

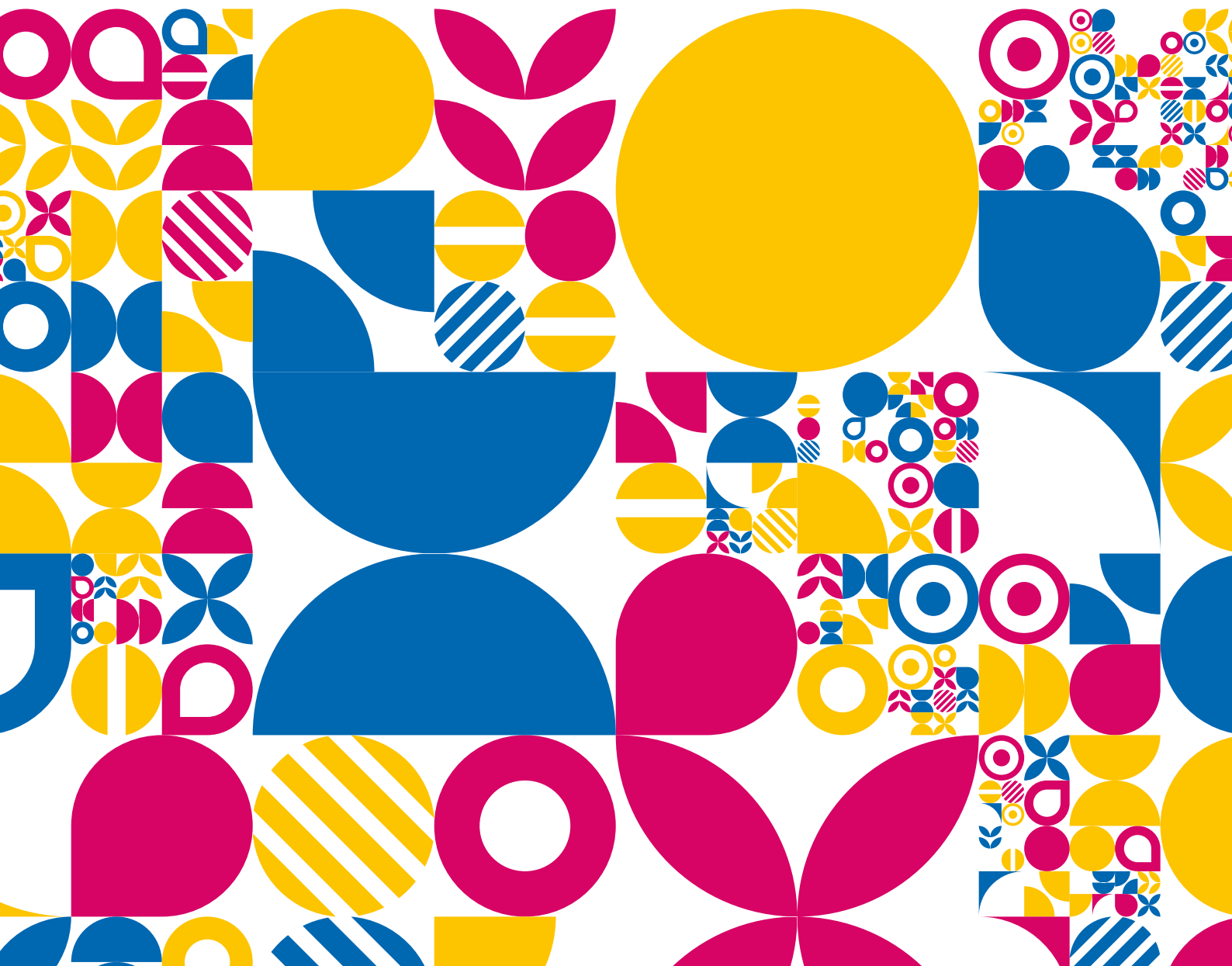


**FLAG DV**

Free Legal Advice Group  
for Domestic Violence

# 2023 IMPACT REPORT

Registered Charity No. 1154070





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# OUR STORY

In October 2023 FLAG DV celebrated 10 years of offering free, family law legal advice to those experiencing domestic abuse. The charity was established when changes to legal aid came into effect in 2013 making it harder for those who have experienced domestic abuse to access legal aid.

Since its inception, the organisation has come a long way, achieving significant milestones and fostering a vision of hope for the future.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

A decade ago, the founders of our charity began a mission to offer crucial family law legal advice to individuals impacted by domestic abuse. Reflecting on our progress, I am both honoured and thrilled by how much we have accomplished during this time.

2023 brought intense challenges to our organisation which saw our team having to address the growing demand with a reduced capacity. I am proud of our staff and volunteers whose dedication and perseverance ensured our clients continued to have access to the advice they needed to make informed decisions to safely leave the abuse.



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

At FLAG DV, everything we do is fuelled by compassion, legal expertise, and a commitment to making a tangible difference in the lives of those in need. This year we are incredibly proud to have celebrated 10 years of delivering on this commitment within the Thames Valley. We have taken this unique opportunity to honour all who have been involved, past and present, and to remember all of the individuals that we have been able to support over the years.

In a difficult year when the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed an estimated 9.8 million people (1 in 5) aged 16 years and over had experienced domestic abuse, it is imperative that we continue to build upon all of our hard work over the last 10 years.

As we look forward to our most exciting year to date, with the introduction of our Family Court Support Worker Service we remain grateful to all of our dedicated staff, trustees and volunteers for their unwavering enthusiasm and pride in FLAG DV and the necessary service we provide.



Domestic Abuse prevalence continues to be around 1 in 5 adults who will experience Domestic Abuse during their lifetime. This equates to: 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6-7 men.

A small 2016 study by Cafcass and Women's Aid Federation England indicated that domestic abuse allegations were found in about 62% of cases, potentially involving up to 32,400 private law children cases annually.

# OUR IMPACT 2023

**851**  
**2023**  
**REFERRALS**

**32**  
**VOLUNTEER  
SOLICITORS**

**408 hours**  
**FREE LEGAL  
ADVICE**

**31**  
**REFERRAL  
PARTNERS**

**% of areas of  
Law  
supported\***

- COURT PROCESS ADVICE - 50%
- PRIVATE CHILDREN MATTERS- 53%
- DIVORCE AND SEPERATION- 40%
- OTHER AREAS - 27%

\*Some clients will require advice in more than one area of law

## CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

**32%**

**Clients from ethnic minority background. \***

**6%**

**Male's accessing support and advice**

**21**

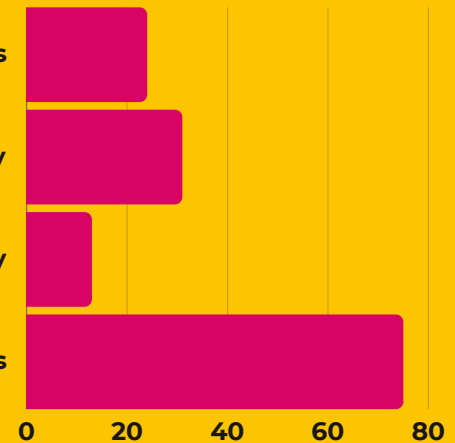
**Different languages supported during advice appointments**

Long term health issues

Physical Disability

Leaning Disability

Mental Health issues



\*Data for TVP in 2022 is that 15% of residents come from a marginalised background





# CASE STUDY



Feb 2023 - Client entered FLAG DV for legal advice following recent assault



Received advice about current situation around orders, children and housing

The client did not proceed with the legal case due to concerns about her husband's reaction.

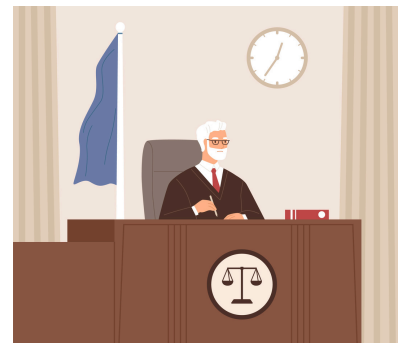
Client didn't qualify for legal aid and took steps to apply herself.



Jan 2024 - Client returned for further advice after a breakdown in agreement had taken place with the children.

Volunteer solicitor provided advice and guidance on self representation,

March 2024 - Client went to court and represented herself



Client's Feedback: *"I am extremely grateful for the presence of this service. Dealing with financial abuse post-separation and facing an intimidating legal team representing my ex-husband has been challenging. The free calls, which I believe are available every six months, have been a source of support during this tough time. As I prepare for the upcoming hearing, I am confident that I can articulate our current situation, stand firm on the truth, and advocate for the protection of my son."*



# FUNDING



## OUR FUNDING

In 2023, we encountered unprecedented funding challenges as successful grant applications decreased, even from previously supportive funders who were strained by increased demand. The economic crisis affecting our clients also heightened competition among organisations like ours for limited resources. Reflecting on these challenges, we are deeply humbled and grateful for our incredible grant funders who continue to invest in and believe in our charitable aims. Their ongoing support has been essential in sustaining our vital services.

We are equally thankful for the individuals who dedicated their time and efforts to raise funds for us, from bake sales to sponsored runs. Your support has enabled us to meet the increased demand and provided much-needed stability.

In 2023 we were thrilled to receive a five-year funding commitment from The National Lottery Community fund. This multi-year grant is a first for our charity and has given us greater confidence and security for the future.

Thank you for standing with FLAG DV and empowering us to make an impact in the lives of those affected by domestic abuse.

- BH&O LLP - Legal Bake
- Berkshire Community Foundation
- Englefield Charitable Trust Grants
- Greenham Trust
- James Purdey Sons
- Local Giving Ltd
- London Legal Walks
- PCC Community fund
- PHLN Community Champions
- Paypal Giving
- Personal Donations
- Peter Baker Foundation
- Police and Crime Commissioners
- Stevenson Foundation



# OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

## FAMILY COURT SUPPORT

More people are representing themselves in complex family law cases due to a lack of access to legal aid and the inability to pay for representation. They find it hard to understand a system tailored for professionals.

Equally solicitor feedback has emphasised their need to focus on legal advocacy and a lack of capacity to provide emotional support. This will leave, even represented clients, feeling isolated and vulnerable and leading to disengagement with the family court support process.

### PROBLEM

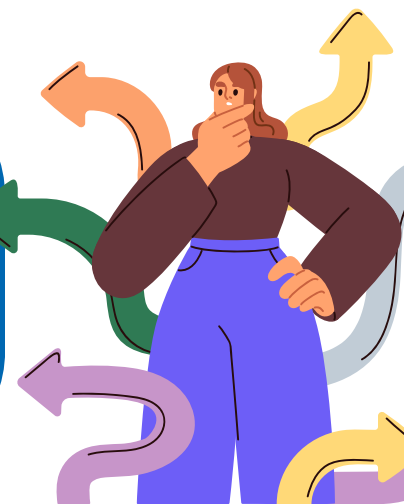
Solve the lack of comprehensive support for those experiencing domestic abuse and navigating the family court process, this can lead to vulnerability, voicelessness, and disadvantage within the system

### SOLUTION

Have a trained domestic abuse family court support worker whose role it is to offer practical, emotional, and moral support in court to individuals navigating the family court system. The primary objective is to support clients throughout each stage of their family court proceedings, ensuring they feel empowered and have their voices heard.

### IMPACT

A thriving society where survivors of domestic abuse are supported, empowered, and able to navigate the family court process with confidence, leading to increased safety, well-being, and positive outcomes for all.





# WANT TO GET INVOLVED?



## VOLUNTEERS

Like all charities the work that we do would not be possible without the support of our amazing volunteers. There are several ways that you too can get in involved with FLAG DV and make a direct impact to the lives of those impacted by domestic abuse.

Get in touch with us at [hello@flagdv.org.uk](mailto:hello@flagdv.org.uk)

## LEGAL ADVISOR

Our solicitors provide free legal advice to domestic abuse victims, offering a lifeline and contributing to improving outcomes for those experiencing domestic abuse.

They volunteer up to 30/45 minutes once a week at our clinics. We welcome applications from qualified family law solicitors who are:

- SRA (Solicitors Regulation Authority) registered.
- Experienced in family law matters, especially those related to domestic abuse.
- Compassionate, empathetic, and committed to making a positive impact in the lives of vulnerable individuals and families.

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## FUNDRAISING

Join FLAG DV as a volunteer fundraiser and make a direct impact in supporting survivors of domestic abuse. Your efforts will help provide crucial legal advice and support to those in need, empowering them to rebuild their lives free from violence.

We need volunteers to consider doing hosting events, sponsored runs and corporate giving.

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## TRUSTEE

As a trustee, you'll play a crucial role in our leadership team, guiding our strategic direction and ensuring our impact. Your responsibilities include strategic planning, governance, financial oversight, advocacy, and networking.

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# CONTACT US

If you want to get in touch with us about our organisation you can find our contact details below



You can access information about our legal advice as well as other resources and support by going to our website, <https://flagdv.org.uk>



Our phone line is open Mon-Fri 11-1  
01635 015854

You can also get in touch with us by emailing  
[hello@flagdv.org.uk](mailto:hello@flagdv.org.uk)

Follow us on:



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violence-flag-dv-

