RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE (RASA) CENTRE LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT YEAR TO 31-03-2022

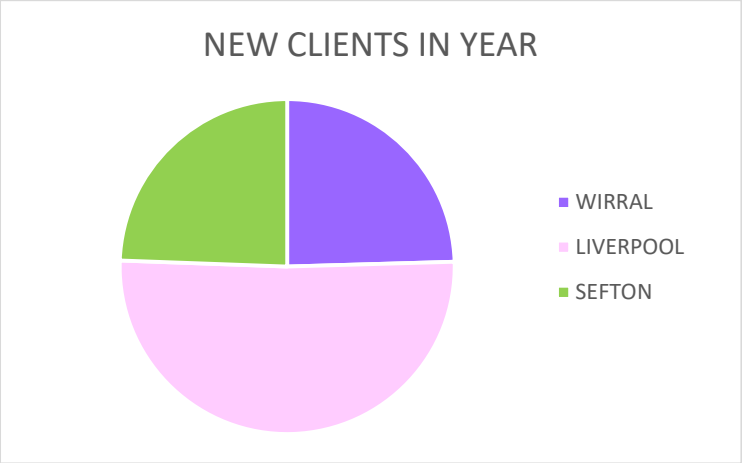
CARING FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE SINCE 1986

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RASA MERSEYSIDE ANNUAL REPORT YEAR TO 31-03-2022

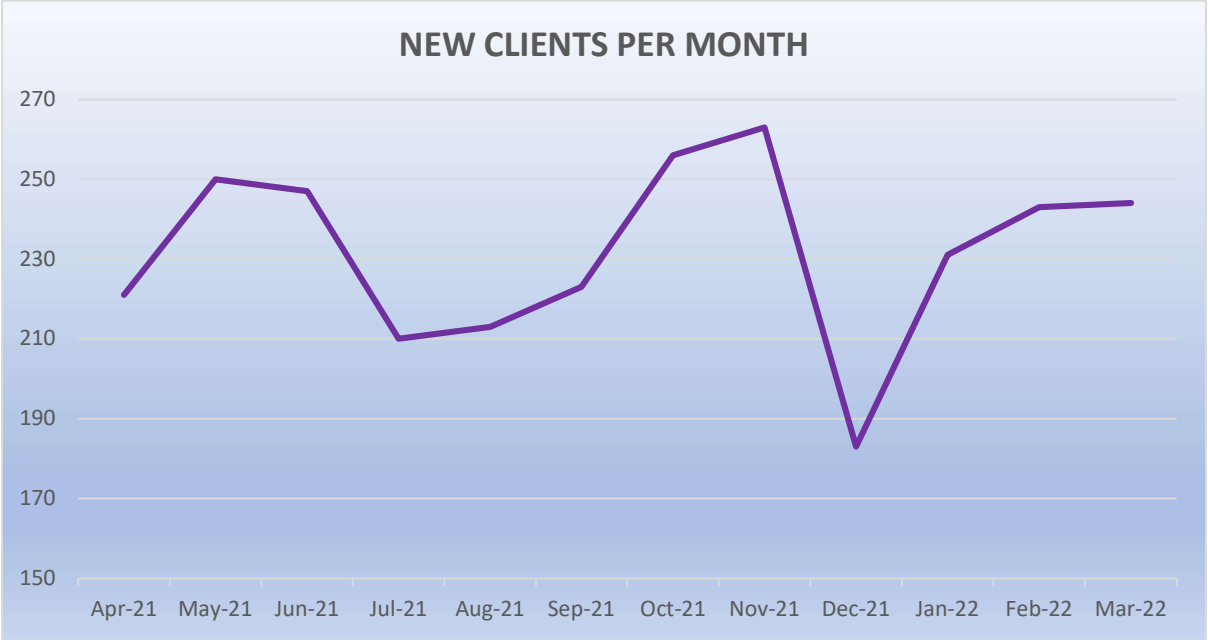
Welcome to a review of our year at RASA from 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022.



After ending last year on a high – as in high rates of referrals and high waiting lists, our aim this year has been to reduce these waiting times and lists as far as possible and to better support those desperately waiting for the support they so desperately need.

As expected, following our localised Christmas lockdown, referrals in QTR 1 21-22 were far beyond anything we had ever experienced before. In the previous 6 years, we had welcomed an average of 562 new cases in QTR 1, in this year we welcomed 830 with the biggest increase by far being cases of non-recent child sexual abuse.

This area of referral was consistently raised throughout the breaks in lockdown and it seems that people had engaged in periods of contemplation during that time and had made the decision to speak out. This was good to hear and see. It is sadly also true that recent rape figures also rose in this period – but we were back in the centres ready to hold face to face sessions as soon as we were permitted.



RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

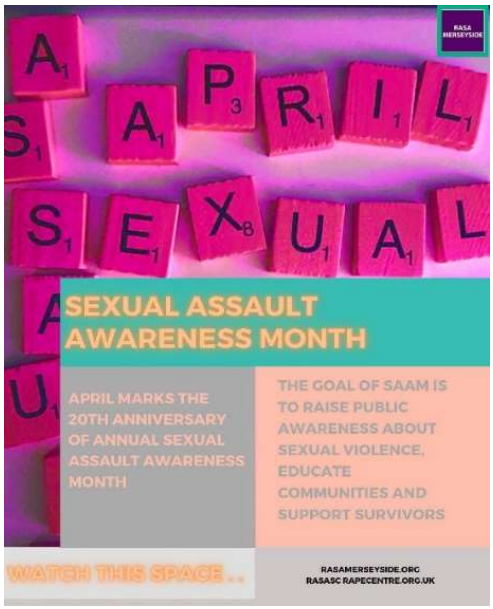
LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

An interesting outcome of the covid period was the realisation that for some – remote working was actually preferable and easier to access and stay engaged. With client numbers so high, this was a huge bonus and we continue to run many long-term counselling programmes remotely, avoiding long waits and disappointing outcomes for those who waited.

In April 2021 we marked the 20th anniversary of SAAM - Sexual Violence Awareness Month. "Even before its official declaration, SAAM was about both awareness and prevention of sexual assault, harassment, and abuse. From the civil rights movement to the founding of the first rape crisis centres to national legislation and beyond, the roots of SAAM run deep". We celebrated with our neighbours @rasasc_cm, raising awareness of consent, harassment and stalking and staying safe online.

We updated our social media daily, raising awareness of what defines sexual assault, what to do if someone discloses sexual violence to you, and discussing online sexual abuse and victim blaming.



The entire month was filled with ways to support yourself as a victim, friends who may be, or who may become, victims and provided advice and support for the general public and for friends and supporters of survivors of abuse.

One of the most engaged modules was the discussion around consent which was shared multiple times and resulted in a surge in self-referrals.

We were busily delivering training on being a supportive bystander, to tram drivers in Manchester and the waiting list in Birkenhead was 10 months long.

In other news - we resubmitted our BACP accreditation documentation. It had taken considerable time to update all our policies and procedures with the challenges of the previous 12 months, but we were finally ready to go for it.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

As part of our regular support, we were delivering Taking Back Control group sessions with survivors. This was going down well with positive outcomes being reported. Feedback from one of the groups included:

- One client has been able to return to work.
- One client is now able to get the bus to university.
- One client saw her perpetrator before a meeting but felt strong enough to attend her meeting despite seeing the perpetrator.

In addition, two attending clients requested to come off the counselling waiting list on completion of the group session. It was making a difference.

Our ISVA Team started the year in discussion with the CPS about working towards actioning the recommendations of the rape review. This positive step was leading to satisfactory progress and a mutual understanding of the challenges faced by all parties.

Our children's team was reporting high levels of peer abuse amongst clients without any level of follow up prosecution or conviction.

It was agreed that the CHISVA Team would attempt a meeting with the CPS to explore this situation and see what could be done to improve outcomes of such reported crimes.

We had started working effectively with Teachable to put our mandatory and CPD training onto an online portal to better reach all those for which it was intended. With larger staff teams and more volunteers, space was at a premium and with long waiting lists and enhanced numbers of clients referring every week, all available rooms needed to be used for face-to-face support – online training suddenly seemed like a great option.

We received 221 new referrals in April 2021 and at the end of the month waiting lists were as follows

Adults 636 Children 92

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

REFLECTIONS OF A LIVERPOOL ISVA

Reflecting on this year, there are several very positive changes as well as important challenges. Main changes were to staff. We lost a long-term member of the ISVA family who has chosen to move back into her counselling career, however we have also gained three new members of staff with fresh ideas and a fresh perspective. As caseloads continue to rise and client needs continue to increase in intensity, I can only hope that staffing levels are maintained if not increased in times to come.

This is my second year as the Liverpool ISVA. It is a role I have enjoyed and continue to enjoy; however, it has continued to come with its challenges. Primarily, rising caseloads have seen an increase in pressure within the team alongside more delays in criminal cases and negative case decisions. Length of time to investigate leaves clients in "limbo", which given the high volume of clients in this position in any given time also has an impact on staff. We find ourselves often feeling powerless to help a client who has been left for so long without any finite answers to their allegations. At these times we see an increase in the need of both our emotional support and our advocacy, obviously putting additional strain on our availability and workload. At the moment, in order to incorporate enough time for all ISVA duties I attempt to cap my appointments at 4/5 per day, leaving one session free per week to deal with any client with an unexpected NFA or any particular safeguarding issues. Even with the best intentions, however, weeks tend to be full to the brim with odd and unexpected jobs or client needs. To do lists remain full over the weekend to be picked back up on a Monday.

Liverpool Crown Court

One positive in this, is that we can see clear and enthusiastic client engagement across all locations. More clients are taking up frequent appointments rather than check in calls/text, and more clients are generally engaging and receptive to all aspects of support. I feel that a caveat in this, however, is that is has coincided with a lack of support from police officers in charge of investigations.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

Over the last quarter particularly I have noticed a lack of engagement from Officers in Charge, as well as an increase in length of time taken to complete mundane parts of investigations e.g. taking witness statements. Clients are more frequently being left for months with no communication and/or update, as well as without even knowing if a suspect has been interviewed. This, of course, increases the need for our challenging of the criminal justice process whilst simultaneously managing clients emotional support. To further this, there has been an increase in inappropriate means of contact, particularly calls from officers during evenings when no immediate support is available to the client, or out of the blue NFA decisions via the telephone. This leaves the ISVA barely any time to respond to the emotional needs, and sometime safeguarding needs, of the client. This is continued to be raised as an issue both directly with Merseyside police and through criminal justice pathways provided by our Team Leader, Sarah Tipton, who is actively involved in meetings with criminal justice professionals.

A further positive to the above, is the inclusion of our new Listening Ear service. These emotional support sessions go a long way towards taking pressure of the ISVAs where we know we won't have time to speak to a particular client for another few weeks. Clients with more intense needs find this very useful, and feedback has been positive. We also have a new RADS group, run by me, which will be taking place in May 2022 and is already at full capacity. We hope to see continued changes in positive offerings for clients who need more than their ISVA can offer at any given time.

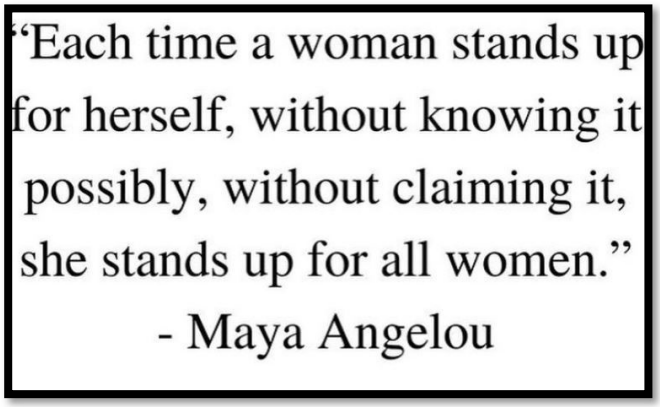
With the addition of extra services, I have been able to take on some RASA counselling clients. This is positive as it allows us to see a full therapeutic process in play, something we miss out on given the stagnation ISVA clients often find themselves in amongst the criminal justice process.

Being able to utilise my full counselling ability also gives me some diversity in the role, which alongside completing the Night-time Economy training is creating a good balance. Together with the Wirral ISVA, I have attended continued professional development training with Lime Culture under the title of

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

"Supporting Clients with Additional Needs." This advised us better ways of dealing with suicidal clients, clients who may be involved in gang culture and clients who are involved in sex work.

This shed more light into important client areas that may be missed and how to deal with them. We are also booked in this year to have a full days training on clients with Learning Disabilities and other special additional needs, which will be particularly helpful given the ongoing presence of this population in our caseloads and the particular needs/ vulnerabilities they bring.



I am hopeful for the future of the ISVA team given exciting changes that have already happened in the last few years; however, with our ever-increasing workloads I hope that our level of service is continuously supported. The team we have at this stage is a formidable one, and with the continued support of the community, the organisation and funding bodies I know we will continue to thrive.

Alex Cavanagh - Liverpool ISVA

At the start of May 2021, we were hugely excited at the possibility of moving our entire Wirral operation to a new building. RASA started out in a small house in Birkenhead in 1986 and while we had expanded into the next-door property, with increased client numbers and the need for more counselling rooms, space was becoming a serious issue. In addition, traffic levels have greatly increased in the intervening years, and it was difficult to find quiet times in the day. Add to that the relocation of the centralised fire station and ambulance station and the challenges grew. Staff were certainly finding problems running hypnotherapy sessions when the blue light services were in full swing. We viewed it, we planned it and we waited.

Our social media team engaged fully with the theme of Mental Health Awareness Week 2021 – nature and celebrated the many ways being in the natural world can help us overcome many mental health issues.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

Meanwhile, plans were underway for a great big street celebration to mark the emergence of support services from the darkness of lockdown. RASA Education was in a position to be a major sponsor and agencies across Merseyside were getting onboard.

We were also pleased to welcome Emily Spurrell PCC for Merseyside to the Bootle offices in early May. She met with staff and volunteers and took time to understand what we did and where.

We noted in May, a sudden spike in recent rape referrals, with no particular common factor. All such information was handed to Merseyside Police to assess and investigate.

Our finance and fundraising team spent a lot of May desperately seeking capital funding that would be needed to convert our newly discovered Birkenhead building for effective use as a counselling and support centre for Wirral. We were met by far too many closed doors as the funding arena had changed post Covid and the needs and wants of funders were more focused on immediate support for individuals impacted by the pandemic – and less on long term capital investment.

In parallel with such searches, we were also keenly seeing funding for additional remote counsellors as our waiting lists were growing and our counselling spaces were permanently at capacity.

With an enhanced report of sexual violence within the night-time economy, RASA staff agreed to work with bar staff to train them on how to be an effective observer and how to intervene or call the alarm. A campaign, in partnership with Liverpool City Council set out to inform and advise the public about RASA, The Police, The Merseyside SARC through posters and leaflets in taxi cabs that served the City.

A new way of working with clients – Single Session Therapy – was trialled in this month.
SST is 'an intentional endeavour where the client and therapist agree to meet to help the client deal with their nominated concern in one session knowing that more help is available if needed'.
In this definition, several important points are made:

1. *The work has a purpose*. The *intention* is ideally to help the person in one session.

2. *The client will get the help needed.* Further therapy sessions are available if the client needs such help.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

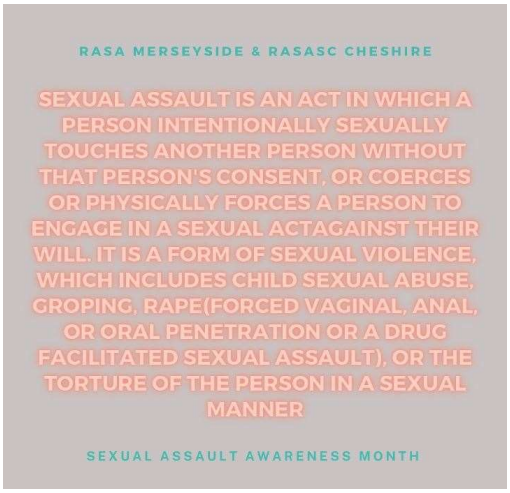
bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

3. *The work is consensual.* The therapist and client *agree* to embark based on the first two points.

This was an entirely new way of working for RASA and one that is carefully assessed before being considered. The challenge is to find the right clients with the right single-issue concerns. There is a lot of preparatory work and clients are aware that further support is available in the future should they so request it, but for some – it just works, and it saves them waiting for months on a waiting list. Several counsellors have been specifically trained in this mode of counselling and it is strictly monitored by RASA Clinical Lead.

In May 2021 we welcomed 250 new clients and at the end of May 2021 waiting lists were as follows

Adults 705 Children 110



COUNSELLING WITH RASA

As I reflect on financial year 2021/2022, I'm proud of the work we have achieved at RASA Merseyside I have seen an increased trend of clients who are presenting with more complex needs. Those who have multiple diagnosed personality and mental health disorders, which can make the work I do as a counsellor more complicated, but never less fulfilling. Clients with complex needs are satisfied with their improved outcomes at the end of therapy, which of course is my goal.

I love that at RASA everyone has the same good intentions, and we are always looking at ways in which we can improve the service, whether that be by process changes or further training of staff. This year more than ever we have evidenced that we are able to develop and grow with the demands and needs of the service and all with the best motives, to improve our clients lives.

Gemma Parle – Counsellor

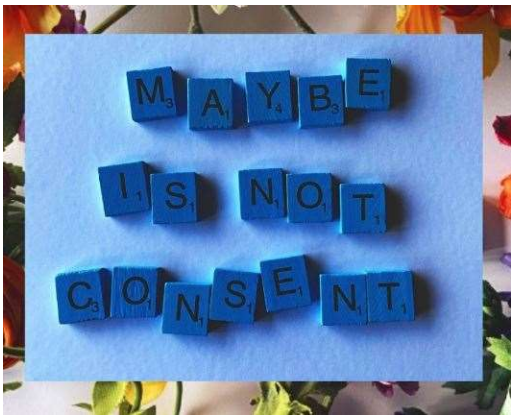
RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

By June 2021 we had received the architects drawings and the costings for the proposed new centre in Wirral. And it was no great surprise that costs had doubled post Covid. So – far from it being cut and dried and an easy option, it suddenly became a mountain to climb, and we had to start looking for some funders/sponsors quickly.

Development work was still moving on apace and the Safer Streets campaign was really getting going. Further information can be found by checking out https://sexualviolencesupport.co.uk/safer-streets-merseyside/ but during this year RASA engaged fully at every stage and was very much at the heart of the campaign. We celebrate the huge changes in recent years and the progress that has been made as sexual violence has become recognised for the hugely damaging impact it has on women and girls. 10-15 years ago it would hardly have seemed possible to imagine such positive co-operation between all the involved statutory and voluntary services.

As part of our involvement in the Safer Streets Campaign, we launched campaign of our own in July 21 The "It's not me, it's you" campaign.

The campaign ran across all RASA social media and blazoned on tee shirts and hoodies intended to make the point – and did – that women and girls are never responsible for the abuse perpetrated against them. It was a huge success and people were requesting tee shirts and hoodies to be able to support us. The campaign introduction video had over 2000 views. We have stickers all over Liverpool in public areas.



What was the key thing for you about your experience of RASA?

"Someone to take the time to listen to what I've been through and give me the support I needed."

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

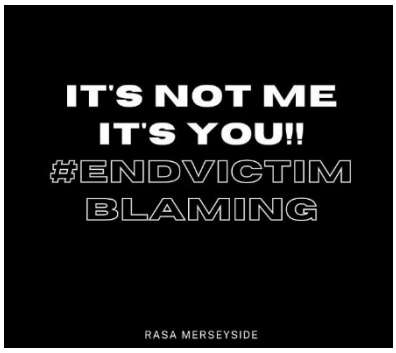
LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

Ofsted Report

In light of an Ofsted report RASA developed a workshop for schools and colleges to be delivered from September onwards. With 2 requests already booked, it looked to be well received.

Our funding team spent the month searching for funders to support our additional needs of family worker, integrative counsellor, and a "power project" young people's worker. We were able to deliver a full sexual violence aftercare service but as always, we wanted to offer that little bit more. Our concern was for young people slipping through the net and not engaging in counselling – we wanted to be able to reach them.



We learned that several Liverpool taxis were now carrying information about our services as a result of the work we were doing on the night-time economy. This was great progress.

We completed another series of clinical hypnotherapy work with clients. The feedback was excellent, and we planned another course to start in October.

Our new ISVA started work and volunteers were in training to manage the Listening Ear Project for clients on the waiting list for counselling.

In June 2021 we welcomed 248 new clients into RASA and our waiting lists were as follows:

Adults 769 Children 109

<u>My Year at RASA – Sarah Tipton – ISVA & ISVA Service Manager</u>

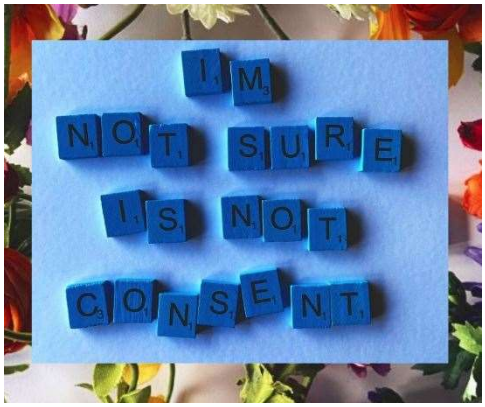
In the past year I have carried out the role of ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Advisor) & ISVA Service Manager.

My role has included developing the ISVA service, supporting the team, liaising/meeting with other professionals (mostly online but some face-to-face meetings have resumed/are an option), establishing communication pathways with new contacts in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and championing not only RASA as a service, but for the victims/survivors who are pursuing their case in the CJS.

I have also continued to provide ISVA support to clients, Some who are long standing clients that I have kept on my caseload due to the relationship built or because their cases were due a case decision or due to go to court.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

ISVA



In the ISVA role, we provide a voice for those clients who don't feel they are able to communicate their needs to others in the CJS, an explanation of the CJS in understandable terms for the client with informed choice sessions, regular communication (with experience of supporting others through this process) and independent advice based on the clients best interest with a person-centred approach. We will also be there for those who come to our service who are unsure of what support they would like or unsure if they want to go through the CJS.

Referrals for the ISVA service mainly come from the Police, self-referrals, Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC) and other agencies/professionals.

Over the last year we have needed particular focus on referrals coming in from Night-time Economy incidents (including the rise we saw in spiking incidents, both drink and needle spiking), increased reporting of sexual abuse incidents involving university students and a higher number of clients who have reported sexual abuse (usually historic) that are being heard at MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) over DV (Domestic Violence) concerns.

We've managed to maintain not having a waiting list as such for the ISVA service, but clients may wait a few weeks for an assessment or their appointments due to ISVA availability. Potentially they may be waiting for an assessment/appointments longer if they cancel or DNA (do not attend) any that are arranged.

Throughout support, I will manage client expectations of the criminal justice process and help to focus/develop their best coping strategies. I can assist clients in helping other professionals involved (and on occasions their employers), to understand the process and to have some concept of what the client is going through.

We provide a multi-agency approach by liaising with other professionals, seeking advice and support within the RASA team and referring/signposting clients to other support when needed. As a service, we have continued to provide a full risk and needs assessment in each session with clients. I have initiated collaborative work with my team to enhance this assessment process, so we are striving to be as inclusive and holistic as possible in our approach to the client's needs.

My counselling skills continue to be of great benefit to carrying out the ISVA role and now the role of a manager.

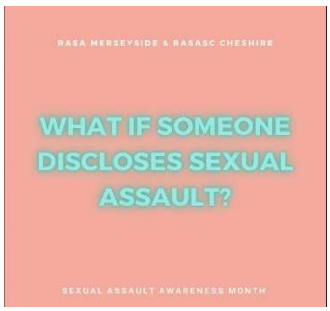
RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

Empathy, non-judge mentality, and congruent person skills are needed to be transferred into the relationship I build with both ISVA clients and ISVA team members.



Court

11 *of my clients cases have been due for court trial this last year – only 3 of which opted to do a Section28 (pre-recorded questioning):*

2 *trials were postponed for covid reasons. (Now due to go ahead April 2022).*

2 *clients trials sadly received a not guilty verdict.*

5 Guilty Verdicts -

1 *- Female client – historic CSA – offender given 15 years prison, Sexual Harm Prevention Order and restraining order, (for offences against my client and her young niece).*

1 *- Female client – historic CSA - offender given 8-year prison sentence with requirement to sign on the Sex Offenders Register.*

1 *– Female Client – historic CSA and physical abuse - offender given 21 years in prison.*

1 *– Male client - historic CSA - perpetrator found guilty 6 out of 8 charges. Offender given 4 years 9 months in prison and an indefinite restraining order.*

1 *– Male client - historic CSA - perpetrator found guilty 7 out of 9 counts. Offender given 4 years in prison with requirement to sign on the Sex Offenders Register for life.*

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

2 Guilty Pleas:

1 *- Female client – recent assault - received a guilty plea a few days before trial, to SA and ABH but the offender pleaded not guilty to attempted rape. This was accepted by my client and the offender was given 32 months prison, 5 year restraining order and requirement to sign on the Sex Offenders Register.*

1 *– Female client - historic CSA - offender gave guilty plea at trial on 5 out of 6 charges. Offender given 5 years prison and requirement to sign on the Sex Offenders Register.*

Overview of Court

I feel it's important to note that while it looks like there are high numbers of guilty verdicts or guilty pleas with a couple of particularly lengthy custodial sentences. This last year has been an accumulation of cases due to postponements from the previous year. Also, as mentioned initially, I had kept on my clients who were due for charging decision, were waiting on court dates and who already had court dates booked in. This was rather than handing them over to another team member, although I have been trying to reduce my caseload for taking on more managerial responsibilities. So, I believe it looks like a more successful 12 months than normal in relation to court results and number of trials, due to these out of the ordinary circumstances.

However, it's still very much worth recognising those successful outcomes for what they are and for what those outcomes will hopefully provide in terms of those clients being able to move forward and feel like justice has been served. It has also been positive for me to experience a higher percentage of successful court outcomes for my clients. I have felt both immensely relieved and thankful for the successful outcomes that clients have had.

ISVA Service Manager

In relation to my responsibilities as ISVA Service Manager, which is now the bulk of my role, I continue to enjoy carrying out this work and supporting the ISVA team.

It is an enormous help and reassurance to be part of such a wonderful team. We try to support one another as each of us recognise this is key to functioning as best as we can as a team. Everyone seems to be working really well together and everyone in the team shows compassion in doing the best they can in the ISVA role. The team have given feedback of how supported they feel, which makes me happy and gives me a great deal of job satisfaction.

Due to the service/staff needs, over this last year we have been awarded additional funding to recruit 2 more team members. One started with us beginning of June 2021 – she has really settled in well to the role and has

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

achieved so much already. Another, working specifically to develop a male service for ISVA clients, started with us end of November 2021. She is doing a great job of learning the role and her funding specifically came as a result of research, which Vicky Green (Clinical Lead) contributed to in terms of highlighting particularly male victim/survivor needs.
Now trained in RASA procedures and the ISVA role, with further training booked, she will start to develop the service we provide for males, not just from an ISVA perspective but for RASA as a whole.

One of our team members sadly left the ISVA role end of January 2022, however, the team are happy for her pursuing her counselling career still within RASA. As a result of this we recruited another new team member who started with us beginning of March 2022. She is just coming to the end of her RASA ISVA service training period and will be starting to work independently with clients. She has made great progress with her role so far and I'm sure she will continue to do well.

All team members are minimum Level 3 Counselling Skills trained. This is something I have put in place as I believe it better equips the team to communicate effectively with clients and professionals and helps them to be more self-aware of what their own needs are both professionally and personally.

This year I have also set up a Listening Ear service for ISVA clients. 2 RASA volunteers are very kindly providing this support for one day a week each. It's offered to those clients who need more frequent focused emotional support and/or more focused coping strategies putting in place. This not only helps the clients but also helps the ISVAs due to their lack of availability, at times, as a result of workloads. The service is running well so far with some really positive feedback from clients and has a growing waiting list.

We have also set up ISVA RADS Groups, which looks at coping strategies for ISVA clients focussing on Reducing Anxiety Depression & Stress. We ran the first group with some lovely feedback received. We hope to run 2 further groups, 1 which has now completed in late 2021 and 1 which is due to run in May 2022. We're hoping to run an average of 3 RADS groups a year.

In terms of the staff, as well as monthly team meetings, I've been delivering bi-monthly self-care meetings for the ISVAs, which I know they need and appreciate. The setup of these meetings varies and are led by the ISVAs in terms of ideas and suggestions of what we can do in the time we have. I am even more reassured that this is good practice as a service to have this in place after a study published highlighting the support ISVA workers need. (Report: A study of impacts, effects, coping mechanisms and effective support systems for people working as ISVAs and ISVA Managers (May 2021) – by Canterbury Christ Church University and Middlesex University London, with support from LimeCulture).

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

I continue to have a regular focus on what personal development needs individual members of the team have, support them with advice and list them on training/workshops where possible. I will continue to review with their input on how the team can best be supported.

The ISVA Team did a fundraising event for RASA in our own time. We did 7 hours of exercise in one day, with the message of positive benefits of exercise, healthy eating and mindfulness which we promote to our clients. We took photos and videos throughout the day for content which was used for a week-long social media wellness campaign. The feedback from this was positive, the content received a lot of engagement, and we raised over £760. This money has gone towards anything RASA needs to support clients with general well-being and activities, such as the mindfulness course.

As A Whole

I continue to undergo supervision for quality of work and self-care, as well as keeping record of information and activity within my roles.

I continue with my personal development attending training and workshops around the work I carry out and keeping up to date with standards, policies and safeguarding.

I continue to maintain and build new relationships with other professionals and services to enable us to have a multi-agency approach to supporting clients. Where possible I have championed for changes needed within the CJS.

Office/room space has become an issue for appointments on most days in both of our centres. This has had some influence in the home working rota I set up and does impact the teams' availability for face-to-face appointments. This has been voiced to management and we hope at some point in the future to be able to look at new/bigger premises, funding permitted.

However, I do think the pandemic has opened up more of an accepted convenience for clients to receive remote support and for RASA as an organisation to look at more hybrid working depending on client need. Which I believe has been a positive change.

Other

In the previous year I provided feedback to Merseyside Police Corporate Support & Development Officer. The feedback was then taken to the National Rape Review and is starting to be filtered down locally. A National ISVA Framework was put in place in 2021 for use by the police and CPS across England and Wales. The framework outlines minimum standards on liaising and communicating with ISVAs. It's starting to show signs of being adhered to by our local CPS and will be addressed through Police training over the coming year.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

RCEW (Rape Crisis England & Wales) have released a report called 'Holding it Together: the Courage, resilience, and innovation of Rape Crisis Centres during the Covid-19 pandemic'. It details the remarkable efforts of Rape Crisis Centres, to rise up and adapt quickly to meet the urgent needs of victims and survivors over the course of the pandemic. Recognising the inconceivable challenges services have faced during these unprecedented times and the incredible achievements of Rape Crisis Centres over the last year and a half.

I made contributions to this report by providing feedback in monthly meetings and I gave written information on a particular case where a client of mine died before his offender's court trial, after the trial previously being postponed.

Looking to the Future

After a recent development with our relationship with local CPS, I am feeling confident they are also championing for changes and improvements to be made within the CJS.

I am providing a voice recording of my feedback to contribute towards Merseyside Police VAWG (Violence Against Women & Girls) training. This training will be delivered to all front-line officers and anyone who deals with investigating cases or communicating with the public. The feedback will be based on what clients have voiced to me about the Police in terms of the CJS, with examples of both good and bad practice. As a professional working for over 9 years now to support people through the CJS who have suffered sexual abuse, I feel this feedback will be invaluable for local Police training and hope it contributes towards positive change.

I have developed in my role as a person and the team have grown stronger in many ways. I look forward to the opportunity for further development, continuing to lead and support the ISVA team.

It is still on my agenda to develop an ISVA Support Group based on giving practical information and allowing time for clients to connect with one another (with clear boundaries). This unfortunately kept getting put on hold over the last year as I have spent unforeseen time with new team members, developed other areas of the service and have been supporting a high number of clients through court proceedings.

I hope that we are able to obtain funding for more/larger premises due to there being limited room availability. It's been fed back that some clients can only attend an evening group, but we currently don't have the space available to do this.

It is my hope that we will also obtain funding for a specific ISVA Pre-Trial Therapist. The services already set up along with more space, another support group and a pre-trial therapist would be the icing on

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

the cake to help a lot of clients to cope better through a difficult and lengthy criminal justice process. But also help them to feel empowered having more choice in how they are supported.

Then the cherry on top would be to have another 1 or 2 more ISVAs so we are able to have better availability for clients and the team can feel they are able to provide the best support possible.

It is my dream that the ISVA service will continue to go from strength to strength in terms of delivering a holistic plan of support to clients and I look forward to the year ahead.

Sarah Tipton
ISVA Services Manager

At the start of July 2021, we were involved in delivering sexual violence and disclosure training in the night-time economy to a variety of night time economy workers.

It was well received, and we are pleased that even more workers will be available to look out for people enjoying a night out in Liverpool.

We took the opportunity on several occasions to challenge news reports of sexual crimes and explore some of the language used and how it is inappropriate and misleading. This could become a full-time role in its own right as we discovered in the short time we were able to devote to the exercise.

We also launched a new training course - Counselling children and young people - This a post qualifying CPD course for counsellors who want to develop knowledge and skills relating to the therapeutic work with Children and Young people. It aims to provide a forum for counsellors to develop as a reflective practitioner and explore working with children and young people whilst remaining within the philosophical underpinnings of your core training. As with many RASA training courses, it quickly filled.

We managed to achieve funding through The Steve Morgan Foundation for one of the outstanding roles we wanted to create. We had funding to recruit a "Power Project Worker" to encourage engagement from disengaged young people in need of support after sexual violence.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RASA staff completed a 21 mile walk from Liverpool to Southport to raise awareness of victim blaming! This walk covered our Liverpool and Sefton region of work. We all wore our campaign tee shirts and there was lots of engagement with members of the public en route.

We wanted to stand up for anyone who has been subjected to victim blaming and pay tribute to anyone who has been tragically lost, going through it or been impacted by it. Together we can pay tribute to survivors and stand up for anyone subjected to sexual violence and not believed or blamed. What is always important to understand is that sexual violence is never, ever the fault of the person who experiences it. It was such a special day for many reasons, we spent the day in each other's company, laughing, crying laughing, aches and pains but finally catching up with each properly. It's important to self-care (although I'm sure a few of the team would say a 21-mile walk is not self-care and quite the opposite😂) and really take time to hear each other. 🩶

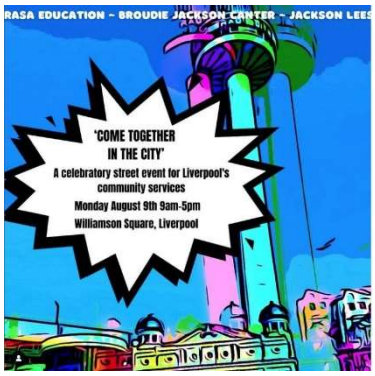
We also created and buried a time capsule close to the memorial to the woman who's death triggered RASA's beginnings.

We sincerely hope things have changed when we dig up the time capsule in five years' time. Our thoughts, feelings and hopes regarding victim blaming are buried away. Five years is a short period of time, but it's 1825 days. 1825 days to help change society's perception on why sexual violence happens and how the perpetrator is always to blame. We buried the capsule by Diane's memorial in Birkenhead. Diane Sindall was murdered on her way home from work just before midnight on Friday, August 1,1986. Her car had run out of petrol on Borough Road, and she had gone in search of petrol. Diane, 21, was just 500 yards from an all-night garage when her attacker struck. She was raped and murdered. RASA was founded in Diane's memory as a catalyst for justice and change. Sexual violence is never your fault, and we should ALWAYS support, believe anyone subjected to sexual violence and continue the fight for justice

In July 2021 we welcomed 210 new clients to RASA. Waiting lists were as follows:

Adults 775 Children 96

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556



In August 21 RASA hosted a street event to celebrate coming out of lockdown. The impact of lockdown cannot be under-estimated. Alongside the ongoing battle to protect each other from the virus, support for social, mental health, and financial issues became even more important than ever.

We know that people's mental health deteriorated during lockdown; loneliness increased; in some cases adults and children became more vulnerable to abuse with nowhere to escape to, and largely, no one to tell; and for many there has been a devastating financial impact.

RASA hosted a street event is to showcase some of the different services available within the Liverpool region that are there to support those impacted by abuse. The event took place on Monday 9th August from 9am – 5pm.

Each agency had an outdoor stall to provide information to members of the public on the services which they offer. There was a range of services at the event including RASA/ Merseyside Police, WHISC and all the Liverpool domestic violence services . We even had entertainment for the children with dancers and face painters.

The aim of the event was to raise awareness, promote services, and showcase the work achieved during lockdown, and also celebrated the end of tough restrictions and the importance of community. The Liverpool Mayor opened the event, we also had a speech from the PCC.

There was a disclosure van for anyone who wanted to access support on the day. The van was in use most of the day. The event was sponsored by RASA Education Limited and Jackson and Roby solicitors who were present on the day to offer advice on family law.

We had some amazing acts some included ex-service users including poets, singers, bands even a boxing class. The event was absolutely bouncing from start to finish. We had radio and local TV coverage. It was a fantastic event with entertainment for everyone.

Following the tragic murder of Sarah Everard, it was felt that more needed to be done to raise awareness and have our voice as women and professional heard. We started our talk show "The Agenda" the first session covered the impact that Sarah Everard's Murder had on staff and clients.

The agenda runs monthly discussing different topics with guest speakers. We have welcomed many interesting people to the discussions including Dr Jessica Taylor, Maggie Oliver, Merseyside Police to name a few.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

We ran a pilot – Guardian scheme – working around the night clubs and bars to assist potentially vulnerable people. It has not yet been determined if this will become a regular scheme.

Lorraine Wood - Operations Manager

In August 21 we welcomed 213 new clients to RASA. Waiting lists at the end of August were as follows. Adults 843 Children 95

My year at RASA Merseyside

This is my second year at RASA, and I now feel I have really settled into the role and have a great understanding and education around it. This past year has provided new team members which I feel have added a new dynamic to the team and I personally have got on with very well. In this past year I have carried out the role of the adult ISVA for the Wirral area and also the assessment officer for Liverpool referrals. This means my time has been split between managing my own caseload, Wirral referrals and completing the Liverpool assessments that have been booked in for me.

The majority of my time is spent supporting my Wirral clients through the criminal justice process, offering practical and emotional support within scheduled sessions and also in the interim between appointments. My caseload through this year has usually been between 55 to 60 clients at a time and I split my time between the Birkenhead office, where I see the majority of my clients face to face when able to, due to the continued Covid 19, and also the Bootle office, where I conduct the Liverpool telephone assessments.

Counselling

I have continued to find that, an interesting addition to my role, is the opportunity to see a counselling client a week to ensure my skills are remaining up-to-date and in constant use. I am still a student counsellor, having finished the academic side of the counselling diploma and have finally completed the 100 hours I need to qualify, leaving me with a final assignment to complete before being fully qualified. I have found, in particular this year, that counselling skills, come hand in hand with the ISVA role, with the need for active listening, empathy, and a non-judgmental attitude to be paramount in offering the best support for clients.

In a world where clients often struggle to feel believed, understood, and valued, it is my job to ensure that there is at least one person who is on their side, walking the journey with them. The need to build a trusting relationship with my clients is ever present but also important to highlight the need to build rapport with other professionals and my fellow ISVA colleagues. This good rapport, has for me, ensured, a stable and supportive team that is always able to offer guidance and support if needed. I have noticed that the emotional support needed for clients has increased over this past year. I do believe this is due to starting to see the mental health impacts that the pandemic has had on people - that and the continued world situation.

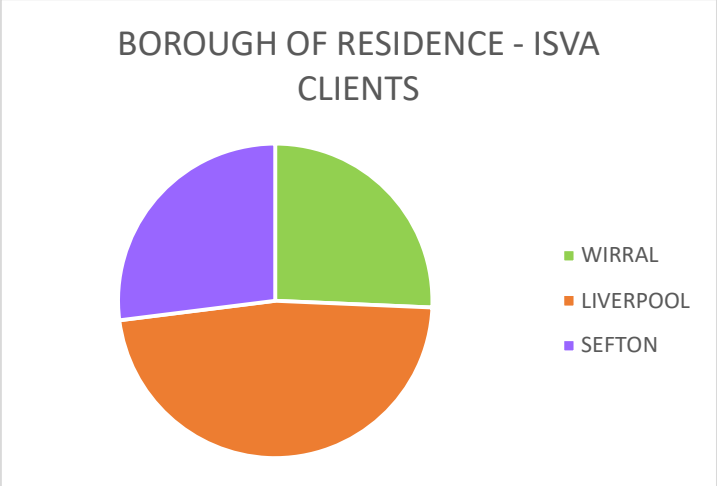
I have found that the proportion of clients who present with heightened anxiety and hypervigilance has increased, and the need for support has been greater. This has had some impact on the job role as

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

the emotional support and therefore workload has increased and, in my opinion, will continue to increase going forward.

My ISVA role

This past year I have found that the majority of my work has been offering emotional support to clients and helping to hold them through the duration of the criminal justice process. It has been important for me to build a good rapport, and strong relationships with the client where they feel they can trust me and lean on me if they need to. I have continued work with many clients from last year, as the criminal justice journey is such a lengthy process.



This means, I feel I have built an incredibly strong, professional relationship with many of my clients, and can recognize through positive feedback that they find me empathic and supportive at all times. I have found that a continued struggle in my job role is having to manage clients' expectations and be the voice of reason and reality. I have found, that when the rapport is strong, this is usually easier, as clients, more often than not, would prefer to know the truth and the reality of what to expect even if it isn't exactly what they want to hear. This honesty, and openness, I believe, is one of the most integral parts of my job role and is something I always have been when working with clients.

It is my job to ensure the client has informed choices and has access to all the information they need to understand and process the criminal justice system wherever they may be within it, so I am constantly available to answer questions, and give information and advice to ensure the client has all the information provided to them and their autonomy remains at the forefront of all the decisions. My role has allowed me to give those that feel they do not have one, a voice, whether that be in their lives or with other professionals. By acting as an advocate, it often allows the client the support needed to make further choices and develops a confidence to take control and ownership of their own journey and experience.

Assessment Role

Another aspect of my role is to complete the Wirral and Liverpool assessments for clients engaging in the service. This assessment allows us to highlight any safeguarding issues and needs for the client to create a tailor-made support plan that put the client at the centre. These assessments usually take about an hour and a half including the additional paperwork that is needed. I have had to make several safeguarding referrals in my time this year and am fully educated in when and how to make these. I believe I am completely competent in completing this assessment and have found this a very enjoyable part of my job role.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

Due to this very strong and highly effective risk assessment which is continued to be utilized throughout support, I am always able to manage risk and safeguard clients in a way that is unique to them. Every session conducted with a client I will ensure I have followed the risk assessment in full to best support the client, pick up any concerns, make appropriate referrals, liaise with other professionals, and safeguard in any way that is needed.

I am often contacting other professionals and working in a multi-agency manner to best support the client in their life as a whole. Often this will mean contacting police officers, witness care officers, IDVAs, or sometimes acting as an advocate for housing and employment, helping others understand the criminal justice process and the impacts this is having on the client. I have found, and continue to find it, really beneficial and helpful that we have such an experienced and close-knit ISVA team, who I know I can communicate with when I am seeking guidance, advice or emotional support.

The main source of referrals I find is from the police, SARCs and often internally from PAC calls or the counselling service. Sometimes clients will refer themselves into the service. I find that, depending on the referral, it will often depend on the quality of information I receive before completing the initial assessment. Regardless of this, all the information required will be obtained when completing the assessment.

I have had a varied range of client cases, from more difficult and complex to fairly straight forward. This also impacts how much support a client will need and is really unique and individual to the client. I have noticed an increase in workload with more challenging clients, who need more support, as sessions will be more frequent and multi-agency work needed more often. During this last year, I have definitely been dealing with much more complex clients, who have a greater need.

I have noticed an even bigger delay, from when I started during the pandemic, in case updates, investigation stages, CPS decision and court dates. What has also been more challenging, is the number of court dates including charge, trial, and sentencings, that have been postponed. There is an awful lot of work being done between ISVA lead, CPS and witness care, in order to make the process of postponements more victim friendly. So far, when needing to chase reasons, I have found the new protocol, very helpful in getting more detailed reasoning to pass onto the client.

Support in court

Several times this year, I have supported in court in either a trial, as section 28 (pre-recorded cross examination), or a video link. When a case goes to court, my support has been provided from the very beginning of the process. This starts with ensuring the client has their voice heard about how they would like to give evidence, and any applications for special measures made and granted. This requires liaison with the client, the witness care service and CPS.

Often communication can be slightly difficult with other professionals, so it is necessary that this is chased up.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

I have ensured that clients are fully aware of the court process and have all the information they need to feel as prepared as possible. I also ensure that the client has access to a pre-court visit, if this is something they are wanting prior to their attendance. Over this past year, my physical attendance has been required where I will offer as much emotional support as possible. I have received, only positive feedback, and heartfelt thanks from clients for my support at this time, with one client stating that she "would not have got through it without me being there and couldn't be more grateful". I have also supported clients in completing CPS expenses forms following the trial, alleviated some of the stress present for them.

Sadly, as is often expected, this year I have continued to have more police and CPS no further actions than cases that have gone to trial. It is my job, in these circumstances, to really hold the client and offer that emotional support. It is always important to ensure the client has enough reasoning, understands that these decisions are not because they are not believed and support with an appeal if that's the route they choose. Over the past year, I have organized a few police meetings to ensure clients are given a full brief of the reasons for the NFA decision.

In one particular case, a very vulnerable client, who received a police NFA, felt her needs were considered and met by the arranging of the meeting by myself. She stated afterwards that she "would not have survived the investigation without me and felt that, because of the police meeting, the reasons were clear, and a full understanding was gained allowing the moving forward". I have had 3 cases go to court, all with guilty verdicts and custodial sentences. I have also had an early guilty plea entered and for which we are still awaiting the sentencing.

In this situation I checked in with the client that she understood what was going on, which at the time she did not, due to the legal jargon being used. I ensured to provide a greater understanding for her and explain what was happening in terms she was able to understand and process. Again, she thanked me deeply for my role in her support.

Further development

During this past year, I have completed my ISVA training accredited by Lime Culture. I have also taken part in all the mandatory training and additional training provided by RASA in order to better do my job. I attend focus meetings facilitated by Lime Culture for working with clients for disabilities whereby we share information and guidance amongst ISVA's across the country to best support clients appropriately. I also feed what was discussed to my fellow colleagues so we are able to support in the best way we can. I have attended training for supporting clients with other needs such as sex workers, girls in gangs and those within the LGBTQ+ community.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

This year I have also completed training about dealing with suicide resulting in becoming a suicide first-aider, and I intend to complete the level 4 qualification in this also. There is further training I have been enrolled on for supporting client with additional needs which will be completed by April 2022.

Our ISVA team also had an assessment with Lime Culture this year, in order to determine our re-accreditation. During this, I was asked specific questions about how I complete my job role within the policies and procedures provided by Lime Culture. Happily, we were recently granted this re-accreditation. This accolade displays, the knowledge, quality and ability of the ISVA team and each individual in it.

Thoughts on my role

Regarding my ISVA role, I am continuing to find the job enjoyable and satisfying, although sometimes challenging. I can manage these challenges that I come across and believe that resilience and self-care is key in maintaining a good work ethic.

One of the most important things for me has been the continued support within the ISVA team and I genuinely believe that in order for me to do my job to the best of my ability the cohesion, knowledge and empathy of the team is paramount. I constantly feel supported and feel that I am always able to share my casework, ask questions and generally talk about the job.

As we all have quite a heavy workload and a busy day to day working life, it is so important that I have a strong team to lean on and hope that they equally feel they are able to lean on me. I find it incredibly helpful to always have open communications with my team and line manager, where I can ask questions and gain further knowledge. I have also had the opportunity to train new members of the team and share the knowledge and expertise that I feel I have gained this past year.

I got very good feedback from my team members who really enjoyed my training style and felt that it equipped them with the tools needed to start the job on a confident note. I have received good feedback from clients thanking me for the support that I offer which is always incredibly nice to hear and reassures me that I am doing my job effectively. Any additional feedback I do receive I then try to utilise and apply this to future case work. In this next coming year, I have been given the opportunity to change roles within the ISVA team so will be spending more time managing the referrals and assessments. I am looking forward to this new challenge and gaining further skills for my role.

In order to maintain my own mental health and ensure my client work is effective, meeting the needs of the client, and professional, I am regularly utilizing supervision. Over the past year I have had two supervisors, with one taking over for interim due to maternity leave. I feel like both supervisors, and I have had a very good rapport and feel comfortable and safe to explore any issues I feel I need to. Through this supervision and line management I have been able to manage more challenging cases

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

with a confidence and professionalism without getting overwhelmed. It has been paramount to my personal development and learning experience within the role so far.

I feel that so far in my time at RASA I have really blossomed in the ISVA role. I have developed my knowledge and skills and feel that I am now an integral part of the ISVA team and the RASA family. It continues to be the most fulfilling job that I have ever done, albeit with its challenges, and I feel blessed to have been given the opportunity within this amazing company. Going forward, I hope to continue to grow and develop, having the opportunity to support even more clients and take an even bigger and more active role within my new job role. I would love to get further involved with RASA and all the exciting new things that are happening in the next coming year. I feel honoured to be able to work with such amazing women and in particular, a formidable ISVA team, that faces it's challenges, difficult workload, and emotional impacts, head on, supporting clients to the absolute best of our ability.

Nadia Bakir- Wirral ISVA and Liverpool Assessments Officer

In September 21 we welcomed 223 new clients to RASA. Waiting lists at the end of the month were as follows Adults 851 Children 96

In October 21 we started work on rebranding RASA. We felt that our logo was looking tired and not perhaps as professional as we wanted it to be. We tried multiple variations until we found one that looked good whatever background supported it.

Work began on preparation of a training video for training bus drivers how to be effective bystanders. It was deemed impossible to try and stop transport to train the drivers en masse so this was the next best option. This activity was part of the Safer Streets Project.

It's been another eventful year at RASA. In addition to client work and managerial responsibilities, during this time I have been able to complete the Level 5 CBT course and Level 1 EMDR course. These have both had a huge positive impact on clients and I feel very proud of the fact that at RASA, we have so much support to offer our clients. It's positive that more people are now reaching out for support but unfortunately, we have long waiting lists. We are always striving to think of ways to improve our service and access to support and so we decided to create an 8 week course for clients as a potential alternative to counselling.

We decided that it could be delivered to groups and would focus on psychoeducation. The aim was to enable clients to develop an understanding of sexual violence, the impacts, and how to then regain a sense of control over their lives. We completed a pilot, and the feedback has been extremely positive so we will continue to deliver this in both centres which will hopefully help to reduce the waiting lists a little.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

I really enjoyed getting involved with the RASA walk last year in order to raise awareness of the service and the street event in Liverpool for coming out of lockdown with our partner agencies – it was great to be able to get back out into the community and talk to people about our service and the support that we can offer.

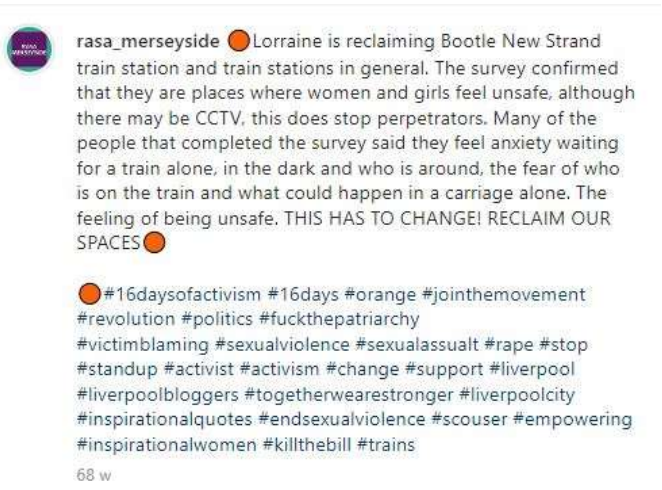
I found that there was less of a stigma about people coming to our stall. In previous years I would often see hands trying to discreetly take our leaflets from the table without being seen but at the street event, it seemed that more people felt comfortable to have conversations about sexual violence and therefore break the silence, which sexual violence thrives on.

As always I feel very blessed and privileged to be part of such an amazing team.

Sarah Meek - Wirral Services Manager

In October 21 we welcomed 256 new clients into RASA services. At the end of the month waiting lists were as follows Adults 879 Children 81

In November 21 RASA was heavily engaged in running events for the 16 days of action to eliminate violence against women and girls. This year, in response to public consultation about feeling unsafe, RASA created a series of videos of women reclaiming spaces deemed unsafe. We reclaimed our public spaces, leaving an orange ribbon and a campaign tag.


rasa_merseyside Lorraine is reclaiming Bootle New Strand train station and train stations in general. The survey confirmed that they are places where women and girls feel unsafe, although there may be CCTV, this does stop perpetrators. Many of the people that completed the survey said they feel anxiety waiting for a train alone, in the dark and who is around, the fear of who is on the train and what could happen in a carriage alone. The feeling of being unsafe. THIS HAS TO CHANGE! RECLAIM OUR SPACES

#16daysofactivism #16days #orange #jointhemovement #revolution #politics #fuckthepatriarchy #victimblaming #sexualviolence #sexualassualt #rape #stop #standup #activist #activism #change #support #liverpool #liverpoolbloggers #togetherwearestronger #liverpoolcity #inspirationalquotes #endsexualviolence #scouser #empowering #inspirationalwomen #killthebill #trains

68 w

The survey demonstrated that women and girls often do not feel safe in public spaces, for example public transport, restaurant/bars and particularly in toilets, parks and walking at night.

I can begin to accept myself, love myself and actually begin to live my life.

Don't think I have had support that worked so hard to help me in my way. My ADHD usually gets overlooked and it was taken into account

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

Videos were shared on our social media pages and members of the public were encouraged to take part and reclaim their own public spaces. Videos were collected and edited and one long video was uploaded to RASA social media. This was a huge success that was embraced by many women.

As part of the campaign, RASA also ran the following activities:

Parents Protect Training –
Child sexual abuse happens in secret and most victims do not tell. The abuser is usually a family friend, neighbour, a member of the child's family or someone working with children: he or she may be someone we know and love. This training provided the information needed to recognise the warning signs of abuse in both adults and children and to build the confidence in accessing support / reporting.

Mindfulness Body Scan - Spending time resting awareness on each part of our body, offering gratitude and affection. The body scan is one of the most effective ways to begin a mindfulness meditation practice. The purpose is to tune in to your body—to reconnect to your physical self—and notice any sensations you're feeling without judgement. Paying homage to empowering our bodies as Women to end violence against Women and Girls.

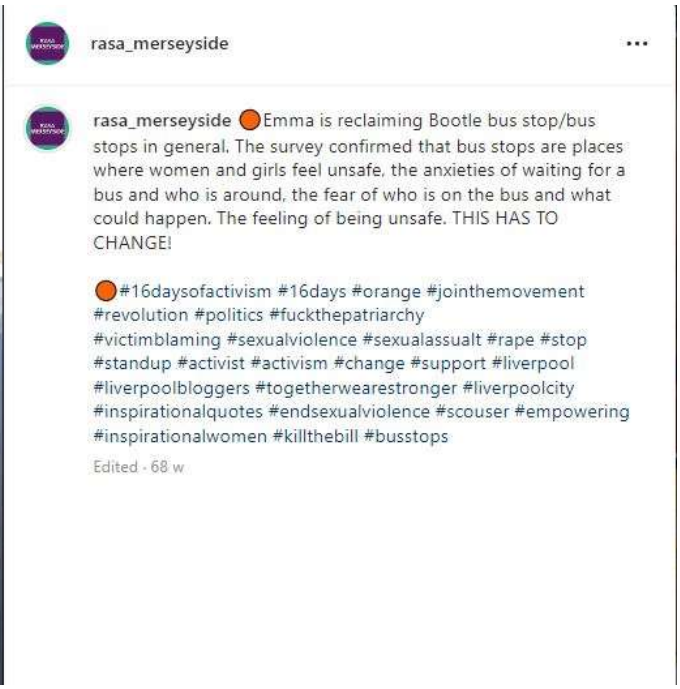
'Mindfulness is a lifetime's journey along a path that ultimately leads nowhere, only to who you are.'

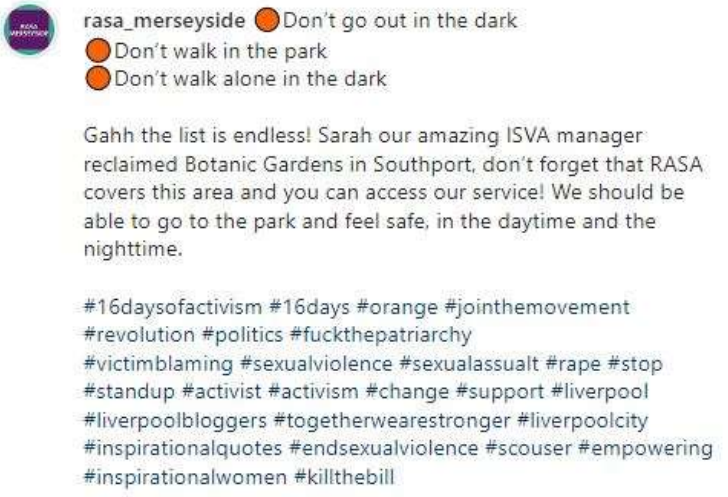
RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)





Responding to disclosures training - This is a 3hour training session suitable for professionals who would like to gain more knowledge with regards to the impact of Sexual Violence and how to respond to disclosures, this session covered the following:

* What is Sexual Violence
* Impact of Sexual Violence
* Responding to Disclosure
* Window of Tolerance

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RASA Power Project Worker visited local schools to capture the voice of young people on the subject of ending violence against women and girls facilitating a display based on these discussions.

In November 21 we welcomed 263 new clients into RASA services. At the end of November, waiting lists were as follows Adults 921 Children 78

In December 21 Covid finally caught up with us. While we had managed to keep open throughout all of the pandemic period, numerous staff had, at different times, fallen prey to the virus. Following a very carefully managed Christmas event in early December 2021, two members of staff tested positive, and we were back into our own mini-lockdown, working remotely while the centres were deep cleaned and fogged. All those screens we had taken down were put back in place again.

It didn't stop us working though, far from it. We continued as we had done in the previous year and worked right up until the Christmas break gave everyone a rest from staring at a computer screen for a few days.

I felt heard, my experiences were listened to, I did not feel rushed or pressured.

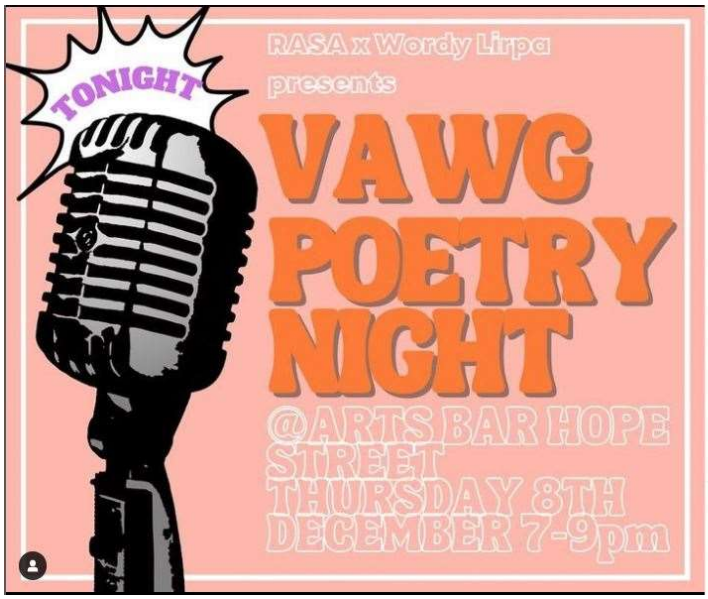
It didn't stop our supporters from raising lots of funds and awareness of our services. We were thrilled that so many organisations got involved in fund raising for RASA in December 21. Big thank you to everyone.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)



rasa_merseyside TONIGHT- RASA X WORDY LIRPA VAWG POETRY ✨✨Get down to @liverpoolartsbar basement, 7-9pm for an amazing collective of local artists coming together to help eliminate violence against women and girls via poetry and the arts. All welcome✨ Do you feel passionate about this? I think we ALL should, things need to change.
TW- content of the evening may be triggering. Massive thank you @liverpoolartsbar @wordy.lirpa

"Violence against Women and Girls is a fundamental human rights violation, affecting 1/3 women around the world. Women and girls experience violence and discrimination in every society simply because of their gender.

Millions of women and girls face many forms of violence throughout their lives, including rape, FGM, sexual exploitation, child marriage, assault, mental abuse, domestic violence, trafficking, stalking, murder, the list is endless. Those subjected to violence can often experience a range of problems, from psychological distress and depression to severe injuries, HIV and unwanted pregnancy. Violence and the threat of violence can stop girls from going to school, from being able to choose if and who they marry and from reaching their potential"

23 likes

DECEMBER 8, 2022

Feedback -

Zoom sessions were really good. It tackled the problems. Helped me overcome a lot in my head.

Feedback –

Very impressed with the level of support and understanding I received.

Job Title: **ISVA for Male Service**

Centre(s): **Where required** (Bootle, Wirral & Southport).

I no longer take on responsibility/blame for the abuse suffered, my relationship has improved, and I feels able to go out on my own.

Summary of day-to-day role: Independent Sexual Violence Advisor for male clients and engagement focus. Supporting clients through the criminal justice system who have reported or wish to report to the police. Practical and emotional support. Establishing interagency relationships with a view to improving client engagement. Developing both the ISVA and RASA's service for males.

Role – ISVA for Male Service (including some female work). Supporting Liverpool, Sefton, and Wirral clients. The role is challenging but I am enjoying it immensely and now I've had full data system (DPMS) training, I feel more confident in performing my administrative duties. All RASA staff have been incredibly supportive in welcoming me to my new role and my team have been patient and understanding as I navigate the job having had a tumultuous start with DPMS due to Christmas break and working from home due to Covid19.

I feel more confident. I used to hide my feelings but now I have ways to cope. I stamp my feet and move around, open the window.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

The support I received was excellent and very professional It helped me to start to be able to deal with what I had been through.

Team meetings and a focus on self-care, help to instil a sense of comradery in the ISVA team and now I have got to know everyone, I feel comfortable approaching more experienced members of the team for support and guidance which they always happily provide.

I have never worked somewhere so supportive and it's worth mentioning, that despite how busy everyone is, I have never felt like an inconvenience or nuisance when asking for help.

During my time at RASA, I have attended three pre-trial visits at court, two section 28's at court (pre-recorded questioning), a MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) and a Team Around the Family meeting. These meetings and experience of supporting clients at court has provided valuable learning for my role.

It has helped me to understand my emotions and I have been able to understand why certain things affect me in a negative way.

The repercussions of the pandemic upon the criminal justice process can still be felt as far as the length of time clients wait to have their cases heard. Face to face interaction between police and clients seems to be non-existent but I can't say personally if this is due to the pandemic or if this has always been the case, due to not being in the role long enough to make a comparison. Most of the interaction my clients get is via telephone.

The service has helped me throughout the darkest and hardest times and without the help and support of Olivia, I don't think I would be here today. She has been an amazing support throughout the whole 3 and a half years. I will truly miss our sessions and I want to say is a massive thank you to Olivia for everything.

This means I am often the only tangible source of contact for clients. I expect the longevity of individual cases means that as more referrals are made my case load will increase more quickly than if cases were handled in a timelier fashion. I have multiple clients "stuck in the limbo" of evidence collection. With police having cases returned back to them from CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) with a request for further investigative actions. This can further prolong the already emotionally difficult waiting time. I am conscious that this feeling of stagnation may transfer into my practise if I am not mindful so I will work hard to manage this and build on my resilience to enable me to provide the best support possible to clients.

With no definitive time scale, clients are having to deal with all the anxiety associated with cases plus the uncertainty of when they will get any answers. My role for many of my clients is providing reassurance that the police are working to deal with their cases but often only being able to provide vague timescales that they can expect.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

I have a client at present who reported in December and the trial is set for August. The turnaround for this case has been incredibly quick (especially in comparison to others). This comes with the positives of the client not feeling stuck and often re-traumatised in a lengthy process, but also the more unusual circumstances that the client is feeling like "it's all happening so fast".

I now have the understanding that the feelings I have been experiencing for many years is not because there is something wrong with me but because of the impacts of the sexual violence I have suffered.

My client has been overwhelmed by the intensity of the case and my role has been predominantly emotional support which I increased from fortnightly to weekly after I became concerned for his emotional wellbeing.

I referred my client to our ISVA Listening Ear service and he benefits greatly from these sessions. Worker from Listening Ear was imperative to ensuring the safety of the client having performed a welfare check by way of a visit from the ambulance service after the client was in distress on the phone. Now with consent from the client, worker keeps me informed as to whether additional emotional support might be required during my ISVA sessions.

Thank you for your patience and continually challenging my beliefs gently for understanding that I did not want to believe it was abuse so took on responsibility which felt easier but now I know I am not to blame or responsible for the abuse I suffered.

I have noticed resistance and defensiveness from some Police officers when I have gently challenged practises or asked for more information relating to cases. I wonder whether this is because officers do not know the benefits of using our role to compliment victim/survivor support. I am hoping this improves with time and will be included to some degree in the upcoming VAWG training that all frontline Police, investigating officers and specialist units will receive over the coming 12 months.

The importance of inter-agency understanding of the ISVA role was something I brought up to Lime Culture and the CPS during a recent focus group I attended. NFA (No Further Action) results from cases are common.

As during the first few months of my employment I have been focusing on training and development. Now I've had DPMS training, I am booked onto the Lime Culture – Supporting Males training in May and I am in a position where I feel confident in the role itself.

I will look to beginning a male engagement action plan and start to add to a portfolio that RASA can submit to stakeholders to hopefully gain/continue with funding for our service. I am looking forward to developing my role and the coming year ahead, feeling determined to create positive change.

Having an understanding of myself and how the impact of the abuse has impacted me which having a greater understanding of myself has enable me to move forward and accept that I am not to blame.

Sally Wexsteen – Male ISVA Development Worker

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

In December 2021 we welcomed 183 new clients into RASA services. At the end of December waiting lists were as follows Adults 924 Children 83

A YEAR IN RASA CHILDREN'S SERVICES

I feel like I owe my life to RASA. I didn't think I could be fixed - I thought I'd always be broken. I'll be forever grateful.

New skills/qualifications acquired *- EMDR LEVEL 1 & 2*

Knowledge development

1. *Attended the Rainbow centre, Alder Hey Hospital*
2. *I presented the Safeguarding Children Training – RASA – this was for new volunteer counsellors prior to them working with clients at RASA.*
3. *Recovery is the best form of revenge book – A book by Carolyn Spring, a survivor of trauma, abuse, and dissociative identity disorder*
4. *Lunch and Learn – Impacts of gambling on women.*
5. *Savera – Honour based violence training – signs, ways to respond and signpost*
6. *Currently started my accreditation process for the BACP.*
7. *Safeguarding Training refresher – LSCP*
8. *Managerial and Clinical Supervision – Monthly to ensure my knowledge is current and in line with the current legal legislations*
9. *Group Supervision – RASA – Helen Millar ran the group Supervision.*
10. *Weekly Team Meetings*

Support given has been outstanding never imagined I would get this support and it has made it has made such a positive impact on my health. Can now see a brighter future.

Multi-agency networking events attended.

- *CAMHS – Referrals: -*
- *EDY's – eating disorder department – 2 referrals with April 2021 – April 2022*
- *Crisis support - high risk clients requiring stabilisation before they can engage in therapeutic work at RASA*
- *Mental Health – Psychological assessment for 1 client*
- *CIN Meetings – various*
- *Referrals follow up meetings – casework – appropriate information sharing as per work done, risk, and expanding on concerns or referral details where necessary.*
- *MARF – referrals compiled over the year.*

I just so much better than when I first started this. I felt I would never come out of the dark hole of depression.

Schools/education: *Many clients request me to contact their place of education to help support their learning. This is a regular occurrence and schools seems to respond well Clients feel unheard 'bad behaviour' when they may be dealing with staying present, hyperarousal, severe anxiety, disassociation, lack of sleep etc*

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register Registered Member 090824 MBACP (Accred)

Things that have gone well

- *CRIES and Young Person assessment forms: -*
- *Clients who have had a minimum of 3 sessions scores have all dropped a minimum of 50%*
- *Clients have disclosed passing driving tests, mock exams, able to sit their exam's (which they could not do before) engaged with others socially rather than still isolating away.*
- *Clients are gaining great benefit from complimentary therapies I am able to offer such as;*

EMDR, Rewind Therapy, Hypnotherapy. These help to reduce such symptoms as Anxiety, Depression, Flashbacks, Nightmares.

ISVA was always there when I needed her and gave me supported when I needed.

CBT – I have used this with several clients to help them return to school or re-engage with the education system.

Psychoeducation = there is a pattern I have identified from working with clients of all ages that once they understand the impacts of trauma and sexual abuse for example: -

- *Ways they responded – Fight, Flight, flop, freeze, friend*
- *Anger*
- *Suicidal thoughts*
- *Flashbacks / nightmares*
- *Depression*
- *Anxiety*

They feel less 'odd' or 'something wrong with me' their symptoms reduce and their view to therapy can sometimes then become more appealing. They now understand trauma, negative experiences, and relationships and how that has affected their health and well-being. All of this helps to reduce the shame and guilt they feel and carry every day.

Vanessa Mount Children's Case Worker

In January 2022 we welcomed 231 new clients into RASA services. At the end of January 2022 waiting lists were as follows Adults 930 Children 72

February 2021 was spent doing a lot of tweaking of forms, of policies and procedures, ready for the new year. Budgets were written and approved, salaries were agreed, hours were shared between the teams and we were almost ready to start another year of service.

We were about to welcome 2 student nurses into the team to shadow some of the ISVA work in the hopes that they will gain a greater understanding of the work they do.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

Job Title: **ISVA**

Summary of day to day role: **Independent Sexual Violence Advisor for Sefton Area/Assessment Lead. Supporting clients through the criminal justice system who have reported or wish to report to the police. Practical and emotional support.**

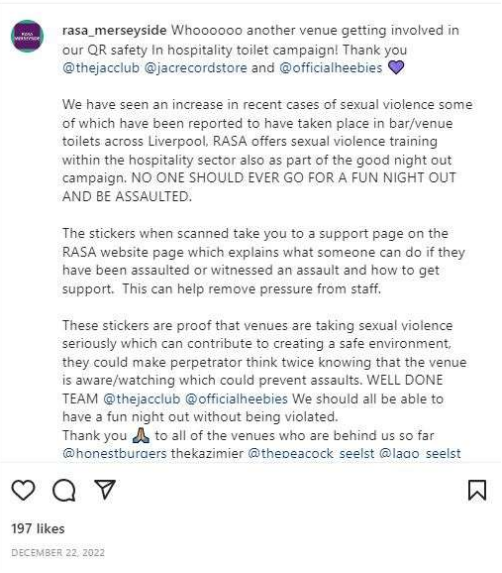
The impact of the pandemic upon the criminal justice process has been pervasive and caused a huge detrimental impact to those of my clients who have had their trials postponed over the past year. Supporting them to manage the impact of this has added another layer to the regular support that they receive.

It has also meant that the timeframes in which they would have been expected to have come to the end of their ISVA support have consequently been extended, therefore increasing the workload. The unknown that exists still, relating to the rescheduled trial dates, carries some further anxious anticipation for my clients and exacerbates the uncertainty that is already a factor when it comes to crown court in under normal circumstances. Due to the amount of trials either booked or rescheduled, I have been in court several times over the past couple of months.

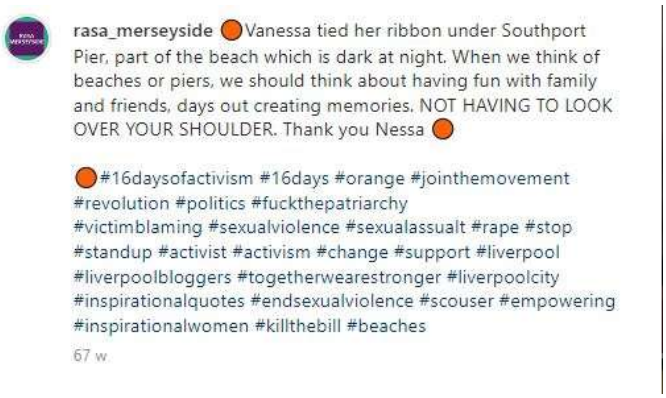
I am thoroughly enjoying being back in the enjoyable and supportive environment with my colleagues for half of my working week. The environment feels refreshed and reinvigorated and the new staff members have fitted in really well and are wonderful new additions to our organisation . I continue to take things in my stride given the impact of the past year and realise that my mental health and well being has never been so important to look after.

Olivia Lewis – Sefton ISVA

In February 21 we welcomed 243 new clients into RASA services. At month end, waiting lists were as follows Adults 971 Children 90



RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556



In March 22 we caried out our usual review of the year. While we had not made great progress in bringing down the general waiting list, we have had success in many other areas of work.

We have engaged new groups and individuals this year and we are delighted to see so many smaller groups and individuals too, raising funds to support our work. Southport KGV College has nominated us as their charity of the year and we will work with them to see how we can support that nomination.

A further college has asked for similar engagement and we await their requirements.

The dedication of a counsellor to support refugees and asylum seekers has meant that there is no longer a waiting list for this very vulnerable group of people and their, often very urgent, needs can be met quickly after initial contact is established.

The Community Safety Marshall Project in Liverpool is being piloted across the busy Easter weekend ahead and we hope it will mean added security for those out celebrating with their friends. Often a trained pair of eyes watching out for perpetrator behaviour is all that is needed to prevent a possible assault. We are proud to be part of such an initiative.

The Listening Ear Project is running well and offering additional support to those waiting for counselling or ISVA services.

So many supporters have held fundraising event this year. We have hosted a street event. We have run campaigns, we have held day events, we have supported others in their running of events for our benefit.

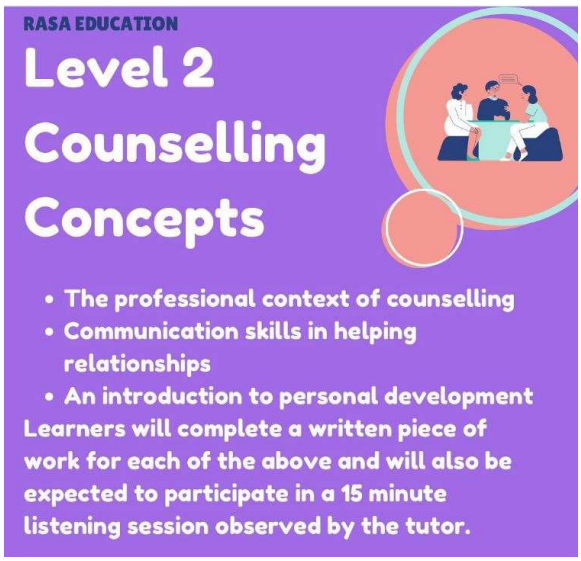
We have supported those seeking to learn more about what to do better to help their own roles and responsibilities – and all in addition to our core work of supporting survivors of sexual violence.

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

Our Education Centre (RASA Education Limited) has grown alongside us with more courses being offered than in previous years. We have trained from Level 2 – Level 4 in Counselling and to Level 5 in specialist areas of work like Adult and Children's Trauma.

And the counsellors trained through our training centre have come back to us as volunteers, even though many have moved into amazing roles elsewhere. Our courses have proved popular and we have needed to add more sessions to try and keep up with that demand.

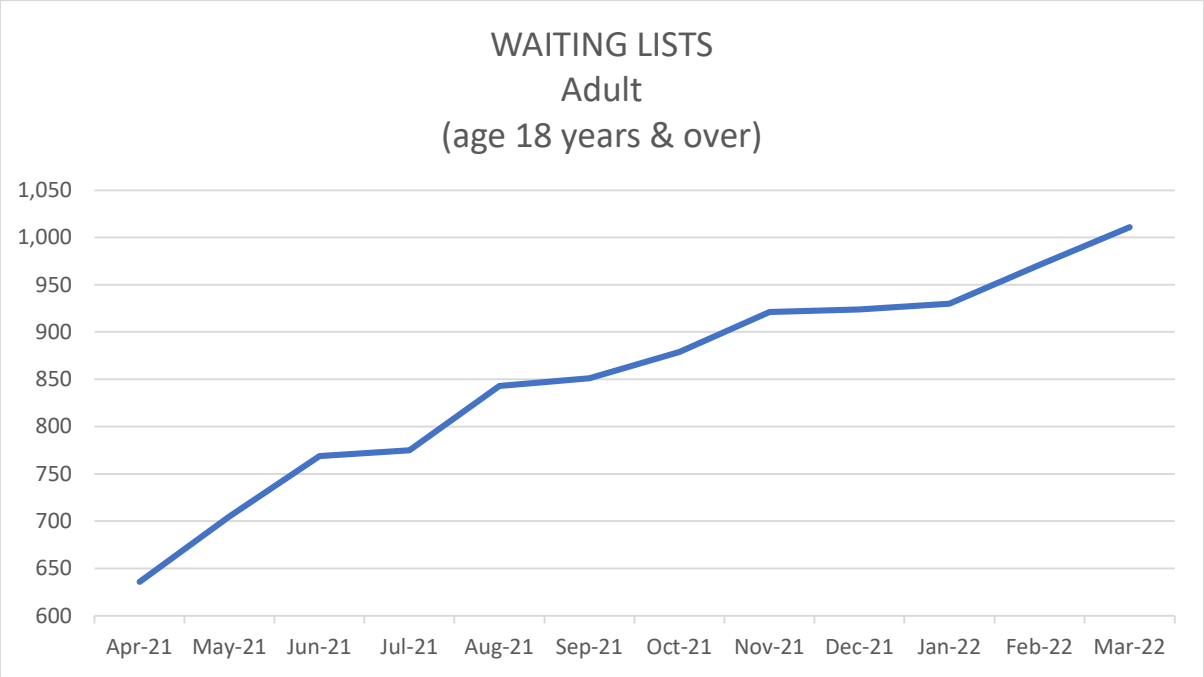


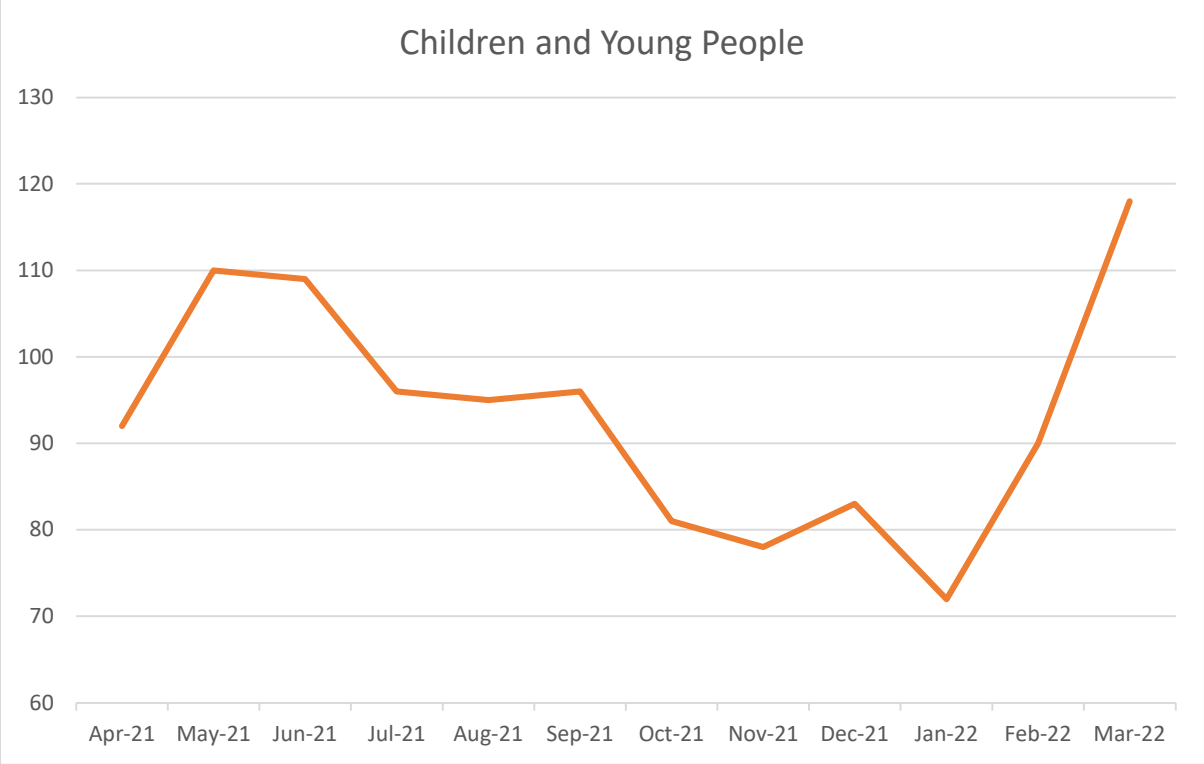
RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services 03/22

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)





RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

And so we end the year with waiting lists higher than ever before Adults 1,011 Children 118.

We have delivered 28.63% more activities than last year.

We have delivered 28.28% more minutes of client facing time.

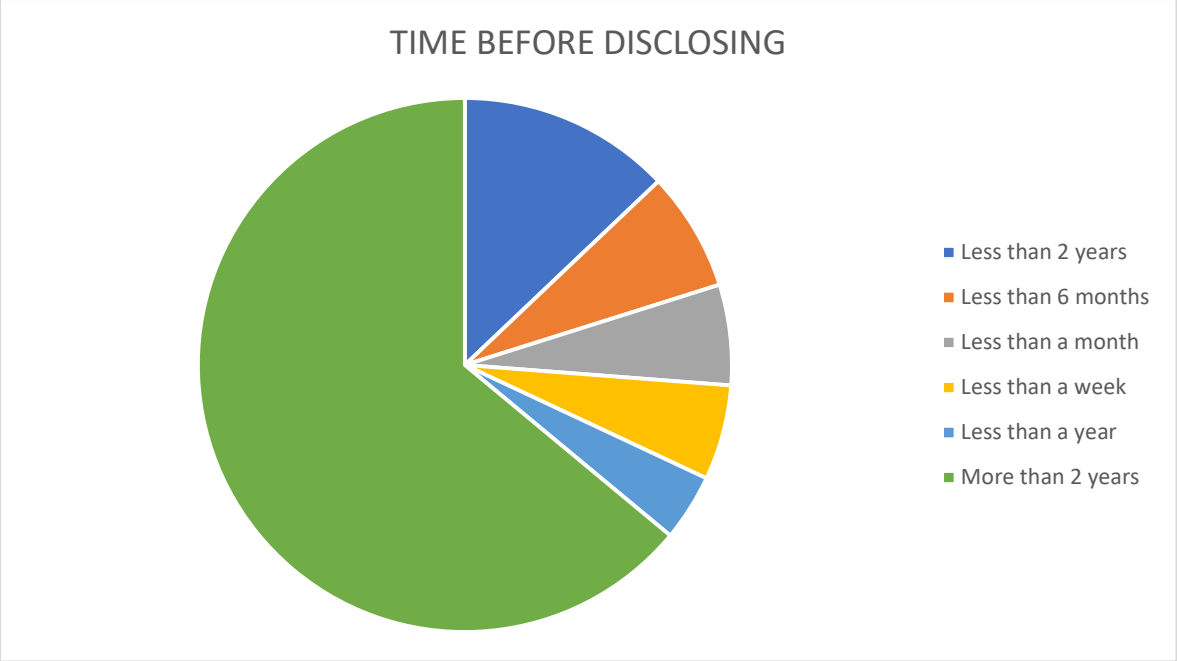
ISVA cases are up by 76.06%.

49.34% more clients stated rape as their main presenting issue.

We welcomed 37.48% more new clients than the year before.

Were we an industry or a retailer, we would be celebrating such an increase in "turnover" – but we are neither. We are a charity supporting survivors of sexual violence and every increased figure represents one more victim of some of the most heinous crimes known.

Do the increased figures mean more sexual crimes are being committed – or does it mean that more people feel confident to report what has happened to them and seek help?



63.97% clients counted in this report had waited more than 2 years to report the crime against them.

It would seem that the majority of new clients felt comfortable to come forward and report the crime against them, because they felt confident to do so. This means we are "doing good" and our partnerships are working.

We have reached a situation in which people who have been sexually violated feel confident to come to us for support. What we have not yet reached is a situation where we have the capacity to manage the volume of cases coming to us for that support, as effectively and quickly as we would like and as they deserve..

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

We are constrained by space and funds, and we are reviewing all our practices to try and get to a situation in which survivors feel confident and supported the minute they need us.

We are looking at, and experimenting with, many different ways of offering counselling and support – and at interim support for those awaiting a dedicated counsellor.

We have diversified ways in which people can engage and have run several hugely successful programmes of virtual support using platforms such as zoom.

And this has reduced for many the amount of time they have needed to wait to get help.

But it doesn't work for everyone and many still need that one to one, face to face, engagement in a safe and private setting, to enable them to get the most from their counselling.

Sadly we were unable to take on board the huge centre conversion in Birkenhead.

We simply could not afford the conversion costs and were unable to find grant funders to help.

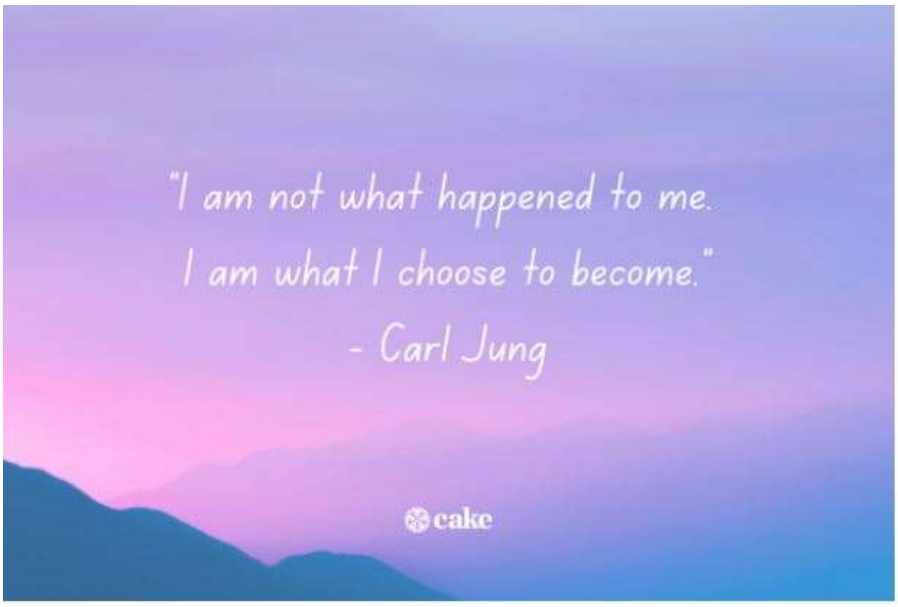
The building is still empty and if such funding does become available we will be back to the drawing board with our designs and needs.

Until then, we will keep listening, keep developing, keep producing new ideas and plans to best support our clients.

And who knows what 2022-23 has in store for us all?

One thing is for certain – we will still be here – and we will still be offering high quality, informed, advised, qualified and experienced counsellors and advocates for survivors of all forms of sexual violence.

It's just what we do!



RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

1 year

52 weeks

2,828 (2,057) new clients

643 (479) sexually abused children

1,213 (1,000) clients from previous year

3,342 (2,585) females – 590 (441) males – 65 (31) others

61,221 (47,595) activities – 1,139,486 (888,261) minutes logged with clients

981 (798) Wirral clients – 2,060 (1,538) Liverpool clients – 956 (721) Sefton clients

2,949 (2,480) counselling clients – 993 (564) ISVA clients – 55 (13) other activities clients

940 (680) multiple sexual violence incidents – 309 (267) affected relatives and friends

905 (606) rapes as a primary cause for presenting – 36 (28) sexually exploited adults

1,094 (987) adult survivors of child sexual abuse

1,120 (2,578) sexually violated adults

16 (10) domestic violence victims

52 weeks

1 year

RASA is a Registered Charity Number 1094462 and a Company Limited by Guarantee 04538556

RAPE CRISIS NATIONAL SERVICE STANDARDS Rape Crisis Professionally Approved

LIME CULTURE INDEPENDENTLY ACCREDITED QUALITY STANDARDS for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser Services

bacp professional standards authority accredited register
Registered Member 090824
MBACP (Accred)