

IMPACT REPORT 2020-21



Introduction

An extraordinary year

This has been a year of extraordinary challenges as individuals, families and organisations have been hard hit by COVID 19 bringing personal loss, financial hardship and isolation for many across the country.

The impact of COVID on those living with abusers has been extreme. In lockdown, perpetrators have been able to enact more severe forms of control and victims have had less access to their normal support networks, friends or family members.

For IDAS this meant an unprecedented demand for our support with referrals growing to over 22,000 during the year. Our helplines were the busiest they have ever been taking more than 380 calls every week. Use of our live-chat support trebled.

As lock-down continued, charities like ours had to find creative ways to reach and support those most in need. IDAS were already well-placed to thrive in the new environment having developed live-chat and online services many years ago. We were therefore able to respond quickly, enhancing our existing online offer and developing new services for individuals and groups.



Sarah Hill, CEO IDAS

We established additional online training and information sessions for stakeholders and professionals and extended our live-chat provision. Face to face support continued for everyone who needed this and our volunteers were mobilised to offer additional emotional support for the most isolated.

We faced an exceptional demand for accommodation during the year and we worked hard to ensure that all our refuges remained fully open throughout the year. Working closely with commissioners we also developed new accommodation and now provide a range of dispersed flats and houses across the region.

The move out of lockdown will mean that many are able to seek support and we anticipate an increase in demand for our services for some time to come.

Over the next year we look forward to continuing to expand our life changing support services and to working with partners to help embed the many positive aspects of the Domestic Abuse Act.

Our work would not be possible without the dedication, determination and support of our whole team, our committed trustees, our commissioners, volunteers, funders and champions.

Sarah Hill, CEO IDAS

Thank you to each and every one you, you have helped IDAS provide vital, life-changing services to thousands of people during one of the most challenging years in recent history.

The year at a glance



Managed over 20,000 referrals



Dealt with more than 22,000 helpline calls



Supported more than 10,000 people in the community



Provided emergency accommodation with intensive support to over 250 families



Trained over 8,000 professionals



Campaigned about the family courts and low rape conviction rates



Our websites received over 300,000 page views



We were followed or liked by more than 15,000 people



Our income grew to over £4m



We became the largest specialist domestic abuse charity in the North



Advice and Support

We provide advice and support to victims and survivors of domestic abuse across the North and South Yorkshire.

Our helpline is available 365 days a year and we operate live chat from Monday to Friday.

We support people whether they choose to stay in the relationship or leave and we also support women who are subject to female genital mutilation (FGM), trafficking, stalking and so-called honour violence.

Support includes intensive safety planning, crisis management, guidance through the legal process and emotional support to help overcome the devastating impact of violence and abuse.

With IDAS support, thousands of people are able to stay safely in their own homes and continue to live independently.

My IDAS Worker was absolutely excellent, calm, empathetic, strong, reassuring. She was one of the first people to ever make me feel genuine and listened to and like there was someone on my side.

Accommodation

During the last year we provided intensive support and accommodation to over 150 families, including to families without recourse to public funds.

We provide accommodation through women's refuges and also through self-contained, dispersed properties which are suitable for anyone escaping abuse.

Our refuges are affiliated to WAFE (Women's Aid Federation of England) which means that we fully support the WAFE principle of an open-door policy, believing women's accounts of their experiences rather than requiring independent proof or evidence of domestic abuse. As members of WAFE we are also able to find people safe accommodation all over the UK using their Refuges Online facility.

Everyone who stays in our accommodation, including children and young people, is offered support tailored to meet their needs. We also employ specialist mental health support workers to provide groups and 1-2-1 support for people accessing our accommodation.

Families can stay in our accommodation for a short time whilst they seek legal advice and protection or for up to 2 years whilst we support them to be rehoused.

Whatever they choose to do, IDAS are here to provide people with the very best accommodation and support.



My worker was such an inspiration. She pulled me out of the darkness and gave me light. I left the refuge a new person, feeling empowered, which led me to getting a work placement and on a Level 2 Adult Social Care course.



Children and young people

Children and young people are often the hidden victims of domestic abuse. Many abusers directly target children through emotional abuse, violence or sexual abuse.

This can have a huge impact on children's relationships with others and on their behaviour with some becoming aggressive and others withdrawn.

IDAS support young people and children across North Yorkshire via our Respect young person's programme. This programme works with whole families where the young person is behaving abusively to other family members.

We have also developed our own Safer Futures programme which provides structured groups and 1-2-1 support to help children overcome the harmful impacts of living with abuse.

Our community teams across North Yorkshire also support young people under the age of 16 years who have been abused or sexually assaulted.

Thanks to an ASDA Foundation grant, we have started to develop a range of educational resources and programmes for schools, trialling our Bee the Change project in South Yorkshire before COVID lockdown.

☾ I was scared because I hated school and thought I would have to write and stuff. I thought I would feel stupid because I'm young, but I didn't. I like the way you get us to highlight things we have been through. Most of my page was highlighted, It made me feel like crying but my support worker helped build my confidence and now I don't feel so bad. ☽

Cally

Sexual violence

The harmful impacts of sexual violence can last a lifetime and providing the right support is crucial for survivors.

At IDAS we pride ourselves on delivering trauma informed support to victims and survivors, which helps them through health and court processes and builds emotional well-being.

This year has been an exceptionally difficult as the average length for cases to be heard in court has increased to three years whilst at the same time, successful conviction rates have plummeted to around 1% of all reports.

Additionally, lockdown has meant isolation for victims and a reduced ability to access normal support networks.

During this time, we have stepped up our online, text and phone contacts providing vital emotional support as well as practical advice and information about the court process.

Our specialist teams have been instrumental in supporting a number of high-profile local cases which have led to successful prosecution, including one case which led to a 30 year sentence and widespread press coverage.

Many of those we support provide testimony to the positive impact of our services.



“I just wanted to say thank you. When I first came, I had nobody to talk to about the rape. You totally supported me throughout the horrible process. You walked alongside me all the way through and helped me make sense of it all. I don’t know how I would have managed alone; you literally saved my life.”



Groups

We have delivered groups to hundreds of people throughout the year, modifying our delivery method to ensure that groups could continue during lockdown.

We have our own IDAS designed therapeutic programme for women survivors and have also developed self-esteem and confidence building courses during the year.

Additionally, we are trialling group work with male survivors starting with a small group of men in Sheffield.

The positive impact of IDAS groups is well-proven as they provide a mechanism for survivors supporting and learning from each other, often leading to the development of long-term friendships.

“Taking part in the groups has been a massive part of my recovery! I built up confidence I never thought I’d have, I learnt to trust and developed new relationships. I can’t recommend all the groups to people enough as without them I don’t think I’d be where I am in life right now. Thank you so much.”

Training

We are committed to training and upskilling colleagues in all sorts of professions so that they recognise and respond effectively to domestic abuse.

Many of the courses we provide are free and easy to access including our basic online domestic abuse and rape awareness training courses which were completed by over 5,000 people in the last 12 months.

Our courses website also allows people to book onto our more advanced accredited training sessions which were delivered to over 2,000 professionals, students and volunteers during the year.

We continued to provide our popular information sessions to thousands of professionals to help raise awareness about our services.

Feedback continues to show the power and impact of the training we provide:

“ I wanted to let you know what a massive impact your lecture had on our students. I have just marked their work and more than 2/3 of them chose to focus on domestic abuse and all reflected on the learning and impact of your lecture on their understanding and awareness of domestic abuse. What an incredible and memorable learning experience for them which will influence their knowledge and understanding as they move forward into practice. ”





Collaboration

For many, IDAS provides all the support they need. However, the impact of abuse can be far-reaching and some people need a range of agencies to help them.

Collaborative working is therefore crucial and we regularly refer to and work in partnership with a range of agencies including counsellors, drug and alcohol specialists, mental health services, women's centres and debt and benefits advisors to provide additional support where this is needed.

During lockdown, partnership working has been even more important and our work with housing, community groups and the police has been vital as we've striven to find more creative ways to safeguard survivors.

IDAS teams have continued to deliver excellent support to clients through the difficult period of COVID-19 and lock downs and the people I speak with say that they continue to feel supported.

Volunteers and champions

Our volunteers and team of champions have key roles in supporting the work of IDAS. Their number has increased to over 200 during the year and they each provide a crucial role in supporting our work, raising awareness of all that we do and fundraising for IDAS.

During lockdown, our teams of champions and volunteers helped us take our information directly into communities including to supermarkets and shops. This was vital to increase our visibility and reach out directly to those people experiencing abuse.

We also want to ensure that everything we do has the needs and voices of survivors at its heart and as well as community champions, we have a team of expert survivor champions who provide advice on how we deliver our services and help us lobby for change both locally and nationally.

Our champion survivors have provided input into the domestic abuse bill and lobbied for change in the family courts. We look forward to working with them in the future to implement real, lasting change.

Our volunteers provide crucial support to all of our teams, working on our helplines and supporting people through buddying and mentoring. Many volunteers have been supported themselves through IDAS and giving time back to the organisation can be a really positive experience for them.



Throughout my volunteering experience at IDAS, I've been exceptionally supported at each stage. Initial training with Marie was really interesting and I learnt so much which helped set me up for my volunteering. Every person I have spoken to at IDAS has been extremely kind and made me feel a part of the team.)



Shane, an IDAS barbershop champion

Thank you for session tonight. It has been really useful to know that you are still here, supporting our communities and individuals affected by abuse. I am now confident to refer people to your amazing service

Community

Our normal work with communities has changed. We have replaced our face-to-face open days and information sessions with a range of on-line activities.

We provided on-line meet the team sessions which were attended by over 500 people and we engaged with chemists, supermarkets and health teams to raise awareness of our services.

In 2021 we will work even more closely with GPs and have developed a GP champion scheme.

To get right into the heart of communities we continue to work with faith groups, women's groups and businesses. Over the next few months we will be launching a new initiative with barbers and hairdressers to provide them with the training and support to recognise and respond to victims and survivors.

As we come out of lock-down we will continue to provide on-line sessions to reach as many communities and individuals as possible.

IDAS voice

IDAS work to raise the voice of survivors in all that we do, threading what they tell us into how we deliver our services and into our campaigning work.

During the year, we have worked closely with IDAS champions, Claire Throssell and Naomi Clayton to help promote their campaigns locally and nationally.

Claire has battled for changes in the family courts since her children Jack and Paul were murdered by their father and Claire's ex-partner on a contact visit in 2014.

Naomi fought to have her case of childhood sexual abuse heard in the criminal courts, successfully challenging the initial CPS decision not to proceed with the case.

We will continue to fight alongside Claire and Naomi until we achieve the changes they lobby for.

IDAS has also developed a Survivors' Advisory Board to help steer and oversee our work and new developments.

In 2020, many aspects of our campaigning and awareness raising were done online.

For the 16 days of action to end domestic abuse in November we developed a series of animations to raise awareness, in December we launched a comprehensive website for victims and survivors of sexual violence and throughout the year we continued to grow our social media presence reaching tens of thousands of people.



Claire Throssell



Influencing and campaigning

Our expertise is now called upon to inform policy and legislation nationally and we regularly contribute to reviews and sector meetings.

We have seized the opportunity that online meetings have presented to connect with partners across the country, ensuring that the voices of victims and survivors in the North are represented, developing networks to bring together specialist experts to focus on key issues.

Our determination and courage have seen IDAS grow in strength and reputation and, underpinned by expertise, leadership, and hard work, we are sought after for our unique perspective.

This is evidenced by the volume of people undertaking our training, attending our webinars, the requests for media statements on current affairs, and the way in which we are regarded by our commissioners and partners in all the areas that we work.

Stories from the frontline

We have helped thousands of people throughout this year, providing life changing and, in some cases, life-saving support. Here, we shine a light on two families that we've helped this year.

Jodie had been married to her partner for 30 years. Throughout the marriage her husband had been financially and physically abusive towards her. They had 2 daughters, one of whom was still living at home. Jodie was referred to IDAS by the Police who had attended an incident where her husband had physically assaulted and threatened to kill her. When we called Jodie, she explained how the abuse had escalated through lockdown. Her husband had been drinking excessively and he had isolated her even further from family and friends. She told us how the abuse had got worse and described some of the physical and sexual abuse as “sadistic” but was still unsure whether it was domestic abuse. Jodie said that she was going to leave her husband and she did not want any support at that time. We offered her reassurance that she could call the helpline any time and provided some safety and legal advice. We asked that Jodie call us when she decided to leave, so that we could help her to do so safely.

Three months later, Jodie called the helpline and said the abuse was getting even worse. Her husband had dragged her out of bed and urinated on her in front of her daughter and she felt that she had to now leave. We offered her refuge, but she declined; she said she wanted to find a rented property for her daughter and herself to live, so we talked her through how she could prepare to do this safely. We advised Jodie to gather all important documents together and to leave them with someone she trusts. She said that her parents did not know about the abuse, but she felt she could tell them now. We also discussed a referral to MARAC because the abuse and threats to kill were becoming more frequent. We asked that we could speak with Social Care Services about support for her daughter. Jodie was a little upset at first, but we reassured Jodie that this was not a reflection on her parenting and that we were not judging her in any way.

In the next few weeks, we wrote a supporting letter to help Jodie apply for a non-molestation order, which was granted at an emergency hearing. We spoke with Jodie on the phone when we knew her husband would not be there and continued to provide emotional support and simply listen to how she was feeling. We gently persuaded her to talk with her parents about how they could help, and they agreed that they would pay for 6 months' rent. By now, Jodie and her daughter were petrified and slept together, barricaded in their room at night. Within days of the Order being served, Jodie's husband breached it and was arrested. The Police applied for a DVPO and we used this time to help Jodie to gather everything she and her daughter needed so that they could leave. Jodie had seen a property she liked and was able to secure it with the money her parents had given her.

Jodie and her daughter are now living independently, and we continued to support her whilst they settled. Jodie said that, without us helping her, she would never have applied for the Order, giving her the chance to leave safely.

Thea and her two children ran from her abusive partner in October last year. He had been violent to her for over 10 years and his abuse had escalated during lock down. Her oldest child had also started to be affected and had asked her mum why she stayed with her dad who she said she hated.

We came into contact with Thea after receiving a live chat message on our website from Jade, a concerned member of the public. They had come across Thea when out shopping, they found her and her children alone and scared on the street, with only a few bags. Thea agreed that Jade could contact someone on her behalf and Jade lent Thea her phone to speak with us.

Thea told us that she had survived extreme violence for the last decade from her husband. She told us that he was controlling and had isolated her from her family and friends. She told us she had only left the abuser on this occasion as an opportunity to escape presented itself, after another violent incident in which her husband had raped her. Thea explained that she feared for her and her children's lives as her husband's behaviour had become worse over the last few months.

We arranged to meet Thea at our offices where we gave her and the children drinks and snacks.

We offered Thea reassurance that she was safe and she could talk to us and that we could work together to agree the next steps. We explained to Thea that we would go through some options with her and support her to think about what would be best for her and the children.

Thea told us that children's social care were already involved with her and agreed for IDAS to make contact with her social worker.

We contacted Thea's social worker, who confirmed she was working with the family but they hadn't been aware of the abuse. Several

attempts were made by IDAS to find safe refuge for Thea which were unsuccessful and so social care agreed to pay for temporary accommodation in a hotel in the City until a refuge could be found.

We gave Thea a phone, toiletries and warm clothes for her and her children. We went with Thea to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre to have a physical check-up and to secure any evidence relating to the sexual assault. Thea was frightened to do this alone and wanted our support as she relayed what had happened.

Over the next few days we visited Thea several times in the hotel to provide emotional support and reassurance eventually finding her accommodation in a women's refuge out of the City where she stayed for about a month.

Thea has now returned to the City and has been temporarily housed locally. For now, Thea has chosen not to make a formal statement relating to her husband sexually assaulting her as she wants to focus on regaining her confidence and settling into a new home. We will continue to support her and her children as they rebuild their lives free from abuse.

Many of the people we help get in touch, sometimes years later, to let us know how they are doing. Earlier in the year, we received this message from someone we had supported many years ago.

Hi there, it's Paula just to let u know Charlotte and I are doing great. She's 18 next Monday and loving life now, so happy, we both are. Sold the house so hopefully my bank balance will look better in a few weeks. Just wanted to update u on us and how we're doing thanks to u and all your amazing work u did for us. I'll always appreciate it you're amazing!!!!

Over 90% of those we supported felt safer, more confident and had an improvement in their well-being as a result.

96% of stakeholders told us that our services were inclusive and open.

90% of people feeding back to us rated our services as 9 or 10 out of 10.

Quality and assurance

We pride ourselves on the quality of our services and these are regularly reviewed by our commissioners.

We retain our their SafeLives Leading Lights status and our Women's Aid national standards. Our sexual violence service was also awarded Lime Culture accreditation in 2020.

As well as our awards and accreditation, our services are validated by commissioners and, most crucially, through the voices of the people we support.

I come into contact with many people who use the services of IDAS, all of them have praise for the services IDAS provide. The teams are always willing to help and go the extra mile when they can. The training provided by IDAS is always excellent and extremely well attended. Thank you IDAS.



Our income

During the year our income increased from just over £4 million in 2019 - 2020 to £4.9 million due to successful bids for government funding. This enabled us to develop additional accommodation and to grow our community services teams. We spend over 85% of our income directly on supporting our service users. Additionally, we raised more than £200,000 to support our children's services and the work of our refuges.

Our full accounts can be found here:

<https://www.idas.org.uk/resources/annual-reports-and-accounts/>

Our thanks

Everyone at IDAS plays a vital role in helping us provide our vital life-changing services and support. Thank you to our incredible team of staff, trustees, volunteers, champions and Survivor's Advisory Board for your fortitude and commitment throughout the year. Additionally, a huge thanks to all our partners and funders including:

ASDA Foundation	North Yorkshire OPCC
Baby Basics	ORR Mack Foundation
Barnsley Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Service	(Share Gift)
Barnsley Town Council	Random Acts
Broadacres	Remedi
Children in Need	Selby Town Council
Countryside Properties	Sheffield City Council
Haven Sheffield	South Yorkshire OPCC
Halo Project	Staying Put
Humankind	Target Housing
Leonie Schroder and the Bruno Schroder Foundation	The Persula Foundation
North Yorkshire County Council	Tomrods
	York City Council

Additionally, we owe a big debt of gratitude to the churches, soroptomist clubs, solicitor firms, rotary clubs, mothers' unions, hockey teams, rugby clubs, hairdressers, women's institutes, football clubs, colleges, universities and grocery stores that continue to support our work.



Last but not least thank you to the unsung heroes and heroines who quietly fundraise and donate to IDAS throughout the year.

Keep in touch

If you would like to volunteer, donate, fundraise or campaign with us please visit: **idas.org.uk**

You can email us at: **info@idas.org.uk**

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