



**sarac**  
we're here to listen

# Annual Impact Report for 2021



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

*The MBE for volunteer groups*



**Our Vision:**  
A world free from  
sexual violence.

**Our Mission:**  
To provide trauma-informed  
support and education to all  
people affected by sexual  
violence in Burton  
and District.

### **Our Values:**

- We believe those at risk of, or suffering the effects of, rape and sexual abuse from every background should be treated with compassionate understanding.
- We invest in people to provide a confident highly trained staff.
- We respect and value difference and provide equal and inclusive access to all our services.
- We connect with our local community to raise awareness and educate.
- We empower people to recover, heal and rebuild their lives.
- We challenge societal attitudes that condone and collude with sexual violence.

# Welcome to our Annual Impact Report



As with most charities, this year has been testing due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the instant changes that had to be made to the services we provide.

An organisation that prides itself in its ability to connect and listen, how were we going to manage the devastating blow of the pandemic restrictions to our service?

Well, due to the efficiencies of our marvellous team and supportive partnerships and funding. We adapted, grew and developed quicker than ever before in our 26 year history and I am immensely proud of our achievements.

This was a pivotal point for our charity, and many of the practices we developed have strengthened our current offer of support as we continue to live with the pandemic and the uncertainty it brings in terms of organisational requirements.

Unable to provide face to face counselling during the first 6 months of the year we developed our online support and provided phone counselling. We trained volunteers to use remote digital access and through covid grants we were able to buy in additional support via registered counsellors, and

additional training for our volunteers ensuring that our waiting times did not increase too much. We introduced safe and well calls for all of our service users who hadn't yet been allocated a counsellor, a practice that has worked so well we are continuing.

After a year of successful cost reduction and funding bid applications we are now in a healthy financial position and able to move forward with a new strategy and investment plan. We are able to do this thanks to the continuing commitment of our staff and volunteers.

I would like to pay tribute to Phillip Goulding, our Trustee who sadly passed away in 2021 after a long illness. In the short time Phil was a Trustee he was a passionate and active member of the Board. He was a man of great charm and intelligence and he will be missed.

I would like to welcome our newly appointed CEO ( August 21) , Catherine Miles who comes to us with a wealth of experience from the VCSE sector. I have no doubt under her leadership the charity will flourish. We will be recruiting additional Trustees to strengthen our Board and enable us to steer the charity forward.

We are proud to have received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2020 as it recognises the huge contribution our volunteers make in delivering support and care to our clients.

We could not do all of this without the dedicated work of our staff and team of volunteers, who work untiringly to assist those in need. I sincerely thank them all, on behalf of the trustees, for all they do on behalf of the Charity.

In addition, we thank the generosity of our funders who have responded to the vision that the trustees have for the charity.

Mary Bright  
Chair



# Response, Resilience and Restructure - How we managed the year the Pandemic hit the world.....



## Achievements and performance over the year

The financial year has been positive for SARAC with a continuing focus on reducing overheads. During the year the charity carried out a restructure, out of which came the decision to appoint a Chief Executive (CEO), who is now in post. This is an exciting development for the charity and Catherine will lead on the implementation of our new strategy.

SARAC has used its significant COVID-19 grants to ensure it could continue during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide a high-quality accessible service, flexible to the needs of the clients. It has demonstrated its ability to move agilely to ensure all clients have been supported remotely and volunteers and staff were supported to work from home.

SARAC has embedded the expanded options for delivering its model of care during the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to provide remote counselling and have expanded our counselling capacity through commissioning private sessions. The expansion of capacity was necessitated by the temporary loss of student counsellors due to COVID-19 restrictions and consequent increase in waiting times. All clients were appropriately supported and continue to be during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SARAC has adopted a 3 year strategy (2021 - 2023) and developed an exciting prudent investment plan to deliver it. The charity plans to invest in the key areas of diversity and inclusion and developing our social media presence to ensure we reach all who needs our services.

Our thanks go to The Henry Smith Charity for providing three-year funding to enable us to recruit a Lead Young Person Worker and two support workers. Our thanks also goes to The Big Lottery and the Ministry of Justice who continue to support SARAC.

“You at Sarac were always there for me, whenever I needed to access the service I knew you were going to call me back, work around my schedule, sort things out. It was so difficult during the pandemic and I went into complete panic, particularly with a house full, to know your service was still operating and someone would ring me every week was a life saver The well being plan eased things for me. I had never tried something like this before and I’m glad I did, for it helped me greatly.”



# What do we do?



Sarac offers confidential support for people in Burton, Lichfield, Tamworth, Uttoxeter, Swadlincote and South Derbyshire who is at risk of or has experienced sexual abuse and/or rape at any time in their lives. We can support any individual over 11 years old.

We work in partnership with the client to expand choices, facilitate recovery and encourage personal growth.

We encourage individuals to consider and reduce potential impacts, such as fear, shame, isolation, anger or depression.

The services are provided by experienced and qualified sexual-abuse-trauma supporters, who can assist with:

For others it may be about escaping the violence or talking through choices, such as other referral options or reporting the crime to the police.

- understanding and managing the immediate and ongoing impacts of experiencing sexual assault;
- making decisions about what to do; and information about the police, legal and other services in the local area.

Emotional supporters can also provide support for non-offending family members and friends. This may include assistance with understanding and managing their own response to having someone they care about experience violence, and working with them to develop strategies to best assist that person.

We're here to listen to those who have experienced sexual assault and/or rape at any time in their lives; we can support any individual over 11 years old.

"I would like to say again how grateful I am - the service and Amanda in particular, she has been there for me all through COVID. As someone with anxiety it is a lot harder. Amanda called me every week and I can't tell you how grateful I am and how much it has helped. Other services have not been anywhere near as good as you guys. I know if I pick up the phone, I've got someone there. Every time you call Natalie, you're so lovely. Marion is marvellous as well as she supported me on the helpline before Amanda."



# What do we do?



## For Professionals

Professionals can contact the service for:

- a debrief after assisting someone who has experienced sexual assault;
- a consultation for support workers helping those in trauma;
- professional training for staff (for example, those working in HR);
- support based around personal experience; or
- education awareness sessions for year groups in schools.

## Community Based Support

Sarac provides specialist support, which is available in a number of schools and/or community venues throughout East Staffordshire and South Derbyshire. We provide medium- to long-term, one-to-one support for males and females who have experienced or are at risk of sexual abuse and/or rape.

We are committed to working in partnership with the local community to develop projects and initiatives that educate and inform working towards a world free from sexual abuse.

“When a disclosure happens, it is really great to know that the services of SARAC are available. They help bring light back into people’s lives. The YMCA is just one of many agencies that make referrals to this great charity. Long may they continue to support victims/survivors.”

Peter O’ Reilly, YMCA Family Mediation Officer



Number of Unique Individuals SARAC supported  
between 1st April- 31st March:



**218 Adults**

**185 Female**

**31 Male**

**2 Transgender /  
Non Binary / Intersex**

**83 Children &  
Young People**

**77 Female**

**4 Male**

**2 Transgender /  
Non Binary / Intersex**

Number of New Referrals to SARAC  
between 1st April- 31st March:



**118 Adults**

**104 Female**

**12 Male**

**2 Transgender /  
Non Binary / Intersex**

**31 Children &  
Young People**

**26 Female**

**3 Male**

**2 Transgender /  
Non Binary / Intersex**

Presenting Experience - Recent Rape / Sexual Assault /  
Exploitation Definition between 1st April- 31st March:  
(assault which occurred less than 12 months before an individual got in contact with centre)



**20 Adults**

**18 Children &  
Young People**

None Recent - Recent Rape / Sexual Assault /  
Exploitation Definition between 1st April- 31st March:  
(assault which occurred over 12 months before an individual got involved with SARAC)



**84 Adults**

**36 Children &  
Young People**

**70 Adults that were abused as Children**

# SARAC Volunteer and Volunteering hours:



**Over 30  
volunteers**

Throughout 2020-2021

**Over 2,700  
hours**

Throughout 2020-2021

SARAC Total Contact Sessions between 1st April- 31st March:  
Includes, emotional support via phone, phone and face to  
face counselling and safe and well phone calls.



**4,423 Adults**

**3,746** Female

**593** Male

**14** Transgender /  
Non Binary / Intersex

**70** Not Stated

**1,380 Children  
& Young People**

**1,300** Female

**50** Male

**30** Transgender /  
Non Binary / Intersex

# This is What Our clients told us/Evaluations:



97/111

Overall Health and  
wellbeing had  
improved

52/76

Said that their  
feeling of safety  
had improved

79/88

Said they were better  
able to cope with  
aspects of daily life



# The Queens Award for Voluntary Service

Sarac have been recognised for their valued contribution to the voluntary sector during this year but due to covid restrictions were not able to receive the award until late 2021.

The Queens Award for Voluntary service are the highest awards given to local voluntary groups and are equivalent to an MBE. Sarac have been given this award for life.

“A huge thanks to all of the award winning volunteers for dedicating precious hours of their lives to rebuild others. Our counselling and emotional support volunteers have, throughout the 26 years helped us to support thousands of victims/survivors

of sexual violence and abuse and their supporters every year. Our ambassadors who raise awareness of the charity and support with fundraising. All our volunteers complete a comprehensive in house training and induction program but skills, empathy and insights all their own! “It is wonderful that the sarac team and the amazing volunteers have been recognised for their contribution to the voluntary sector. The work carried out here is incredible!”

Catherine Miles CEO

The longest serving volunteers received the award on behalf of Sarac on Friday 24th September.

“There is a great quote by Roy Bennet which says, Listen with curiosity. Speak with Honesty. Act with Integrity. The greatest problem with communication is we don’t listen to understand. We listen to reply. When we listen with curiosity, we don’t listen with the intent to reply. We listen for what’s behind the words.

That is something that the staff and volunteer at SARAC do incredibly well. They speak with honesty. They act with integrity. They listen with curiosity and quiet compassion, and they are willing to have those difficult conversations with people who are hurting, who suffer emotional pain, and those who have been traumatised.”

Paul Laffey CEO YMCA Burton



Ian Dudsons Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire and Trustees of SARAC at Queens Award Ceremony

# What next...



The sarac we have today is very different from its humble beginnings of over 20 years ago. Sexual Abuse was very much a taboo subject. One of the founders Valerie Burton and her colleagues told us that no one spoke about it and there was no place for victims to go. A few forward-thinking women saw a need for a meeting place where victims could just off-load the trauma of their suffering.

Now we have counselling premises, a space for a drop in hub, a whole team of counsellors, a small and dedicated staff team and board, funders and supporters and firmly entrenched in the fabulous voluntary sector fabric of Burton on Trent and beyond...

Some of our vital private, life affirming and rebuilding work takes place in safe locations, however we are very much open.

We open to our networks, partners, friends, schools colleges, fellow voluntary sector organisations. We welcome discussion and debate ideas We are looking for opportunities to collaborate and share resources, educate and learn.

Together we can push firmly against 'normalising and ignoring'. Helping us react and develop new approaches to tackling the ever-changing picture of what abuse looks like.

A small resilient and reactive charity needs its partnerships so that it can respond to current issues such as the rise of online abuse and grooming during the lockdowns when people spent more time on their computer devices. We are the only dedicated charity in Burton that specialises in this work and people don't have to wait to be seen or heard once referred, a unique value that is extremely important for us to protect as waiting lists for most services now as a result of the pandemic are extremely lengthy.

We are open to learning and welcome ideas to move forward in a world where there is no guilt, shame and unwillingness to share histories of abuse, that we may recognise and understand ways to help educate and prevent future lives from being affected by trauma.



Amanda - Adult Service Team Lead



Caroline - Young Person's Team Lead

# What next...



You will be seeing and hearing more of us in the future. We will be reaching out to new communities and audiences by setting up digital platforms and social media.

We will be expanding our training offer through online platforms to use in schools in colleges so that we can reach more people with these important messages.

We will be working with diverse communities of Burton, using partnerships to develop methods to engage and research needs. We will be taking ourselves to meet communities who are particularly vulnerable. Reaching out via new partnerships to educate and inform. We are looking for more volunteers in a range of roles from counsellors, ambassadors and emotional support to helping to set up our physical drop in space.

We are expanding our children's services. We are planning a programme of education in schools and youth groups around issues that resonate with families everywhere from how to talk to their own children about their own experiences, with topics such as consent and image based sexual abuse.



# COCO

SPACE TO CONNECT



Catherine Miles CEO

We will be developing a hub for training and drop in at our COCO premises opening up to new partners. We will be developing activities with a 'Friends of Sarac' network.

Our ask of you is to continue to have our back, be our friends and supporters and stand together proudly. With you, we are here to listen, rebuild, reconnect and heal. Creating the safe place of a trusted community, of a community which listens and doesn't rush to judgement and of one that wants to reconnect and create a place of belonging.

# This is what our clients said about us



“You’ve done an amazing job.”

“I’m an incredibly strong person and no-one can stop me from getting what I want in life. My GP put me through to another service, but they were not a scratch on you guys. I would recommend your service in a heartbeat.”

“All round a really pleasant and validating experiences. Safe place to talk and to give me advice but gave me the tools to do it myself. Giving me my sense of agency back. Marion worked with me and we came to agreement together”

“I would definitely recommend the counselling service to my friends”

“You at Sarac were always there for me, whenever I needed to access the service I knew you were going to call me back, work around my schedule, sort things out. The well being plan eased things for me. I had never tried something like this before and I’m glad I did, for it helped me greatly”

“The service from Sarac was better than other services I have been to. I feel the service is more like for me. I have been so pleased with the whole service.”

“The service provided is amazing, all parts were. There are so many services you offer. Sarac were very professional and confidential.”

“The staff and volunteers were wonderful, all people who called me have been great, a huge thank you to all of you.”

“Absolutely everything was perfect, both Liz and Ellie were amazing.”



“The methods for grounding I was given were invaluable and absolutely brilliant”

“I feel very positive for my future and I can laugh a lot more now.”

“I can honestly say for the first time in a very very long time I don’t have any feelings of wanting to hurt myself or take my life and I am not losing my mind anymore.”

“I have made a new friend which is unheard of for me”

“I am enjoying family time more”

“Please thank John and Liz for me, in a very dark time I had two people who didn’t judge me and they just listened. It was everything I needed.”

“Sarac has been so good and it’s so good they support at any age and any situation.”

“I don’t like having to tell my story over and over again and when I changed counsellors the transition was really smooth, and I think it was handled really well.”

“It was good to be listened to, be heard and actually believed.”

“I can talk to people I don’t know better and everyone I spoke to at Sarac was really friendly.”

“I’m sleeping a lot better and my awareness of self-care has increased.”

“I am more confident going places, I no longer avoid places.”

# Thanks to our Funders and Supporters



Ministry of Justice Rape Support Fund

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Burton Breweries Charitable Trust Fund

Henry Smith Foundation Fund

Lloyds TSB

National Lottery Community

Garfield Weston

SCVYS

Tesco Bags of Help Groundwork

Support Staffordshire

William A. Cadbury Charitable Trust

Ministry of Justice COVID Grants

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Clothworkers' Foundation COVID-19 Grant

The National Lottery COVID-19

Lloyds TSB COVID-19 Grant

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