

Research and Evaluation

- Maia and Natalie are working on aligning the names of organisations we work with in the various databases we use across the organisation. This will make it easier to combine data from different systems for analysis or other purposes.
- DLUHC have recently published their annual data on how Local Authorities are implementing the statutory duty. There are some discrepancies in their data compared to ours. We are working with them to do a deep dive into 3-5 Local Authority areas to explore the reasons for some of these discrepancies.

Direct Services

[Click here](#) to read this week's case studies.

- This week, we have migrated to the new Live Chat infrastructure; this provides us with greater technical and financial control over the system where it used to be managed by our previous agency.
- Stacey KM and Stephanie have begun work on the Flexible Fund set up, this will be a big focus for the rest of January so please bear with them on other projects!
- **Recommendation:** a recent article from the New York Times shares survivors' stories of being tracked by partners with access to their location through apps linked to their car, [read about their experiences here](#).

Finance and Operations

- **Bristol Office –**
 - On the 26th January intruder alarm/fire alarm/emergency lighting checks will be being conducted by an external provider and they will be accessing all areas of the office.
 - ***Reminder*** - If you have items delivered to Brunswick Court please be sure one of your team is present to take receipt and take the delivery up to our office. Items (particularly if they are large) should not be left in the foyer as it presents fire safety issues. The [@Ops](#) team may be able to assist if given sufficient notice. EPC will not take responsibility for lost deliveries.
 - As you may be aware a major tidying and sorting operation has been underway over the last few months. Over the last week we have built some new shelving units for storage and Deanna - with help from department reps - will be starting to populate these with loose items which are currently scattered around the office. We have also had a large rubbish collection this week, so hopefully regular visitors should start to see an improvement to general levels of tidiness. Please help up continue these improvements by

complying with our Clear Desk Policy and leave the desk in a state for someone else to use it.

- **Home Working** – We are seeing a few issues with laptops potentially arising from ways of working. Please make sure that laptops are only used on hard surfaces (not laps/soft furnishings) this reduces the chances of overheating. Furthermore, if you have space at your desk, you should ideally be working on a separate keyboard and mouse to reduce wear and tear on the laptop. If you need any items for working from home please use the [equipment request form](#). Additionally, please make sure you have completed a [Home Working Risk Assessment](#) to ensure your workstation has the optimum set up for good posture and minimal strain.
- **Phishing emails** - As a reminder for healthy email security (both at work and home):
 - Check you recognise the senders email address not just the display name.
 - Don't open attachments if you don't recognise the sender.
 - Even if you do recognise the address, don't open attachments or links if you aren't expecting to be sent anything.
 - Verify message via another method (alternative email/ by phone) if you're unsure.

Fundraising

- We have some places remaining in the Bath Half Marathon. If anyone is interested or knows anyone who might like to run in support of Women's Aid, please do get in touch with [Evie](#).
- We are delighted to have received £10,000 from the David Family Foundation to support our family courts work.
- We have been working with Community Rail Lancashire on the 100 Women, 100 Stories project, which we are really pleased will include a few powerful stories from survivors who have benefitted from Rail to Refuge as well as include an opportunity to donate to Women's Aid. The book will be launched on the 8th of March and 2000 copies will be given across major train stations across England.
- A **big** thank you to everyone who shared and donated to our winter appeal. We were blown away with the generosity of our supporters and will be following up with a final total raised soon!

External Affairs

- The Digital Team are scoping events and conference journeys, overseeing the Annual Audit production, continuing to work on improving the Job Shop and Web

Champion work, and undertaking SEO training. Additionally, they are working on 50th Birthday logo designs and Parliamentary Champion designs.

- The Public Affairs Team are continuing Victims and Prisoners Bill work, including drafting amendments and working with Peers on tabling them, and work on the Flexible Fund ahead of the launch at the end of the month. They are developing briefings for the Spring Budget, and working with Policy on the Murder Sentencing Consultation and W&E Select Committee Oral evidence.

Policy

- Izi and Alice have organised two commissioning workshops on 'alternatives to procurement' with a leading procurement lawyer, Julian Blake from StoneKing LLP. A workshop for members is taking place this week, and another for commissioners next week. The workshops seek to demystify the procurement process and equip our members with the legal and advocacy tools to push for alternatives to procurement and competitive tendering.
- GREVIO (the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence), are the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. They are conducting their first baseline evaluation of the UK's implementation of the Convention in 2024. Following our submission of a VAWG sector shadow report to GREVIO in December, VAWG organisations have been invited to a series of roundtables with GREVIO during their visit to the UK – Farah and Lucy will be attending the London roundtable on Thursday.
- We're working with External Affairs, Rights of Women & the London Victims Commissioner to propose a number of amendments on the family courts to the Victim & Prisoners Bill next week – including regulation of 'experts' and banning unsupervised contact where there are ongoing criminal proceedings for domestic abuse, sexual violence and child abuse.

Membership

- We held a coffee morning where two of our member services presented the work their services are doing around survivor engagement, including a wonderful piece of work where a service invited a graphic facilitator to work with survivors to visualise their help-seeking journey through an infographic. Members were keen to connect with one another to share ideas on how best to engage and empower survivors, and push towards driving national change to ensure survivors' voices are heard by all stakeholders involved along their journey.
- Survivor consultations are taking place this week to inform the review of NQS.

- We are continuing to do preparatory work for the launch of the Home Office's Flexible Fund, as well as the upcoming Caring Family Foundation Fund.

Media, Brand and Relationships

- This week, we continued to receive coverage following the announcement of the Flexible Fund, with a new piece running in Stylist ([“Offering ‘flee funds’ could help some survivors of abuse, but so much more needs to be done”](#)), as well as a possible opportunity with ITV. The press office is also working with Channel 4 and the Research and Evaluation team on a potential media exclusive focused on our upcoming Annual Audit.
- International Women's Day 2024 planning has started, with support from teams across the organisation. Our campaign will be inspired by Mel B's re-release of her book, Brutally Honest, which features news chapters and a special mention of her work with Women's Aid. We will share survivor experiences showing the reality of abuse and the actions needed to end violence against women and girls and encouraging supporters to donate.
- This week the team commented on Stephen Bears early release from prison on socials. The posts had very high engagement with 64.7k impressions on twitter and 791 engagements on IG. We were also mentioned by MP Apsana Begum.

Project Management team

- Following a competitive internal recruitment process, Jess Holmes was appointed to the role of Head of Strategic Programmes in the autumn, on a fixed term basis until March 2025. Jess is focusing on organisational planning, programme management, governance, and delivery of some of our higher risk projects. This will allow us to continue the work started by Anne Baxendale (Interim Director for Organisational Effectiveness) once her contract comes to an end. Jess also continues to oversee the project management function and is reviewing the structure and capacity of the team in the context of what will be needed to support the success of key projects over the next year.