

# **Salisbury Women's Refuge**

## **Annual report 2025**



**Registered Charity Number 01112497**  
**Registered Company Number 05632436**



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## Report from Chair of Trustees

At the beginning of 2025, recognising the difficulty of raising sufficient funds from grants and other fundraising activities to meet the shortfall caused by the withdrawal of the local authority grant in March 2023, the trustees decided that a different course of action was needed to maintain financial stability in the longer term. Links with other organisations in the region had already been established and in early 2025 the trustees chose a few of those to initiate discussions about a formal merger, from which a large regional charity emerged as an interested party. A great deal of preparation and legal work was undertaken on both sides over many months, but ultimately the other charity decided to withdraw in December 2025.

An urgent fundraising campaign was initiated immediately, and meanwhile ongoing negotiations on housing benefit were being finalised by the refuge.

The screenshot shows a news article on the Salisbury Journal website. The article is titled "Salisbury Women's Refuge facing closure due to lack of funding" and is dated 19th December 2025. It is categorized as "CHARITY" and "SALISBURY". The author is Isaac Maddock, a Reporter. The article features a photograph of a living room with a red sofa and a yellow armchair. A camera icon with the number "2" is overlaid on the photo. To the right of the photo is a sidebar with a "cybèle" logo and the text "Performance Starts With People" and "High-quality conversations create high-performing teams." Below the photo is a caption: "SALISBURY Women's Refuge, crucial for domestic abuse survivors, faces imminent closure due to a severe funding shortage." The article has 4 comments.

The staff and trustees worked with many local and county-wide media organisations to promote the cause of the refuge with huge success, which has transformed into longer lasting engagement by the refuge with local musicians, entertainers and many others who regularly hold events to support the refuge. Jointly, these mean that the financial situation of the refuge is once again secure and the prospect of continuing as an independent local charity is not in doubt.



### What our residents say.....

*It was a lifeline in one of the worst periods of my life.*



During the year no new trustees were appointed due to the ongoing merger negotiations and Alison Bradley resigned as a trustee. By the end of the year trustee numbers were therefore quite low, but there has been considerable interest and some new appointments in 2026. One of the key workers at the refuge took a step back from that role and instead joined our bank staff who provide cover when the rotas cannot be filled by permanent staff.

The refuge continues to have tremendous support from the local community, especially the Mothers' Union and the Soroptimists. During the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence in November 2025, the Soroptimists held a film night, now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year, in support of the refuge, and, at the November Mothers' Union monthly Eucharist in the Cathedral and annual lunch, many donations of Christmas gifts, toys, toiletries, clothing, and all sorts of other essentials and nice-to-haves were given to the refuge by the Mothers' Union members. We are very grateful to them and to all our friends and donors for their ongoing support without which the refuge might not have remained open during 2025. Happily the refuge goes into 2026 in a much stronger position.

On behalf of the trustees, I would like to thank the staff of the refuge for their continued dedication and hard work, without which the refuge would not be open to take in women and their children in times of crisis.

**Caroline Probert**  
**Chair of Trustees**



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### What our residents say.....

*SWR gave me and my children everything we needed. It is a safe space with mental health support.*



## Our Finances

2025 ended with a deficit of just over £44,000, not dissimilar to the preceding year's deficit of £40,000. Obviously annual deficits of this order cannot be sustained for long but try as they might, the trustees have not succeeded in breaking out of this pattern of an annual deficit.

Behind this figure though the refuge had a successful year in that it provided refuge accommodation for 25 women and 32 children and, over the year as a whole, had an occupancy rate of about 88%. This was similar to 2024's 87%, notwithstanding reduced admissions in the latter part of the year when we thought the refuge might have to close. The refuge was very full in the early months of the year. The average length of stay in the refuge was a little over 8 months.

We received unrestricted grants in 2025 from St Mary's Fund, Salisbury, our single largest grant funder and the Wiltshire Community Foundation. We also received a substantial restricted grant from Mazars, which enabled us to replace the conservatory roof which has improved temperature control throughout all seasons.

Over the Easter weekend Ann Monahan organised an 'Easter Egg Hunt' in the gardens of Wilton House which, despite less than ideal weather conditions, raised over £6,000.

In September Mrs Charlotte Veitch, a refuge supporter, organised a ball in aid of local charities and from which the refuge benefitted very significantly. This greatly helped our finances. Overall, our income in 2025 was just over £216,000.



Expenditure in 2025 was just over £260,000, with the largest item being our staff costs, accounting for 61% of that total. We are fortunate to have a dedicated staff team with virtually no staff turnover. Our second largest expense is utilities and this seems likely to increase further in 2026.

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### What our residents say.....

*I have no words to explain the experience in Salisbury refuge.*



Fundraising at the refuge remains dependent on one-off events and donations which, by their nature are irregular and variable. We have ten individuals who support the refuge financially on a monthly basis, but if we could raise this number to say 300, giving £10 per month, then the refuge would have a secure future.

I am also keen to establish a legacy campaign, as unlike many charities the refuge has no endowment. This would add to the long-term financial stability of the refuge. A presence in the city centre, such as a shop, to give visibility to the refuge, raise funds, encourage new supporters and have a space where we could hold small scale social events would also provide daily profile raising for the refuge.

**Chris Dragonetti**  
**Honourary Treasurer**



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**What our residents say.....**

*We build confidence, meet new friends. The support is amazing.*

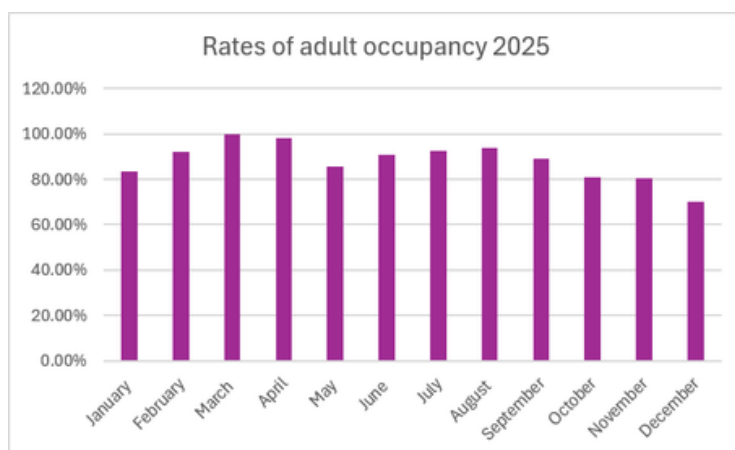


## Our Service

In 2025 we were lucky to have 2 student counsellors to supplement our offer of therapeutic services and Shelly (a former student counsellor at the refuge) completed her course and is now a qualified counsellor. She elected to stay with the refuge which means residents have access to a range of options to aid their recovery.

Key workers have supported several of the residents through court procedures throughout 2025. In some circumstances this could be done via video link; the key worker is present in the room with the resident; she doesn't have any role in proceedings but acts as moral support for the resident. Facing or just hearing their perpetrator can be very daunting for residents and reignites trauma, so having the reassuring presence of their keyworker helps to make the process less traumatic. On occasion where a Judge decides that an in-person attendance is necessary, the key worker attends with the resident, booking a non-signaged taxi to ensure she can't be traced back to Salisbury.

In 2025 once again, there was some fantastic feedback from our outgoing residents which you can see at the foot of each page of this report.



The average percentage of occupancy over the full year was 88% not including the children who were also staying at the refuge.

Figures for the final 3 months of the year are low because of concerns that the refuge might have to close in 2026 and the residents would have to be moved to other refuges, so for a while vacant rooms were not advertised.

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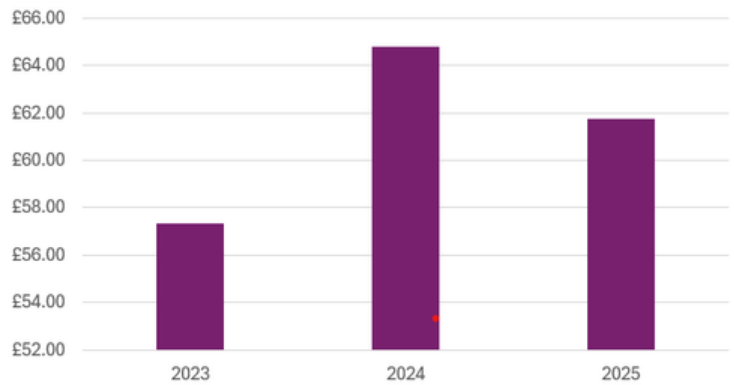
### What our residents say.....

*Staff members were fair and objective at all times. I always felt I could raise issues comfortably, staff are child friendly.*



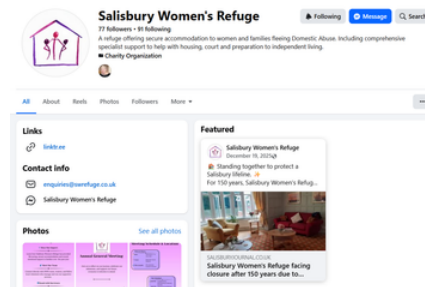
In 2023 the cost per day of keeping a resident at the refuge was £57.36. In 2024 it was £64.82. In 2025 it was £61.64. These figures do not include the children in the refuge which would make the daily cost per person lower.

Average cost per day for adult residents



We have had offers from supporters to come and deliver workshops to the residents. This has included poetry and writing workshops, jewellery making, and wellbeing sessions. We were told about a community allotment which several of our residents go along to.

All the staff played a part in the campaign over Christmas 2025 to raise funds to keep the refuge open. In particular, the refuge Facebook and Instagram pages are frequently updated to keep in touch with the supporters of the refuge, and the newsletter has had a make over.



**Sandra Horner**  
**Refuge Manager**



## What our residents say.....

*All staff were fantastic with their support.*



## Our Buildings

2025 was another busy and challenging year with regards to the fabric and maintenance of the house, not only because of financial constraints but also because of the age of a multi-occupancy three storey Victorian brick building. Having said this, because of the dedication and hard work of Paul, our maintenance employee and Alex, our housekeeper, the house is generally in a good state of repair.

At the beginning of 2025 Paul identified his objectives for the coming year; projects that needed to be undertaken in the house and garden and those that had been deferred or could not be completed in the previous year.

This includes the planned rolling programme of painting both the public areas and residents' rooms as they become vacant. Many of the residents and their families are staying for longer than usual in the past, and in some cases, it was necessary to completely redecorate the room and replace the carpet. Some of the furniture in the residents' rooms is beginning to look tired and will need attention in 2026.

Besides planned maintenance, Paul had to address day to day problems that arose throughout the year, such as leaking downpipes over the kitchen that caused damage to the sitting room ceiling. An ongoing problem with a boiler necessitated outside help which was eventually resolved.



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### What our residents say.....

*This will hold a special place in my heart always.*



The garden always needs attention. Help came from one of the keyworkers who had an interest in gardening. This resulted in the front of the house being much more pleasing to the eye. Help also came from B&Q staff who repainted the children's climbing frame. The residents repainted the smoking shelter.

Alex, our housekeeper, has also done sterling work, cleaning and preparing rooms, so they are always welcoming to new residents. She also works with the residents to maintain the cleanliness of the house through a weekly rota. They undertook a "deep clean" of the main kitchen.

In April, to improve the heating in the winter and to reduce overheating in the summer "Cosy" panels were attached to the roof of the conservatory with good effect. This was made possible by a substantial grant.

The usual weekly, monthly and annual Health and Safety checks were undertaken. Following the annual fire risk assessment, new extinguishers were purchased and electronic locks, which respond to the fire alarm, were attached to the doors of rooms 4 and 7. These rooms lead to the fire escape. The fire door in room 4 was found to be rotten. Paul remedied this and it should last for at least another five years. The five-year electrical installation assessment was undertaken. New sockets and electrical boards were replaced.

On behalf of the Trustees, I would like to thank the staff, particularly Paul and Alex for their assistance and ongoing hard work with regards to the upkeep of the house. There are always jobs to do.

**Catriona Wood**  
**Trustee with responsibility**  
**for buildings**

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### What our residents say.....

*I'm going to miss everyone here, the house itself is amazing, so much space and facilities.*



## Our Accounts

Our income and expenditure for 2025		
Simplified Annual Accounts for 2025		
	2025	2024
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grants	15,184	29,180
Donations and fundraising	60,156	40,368
Housing benefit and rent	100,342	101,168
Service charge	16,649	15,804
Interest and investment income	3,528	4,122
Other income	110	150
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>195,969</b>	<b>190,792</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Staff salary costs	160,362	155,921
Utilities	30,660	27,278
Repairs and maintenance	11,902	13,556
Planned maintenance projects	65	507
Insurance	6,651	6,390
Office costs	8,167	8,881
Residents' welfare	8,382	11,155
House operating costs	1,646	1,230
Governance costs	4,245	4,213
Fundraising costs	1,714	-
Other expenditure	4,709	5,160
	<b>238,503</b>	<b>234,291</b>

For further information, the full Report and Accounts of the Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2025 and the auditors' report on those accounts should be consulted. Copies of the full accounts are available free of charge from the Charity. The simplified accounts do not constitute full accounts within the meaning of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011. A full version of the accounts will also be found on the Charity Commission website in due course.

