



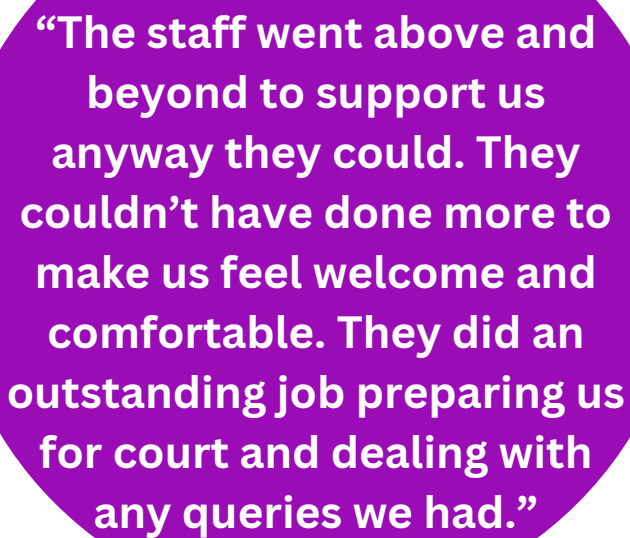
Victim Support and Witness Service

Annual Review 2024

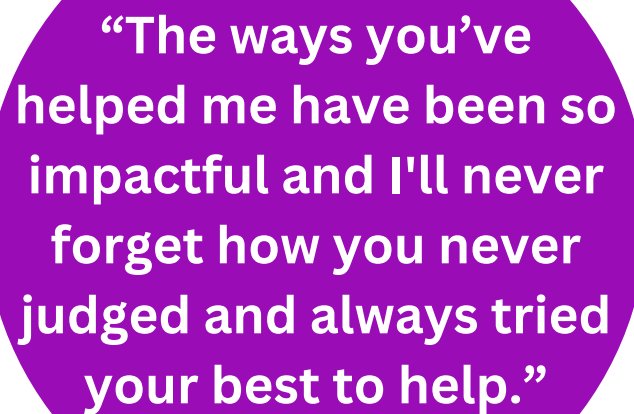




“I truly felt listened to and their support also extended to my family too, the positive impact that had has changed my entire family’s life in the most positive way possible and I couldn't thank them enough.”



“The staff went above and beyond to support us anyway they could. They couldn’t have done more to make us feel welcome and comfortable. They did an outstanding job preparing us for court and dealing with any queries we had.”



“The ways you’ve helped me have been so impactful and I'll never forget how you never judged and always tried your best to help.”

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Peter Harwood, Chairperson

This report focusses primarily upon the outcomes for Victim Support and Witness Service (the Charity) in 2024, but it also enables attention to be drawn to our ambitions for the next four to five years. The year 2025 will be the first year of our new strategic plan period. Those ambitions will be challenging but it will be important that they are met if this Charity is to continue to deliver its key vision as set out on page 6.

The year 2024 was a busy year for the Charity. The statistics show the number of victims and witnesses that we supported. Whilst the number of witnesses is broadly consistent with previous years, it is important to note the number of contacts that members of our executive team and volunteers had with those witnesses. The number of victims that we supported shows a further increase over previous years and again I would draw to your attention the number of contacts with those victims during the year.

The year also reflects the first full year of the Charity's association with Willow House, Guernsey's sexual assault referral centre. We have supported Willow House in conjunction with Safer, the charity for domestic abuse in the Bailiwick of Guernsey, with qualified Independent Sexual Violence Advisors to provide ongoing support to survivors of sexual violence. We see this service as a natural adjunct to the wider role of the Charity to support victims of crime. In order to meet the demands for our services at Willow House, whilst maintaining our usual commitments to other victims and witnesses, we have necessarily increased the hours of employment of our executive team. This has had an impact upon our running costs.

We are very happy to continue to support Willow House but remind ourselves that it is only being run on a temporary "pilot" basis. We would urge the States of Guernsey to recognise that the service needs to be established on a permanent basis beyond the current "pilot" period.

The Charity recognises that it needs to represent the voice of victims of crime when reviewing government policy initiatives. The Charity has been closely involved with government in the development of the Island's Domestic Abuse Strategy and welcomes the imminent introduction of phase one of the Domestic Abuse Law. We are also looking forward to seeing progress in the formulation of phase two of that Law. We continue to enjoy a good working relationship with the current Committee for Home Affairs and we remain grateful for their ongoing financial support. We also look forward to working with their successors, after the States elections later this year, particularly in the delivery of the Justice Strategy.

Peter Harwood, Chairperson

Whilst there has been a significant increase in our running costs over the last two years, we have been very fortunate to have been able to attract sufficient funding to ensure that the Charity can continue to operate at least on a year by year basis. We recognise the importance of, and are very grateful for, all funding contributions; from the States of Guernsey through its annual grant, from the third sector through the Social Investment Fund and from our corporate partner Canaccord Genuity. As a charity we have also benefited through our own fund raising efforts, through collection boxes, individual donations, the Annual Flag Day, the Quiz Night, Charities Fete Day and a sponsored Afternoon Tea. These fund raising efforts required an immense amount of time and effort from our staff and volunteers.

We were proud to hold an open day at the end of January this year to showcase our newly decorated and furnished witness suite at the Royal Court. That project was only possible through the generous services of Clermont Interiors - thank you to all who were involved.

This Charity could not deliver its service without the continued dedication and support of our willing team of volunteers to all of whom we owe a great debt of thanks.

The directors of the Charity recognise that the public face of the Charity is its executive team. We are very fortunate to have a great team lead by Jenny Murphy. During 2024 we were sorry to say farewell to Sharon De La Mare on her retirement. We were pleased to welcome Chantelle Turner as a newcomer to the team.

Once again, my personal thanks for the continued support of my fellow directors. The Charity is fortunate to be able to draw on the particular skills and knowledge that each bring to the running of the Charity.

Peter Harwood, O.B.E

Vision & Mission



VISION

The vision of the Bailiwick of Guernsey Victim Support and Witness Service (VS&WS) is to ensure that victims and witnesses of crime within our community have access to support of the highest standard.

Vision & Mission



MISSION

The purpose of the VS&WS is to provide free and confidential emotional support, practical help and information to all victims and witnesses of crime in the Bailiwick, regardless of whether or not they choose to report the crime. It provides that same service to families and friends of victims and witnesses.

Volunteers may support victims, witnesses or both and receive specific training for both services.

For victims, we help people cope with the effects of crime, we listen while they talk through their feelings and reactions to the crime, and we try to help them find the way that best suits them to work through their emotions and concerns.

The support we provide may relate to personal and/or practical issues and may include accompanying individuals during visits to the police station, advocates, hospital etc., securing them access to other services, for example crime prevention, and, if they are required to give evidence in court, supporting them before, during and after a trial.

The Witness Service provides guidance and support for witnesses who find themselves having to attend court to give evidence. This can be extremely daunting and sometimes frightening, particularly for young or vulnerable witnesses. The service offers support to prosecution and defence witnesses, and their family and friends, before, during and after a criminal trial.

Witnesses are offered pre-trial visits to the courtroom during which the court procedure will be explained, including where they will be asked to stand to give their evidence, and where all other participants will be positioned. Facilities for witnesses who have been granted "Special Measures" to give their evidence, i.e., via video link or from behind a screen, are also explained.

These visits enable witnesses to feel less intimidated and a little more comfortable in the court surroundings, all of which may help them provide better quality evidence. Volunteers can also accompany witnesses into the courtroom whilst they give their evidence and provide on-going support after the event. The service can also support anyone attending the family court.

Our Impact

Number of
Victims
Contacted:
408

Number of
Witnesses
Contacted:
176

Volunteer hours
given to Victims &
Witnesses:
288

Other Agency
Referrals:
25

Total Training
Hours:
122.5
delivered to staff
& volunteers

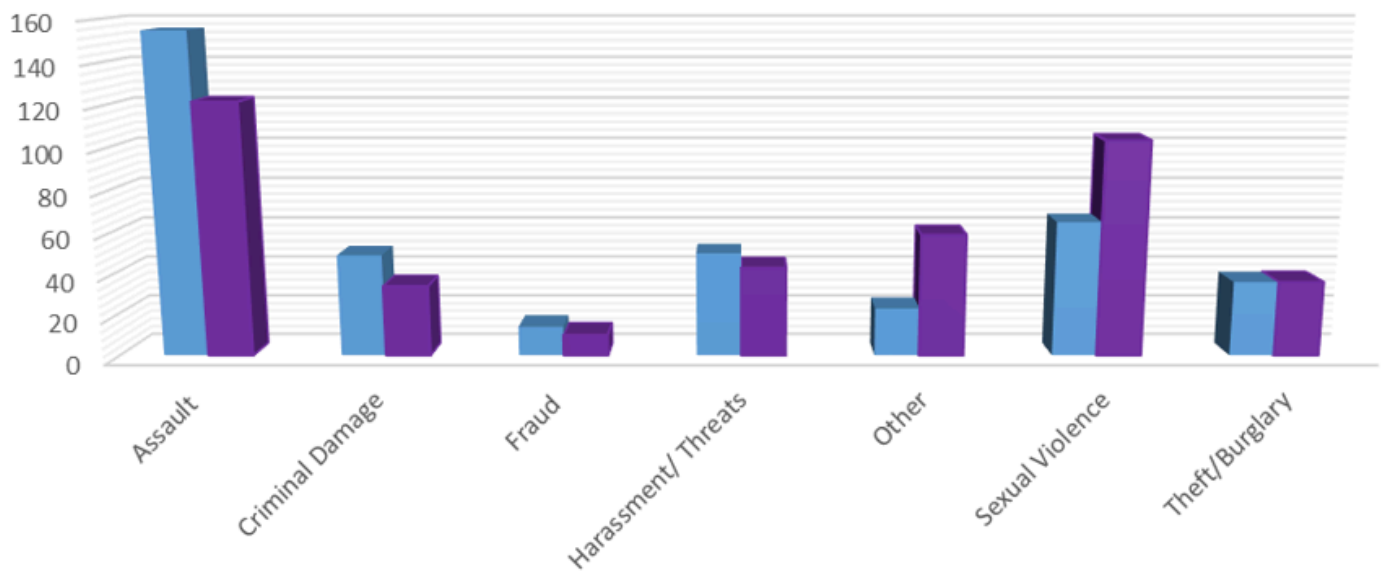
Number of
Pre-Trial
Visits:
49

Police
Referrals:
361

Self-
Referrals:
22

Victim Referrals

■ 2023 ■ 2024



2023 = 392

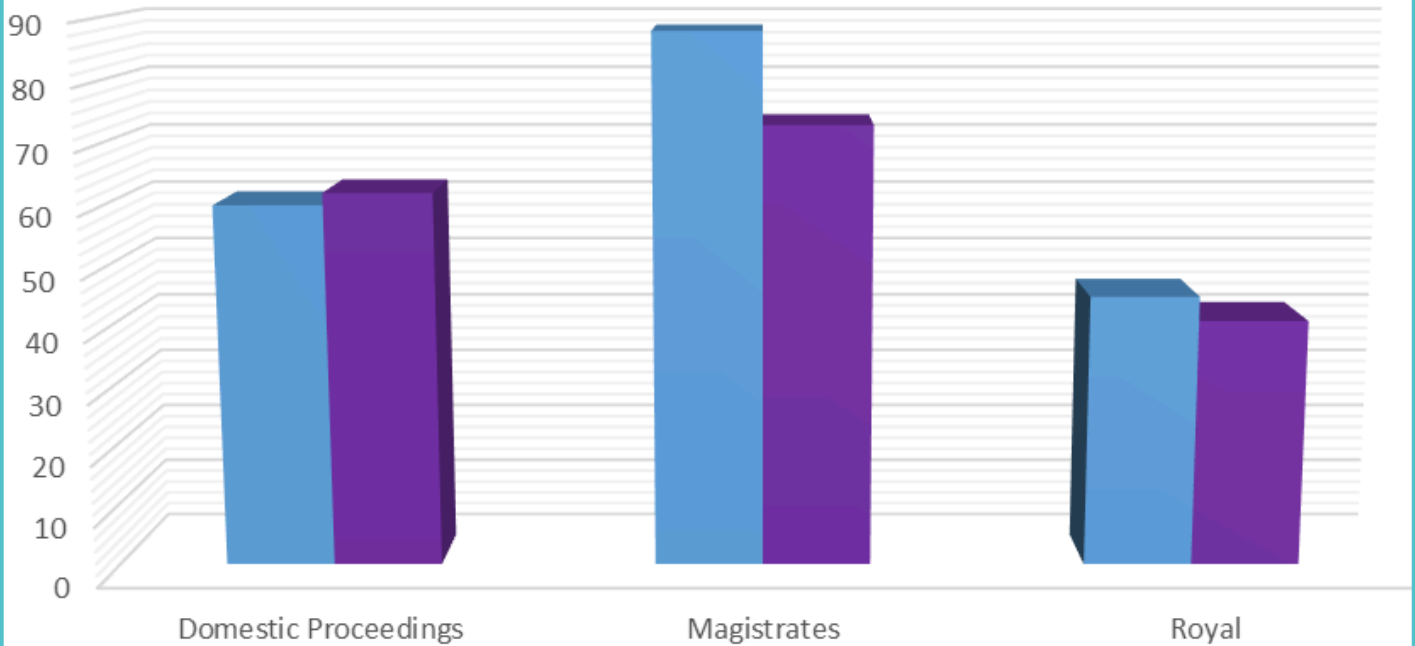
- 155 Assault
- 49 Criminal Damage
- 14 Fraud
- 50 Harassment/Threats
- 23 Other
- 65 Sexual Violence
- 36 Theft/Burglary

2024 = 408

- 122 Assault
- 34 Criminal Damage
- 10 Fraud
- 43 Harassment/Threats
- 59 Other
- 104 Sexual Violence
- 36 Theft/Burglary

Witness Referrals

■ 2023 ■ 2024

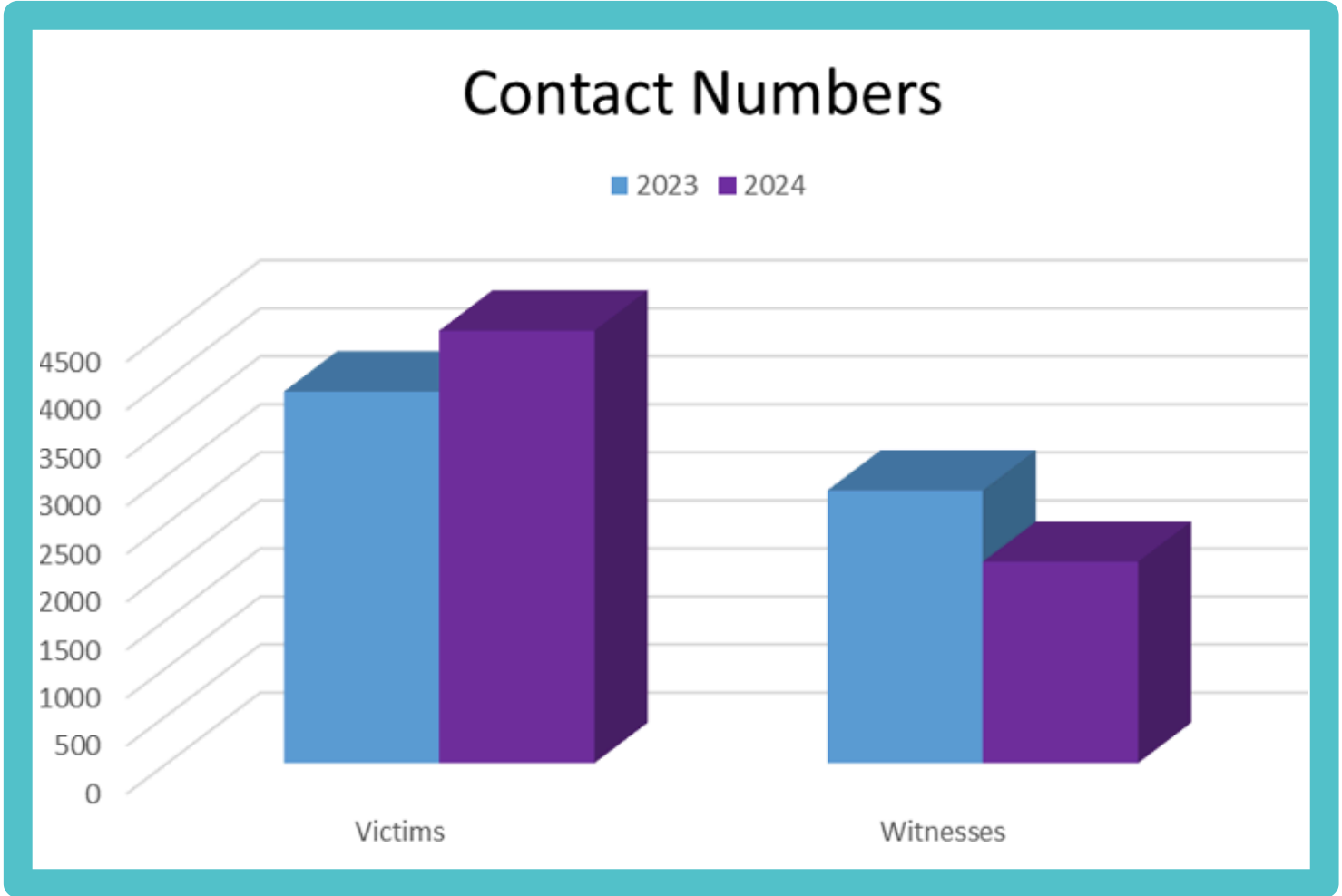


2023 = 193

- 60 Domestic Proceedings Court
- 88 Magistrates Court
- 45 Royal Court

2024 = 176

- 62 Domestic Proceedings Court
- 73 Magistrates Court
- 41 Royal Court



2023 = 6,703

- 3,866 Victims
- 2,837 Witnesses

2024 = 6,838

- 4,744 Victims
- 2,094 Witnesses

Michael

Background

Michael was called as a witness in a complex criminal case. Although willing to testify, Michael felt overwhelmed by the court process and anxious about giving evidence. Michael was referred to the Witness Service for support.

Witness Service Support

The Witness Service provided Michael with:

- Court Orientation: A pre-trial visit to familiarise himself with the courtroom environment and explain roles of the court personnel.
- Special Measures Guidance: Assistance in arranging a screen so Michael could give evidence without seeing the defendant.
- Emotional Support: Regular check-ins to address Michael's concerns and build his confidence.
- On-the-Day Assistance: A dedicated supporter accompanied Michael on the trial day, providing reassurance and practical support.

Outcome

With the support of the Witness Service, Michael felt empowered to give clear and confident evidence. He expressed gratitude for the emotional and practical help, stating he would not have been able to navigate the process without it. This case highlights the vital role of the Witness Service in reducing the stress of giving evidence, enabling witnesses to participate fully in the justice process.

Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Service

2024 marked a significant milestone for Victim Support & Witness Service (VS&WS), as we officially launched the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service. This vital service is delivered as part of the Committee for Home Affairs' Willow House/SARC Pilot, in partnership with Safer. Together, we have been commissioned to provide specialist support to victims and survivors of sexual violence.

Our dedicated team consists of five trained ISVAs—three based with VS&WS and two with Safer. ISVAs offer independent, non-judgemental support, empowering victims with guidance and advocacy tailored to their needs. While support is available regardless of whether a report has been made to the police, ISVAs play a crucial role in assisting victims through the criminal justice process, including court support when required.

In 2024, the ISVA service provided support to 88 victims of sexual violence, demonstrating the urgent need for this specialist provision. We are proud of the impact the service has already made and remain committed to expanding and strengthening our support for survivors in 2025.

Alex

Background

Alex, referred to our Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service by the police, had experienced sexual abuse as a child. Seeking justice and healing, Alex faced significant emotional and practical challenges as the case progressed through the criminal justice system.

ISVA Involvement

From the outset, the ISVA provided tailored, survivor-centred support to help Alex feel empowered and informed:

- **Safety and Support Planning:** A comprehensive safety and support plan was developed in collaboration with Alex, addressing immediate and long-term needs.
- **Referrals and Liaison:** The ISVA facilitated access to mental health services, coordinated with Alex's GP, and engaged with other relevant agencies to ensure holistic support.
- **Emotional Support:** Regular check-ins provided Alex with a safe space for emotional support, helping Alex build confidence and resilience.
- **Court Preparation:** The ISVA explained the court process step by step, ensuring Alex felt informed and prepared. This included a pre-trial visit, discussing special measures, and offering information on giving evidence.
- **Trial Support:** The ISVA provided critical in-court support during the trial, remaining by Alex's side as they gave evidence and ensuring they felt supported throughout.

Outcome

Alex expressed that they would not have been able to stay engaged with the legal process without the ISVA's consistent and compassionate support. By addressing both practical and emotional needs, the ISVA empowered Alex to actively participate in the pursuit of justice while accessing vital care and resources to support their recovery.

This case highlights the transformative impact of ISVA services in helping survivors navigate the complexities of the justice system and begin their journey toward healing.

Training Delivered

Victim Support and Witness Service (VS&WS) volunteer training modules have been reviewed and updated where applicable. We are also exploring the online training that is available through other victim and witness support organisations and, cost permitting, some of our training modules which have previously been developed and delivered in-house, may be replaced by online alternatives.

Training delivered this year has included:

- Basic Victim Support Training for new volunteers
- Basic Witness Service Training for new and existing staff and volunteers
- Four SAFER training day carousels. These help raise awareness of the support that is available and promote appropriate signposting of individuals by attendees
- Introduction to new and existing police recruits
- Adult Safeguarding Level 1 led by Manager Jenny Murphy, for new and existing staff and volunteers

External Training Received

Training events attended by staff and volunteers have included:

- SAFER Domestic Abuse Awareness training
- SAFER DASH/RIC (Domestic Abuse, Stalking, & Honour Based Violence Risk Identification Checklist) training
- Professional & Personal Boundaries training
- Safeguarding Children
- Lunchtime learning with H.M. Sheriff, H.M. Sergeant Jason Savident, H.M. Deputy Sheriff, and H.M. Deputy Sergeant Tara Bromley to speak about their work and roles
- Lunchtime learning with Charlie Cox, Willow House Manager, to discuss the launch of the new Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Willow House
- Lunchtime leaning with Police Inspector Sarah Naftel, to speak about the journey of victims and witnesses
- Lunchtime learning with Isabel de Menezes to discuss the role of an interpreter, knowledge of the Criminal Justice System and her experience of being a past volunteer for VS&WS

Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) Service

VS & WS in partnership with Willow House and Safer began running the ISVA service to offer better support to survivors of sexual violence

Office Refurb

Clermont Interiors chose us as their charity of the year and completed a refurb of our offices and witness suite

Alderney

We secured funding to begin putting support in place to those in Alderney. Our Manager, Jenny, and Deputy Manager, Philomena, visited Alderney to start gathering information

Domestic Abuse Law

VS&WS supported in the development of the Domestic Abuse Law

ISVA Support in Court

ISVAs can now support their clients in the court room when they are giving evidence and being cross-examined

Fundraising

Fundraising efforts raised a total of £10,021 throughout 2024

Royal Visit

Our Manager, Jenny, attended a tea party on the Crown Pier as part of the King's and Queen's Royal visit to Guernsey

Moments that Mattered



Charities Fete Day



Afternoon Tea



Flag Day



Flag Day



Staff & Volunteer Christmas Lunch



Quiz Night

Office Refurbishment

Clermont Interiors completed a full refurbishment for VS&WS, using trauma-informed colours, creating a safe and relaxing space for clients, contributing to the feeling of a calm and comforting environment.



Before:



Grants, Donations and Fundraising

In 2024, we have received:

- £38,000 from the States of Guernsey
- £31,352 from the Social Investment Fund
- £32,500 from Willow House (ISVA Service)



In 2024, VS&WS has raised:

- £5,455 via our collection boxes and donations. These donations were from Canaccord Genuity and private donors
- £683 from fundraising at the Association of Guernsey Charities Charities Fete
- £1,728 from our Annual Flag Day
- £1,530 from our Annual Quiz Night
- £625 from an Afternoon Tea, raised and donated by Becky Link

Income

Breakdown of Income:

- Charity Partner Canaccord
- ISVA Service
- Grant Received from Social Investment Fund
- Grant Received from States of Guernsey
- Other Grants and Donations
- Fundraising Efforts



3.7%

23.9%

23%

27.9%

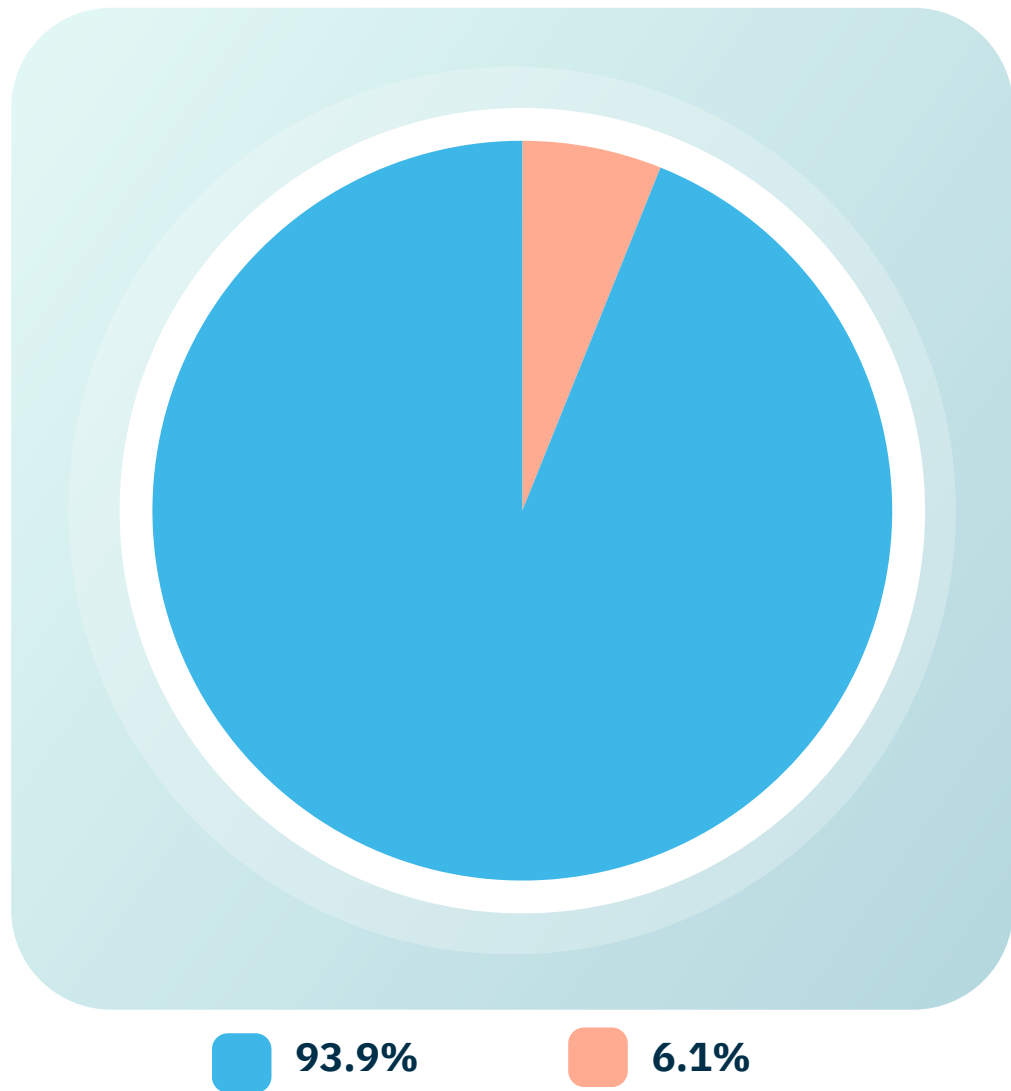
18.2%

3.3%

Expenditure

Breakdown of costs:

- **Operational Costs**
- **Salaries and Social Security**



Appendix A: Management Committee & Staff

Management Committee

Peter Harwood (Director)	Chairperson
Phil Taylor (Director)	Vice Chairperson and Treasurer
Anna Guilbert (Director)	
Jason Morgan (Director)	
Jenny Murphy	Manager
Philomena Haddon	Deputy Manager
Sarah Naftel	
Sandra Thomson	Volunteer Representative
Molly Edington (Volunteer Representative from January 2024)	

The committee meets once a quarter against an agreed agenda and minutes are kept.

Staff

Jenny Murphy	Manager
Philomena Haddon	Deputy Manager
Corey Wyatt	Support Officer
Sharon De La Mare (Support Officer until September 2024)	
Chantelle Turner (Administration Officer from August 2024)	

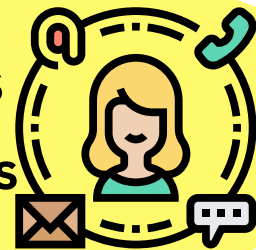
VICTIM SUPPORT AND WITNESS SERVICE 2024 STATISTICS

We supported 408
Victims of Crime



We supported 176
Witnesses

4744 Contacts relating to Victims
2094 Contacts relating to Witnesses



Our Team of 15 Volunteers
provided daily support to
clients



Running Cost = £130,000
We received our annual grant
from the States of £38,000

