



survivors
OF CHILDHOOD ABUSE
SUPPORT FUND



YEAR 2 PROGRESS REPORT



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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INSPIRING

SCOTLAND

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Introduction

Survivors of childhood abuse experience long lasting inequalities and disadvantages as a result of the abuse. Scotland is one of the few countries in the world to have actively taken steps to acknowledge and address the devastating effects of childhood abuse. Working with Inspiring Scotland, the Scottish Government launched the Survivors of Childhood Abuse Support Fund (SOCAS) in April 2020, with a £10m fund over four years, providing annual funding to 29 charities to March 2024.

The fund aims to support the recovery and resilience of adult survivors of childhood abuse, enabling them to enjoy the highest attainable standard of living, health and wellbeing, and family life. The fund seeks to ensure survivors of abuse are treated with dignity and respect and are empowered and enabled to access the right support. In addition, survivors have timely access to resources and services which are trauma-informed. A key purpose of the fund is to enhance the capacity and capability of third sector and community-based organisations who provide dedicated support.

The SOCAS fund aims to increase access to services, improve quality and encourage collaboration and partnership working amongst third sector providers, and to build greater integration with statutory services.

This report is a review of the second year of the fund, from April 2021 – March 2022 and is based on progress reports provided by the portfolio charities. The portfolio partners have worked tirelessly throughout the second year of the fund to continue to provide high quality services to survivors, despite the many challenges they faced.

Case Study - Carol*

Carol is a 54 year old woman, sexually abused by a family friend for most of her childhood, raised by a verbally abusive father and a terrified, cowed mother. She has self-harmed in several ways, drink, drugs and now cutting. Her husband knows about the abuse and addictions but is unaware of the extreme levels of self-harm she is currently using. Her Community Psychiatric Nurse has recommended a stay in hospital for respite but her husband thinks she just needs to "get over it". Speaking to him has never felt like an option for her. However, she has recently decided, with support, to look at ways of broaching the subject with him without feeling out of control or confrontational. This is a really big step for her but she has a determination now to make him see what's happening to her. With support from ABRC, she feels able to stand up for herself, something she's never felt able to do before. *Client of Argyll and Bute Rape Crisis Centre*

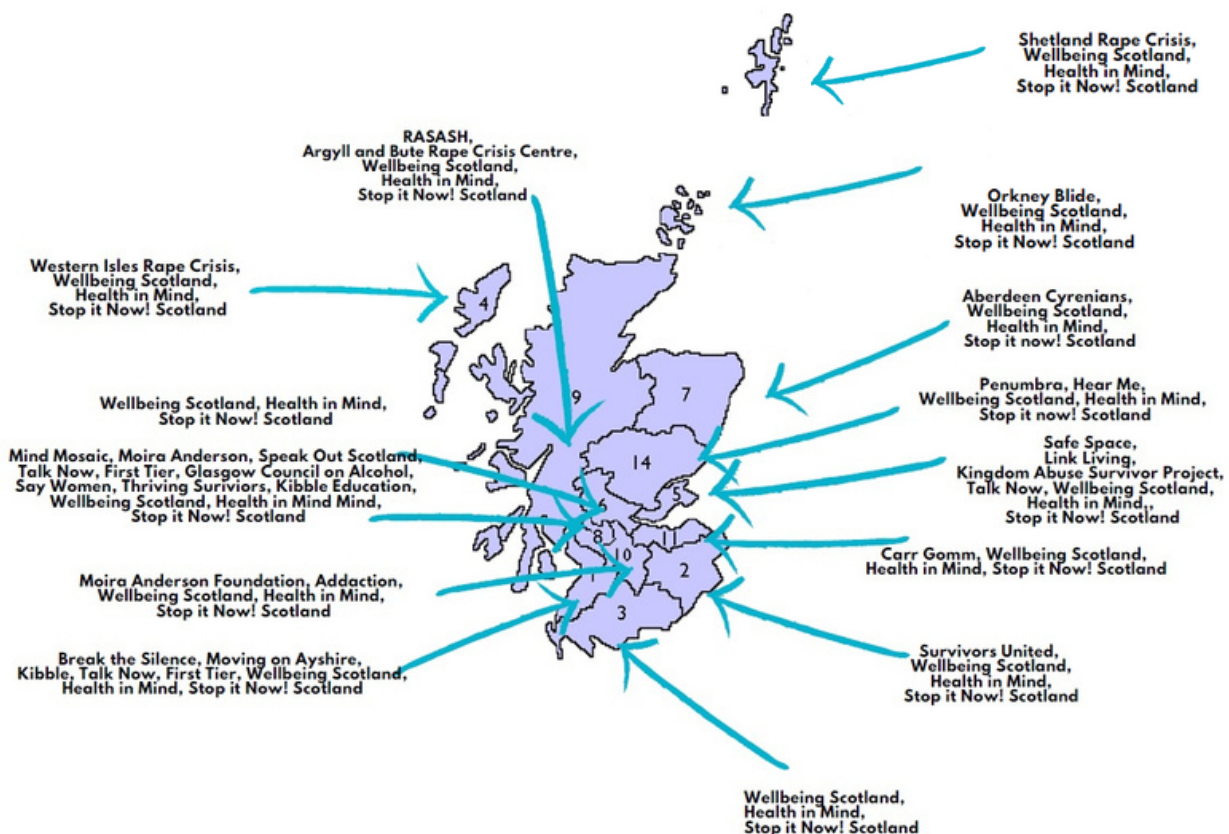
*Name has been changed to protect identity

Portfolio Profile

Across the fund, the 29 charities provide a range of services to support survivors, including counselling, outreach, wellbeing support and trauma-informed yoga. These services are offered in individual or group settings, either virtually or, as Covid restrictions have been lifted, increasingly in person.

The charities in the portfolio range in size, from large national providers to small local charities who are rooted in their communities. There is great support and collaboration between portfolio partners, which further enriches the fund.

- **5152** survivors were supported in the 12 months to March 2022
- **£2.4m** of funding distributed to charities in 2021/22
- **£100k** of ring-fenced funding to support the portfolio
- Over **100** staff are employed as a result of the fund
- Additional funding of **£101,780** was given to 12 organisations to tackle waiting lists



Year 2 Overview

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the numbers of survivors accessing support. In the first phase of the pandemic (2020/21) numbers were down; reflecting restrictions on delivery, a lack of comfort in accessing virtual support by survivors and organisations alike, and reduced referrals from statutory services.

During 2021/22, this process has been reversed and a backlog in cases has resulted in a surge of referrals to the portfolio. Marked increases in referrals have been noted by the majority of charities operating across different regions of Scotland. Across the portfolio, the overall number of survivors supported in the last 6 months was 13% higher than the previous 6 months. This was achieved despite staff absences due to the Omicron variant of Covid-19, staff turnover and delays in recruitment.

There is a growing awareness of childhood abuse, stimulated in part by a series of high-profile cases in the media and the redress scheme. There is agreement across the portfolio that this, together with a greater understanding that support is available, will lead to growing numbers and pressure on services for some time.

It is important to note that the SOCAS charities report an increase in cases where survivors are needing longer, more intensive support. The reasons for this are individual and multi-faceted, but it is likely that delays in treatment at NHS centres are leading to more complex cases being handled by third sector organisations together with the effects of the pandemic itself reducing the vital positive social relationships and interactions.



**15 organisations provided
counselling support**



**14 organisations provided
wellbeing support**



**Over 5000
survivors supported**

Spotlight - Waiting List Funding

To assist organisations in tackling the challenge of growing waiting lists, the Scottish Government reallocated funding to 12 organisations totalling £101,780. The Waiting List Urgent Response funding was used in a variety of ways by the organisations; some increased staff hours allowing them to support more survivors, others used the funding to triage their waiting lists and provide some support to survivors quicker.

'The additional funding came when we desperately needed it and allowed us to support survivors who had been on our waiting list for over three months. It was refreshing to be able to get people off the waiting list and in with counsellors.'

Talk Now



'Capturing Resilience' - Say Women Art Therapy Group participants

Outcome progress and fund highlights

Improved wellbeing and resilience for survivors

5152 survivors accessed support to help improve their wellbeing and resilience during the year. Organisations assess progress and risk through validated clinical measures (eg CORE, i-roc and WEMWBS.)

Organisations also provided tangible, practical support to survivors e.g. to secure and maintain tenancies, access benefits and travel passes and to reduce substance use.



'Over the last six months we have run three Sea Change groups, nine Survive & Thrive groups and one Beyond Trauma group, supporting 93 survivors. Each survivor is also offered one-to-one link work support, which could involve help to get information about relevant services, to attend an appointment, or support to attend the groups themselves.' *Carr Gomm*

Survivors have access to quality services across Scotland

Support is available across Scotland, from Shetland to the Borders, from both local and national services. Many organisations continued to provide services in a blended format, offering both virtual and in person support. Organisations are reporting increased confidence in digital support; this has been a steady area of improvement across the year. Across the charities, the support provided helps to promote the recovery and resilience of survivors.

'I feel so different from last year, I can't recognise who that was who came into our first session now, I feel better than I have in a long time'

Link Living Better than Well



Survivors have access to timely, appropriate services

Increased awareness and the demand for services has placed pressure on the capacity of the SOCAS charities. Many organisations continue to have long waiting lists and organisations have developed a variety of ways to manage these. Some organisations have introduced a triage service to their waiting list and are providing services to support survivors while they wait for appropriate trauma treatment.



'We developed a new website, with specific information on survivor services and introduced Smart Forms to make the referral processes easier to navigate. Referrals are now processed within one week and added to our secure CRM system. Dedicated time slots with trained therapists are provided to complete psychological assessment, enabling us to offer an assessment within two weeks of referral. We also provide clients with a choice of interventions while they are on the waiting list for therapy.'

Mind Mosaic

Outcome progress and fund highlights

Organisations demonstrate continual improvement

Across the year, portfolio charities have participated in training events, Networking Days and Inclusive Leaders training. Many charities completed the Inspiring Scotland HealthCheck and are working towards improvements across several functions.



‘After an external review, we implemented new tools to measure the effectiveness of our work with survivors, in addition to the CORE-10 which we were already using. We are now also working with the Work & Social Assessment Scale (WSAS), and the International Trauma Questionnaire (ITQ). We also reworked our anonymous Feedback Form for the service and are now gathering consistent data to measure the quality of our services.’

The Compass Centre

Greater collaboration between partners

Monthly portfolio meetings ensure ideas and learning are shared and charities are building excellent relationships with each other. Portfolio partners regularly support each other with either direct requests to the portfolio, or requests coming through Inspiring Scotland.

‘In the last six months we have linked with over 30 organisations, including SOCAS portfolio partners, to maximise the support we provide to young women. These connections with other agencies are vital to ensure our young women access the right wrap around support that is often needed.’

Say Women



Impact on Survivors

The SOCAS fund has resulted in positive impacts for survivors, providing them with the support they need to enjoy the highest attainable standard of living, health and wellbeing, and family life. The charities' services are patient, non-judgemental, person-centred and trauma-informed. Below are some quotes, which have been anonymised, which highlight the quality and impact of the support that the SOCAS fund has enabled. We thank those survivors for sharing how the support they have received has positively impacted their lives.



Thank you again so much for everything. The service has really made such a difference in my life, and I won't ever forget that. I don't know where I'd be if I didn't have the support from yourself, just having someone to listen to me and believe me and help me find a way to cope. Greatly appreciated.

I am finally seeing a light at the end of the tunnel. I hope that light will get brighter as things go on. I really thought I would never get there but the people helping me believe in me and that means a lot. It is good to be believed. Thanks



I appreciated the patience and time the practitioner gave me, which made me feel safe enough to open up and disclose. I felt at ease with the practitioner as she took the time to build the relationship and establish trust.

I have found the counselling really good. I feel safe, not judged and not rejected, which I have experienced with previous professionals. I like that my counsellor can provide me with feedback and another perspective. It has definitely helped. I have nothing bad to say.



Thank you for being so innovative that you could offer this service. I couldn't have got through it without you.

Two survivors from our project are now trained and working as Volunteer Befrienders within our service. Our projects gave them the confidence, skills and knowledge to help others.



I cannot speak more highly for Stop It Now. I would say that if it was not for the involvement, I would not be here but a memory only. The ongoing support and guidance to myself and my family has been second to none. I genuinely wish I was not needing the support, but it has been invaluable.

Key Themes

Whilst there is much going on which is positive, challenges remain.

Waiting lists and rising demand

The portfolio is reporting growing and sustained pressure on waiting lists, particularly for counselling:

- Number of organisations with a waiting list: 21
- Average wait time: 13 weeks
- Range: A couple of weeks to more than 2 years. Waiting lists are longest for those waiting for trauma counselling

Current pressures are unlikely to reduce in the near term and tackling waiting lists is a priority for the SOCAS portfolio moving forwards. While this extra funding was very welcome and waiting lists would have been worse without the funding, the steep rise in the numbers of survivors seeking support means waiting lists have continued to grow despite best efforts.

Staff Recruitment

Difficulties in attracting and retaining highly qualified and skilled staff were reported by a majority of portfolio members. Several organisations highlighted recruitment issues as the reason for delays in starting services or extension/closing of waiting lists for some services. There is a recognition that SOCAS charities are competing for staff with private counselling practices which offer higher levels of pay and job security.

Inspiring Scotland supported by facilitating information sharing between members, arranging an Inspiring Scotland SVN-led workshop on recruitment and developing leadership capacity through Inclusive Leaders training.

Inter-agency Working

Across the portfolio, there are strong examples of inter-agency working enabling survivors to navigate complex systems, and this trauma-informed and collaborative approach is translating into tangible wellbeing outcomes such as achieving and sustaining a tenancy.

While there has been progress, challenges still remain, such as inappropriate referrals and disjointed processes. Inspiring Scotland are supporting with contacts and links into NHS Trauma Champions and Transforming Psychological Trauma Implementation Co-ordinators (TPTICs). This is an on-going area for discussion at both the Advisory Group and at regular portfolio meetings with challenges and best practice discussed.

Key Themes

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

Organisations reported the on-going issues related to the COVID19 pandemic:

- Increased complexity of cases - requiring longer and more intensive support
- Social isolation - reducing access to the critical healthy relationships which are key to wellbeing and recovery.
- Fear of returning to 'normal' - nervousness amongst some survivors to return to face-to-face meetings or other social interactions.
- Blended approach to service delivery is now standard across the portfolio
- Digital capacity and flexibility have been increased

Impact of Rising Costs

With rising overheads, many organisations reported that their costs of delivering support will exceed the money received from the SOCAS fund. Many organisations had an overspend on their budget and expect this to be the case again in 2022/23. At the time of writing this report, in October 2022, the persistent rise in overheads is continuing to put pressure on portfolio members.

Case Study - Barry*

Barry had not been able to leave his home for several years due to extreme anxiety and panic attacks. Work was initially by telephone but moved outdoors, becoming a regular activity. We walked to a piece of countryside that used to be the client's "safe place". He would run away to this area when he was young, but hadn't been able to walk here for many years. We had a pleasant walk, and it was a huge achievement for him. Barry is beginning to have a sense of control over what he can do, he has a sense of pride in his achievements, he has begun to consider his own self-care, and he has plans for the future for the first time in many years. His short-term aim is daily walks which should have a positive impact on his physical health (asthma, heart condition, swelling legs and ankles) as well as his mental health. His GP is aware of our work. I experience him as more engaged and less hypervigilant. He also reports being less triggered and less affected by family dramas. *Client of Hear Me*

*Name has been changed to protect identity

Looking Ahead

Scottish Government and Inspiring Scotland will work together on the following identified priorities during 2022-23.

- Waiting lists
- Evaluation of SOCAS service
- Training
- Integrating statutory and third sector services
- Scottish Government refreshed Mental Health Strategy
- Workforce Wellbeing

Budget projections suggest that many of the charities in the portfolio will have a budget overspend in the coming year, reflecting the rising costs charities are facing. Many expect to use reserves to support their SOCAS services, together with careful cost control and an increased fundraising effort.

Key Contacts



Kaylie Allen, Director of Funds. kaylie@inspiringscotland.org.uk

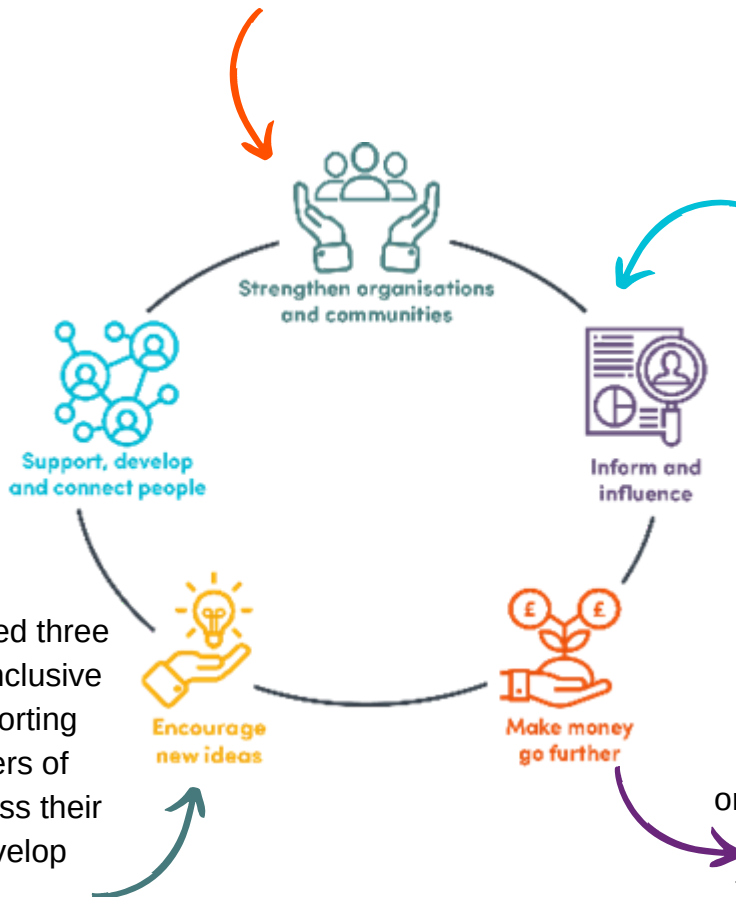
Fiona Dunlop, Fund Manager, SOCAS. fionadunlop@inspiringscotland.org.uk

Jane Whitworth, Fund Manager, SOCAS. jane@inspiringscotland.org.uk

Appendix 1 - Inspiring Scotland Impact

27 of the 29 portfolio partners were supported to undertake Inspiring Scotland's interactive digital HealthCheck, enabling them to evaluate their organisational performance across key business functions. After the HealthChecks were completed, organisations received advice in areas where improvement was required.

Inspiring Scotland facilitated and ran monthly portfolio meetings, and 1 Networking Day, which gave organisations the opportunity to connect with others to support, develop and connect with each other.



Inspiring Scotland facilitated the SOCAS Advisory Group, increased the membership of the group and broadened the range of skills in the group. We also co-ordinated expert training on evaluation to support organisations to better assess the clinical impact of their services.

Inspiring Scotland supported three cohorts of the innovative Inclusive Leaders programme, supporting 40 current and future leaders of SOCAS charities to progress their leadership journey and develop their skills.

123 hours of Specialist Volunteer Network (SVN) support, helping 23 organisations with a value of £22,600 value. We also facilitated £11,400 worth of SVN trusteeship support for SOCAS organisations.

During the year Inspiring Scotland supported funded organisations to:

- monitor the on-going development of the project outlined in the organisation's application.
- evidence the impact of the project
- evaluate project progress on their behalf.
- share learnings from the Survivors portfolio to support policy development.
- enable collaboration to add value to the Survivors portfolio through sharing best practices, training and developing charity leaders and use of Specialist Volunteer Network resources
- support the wellbeing of the charities, their staff and service users.



We would like to thank Inspiring Scotland for their support. This year has been a challenging year in terms of service provision – but extremely thankful for approachable and knowledgeable fund managers. We are excited about how our service can progress emerging from Covid and feel positive about our future progress. *WIRCC*