First Light

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Support for All

Our Impact Report
2024 - 2025

Because
it's
not just
someone
else's story.

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence affects us all.

We believe change happens when voices unite. By building new collaborations, strengthening partnerships, and listening deeply to those affected, we can ensure every voice is heard, believed, and supported.

From friends and family to neighbours and colleagues, every year thousands of people are impacted by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

That's why we offer a range of supportive services, ensuring every voice is heard, every story is believed, and every person is supported.

This impact report offers just a small reflection of our ongoing work and the journeys of those affected by abuse.

It's a testament to what we can achieve when we come together for change.

Who We Are

First Light is not just a logo or a name, but a reflection of every team member's dedication, every individual we assist, and every voice that often remains unheard.

We stand proudly as an independent voice, where everyone will be believed, heard, and supported, no matter their gender, age, or ethnicity.

Because everyone who has experienced abuse deserves to be heard.

We are independent from statutory agencies, including the Police.

OUR VISION
A society where everyone lives in safety free from sexual violence and domestic abuse.

OUR VALUES
Trust
Integrity
Respect
Progression
Collaboration

OUR MISSION
First Light supports individuals of any age, gender or sexuality who have been affected by domestic abuse and/or sexual violence.

- **Educate & Prevent** through early intervention, training and campaigning.
- **Protect & Support** through the provision of services to help safeguard and reach out to those suffering Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.
- **Cope & Recover** by providing a full range of services to help people build resilience and move on to healthier happier lives.
- **Give a Voice** to those who suffer in silence and influence others to bring about positive change.

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Lyn Gooding

Lyn Gooding
Chief Executive Officer

I am proud to present this year's Impact Report, which reflects the strength, compassion and dedication of everyone at First Light.

This year has been one of change, challenge and growth. Across every service, our teams have shown what care and commitment can achieve when people come together with a shared purpose.

We have continued to stand beside survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence, offering a safe place to be heard, believed and supported. Every member of our team has worked tirelessly to meet rising demand while maintaining the warmth and humanity that define First Light.

One significant change this year was the end of our Devon and Cornwall Independent Sexual Violence Advisor service contract. For more than six years, this service made a lasting difference to thousands of people across the region. We are proud of the care, advocacy and hope our team provided, and grateful to every staff member who helped build such a trusted and respected service.

Though the contract has now passed to a new provider, the impact of our work and the lessons we learned will continue to shape how we support survivors across the South West.

Our work this year has been shaped by listening to survivors, partners and our own teams. Their voices have guided improvements, informed campaigns and strengthened partnerships.

We have seen the impact of this in every area, from our Independent Sexual Violence Advisor services in Swindon and Wiltshire, to our counselling work in Plymouth, and our ongoing support through Safe Spaces and Domestic Abuse services across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

The launch of campaigns like Happy Healthy Love and Pledge4Change reminded us how powerful awareness can be when it is grounded in support and community. We also began a new chapter through our brand refresh, created in-house and shaped by survivor feedback, and proudly signed the Armed Forces Covenant to extend our commitment to those who serve and their families.

None of this would have been possible without our dedicated staff, volunteers, funders and partners. Their commitment continues to turn compassion into action, helping people rebuild their lives with dignity and hope.

As we look ahead, we will continue to grow our services and build new partnerships to ensure every voice is heard, believed and supported.

Michelle Davies
Chair of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to every member of our team, our volunteers, funders, and partners. Your dedication continues to transform lives and create safer futures for those affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence.

This year's Impact Report reflects not only the scale of our work but the depth of compassion and resilience that defines First Light. Across all our services we have seen extraordinary commitment in the face of rising demand and complex challenges.

As trustees, we remain focused on ensuring that First Light continues to grow sustainably, advocate boldly, and deliver services that are trauma-informed, inclusive, and survivor-led.

We are proud of the progress made this year, from the launch of new campaigns like Happy Healthy Love and Pledge4Change, to the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant and the thoughtful brand refresh that reflects our values and vision.

Looking ahead, our priorities for the next 12 months include:

- Deliver against our new 5-year strategy to 'Do more, Do it Well and Do it Together' to drive our mission forward
- Future proof our organisation with a workforce that are trained, resourced and equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and support to perform their duties safely, efficiently and to a high standard
- Build our national presence and extend our reach through Safe Spaces and digital outreach
- Support the seamless mobilisation of recommissioned and new services
- Energise and elevate our fundraising efforts to unlock new opportunities, bring sustainability and grow our Client Crisis Fund's into other service areas
- Launch new campaigns that amplify survivor voices and challenge stigma
- Expand our external training offer to raise awareness and build communities of upstanders not bystanders
- Secure new partnerships and opportunities for service expansion

This report is more than a summary of achievements; it is a testament to the courage of survivors and the unwavering commitment of those who walk alongside them.

I hope you find inspiration in these pages and join us in our mission to ensure that every voice is heard, believed, and supported.

Michelle Davies

Our Strategy for 2025 to 2030

Introducing Our Strategy for 2025 to 2030

As we step into the next chapter of our journey, we are proud to unveil our new five-year strategy. This is a roadmap shaped by insight, ambition, and the voices of those we serve.

It is a commitment to deepening our impact, driving innovation, and standing firm in our values.

Built on the foundations of our past successes and the lessons we've learned, our 2025 to 2030 strategy sets out a clear direction for how we will continue to challenge injustice, empower communities, and create lasting change. It reflects our belief that meaningful progress comes from collaboration, courage, and a relentless focus on what matters most.

OUR STRATEGY 2025 – 2030

OUR VISION

A society where everyone lives in safety free from sexual violence and domestic abuse

OUR MISSION

To work together to build safer lives free from domestic abuse and sexual violence by:

- Educating and preventing
- Protecting and supporting
- Enabling coping and underpinning recovery
- Giving a voice

OUR CORE VALUES

Trust
Integrity
Respect
Progression
Collaboration.

DO MORE

Scale up our response to domestic abuse and sexual violence to meet the growing need

What we will do

- Grow and diversify income specifically unrestricted income
- Create, promote and deliver a non-commissioned product offering
- Grow our profile as a known and trusted charity in the South West, and nationally

How will we know

- We receive sustainable and scalable unrestricted income from diverse sources
- We have a range of products that are realising unrestricted income
- We have increased our audience reach, grown our supporter base, and improved brand recognition, measured through recognised tools against industry benchmarks

DO IT WELL

Innovate to improve the quality, equity and equality of our service offer

What will we do

- Attract, retain, and develop a high-performing workforce
- Have infrastructure, systems and processes that meet the needs of the organisation.
- Evaluate and measure our impact and learn for the future

How will we know

- We become an employer of choice
- We have the right policies in place and positive staff feedback via staff questionnaires
- We have robust governance that scrutinises outcomes and can demonstrate organisational learning to influence future strategy and service provision

DO IT TOGETHER

Influence societal and system response to domestic abuse and sexual violence

What will we do

- Influence national direction, policy, funding and commissioning
- Help shape institutions to increase our reach for collective change
- Work collaboratively with service providers to create a network for service delivery

How will we know

- First Lights ask is reflected in national direction, policy, funding and commissioning
- We have a network of institutions who have changed their behaviours and practices as a result of our collaboration
- Domestic abuse and sexual violence services are integrated within the Southwest region

KEY CHALLENGES

- Potentially new Government leadership
- Government policy & priorities
- Economic downturn (Cost of living crisis)
- Increased mental health needs and drug and alcohol dependency
- Service users journey though the criminal justice system
- Recruitment of staff
- Social Isolation of service users

WHAT WE DO BEST

- Providing quality services to domestic abuse and sexual violence service users
- Providing good support to our staff
- Working innovatively
- Working with partners
- Having dedication, commitment and bravery
- Maintaining a clear communication for service users throughout their journey

LISTEN AND ACT ON THE VOICES OF LIVED EXPERIENCED

First Light Brand Refresh

In 2025, First Light began a thoughtful and sustainable brand refresh, marking a new chapter in how we visually represent our mission, values, and the voices we uplift.

The refresh is being introduced gradually through a soft launch. From April onwards, our updated logo will appear organically on newly created or printed materials.

Existing resources, such as leaflets, posters, and paperwork will continue to be used to ensure sustainability and responsible use of funding. This approach allows us to prioritise investment in our services and support, rather than incur additional costs for rebranding.

Our refreshed logo was developed in-house at no cost, shaped by feedback from our teams, services, and survivors' voices. It reflects who we are today, a bold, compassionate organisation committed to action and advocacy.

The new design speaks with conviction, uplifts voices, and instils a sense of purpose. It ensures visibility across all formats and backgrounds, visually reinforcing our tone and drive to motivate change.

Why It Matters
Our logo is more than a visual identity, it is a symbol of trust, authenticity, and our commitment to those we support. It will only be used on work that truly reflects our values and mission.

When someone sees the First Light logo, we want them to recognise it as a promise: that no one is ever alone in their journey, and that everyone will be heard, believed, and supported.

Our Impact
2024 - 2025

Service Impact

13,429
referrals into our services

17,639
people supported due to Domestic Violence or Abuse

2,856
people supported disclosed having a disability

4,662
people supported due to Sexual Violence or Abuse

11,088
people supported were over the 18 years old.

1,787
people supported due to Church-related Abuse

2,069
people supported were children and young people

Digital Impact

155,783
people accessed the First Light, Safer Futures or Safe Spaces website over the last year

473,979
pages viewed, accessing resources, information, advice and referrals

292,018
people have viewed our campaigns and content across our social media

1,328
pieces of content posted across Facebook, Linkedin, Instagram, and X

9,985
types of engagement (likes & shares) with our content across all social platforms

Over the past year,

24,088

people supported by our services

13%
increase in support provided since 2024

Social Value Impact

- Combined social value generated: ≈ **£256 million.**
- Combined direct savings to public services: ≈ **£56 million.**
- Major beneficiaries: **NHS** (£14 m), **Police** (£11 m), **Local Authorities** (£11 m), **CPS + MoJ** (£11 m), **Housing** (£2.8 m), and **Community/ Workforce wellbeing** (£5.6 m).
- Overall social return remains consistent across services at ~**£10–£12 social benefit per £1 invested.**

Impact Measurement

Total Social Value Created Societal Cost Avoided)

Broader societal benefit of our intervention, including reductions in emotional harm, lost productivity, and service costs.

Total Supported × (Societal Cost Per Case × Central Impact Assumption%) = Estimated Value

Public-Service Savings (Direct Cost Avoided)

The direct financial savings to public services such as health, police, criminal justice, social care, and housing.

Total Supported × (Estimated Public-Service Cost Per Case × Central Impact Assumption%) = Estimated Value

Totals Across All First Light Services

Total Social Value Created (Societal)	£256,100,912
Public-Service Savings (Direct)	£56,088,220

% Breakdown into sector	
NHS & Mental Health (25%)	£14,022,055
Police (20%)	£11,217,644
CPS (10%)	£5,608,822
MoJ (10%)	£5,608,822
Local Authority / Safeguarding (20%)	£11,217,644
Housing (5%)	£2,804,411
Community & Productivity (10%)	£5,608,822

Geographical footprint of First Light

Our Impact

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly

Domestic Abuse Support & Safer Futures Service

Total Supported: 17,639 people
- Referrals: 10,808
- Advice & Support: 6,831

Gender Breakdown (of referrals):
- Women: 7,576
- Men: 1,757
- Other: 187

Age Breakdown (of referrals):
- Adults: 9,018
- Children: 1,571

Independent Sexual Violence Advisory (ISVA) Service

Total Supported: 727 people
- Referrals: 267
- Advice & Support: 460

Gender Breakdown
- Women: 242
- Men: 23
- Transgender: 1
- Other: 1

Age Breakdown
- Adults: 205
- Children: 61

Plymouth

Plymouth Sexual Violence Counselling

Total Referrals: 599

Gender Breakdown
- Women: 472
- Men: 68
- Non-binary: 4
- Transgender: 4

Age Breakdown
- Adults: 431
- Children (13–18): 118

Independent Sexual Violence Advisory (ISVA) Service

Total Supported: 504 people
- Referrals: 187
- Advice & Support: 317

Gender Breakdown
- Women: 163
- Men: 21
- Non-binary: 1
- Other: 1

Age Breakdown
- Adults: 148
- Children: 39

Devon

Independent Sexual Violence Advisory (ISVA) Service

Total Supported: 820 people
- Referrals: 410
- Advice & Support: 410

Gender Breakdown
- Women: 354
- Men: 41
- Non-binary: 5
- Transgender: 6
- Other: 4

Age Breakdown
- Adults: 291
- Children: 119

Swindon & Wiltshire

Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

Total Referrals: 387 people

Gender Breakdown
- Women: 335
- Men: 50
- Other: 2

Age Breakdown
- Adults: 375
- Children: 11

Independent Sexual Violence Advisory (ISVA) Service

Total Supported: 1,625 people
- Referrals: 580
- Advice & Support: 1,045

Gender Breakdown
- Women: 509
- Men: 68
- Non-binary: 2
- Transgender: 4
- Other: 2

Age Breakdown
- Adults: 432
- Children: 150

England & Wales

Safe Spaces - Church-related Abuse

Total Supported: 1,787 people
- Referrals: 191
- Advice & Support: 1,596

Gender Breakdown
- Women: 96
- Men: 92
- Other: 1

*The data collected comes from clients who choose to disclose their gender, age, and any disabilities.

Our Services

We're here for anyone affected by sexual violence, domestic abuse and church-related abuse, no matter when it happened. Whether someone is looking for immediate help, emotional support, or guidance through the justice system, our services are designed to meet each person's needs in a safe, understanding, and non-judgemental way.

Our **Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Services** provide specialist support to people of all ages and genders who have experienced rape, sexual assault, or sexual abuse. If someone chooses to report to the police, an ISVA will guide them through every stage of the process, from initial contact to attending court. For those who are unsure or don't wish to report, we offer support to help them understand their options and make the decision that feels right for them.

Every person is assigned a dedicated support coordinator who listens, understands their needs, and helps them access the right care.

We also offer **Sexual Violence and Abuse Counselling** for adults, children, and families who have experienced sexual abuse. Our trained counsellors work in a trauma-informed way, providing a safe and confidential space to talk, reflect, and begin to heal. For those involved in a trial, we can offer support both before and after the court process. Our counselling is flexible and person-centred, recognising that everyone's journey is different.

For those who have experienced a recent assault, our **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)** is often the first point of contact. We provide immediate crisis support, including access to a forensic medical examination, carried out by a specially trained team. If someone doesn't want to report to the police straight away, any evidence collected can be stored safely for up to two years. We also offer other areas of wellbeing such as screening for sexual infections and any concerns surrounding possible pregnancy. We also offer the option to make onward referrals to sexual health and a person's GP for follow-up support outside the forensic window, ensuring that care is still available.

Whether someone chooses to report or not, access counselling or not, we're here to help them feel heard, supported, and safe. Everything we do is shaped by the needs of the people we support.

Learn more about our Swindon & Wiltshire ISVA Service

Learn more about our Gloucestershire ISVA Service

Learn more about our Plymouth Sexual Violence Counselling Service

Learn more about our Swindon & Wiltshire SARC

Our Services

Our **Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service** offers comprehensive, trauma-informed support for individuals affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence across a wide range of needs. A core part of the service is safety planning and empowerment, working closely with individuals to reduce risk and help them feel safe both now and in the future. The service empowers people to take confident steps forward in their recovery. It also operates through a multi-agency approach, collaborating with social workers, police, and other statutory and voluntary organisations to ensure clients' voices are heard and their needs are met.

Learn more about our Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Safer Futures Service

Overall, this service supports survivors by offering holistic, person-centred care that prioritises safety, empowerment, and long-term recovery, making a meaningful difference in the lives of those affected by abuse.

Learn more about our National Safe Spaces Service

Our **Church-related Abuse Service** offers a comprehensive range of support tailored to the needs of survivors. This includes advocacy to help individuals navigate church procedures, report abuse, and access appropriate services. Emotional support is provided in a safe and confidential environment, allowing survivors to share their experiences and receive compassionate care. Practical assistance is also available, including guidance and referrals to other relevant organisations.

In addition, Safe Spaces facilitates peer support by connecting individuals with others who have faced similar experiences, building a sense of community and understanding. To ensure accessibility and flexibility, an out-of-hours helpline is available, offering support beyond standard working times.

Swindon and Wiltshire **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)**

This year, Swindon and Wiltshire SARC have continued to be a place of safety and care for people affected by sexual violence. Our team has worked with dedication and compassion through a year that has tested every part of the service. Despite challenges, we've grown, learned and made a real difference to the lives of survivors.

In the past year, **we have supported 387 people**

Every number represents someone who has taken an incredibly brave step to seek help. For each person, we've offered medical care, emotional support and space to be heard without judgement.

We've seen that when survivors are met with understanding and respect, they begin to regain a sense of control. That is the real impact of our work, helping people start to rebuild their lives at their own pace and in their own way.

The difference we made
Our work reaches far beyond the walls of the centre. By supporting survivors, we help reduce long-term harm and strengthen communities. When people are able to access help early, they are less likely to experience further trauma, isolation or poor mental health. This not only improves individual wellbeing but also reduces pressure on local health and social care systems.

What we've achieved
We've also continued to build strong partnerships with police, health services and community organisations. These relationships mean survivors get joined-up care, and our collective knowledge continues to grow. It is social value in action, with services working together to create a safer and more supportive community.

Invited to Event at Buckingham Palace by Her Majesty the Queen.

What we've learned
Every survivor's story is different, and we've learned to keep adapting. We've simplified processes, improved communication and made sure our team has the right training and support. Flexibility has become one of our greatest strengths.

We've also seen the importance of accessibility. Many of the people we supported this year live with a disability, 186 in total, including those with physical, learning or mental health needs. We've worked hard to make sure our environment and approach reflect that diversity, offering care that truly meets each person's needs.

Facing challenges together
Recruitment and staffing have been difficult at times, but the team's commitment has never wavered. Everyone has stepped up to make sure survivors still received the care they needed. We've also tackled technical and facility challenges head-on, always focusing on safety, dignity and quality.

Looking ahead
We're proud of what we've achieved, but we know there's more to do. In the year ahead, we will:

- Use survivor feedback to shape our service
- Grow and train our team
- Make our spaces even more welcoming
- Strengthen our community partnerships
- Keep raising awareness and challenging stigma

We'll continue to listen, learn and stand alongside survivors, creating lasting impact for individuals, families and communities across Swindon and Wiltshire.

"Honestly, thank you so much for everything. You guys are amazing and I can't thank you enough.

Whilst I hope I don't ever see you again because of the circumstances, I am so glad I met you. It was less scary than I imagined, thanks to you."

Social Value & Impact
Supporting 387 survivors through forensic examination and trauma-informed care, generating an estimated £4.57 million in total social value. This includes £1.09 million in direct public-service savings, with approximately £327,000 attributed to efficiencies within the criminal justice system.

The service improves evidence preservation, reduces repeat offending, and enhances case progression. It also lowers demand on health and justice services by providing early access to specialist support.

For every £1 invested, the SARC delivers an estimated £10 to £12 in social value, demonstrating its critical role in supporting survivors and strengthening system-wide responses to sexual violence.

Overall Outcomes

- Each SARC attendance represents immediate evidence preservation, which improves conviction prospects and reduces repeat offending benefits not fully captured in cost models.
- NHS and mental-health savings are significant: faster access to trauma care reduces later-life healthcare costs and long-term PTSD incidence.
- Early intervention improved evidence preservation, supporting stronger justice outcomes and reducing repeat reports..
- The service contributed to more efficient use of police and court resources, helping reduce case backlogs and re-investigations.
- The value for money ratio is roughly £10–£12 in social benefit per £1 invested in SARC provision.

Funded by

NHS England

GWR

National Benevolent Charity

Wiltshire Community Foundation

The Weinstock Fund

Swindon & Wiltshire

"I didn't know what to expect when I arrived at the SARC. I was scared, overwhelmed, and unsure if I could even walk through the door. But from the moment I was greeted, something shifted.

The women who welcomed me were incredible. Kind, calm, and reassuring. I felt safe with them, truly safe, for the first time since the assault. One of them even called me back after I hung up the phone earlier, when I was too panicked to speak. If she hadn't, I don't think I would have found the courage to try again. That call meant everything.

Inside, the atmosphere was nothing like I imagined. It wasn't clinical or cold, it was warm, respectful, and gentle. I was treated with dignity. I didn't feel judged. I felt listened to. Kayleigh and Sarah were lovely. After speaking with them, I felt more relaxed, more reassured. I was glad I came.

Even the medical part, which I had dreaded, was handled with such care. That might sound strange, but it meant a lot to feel comfortable in such a vulnerable moment.

I left the SARC feeling lighter. Not healed, not fixed, but supported. The awful situation I was in felt manageable, thanks to them. I hope I never have to go back, but I'll always be grateful I met them.

Thank you so much for everything."

**This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.*

Swindon and Wiltshire **Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Service**

This year, our ISVA team in Swindon and Wiltshire has continued to stand alongside survivors of sexual violence, providing emotional and practical support at every stage of their journey. It has been a year of pressure and progress, and our team has remained steady, compassionate and focused on the people who need us most.

Every person we meet has a different story. Some need help to report to the police, others want emotional support, and many just need someone to listen. Whatever the situation, our ISVAs stand beside them, offering choice, information and stability.

Over the past year, **580 people were referred** to the ISVA service. Alongside this, we offered advice and **ongoing help to 1,045** others, including family members and friends affected by sexual violence.

Many people we support live with a disability or health condition. This year, **632 clients disclosed one or more disabilities,** including physical, learning and mental health needs. Understanding and responding to these needs is central to how we work.

The difference we made

The ISVA service helps survivors regain confidence, safety and control. This reduces the risk of long-term trauma and supports recovery, benefiting not only individuals but also families, workplaces and communities. When people receive the right support early, they are more likely to stay engaged with services, maintain their wellbeing and rebuild their lives.

Our work also strengthens local systems. Through close partnerships with police, health teams, schools and charities, we have helped improve how survivors are identified and supported. Joint training and shared learning have led to better communication between professionals, more coordinated responses and greater trust in the system.

By reaching into rural and underrepresented communities, we have helped remove barriers to support. Each outreach visit or awareness session helps reduce stigma and encourages more people to come forward. This community presence builds understanding and safety for everyone.

Student Freshers - Talking to young people about the ISVA Service

Learning and improvement

This year we simplified our internal systems, streamlined paperwork and improved how we track each person's journey. We introduced new digital tools and held regular learning meetings to share experiences across the team. These changes have helped us stay consistent, focused and responsive.

We've also seen that visibility matters. Being present in local spaces builds trust and helps people find us when they might not otherwise reach out.

Challenges

Recruitment has remained one of our biggest challenges. Limited staffing affects how many people we can reach and how quickly we can respond. Demand for our service continues to grow, and sustainable funding is essential if we are to keep meeting that need. Survivors should not have to wait for help, and our communities should not have to choose between visibility and availability.

"I've just completed my third trauma stabilisation session. If I hadn't been offered support and a listening ear, I probably wouldn't be here today, I had no one else to talk to."

Looking ahead

In the coming year we plan to:

- Grow our team through new funding and recruitment, including trainee roles
- Expand outreach in underrepresented communities through local events and our new "ISVA Ally" scheme
- Keep improving how we assess and record support, using survivor feedback to shape our work

The ISVA service exists to make sure every survivor is heard, believed and supported. Through partnership, persistence and care, we continue to create lasting social value across Swindon and Wiltshire.

Hosted Dr. Olivia Chapple, High Sheriff of Wiltshire to our Services

Social Value & Impact
Supporting 1,625 survivors across Swindon and Wiltshire, generating an estimated £19.15 million in total social value. This includes £4.58 million in direct public-service savings across health, policing, justice, safeguarding, and housing sectors.

This includes approximately:
- £1.15m NHS savings
- £0.9m Police savings
- £0.46m CPS savings
- £0.46m MoJ savings
- £0.9m local authority/safeguarding savings

By reducing repeat victimisation, improving mental health outcomes, and enhancing multi-agency efficiency, the ISVA service delivers a return of approximately £10 to £12 for every £1 invested. This highlights the powerful and lasting impact of trauma-informed advocacy for individuals and communities.

Overall Outcomes
The social value generated reflects meaningful, life-changing outcomes for survivors.
This has led to:
- Improved mental health and wellbeing
- Reduced repeat victimisation
- Greater engagement with the criminal justice system

These outcomes contribute to:
- Safer communities
- More resilient public services
- Enhanced recovery journeys for those affected by sexual violence

The service:
- Strengthen multi-agency collaboration and reduces duplication across systems.
- Survivors receive timely, trauma-informed support that improves individual wellbeing.
- Long-term capacity is built across health, justice, and safeguarding sectors.

Funded by

Wiltshire and Swindon pcc
NHS England
Wiltshire Community Foundation
nationwide

Swindon & Wiltshire

"I was 16 when I reported being groomed online. I was already struggling with my mental health, autism, and an eating disorder. Support from mental health services had broken down, and I felt like I was on my own.

I was referred to First Light and met my ISVA at home, which felt easier for me. She listened, didn't judge, and helped me feel more in control. We talked about what I was going through, and did activities that helped me open up about my anxiety, self-harm, and thoughts of suicide.

With my mum's consent, a safeguarding referral was made. Since then, I've been given a crisis worker, I'm accessing DBT, and my family is waiting for therapy. It's been a huge help – my mum said it finally felt like someone was really listening.

We've talked about trauma, coping strategies, healthy relationships, and what to expect from the police process. But almost a year on, I still haven't had my interview with the police. There's been confusion and delays, which has caused even more stress for me and my family.

Right now, I stay in touch with my ISVA by text or call. It helps knowing she's still there. Things aren't perfect, but for the first time in a long time, I don't feel completely alone."

**This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.*

Survivor Story
Safety, Kindness, and Care at the SARC

Arriving at the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) can be a daunting experience, but for one survivor, the care they received made all the difference. From the moment they were welcomed, they felt safe, supported, and respected.

> "The staff were incredible and amazing. I felt so safe with them."

The survivor had expected the process to be frightening, but the compassion and professionalism of the team helped ease those fears.

> "Honestly, thank you so much for everything. You are amazing and I can't thank you enough. Whilst I hope I don't ever see you again because of the circumstances, I'm so glad I met you. It was less scary than I imagined thanks to you."

Another survivor shared how the team's approach helped them feel reassured and respected:

> "I felt much more reassured and was happy I came to the SARC. The staff were lovely, and I felt more relaxed after talking to them. I didn't feel judged."

The impact of the service extended beyond the appointment itself. One survivor reflected on the importance of a follow-up call:

> "Thank you for calling me back when I hung up the phone. If you hadn't, I don't think I would have called again, and I was desperate for support. You were really patient with me and gave me the opportunity to talk. I will always be thankful."

For many, the SARC team helped turn a traumatic moment into one of dignity, safety, and care:

> "Thank you so much for everything. Honestly, you made an awful situation manageable."

These stories highlight the vital role of the SARC, offering survivors a safe, respectful, and compassionate space where they feel heard, supported, and empowered to take the next step in their journey after sexual assault.

**This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.*

Survivor Story
Support for Children & Parents

For one young survivor and her family, the journey through the criminal justice system was long and emotionally challenging.

Over three years, they faced the uncertainty and stress that comes with preparing for court, all while trying to heal.

What made a profound difference was the support they received from their Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA).

> "She had someone she could talk to throughout the whole process," her parent shared. "The ISVA was kind and supportive, not just during the court proceedings, but in the years leading up to it. Without her support, I don't think our daughter would have made it to court."

The ISVA's role extended beyond practical guidance, she became a trusted source of emotional support.

> "She was a rock to our daughter during a very difficult period," the parent continued. "Supportive, caring, attentive, wise, helpful. We were amazed to have access to such a service and are so grateful for everything she did."

Even when the case required support across regional boundaries, the ISVA's presence made a lasting impression.

> "Thank you so much for supporting her at court recently, it was really appreciated. She spoke so highly of you and the support you offered her on the day, and for that I am very grateful," said a professional from a partner service.

This story highlights the vital role ISVAs play in helping survivors feel safe, supported, and empowered throughout their journey, making the difference between facing the criminal justice system alone and moving through it with strength and confidence.

**This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.*

Devon, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly **Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Service**

Our ISVA service across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly supported thousands of people affected by sexual violence.

After six years of dedicated service, the contract moved to a new provider in October 2024. As we reflect on this chapter, we want to highlight the difference the service made and the lives it touched.

Over the past six months under our management, the service **supported 2,051 people** across the region. With **887 clients living with one or more disabilities**, including physical, learning or mental health conditions.

The difference we made
Every person we supported received tailored guidance, emotional support and advocacy. Some needed help navigating the legal system, others needed practical advice or someone to listen. By being consistent and present, we gave people a reliable point of contact during times of fear and uncertainty.

Freshers – Engaging with students about the ISVA Service.

Across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly our team helped people start to regain control and rebuild their lives. Early support reduced the risk of long-term harm, improved wellbeing, and helped families, friends and communities stay strong.

The service also strengthened local systems. By working closely with police, health services, schools and other agencies, we improved how survivors are supported and helped create pathways for care that are clear, joined-up and compassionate. Outreach and awareness work encouraged more people to come forward and reduced barriers to accessing help.

Learning and reflection
This period reminded us that every survivor's journey is different. Some faced multiple challenges beyond the abuse, including mental health, housing or family issues. Listening carefully, adapting support and being a steady presence made a real difference.

We also saw the importance of specialist support for children, young people, LGBTQ+ clients and neurodiverse individuals. Providing tailored services meant that more people felt understood and supported.

"My ISVA has been by my side through the tough and the bad times, especially over the past year. They'll always be someone I look up to. I can't find the words to thank her enough for the wonderful guidance and care she shows to her clients."

Looking forward
Although our time delivering this service has ended, the impact remains. Survivors have been heard, supported and empowered. Systems have been improved, and pathways for care strengthened. The experiences and lessons from this service will continue to influence how support is delivered across Devon, Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly in the future.

A heartfelt thank you

To the team who made this service what it was: thank you. Your care, professionalism and commitment changed lives. You helped people find their voice, their strength and their path forward.

To the survivors who trusted us with their stories: thank you. It was a privilege to walk alongside you.

Though our time delivering this service has come to an end, the impact remains.

The voices we helped amplify, the systems we helped shape, and the lives we helped rebuild will continue to echo long into the future.

We are proud of what we built. And we are hopeful for what comes next.

Devon, Cornwall & Isles Of Scilly

Social Value & Impact
Supporting 2,051 survivors across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, generating an estimated £24.2 million in total social value. This includes £5.78 million in direct public-service savings across health, policing, justice, safeguarding, and housing sectors.

This includes approximately:
- £1.45m NHS & mental health savings
- £1.16m Police savings
- £0.58m CPS savings
- £0.58m MoJ savings
- £1.16m local authority and safeguarding savings

Through trauma-informed advocacy, the service has helped reduce repeat victimisation, improve mental health outcomes, and strengthen engagement with the criminal justice system.

For every £1 invested, the ISVA service delivers approximately £10 to £12 in social value, demonstrating its vital role in supporting recovery and building safer, more resilient communities.

Overall Outcomes
The social value generated reflects meaningful, long-term outcomes for survivors:
- Improved mental health and emotional recovery
- Reduced repeat victimisation and trauma-related incidents
- Increased engagement with the criminal justice system

The service:
- Improved multi-agency coordination, reducing repeated contact and referrals.
- Survivors benefit from timely, trauma-informed support that promotes wellbeing and long-term stability.
- Public agencies experience increased efficiency, enabling better use of resources and improved outcomes for all involved.

Funded by

The Henry Smith Charity founded in 1628

Ministry of JUSTICE

Garfield Weston FOUNDATION

PCC Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Devon and Cornwall

Student Freshers - Talking to young people about the ISVA Service

Our ISVA was awarded the Chief Superintendent's Commendation

Inspire Justice Awards - Nominated for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative of the Year

Inspire Justice Awards - We achieved the Highly Commended Award in the EDI Initiative of the Year

Plymouth **Sexual Violence Counselling Service**

This year, our Sexual Violence Counselling service has continued to provide vital support across Plymouth.

We have recognised the ongoing need for support for children and have been campaigning to ensure all children are included in the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy. This has been raised locally with MP Rebecca Smith to encourage a change to the Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) Strategy.

Over the past year, the service **supported 599 people** through referrals.
Of those referred, **431 were adults, 103 young people aged 13–17, and 15 children aged 0–12**

Every person we support has different needs. Some need counselling to process trauma, others need guidance on coping strategies, and many need a safe space to be heard.

Our approach ensures that people feel supported, understood and respected at every stage of their journey.

Our team has also engaged in city-wide awareness events, including White Ribbon Day and the Man Culture event, helping raise understanding and challenge harmful attitudes.

"My counsellor was brilliant. Within three sessions, I could really feel the positive impact. She truly listens, remembers, and understands.

Each session, she brings up the things I'm struggling with and helps me work through them. Overall, a great service. I would 1000000% recommend it to anyone going through what I did."

The difference we made
By offering accessible, trauma-informed counselling, we help people regain control, rebuild confidence and improve wellbeing. Early support can reduce the long-term effects of abuse, strengthen families and allow communities to be healthier and safer.

Participating in city-wide events and campaigns allows us to raise awareness, challenge stigma and make sure survivors know where to find support. Working with local partners ensures that support is joined-up and responsive to the needs of adults, young people and children.

Looking ahead
In the coming year, we plan to:

- Continue campaigning for inclusion of all children in the VAWG/VAWC Strategy
- Expand awareness work and continue participation in city-wide events
- Ensure counselling remains accessible, trauma-informed and responsive to the needs of everyone who contacts the service
- Work closely with partners to provide clear and joined-up support for children, young people and adults

"My counsellor and First Light have helped me see that there is life after abuse. One that I can control and feel positive about."

Our Sexual Violence Counselling Service is built on trust, understanding and care. We are proud of what we have achieved and remain committed to making sure every survivor receives the support they need.

Social Value & Impact
Supporting 599 victim-survivors of sexual violence and abuse, generating an estimated £7.08 million in total social value. This includes £1.69 million in direct public-service savings across health, policing, justice, safeguarding, and housing services.

This includes approximately:
- £423k NHS & mental health savings
- £338k Police savings
- £169k CPS savings
- £169k MoJ savings
- £338k Local authority safeguarding savings

Through specialist trauma-informed therapy, the service has helped reduce repeat victimisation, improve emotional recovery, and lower demand on crisis health and safeguarding systems. It also strengthens multi-agency coordination and supports better engagement with the criminal justice process.

For every £1 invested, the service delivers approximately £10 to £12 in social value, demonstrating its vital role in supporting recovery and resilience across Plymouth's communities.

Overall Outcomes
The social value generated reflects meaningful, long-term outcomes for survivors:
- Therapy led to improved emotional wellbeing, reduced repeat victimisation, and fewer crisis health contacts.
- Survivors were better able to engage with the justice system and access coordinated support.
- Public services benefited from reduced duplication, lower demand, and more efficient multi-agency working.
- The service plays a vital role in building safer communities and supporting long-term recovery across Plymouth.

Funded by

Northbrook community trust
John Casson Foundation
Livewell Foundation
Rayne Foundation
Plymouth City Council
VS

Plymouth

"When I first reached out to First Light, I wasn't sure what to expect. I was struggling, overwhelmed, and unsure if anyone could truly help. But from the very first session, my counsellor made a difference. She listened, really listened.

She remembered the things I said, understood what I was going through, and gently helped me work through it all. Within just three sessions, I could feel the positive impact.

Each time we met, she brought up the things I was struggling with, checked in, and helped me find ways to move forward. I felt seen. I felt heard. I felt supported.

I'm honestly not sure where I'd be without this service. First Light has been the only place that truly helped me through some of the most difficult times in my life. I'm sad to be leaving, but I'm leaving stronger.

Having somewhere to turn to with complex issues has improved my life twofold. I would recommend you to anyone who needs help. In fact, I'd recommend you a million times over.

Thank you for being there when I needed it most."

**This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.*

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly
Domestic Abuse, Safer Futures Service

Over the past year, our Domestic Abuse team in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly has continued to stand alongside families, offering support, understanding and a safe space to begin healing. Whether through one-to-one work, group sessions or community outreach, our focus has remained on helping people feel seen, heard and supported.

In the past year, the service **supported 17,639 people** in total. This includes **10,808 referrals** and **6,831 people** who received advice, ongoing support or help for family and friends.

Every person we worked with had different needs. Some needed safety planning, others wanted guidance on healthy relationships, and many needed emotional support or practical help to rebuild their lives. By being present, consistent and compassionate, we helped families take steps toward safety, confidence and stability.

The difference we made
This year, the team increased its presence in the community, attending family hub days and Safer Cornwall events. These visits helped raise awareness, build trust and let people know where to turn for help.

We responded to the needs of professionals as well, providing more support around healthy relationships. Tools like the Bill of Rights and the Power and Control Wheel helped adults reflect on what they want and deserve in relationships, supporting positive change across families.

Through training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma-informed practice, we improved how we support children affected by domestic abuse. Many parents did not realise the impact of domestic abuse on children, even when they are not directly witnessing it. By having these conversations gently and with care, we helped families move forward together.

I met you at a very low point in my life, and hearing you say you could see change in me definitely drove me forward to keep going. For that, thank you."

Challenges and learning
Recruitment challenges meant we had to think creatively about maintaining consistent support. This led to improvements such as keeping clients with the same key worker whenever possible and giving staff more opportunities to grow and specialise.

Honoured to speak at the Mawnan Women's Institute event.

We also identified areas where more focused support is needed, including older people, children experiencing familial violence, and neurodiverse clients. These areas will be a priority for development in the coming year.

Looking ahead
In the year ahead, we will:

- Keep building our team's skills and confidence through training and shared learning
- Expand our healthy relationships work and embed it further into our support
- Develop specialisms to better support older people, children and neurodiverse clients
- Strengthen our trauma-informed approach and keep clients at the heart of everything we do
- Continue listening to families, professionals and each other

"Just wanted to say a big thank you for the course and the one-to-one support offered. It really has been a life saver."

This service is built on trust, care and the belief that change is possible. The support we provide helps people regain safety, confidence and hope, and we will continue to work until every voice is heard, believed and supported.

Social Value & Impact
Supporting 17,639 individuals across Cornwall, generating an estimated £180 million in total social value. This includes £37.9 million in direct savings to public services including health, policing, justice, safeguarding, housing, and employment support.

Through early intervention, safety planning, advocacy, and trauma-informed support, the service has helped reduce repeat incidents, improve wellbeing, and lower demand on crisis services. It has also strengthened community resilience and supported recovery journeys for thousands of individuals and families.

For every £1 invested, the service delivers approximately £10 in social value, demonstrating its vital role in protecting lives, preventing harm, and supporting long-term wellbeing across Cornwall.

Overall Outcomes
The social value generated reflects meaningful, long-term outcomes for survivors:

- The service supported over 17,000 individuals, helping them move towards safety, stability, and recovery.
- Early intervention and trauma-informed support reduced harm and improved wellbeing for individuals and families.
- Public services experienced lower demand across health, policing, justice, housing, and safeguarding.
- Survivors were better able to access coordinated support and rebuild their lives.
- The service strengthened community resilience and contributed to long-term social wellbeing across Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly.
- Investment in domestic abuse support protects lives and delivers lasting value for individuals, services, and society.

Funded by

SAFER CORNWALL Kernow Salwa
Cornwall Community Foundation
CORNWALL COUNCIL one and all • omen hag oll
THE ALBERT HUNT TRUST
THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOUNDATION
NHS CHARITIES TOGETHER

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly

"For over 20 years, I lived in silence. I didn't think what I was going through counted as abuse. My son said he was my carer, but I was isolated, unsupported, and afraid. I didn't have the words for what was happening, coercion, control, emotional abuse. I just thought it was my life.

I'm older now, and my health makes it hard to leave the house, especially in the colder months. I can't move easily, and my eyesight is poor. I felt trapped, not just physically, but emotionally. But then I found First Light.

They didn't just listen, they understood. They helped me see that what I'd been experiencing wasn't okay. They gave me the language to name it, and the tools to protect myself. My son has been evicted, and I've learned how to keep him out. I have a safety plan, a panic alarm, and I know what to do if he tries to come back.

They connected me with other services too, Adult Social Care, the Susie Project, Age UK. They even helped me understand how to get online so I can access more support. I've started setting boundaries with my son, even when it's hard. I'm not giving him money anymore. I'm not letting him manipulate me.

I still struggle with loneliness, and it's not easy cutting someone out of your life, even when they've hurt you. But I'm stronger now. I feel more confident. I know I'm not alone.

First Light made me feel seen. They made me feel safe. And for the first time in a long time, I believe I deserve that."

**This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.*

National Church-related Abuse, **Safe Spaces Service**

Throughout 2024, the Safe Spaces Service continued to provide a safe, supportive and understanding environment for survivors of church-related abuse. This year was one of growth, learning and deep commitment to those who reached out to us.

Over the past year, the service **supported 1,787 people** in total. This includes **191 referrals and 1,596 others who received advice, ongoing support or help for family and friends.**

Every person who contacted the service had different needs. Some required help accessing counselling, others needed guidance for reporting abuse, and many sought support to navigate complex systems or simply to be heard. By providing consistent, trauma-informed support, we helped people regain a sense of safety, control and hope.

The difference we made
This year, we focused on making the service more accessible and responsive. We introduced our first peer support group and expanded outreach to reach more survivors. We listened closely to feedback and adapted our approach so that every voice was heard and every person felt believed and supported.

We also strengthened our partnerships with external agencies and community services, which helped us provide joined-up care and guidance for people navigating safeguarding and reporting processes.

Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults Conference in Rome
Photograph by Lorenzo Iorfino

Challenges and learning
Like any growing service, we faced staffing and recruitment pressures. Rising demand meant we had to adapt quickly and find creative ways to maintain continuity of care. Some survivors experienced delays or disruptions in support, and we used this feedback to review processes, provide additional training, and make improvements.

My experiences with Safe Spaces have been overwhelmingly positive. It's the knowledge that someone is on my side, not judging. My needs were fully understood.

Through it all, we learned the importance of consistency, empathy and listening carefully. Being a reliable presence for survivors made a real difference during times of uncertainty and trauma.

They have made an enormous difference, coming on board just as I was going under and desperately in need of extra help. They let me use the time how I want, which is absolutely great. They listen and always offer helpful encouragement and advice when relevant, and I know they really care.

Looking ahead
In the year ahead, we plan to:

- Expand the peer support offer, shaped by survivor feedback
- Strengthen links with external organisations and community services
- Continue improving systems to make access and communication easier
- Offer more training and development for staff to meet emerging needs
- Keep listening, learning and adapting so that survivors remain at the heart of everything we do

Safe Spaces is built on trust, empathy and the belief that healing is possible. We are proud of what we achieved in 2024, and we remain committed to ensuring every voice is heard, believed and supported.

Social Value & Impact
Supporting 1,787 victim-survivors across England and Wales, generating an estimated £21.1 million in total social value. This includes £5.04 million in direct public-service savings across health, policing, justice, safeguarding, housing, and community services.

Through specialist trauma-informed support addressing sexual violence, domestic abuse, and spiritual abuse, the service has helped reduce repeat victimisation, improve mental health outcomes, and strengthen engagement with the justice system. It also improves multi-agency coordination and reduces duplicated service demand.

For every £1 invested, the service delivers approximately £10 to £12 in social value, highlighting its vital role in supporting recovery and protecting public resources.

Overall Outcomes
The social value generated reflects meaningful, long-term outcomes for survivors:

- The service supported 1,787 individuals affected by sexual violence, domestic abuse, and spiritual abuse across England and Wales.
- Trauma-informed support led to improved emotional recovery, reduced repeat victimisation.
- Survivors experienced greater stability, improved wellbeing, and increased access to coordinated multi-agency support.
- Public services benefited from reduced demand across health, policing, safeguarding, housing, and justice sectors.
- The service helped prevent long-term harm, supported recovery, and strengthened community resilience.
- It plays a vital role in protecting individuals, reducing duplication across agencies, and delivering lasting social value.

Funded by

England & Wales

"For a long time, I didn't know where to turn. The abuse I experienced within a church setting left me feeling confused, isolated, and deeply hurt. I needed someone who wouldn't just listen, but who would stand beside me.

Talking to Sarah changed everything. She didn't pretend to have all the answers, and that humility meant the world to me. She never took advantage of the power she could have held over me. Instead, she offered something far more powerful, presence. "What I need is someone to stand beside me," I told her, and that's exactly what she did.

Safe Spaces gave me more than just one-to-one support. They introduced me to the peer support group, and I honestly think it's going to be the best thing I've ever been involved in. When I talk to others who've been through similar experiences, it's like the weight I've been carrying around for years is lifted. There's a sense of understanding, of shared strength, that I didn't know I needed.

I'm still healing. But now, I'm not doing it alone."

**This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.*

This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.

Survivor Story: Support for families

After 30 years of domestic and sexual abuse, a survivor and her teenage son faced escalating threats from her partner, whose deteriorating mental health made the situation increasingly volatile. Financially controlled and emotionally broken, the survivor was living in fear, receiving minimal support while trying to protect her son.

The son, deeply affected by the abuse and revelations of sexual violence, struggled to focus on his GCSEs amidst growing concern for his and his mother's safety. A violent incident involving weapons prompted the survivor to temporarily leave the home, though she later returned under an agreement that her partner would stay in a separate caravan on the property.

Despite this, the partner repeatedly breached the agreement, leading to a referral from school and social services. The survivor and her son applied for an emergency non-molestation order, which was granted and later contested. Although the order allowed the partner to remain on-site under strict conditions, he violated them and was arrested.

The son continues to deal with the emotional fallout, expressing anger and a sense of responsibility to protect his mother. Support from family services, school, police, and social care remains in place, helping the family navigate ongoing risks while focusing on recovery and education.

Survivor Story: Primary Care, GP Support

After decades of coercive control, physical violence, and sexual abuse, a survivor in her seventies reached out for support. Her partner's health had deteriorated, but the abuse continued leaving her emotionally and physically vulnerable. She had previously been hospitalised due to injuries and was sleeping in a chair because her partner occupied their only bed.

Initial referrals were made through her GP, and meetings were arranged in safe locations, as phone contact was not secure. Although emergency accommodation was offered multiple times, the survivor withdrew each time, often due to fear or concern about losing access to her only source of emotional support, a close friend.

In mid-2024, the situation escalated when threats were made against both the survivor and her friend. Police were involved, and a multi-agency response was coordinated. A joint plan was developed with social care, enabling the survivor and her friend to seek housing together. Safety planning was put in place, and ongoing contact was maintained through her friend to ensure she felt supported.

Over time, the survivor built trust in the support service, expressing that she finally felt understood and safer with a plan and police involvement. She and her friend shared that they had complete trust in the team and were deeply grateful for the support they received.

This story has been adapted to protect the identity of the individuals and is based on a collection of real experiences and feedback.

#HappyHealthyLove Campaign:
Healthy Relationships & Toxic Behaviours

In February 2025, First Light launched Happy Healthy Love as part of our Healthy Relationships and Toxic Behaviours Awareness Month. This campaign focused on empowering young people to recognise, build, and celebrate healthy relationships, while raising awareness of sexual violence and domestic abuse.

Rather than centring on negative behaviours, Happy Healthy Love highlighted what positive, respectful and supportive relationships look like. It brought together young voices, survivors, and partner organisations to share experiences, advice and support.

Social Media Reach and Engagement

Across Instagram, Facebook and TikTok, we shared videos and informational posts on key topics including coercion, grooming, boundaries, signs of abuse, pressure, love bombing, consent, and healthy relationships.

Key Highlights

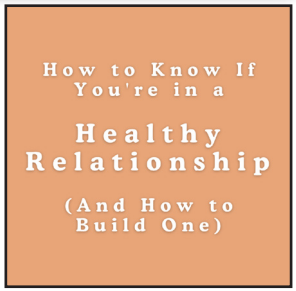
TikTok Launch:
- 14,347 video views
- 1,186 minutes (20+ hours) of watch time
- 43% of viewers aged 18–24

Instagram Engagement:
- 21,282 content views
- 15,408 non-followers reached

Facebook Takeover for Adults:
- 54,746 views

Collaboration and Reach:
- Content provided by First Light and NSPCC
- Shared by universities, colleges, NHS Trusts, and community organisations across the South West

It was also amplified by community groups and services across the South West, including NHS Trusts, local partnerships, and support organisations.



Lasting Impact

Due to its success, Happy Healthy Love secured additional funding to expand its reach and develop more resources for young people throughout 2025. The campaign continues to grow as a creative and collaborative space where young people can learn, connect and feel supported.

Funded by

Cornwall Community Foundation

PCC Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Devon and Cornwall

Happy Healthy LOVE

Pledge4Change Campaign:
16 days of Action Against Violence

As part of the 16 Days of Action, First Light continued its Action for Change campaign, encouraging organisations, schools, charities, and community groups to commit to meaningful action against domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Three Pledges we made in 2023 and what we did over 2024.

- **Create Change (#WeSeeYou)**
  Raised awareness through media, launched the #TheyThinkItsAllOver campaign addressing abuse in sport, and challenged harmful myths with #LoveActually.

- **No Voice Left Unheard (#WeHearYou)**
  Worked with survivors to shape services, created safe spaces for sharing experiences, and gathered feedback to drive improvements.

- **Empower Everyone (#WeBelieveYou)**
  Delivered training, developed community resources, and built partnerships to improve access to support.

First Light extended its Pledge4Change campaign throughout November, encouraging individuals and organisations to commit to action against domestic abuse and sexual violence. A digital pledge badge

Ongoing Engagement
Participants received a digital pledge badge, access to resources, and ongoing support. All pledges were featured on our Pledge4Change webpage and promoted during the 16 Days of Action.

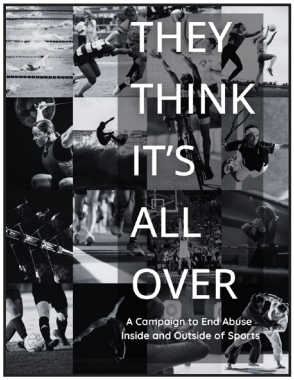
Campaign Impact

- 42 pieces of social content created
- 29,944 content views across all platforms
- 3 survivor stories recorded and shared
- BBC Spotlight interview with a survivor, which won the 2025 BSAW Journalism Awards in the Lived Experience category.
- 6 events attended across Cornwall, Swindon, and Wiltshire
- Bespoke landing page and resource hub with 33 pages of support materials

They Think It's All Over Campaign:
Ending Abuse in and outside of sports

In 2024, First Light launched They Think It's All Over to raise awareness of abuse in and around sports. While football clubs make up just 12% of all UK sports clubs, abuse can occur across all sports, affecting people of all genders and ages.

The campaign called for stronger safeguarding, more research into the links between sport and abuse, and safer environments for players, fans, and communities at every level , from grassroots to professional.



Next Steps

The campaign is still ongoing. First Light is now gathering its own research and data on the links between sport, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. This evidence will support a future funding bid to develop and deliver grassroots safeguarding training for sports teams and clubs across the region.

Nominated and runner-up in the CharityComms Best In-House Campaign

Campaign Highlights

- Nominated and runner-up in the CharityComms Best In-House Campaign 2024
- Shared survivor stories and statistics across a range of sports
- Promoted the hashtag #TheyThinkItsAllOver to drive awareness and engagement
- Called for urgent research and safeguarding reform across the UK's 151,000 sports clubs

Media and Community Reach

The campaign gained significant traction across radio, news, and social media, with coverage from:

- Media outlets: National and local newspapers, digital print, radio and social media.
- Political and public figures: Rebecca Smith MP, Devon & Cornwall PCC, Wiltshire & Swindon PCC, Philip Wilkinson
- Local authorities and services: Plymouth City Council, Trevi, Harbour Plymouth, Safer Cornwall, Wiltshire Police
- Community and support organisations: Man Culture, Operation Emotion, CPR and Saltash Foodbanks, Cornwall Counselling Hub, Together for Childhood Plymouth, and more
- Health and sports networks: Gloucestershire Health & Care NHS Trust, Active Cornwall, Active Devon, Active Avon & Somerset, Active Wiltshire

This widespread support helped amplify the campaign's message and encouraged open conversations about abuse in sport across the South West and beyond.

Big Give Campaign: Crisis Fund for Women & Girls Fleeing Domestic Abuse

You Helped Us Raise Over

£10,000

to Support Women & Girls Fleeing Domestic Abuse.

What Your Donations Achieved

Your support allowed us to:

- Provide mobile phones to prevent tracking and harassment
- Install letterbox locks and camera doorbells to improve home security
- Cover travel costs like train tickets and taxi fares for those fleeing unsafe environments
- Supply clothing, toiletries, and essentials for families who left everything behind
- Assist with moving costs to help survivors start fresh in a safe place

First Light ran a domestic abuse campaign in partnership with The Big Give. Thanks to your generosity and the power of matched giving, we successfully raised over £10,000 to establish a Crisis Fund for women and girls escaping domestic abuse.

The Crisis Fund was created to provide immediate, practical support to survivors, helping them stay safe and begin rebuilding their lives.

Matched Giving Made a Big Difference

BigGive

Every online donation made during the campaign week was doubled thanks to The Big Give.

This match funding helped us reach our goal faster and with greater impact. One donation truly became twice the support.

We are deeply grateful to every individual, business, and community group who stood with us.

Campaigns

Community Fundraising

Coode's Solicitors hosted a fundraising Cake Sale & Quiz Night

Eden Project Marathon & Half Marathon

TClarke chose First Light as their Charity Partner and hosted a fundraising event in support.

Stephens Scown collected donations to support people escaping abuse.

Plymouth 10K and Half Marathon

FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

What an incredible year!

Thanks to your support, we've been able to provide vital, additional help to people affected by abuse. Your generosity has enabled us to offer a wide range of support, from crisis funds helping families flee domestic abuse, to Christmas presents for children forced to leave home during the holidays, to clothing and care packs for survivors of sexual assault, and so much more.

Everyone who has fundraised for us over the past year has played a part in making this possible. You've helped us go beyond what traditional funding can cover. You've helped ensure survivors feel safe, supported, and seen.

It's been truly inspiring to see so many people come together to stand against abuse and stand in solidarity with survivors. Whether you ran the Plymouth Half Marathon, hosted quiz nights, raffles, and competitions, or raised awareness through cake sales, jam stalls, charity pots, or Brikes, Trikes, and dog shows, you've helped create real change.

Together, we've raised over

£34,700 through fundraising in the last year. That's an extraordinary achievement, and it's all thanks to you.

It was a very challenging course with just under 500m of vertical ascent and the heavy rain fall and multi-terrain nature of the course made it an interesting challenge.

But so many people provided encouragement, and a large number made hugely supportive comments for both me running and also for the amazing work that First Light do.

A tough, emotional and rewarding day out which meant that those who kindly donated hopefully had the value returned to them for their kind pledges seeing a slightly broken, emotional and wet and muddy me cross that finish line!!"

- Alex, Running the Eden Project Marathon & Half Marathon

"It was our first specialist family finance team away day!

It's always great to get us all together in person in one place as it reminds us what a great bunch of people we have.

We gathered our colleagues' donations for First Light, a brilliant charity helping sufferers of domestic abuse to escape and restart their life.

- Sarah, Stephens Scown Solicitors

Creating Change

Professional Training
Empowering Workplaces

Over the past year, we've been delivering professional training to organisations and businesses, designed to empower you to support team members affected by sexual and domestic abuse or violence.

We're proud to announce that our courses are now AIM-accredited. This is a significant milestone, as it allows us to offer certified recognition to organisations taking meaningful action to support their teams.

Providing Three Vital Courses
Our training is carefully developed to promote early intervention, deepen understanding, and equip professionals with the tools to offer effective support.

We currently offer the following courses:

Confidence in Your Response

- Interpersonal skills for responding to disclosures
- Understanding the impact on survivors
- Trauma-informed practice

The ABCs of Domestic Abuse

- Increased understanding of domestic abuse
- Trauma-informed approaches to response
- Professional terminology and myth-busting

The ABCs of Sexual Abuse

- Increased understanding of sexual abuse
- Trauma-informed approaches to disclosures and support
- Overview of the criminal justice process and support pathways

Challenging Perceptions

- Exploring societal, cultural, and historical impacts on survivors
- Challenging myths and victim-blaming
- Applying a trauma-informed lens to support those affected by VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls)

Funded by BENEFACT GROUP Cornwall Community Foundation

Thinking About a Career Change?
Why First Light Might Be Your Next Step

What Our Team Says

"Working for First Light has been incredible for me. Everyone is working towards the same goal and is willing to support each other in any way they can. They allow me to work from home or in office based on the needs of my work. This organisation views staff as people, not just workers."

"I had no experience in the sector when I got the job as an ISVA and have been given a lot of chances to show my skills and progress. I've learnt so much and met amazing people."

"Helping people out of their trauma is incredibly rewarding. To be part of a team doing the same is validating and fulfilling."

"The best thing about working for First Light is the passion of the team. They care so much about what they are doing."

At First Light, we don't just offer jobs. We offer purpose, growth, and a community of passionate people working together to make a difference.

Whether you're new to the sector or looking for a fresh start, First Light is a place where your values, wellbeing, and career aspirations are supported every step of the way.

In the past year alone, **20% of our team changed roles internally, and 38% of our senior and team leaders started as practitioners.**

We believe in nurturing talent and helping people grow.

Make an Impact

Working at First Light means being part of a team that supports survivors, innovates services, and builds safer communities. Every day is different, and every role contributes to meaningful change.

If you're ready to make a difference and grow in a supportive, values-driven organisation, we'd love to hear from you.

Why Join Us?

We offer a sector-leading benefits package designed to support your wellbeing, development, and life outside of work:

- Flexible working options tailored to your needs
- 25–30 days annual leave plus bank holidays
- Paid sick leave, compassionate leave, and domestic crisis leave
- Real Living Wage employer
- Personal Support Hour with external supervisors
- Employee Assistance Programme with counselling, legal, and financial advice
- Paid wellbeing day annually
- Free 24/7 GP helpline for you and your household
- Support for pregnancy loss, menopause, neurodiversity, and gender transition
- Training and development tailored to your learning style
- Innovation and Long Service Awards
- Blue Light and Charity Discount Cards

We also offer a comprehensive induction, adjustment passports, and a formal Joint Consultation Committee to ensure your voice is heard.

Creating Change

Support for Family Friends & Children
Resources That Support You

This year, we've developed dedicated resources to support people affected by sexual violence or domestic abuse. Whether you are a parent, a young person, or an adult survivor, we are here for you.

For Parents and Carers

When a child or young person experiences abuse, it can be overwhelming for those who care for them.

Our resources help parents and carers:

- Understand trauma and how it affects children
- Learn how to respond with compassion
- Navigate the criminal justice system
- Access support for themselves and their family

You are not alone. We are here to help you support your child.

For Children and Young People

If something has happened to you that doesn't feel right, it's okay to talk about it. Abuse is never your fault.

Our resources for young people offer:

- Safe, confidential support
- Help with difficult feelings
- Guidance to disclosing abuse.
- Information about your rights and support options

We will listen, believe you, and help you feel safe again.

For Adults

If you have experienced sexual violence or domestic abuse, recently or in the past, you deserve support.

Our adult-focused resources provide:

- Emotional and practical support
- Trauma-informed guidance
- Help navigating the justice system
- Access to counselling and recovery services

You are not alone. We are here to support your journey.

Support for Professionals, Organisations and Sports Clubs

This year, we've expanded our support by developing tailored resources for professionals, organisations, and sports settings. These tools are designed to help people respond confidently, compassionately, and appropriately to anyone affected by sexual violence or domestic abuse.

Resources

For Professionals

Whether you work in education, healthcare, social care, or the criminal justice system, you may be the first person someone turns to for help.

Our resources for professionals provide:

- Guidance on responding to disclosures
- Trauma-informed approaches to support
- Understanding the impact of abuse
- Signposting and referral pathways

We help professionals feel confident in offering the right support at the right time.

For Organisations

Workplaces play a vital role in supporting staff affected by abuse.

Our resources for organisations include:

- Accredited training for managers and teams
- Policies and procedures for safe, supportive environments
- Awareness-raising materials
- Advice on creating a culture of safety and respect

We help organisations take meaningful action and become part of the solution.

For Sports Settings

Coaches, volunteers, and club leaders are in a unique position to spot signs of abuse and offer support.

Our sports-focused resources offer:

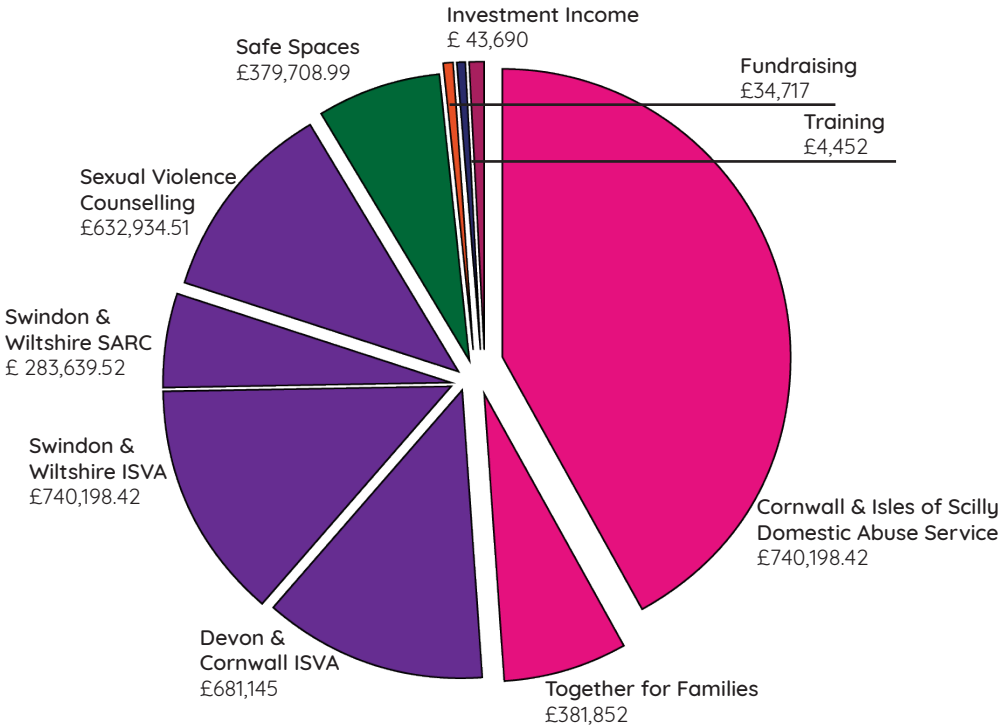
- Training on perceptions and disclosures
- Guidance on supporting young people and adults
- Information on reporting concerns

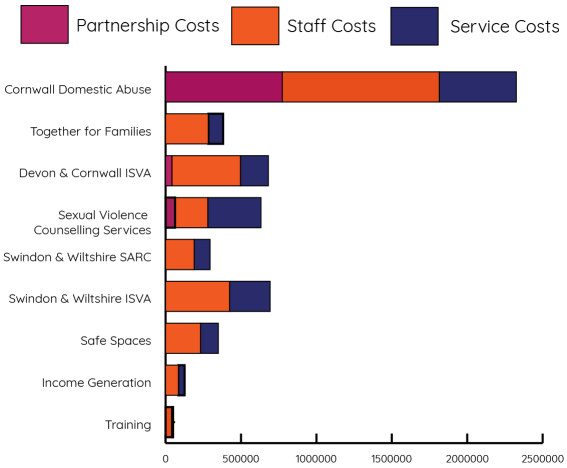
We work with sports communities to ensure everyone feels safe, supported, and heard.

Financial Performance

Income by Activity

Cornwall & Isle of Scilly Domestic Abuse	£2,325,043
Together for Families	£381,852
Devon & Cornwall ISVA	£681,145
Swindon & Wiltshire ISVA	£740,198
Swindon & Wiltshire SARC	£283,640
Plymouth Therapy	£632,935
Safe Spaces	£379,709
Fundraising	£34,717
Training	£4,452
Investment Income	£43,690





Expenditure by Activity

Cornwall & Isle of Scilly Domestic Abuse

Partnership Costs	£773,243.02
Staff Costs	£1,041,380.14
Service Costs	£510,419.84
Total	**£2,325,043.00**

Together for Families

Partnership Costs	
Staff Costs	£283,428.97
Service Costs	£98,423.03
Total	**£381,852.00**

Devon & Cornwall ISVA

Partnership Costs	£42,000.00
Staff Costs	£454,282.39
Service Costs	£184,862.61
Total	**1,351,508.20**

Plymouth Sexual Violence Counselling

Partnership Costs	£63,000.00
Staff Costs	£216,714.65
Service Costs	£353,219.86
Total	**£632,934.51**

Swindon & Wiltshire SARC

Partnership Costs	
Staff Costs	£189,636.84
Service Costs	£105,314.16
Total	**£294,951.00**

Swindon & Wiltshire ISVA

Partnership Costs	
Staff Costs	£424,025.20
Service Costs	£268,660.80
Total	**£692,686.00**

Safe Spaces

Partnership Costs	
Staff Costs	£231,514.63
Service Costs	£118,059.37
Total	**£349,574.00**

Income Generation

Partnership Costs	
Staff Costs	£84,964.13
Service Costs	£41,308.94
Total	**£126,273.07**

Training

Partnership Costs	
Staff Costs	£43,491.32
Service Costs	£6,167.68
Total	**£49,659.00**

Our Funders and Partners

Thank You from First Light

This year's impact report reflects the power of compassion, collaboration, and commitment. Together, we have supported 24,088 people affected by sexual violence, domestic abuse, and church-related abuse. This increase speaks to both the growing need and the strength of our collective response.

We are especially proud to have launched a dedicated crisis fund for women and girls experiencing domestic abuse, ensuring urgent, life-saving support reaches those who need it most.

None of this would be possible without you, our volunteers, funders, donors, fundraisers, charity partners, staff, and trustees. Your belief in our mission and your continued support have helped us reach more people, amplify more voices, and drive meaningful change.

On behalf of everyone at First Light, thank you for standing with us.

Whats next for First Light?

As we look ahead, First Light is proud to launch our five-year strategy for 2025 to 2030, setting out a bold vision to deepen our impact and expand our reach. This strategy is rooted in our mission to support anyone affected by sexual violence, domestic abuse, and church-related abuse, and to ensure that every voice is heard and every person receives the support they need and deserve.

Our focus is on collaboration. We are building new partnerships and finding innovative ways to ensure every voice is heard, believed and supported. We aim to expand our services into new counties, guided by our values and driven by the voices of survivors.

We are committed to empowering everyone. Friends, family members, guardians, and colleagues will be supported with tools, training, and resources to help them understand the important role they play and how they can support the people they care about.

There is still much to do. But with your continued support, we will keep pushing forward, reaching more people, shaping new models of care, and leading the conversation around abuse and recovery.

Together, we will create a future where safety, dignity, and freedom are available to all.

We invite you to
join us in this journey,
as we work together
to create a society where

safety,
dignity
and **freedom**
are not just ideals
but lived realities.

First Light is the operating name of First Light South West Ltd
The Business Centre, 2 Cattedown Road, Cattedown,
Plymouth, Devon, PL4 0EG.
Registered Company & Charity in England and Wales
Company number: 03440794 | Charity number: 1090457

ARMED FORCES COVENANT

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR