



Our mission is for everyone affected by sexual assault and abuse to be able to access support to live fulfilling lives.



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www.saassbmk.org.uk



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SAASS Buckinghamshire and
Milton Keynes

c/o MHA, Building A
150-170 Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK9 1FD

Registered Charity Number: 1175021



Our purpose

Providing intersectional feminist support to survivors of all genders to improve their wellbeing

Deliver a wide range of support to meet individual needs and choices

To support family members, partners and friends of survivors

Raise awareness of consent and change the perceptions of sexual violence within our local area

Introduction



This year, we reached a record 1,354 survivors — increasing our impact through expanded partnerships and a dedicated team of new staff and volunteers, as we continue to lead in empowering survivors and fostering a safer, more supportive community in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

We saw the numbers of people reaching out for our support hit a new all-time high, increasing by 9.3% on the previous year and, significantly, delivered a 22.3% increase in the number of support sessions. We'd like to thank all of our funders, partners and supporters, without whom none of our work would be possible.

To respond to these increases in demand, we worked hard to increase the size of our team, including the recruitment and training of 25 new volunteers. We wouldn't be able to do our work without this team of incredibly talented and dedicated people, and we thank each and every one of you!

The majority (81%) of our work over the past year was supporting women and girls, however we have continued to develop our service provision for men and boys, through the SAM Project, and have seen a 4% increase in men and boys accessing our service over the previous year. As the leading specialist service for male victims of sexual assault and domestic abuse across the Thames Valley, we were proud to successfully deliver our first ever series of webinars to professionals and male survivors.

One of our biggest achievements this year has been the continued and dedicated focus on reducing the waiting times for survivors to begin their support with us.

Through streamlined processes and the responsiveness of the team in meeting growing demand efficiently, we have reduced the waiting list for counselling by 45%, Stabilisation Intervention Programme (SIP) by 95% and assessments by 35%.

This year also marked our first awareness raising conference supporting LGBTQ+ victim-survivors of sexual assault and domestic abuse, and the launch of the VAWG Alliance Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, a collective of 11 independent, third sector organisations dedicated to reducing VAWG and supporting survivors.

Ultimately, our key achievement will always be the honour to work with survivors who amaze us every day with their candour, strength and resilience. Even through the darkest times, you remind us that there is a glimmer of hope for a better future where no one has to fear sexual assault and abuse.

We'll always be here for you, our door is always open.



Korinne Leney,
Vice Chair of Trustees



Zoe Bell,
Interim CEO

Our Services



Information, Advice and Guidance

When a survivor refers themselves or is referred to us, we'll invite them to attend an Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) appointment. This appointment is an opportunity to explore their concerns in a safe environment and consider the type of support that they would find most beneficial.

1:1 Counselling

We offer up to 24 free therapeutic counselling sessions to anyone aged 16 years or older, regardless of gender, who has experienced any form of rape or sexual violence at any time in their lives, or who is supporting a survivor.

Our specialist volunteer counsellors are trained in working with survivors of sexual assault, abuse and trauma.

Peer support

Our weekly peer support service, Thrive2gether, provides a safe and sociable space for individuals with shared experience of sexual assault and abuse to support each other.

Stabilisation Intervention Programme

Our Stabilisation Intervention Programme (SIP) offers a safe space where survivors can explore the impact of sexual violence on their life and learn how to cope with the emotional and physical effects of trauma through psychoeducation.

Group therapy

We offer group therapy which takes place with a group of people together, rather than with an individual counsellor during a one-to-one session. Groups are offered to all genders.

Our Services

Support through the criminal justice system

Our Independent Sexual Violence Advisors provide emotional and practical support to survivors of all genders who have experienced rape, sexual abuse or assault who have reported to the police or are considering reporting to the police.

Advocacy

We offer general advocacy around practical issues such as health, housing, immigration and debt where the issue relates to the survivor's experience of sexual violence or trauma responses and refer or signpost survivors to other specialist services as appropriate.



Services delivered in partnership

Support after Abuse and Sexual Harm (SASH) project in partnership with SAFE!

SASH is a partnership project providing support to children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse or sexual harm. This project brings together specialist and established services from SAASSBMK and SAFE!.

SASH is able to provide support to children, and young people aged 5 to 18 years by delivering a responsive, individually tailored specialist support service in Buckinghamshire to those who have been affected by rape, sexual assault, and domestic abuse. This includes 1:1 counselling (provided by SAASSBMK) and project work, DAY programme, parent/carer support and CHIDSVA support (all provided by SAFE!).

Specialist counselling for survivors of domestic abuse in partnership with MK-ACT

Following completion of crisis support delivered by MK-ACT, survivors of domestic abuse are then referred to SAASS for up to 12 sessions of 1:1 counselling.

Specialist work

To address a local and regional gap in specialist support for male survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse, SAASSBMK promote their services for men under the sub-brand of Support after Assault and Abuse for Men (SAM).

This includes 1:1 counselling in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy in Buckinghamshire and group therapy across the Thames Valley region (including Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire).

Our Support



Number of survivors supported

Total FY 24/25

942

Adults

Over 24 years old

333

Young People

16-24 years old

79

Children*

5-16 years old

Adults and Young People

Counselling

6014

Sessions

529

Survivors

441

Sessions

Information, Advice & Guidance

IDSVA and Advocacy sessions

127

IDVA

570

ISVA

198

Advocacy

371

Sessions

Group Support

Stabilisation Intervention Programme

153

Sessions

33

Survivors

531

Calls

Telephone Support

Children

*SASH

29

Assessments

658

Sessions

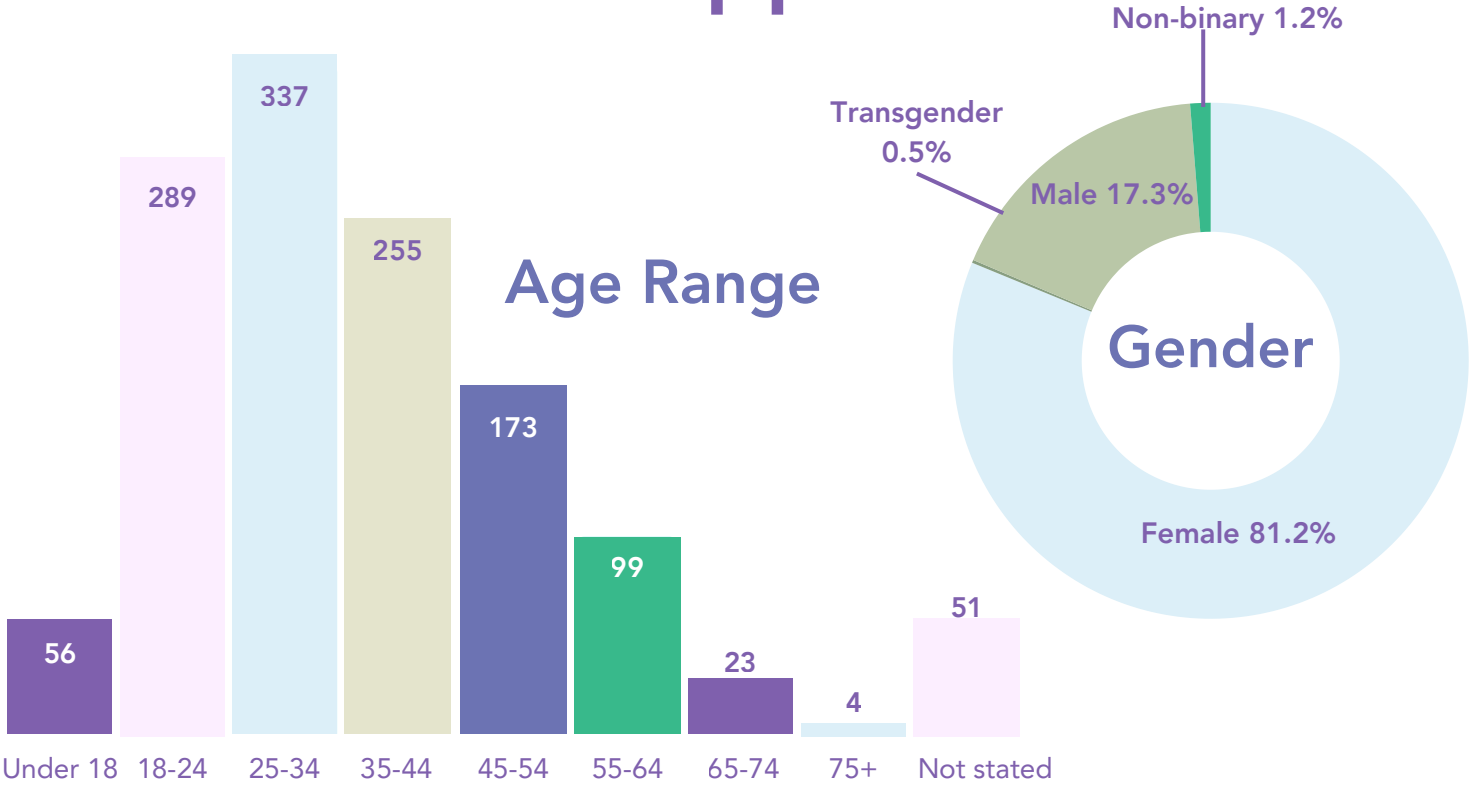


Buckinghamshire

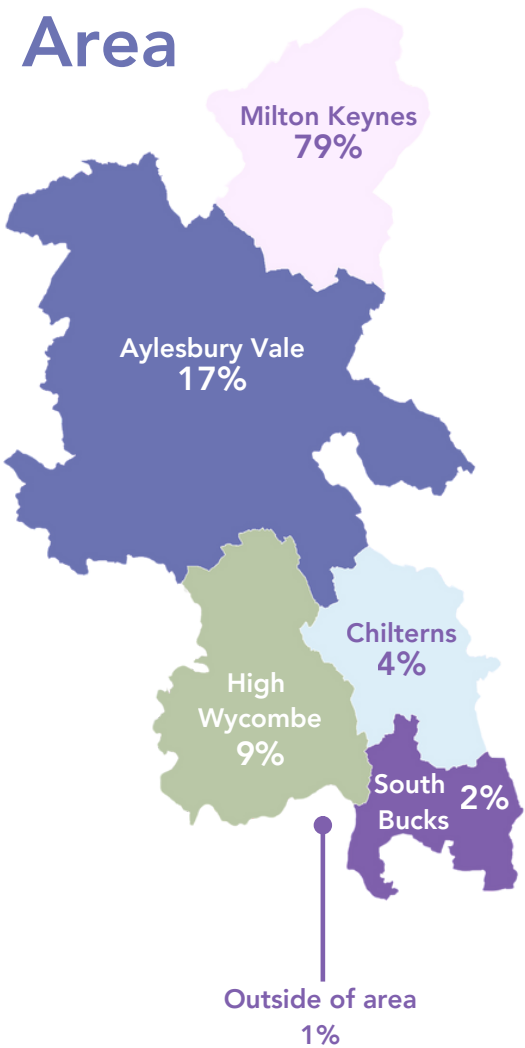
In partnership with

Safe! Support for Young People Affected by Crime

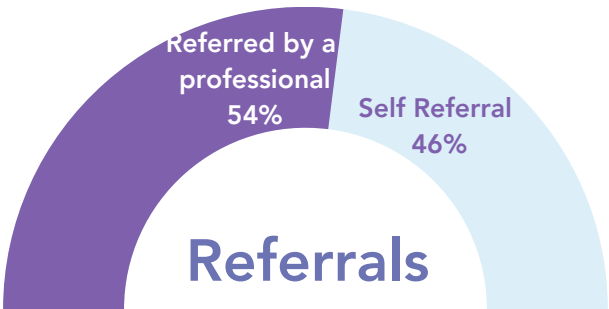
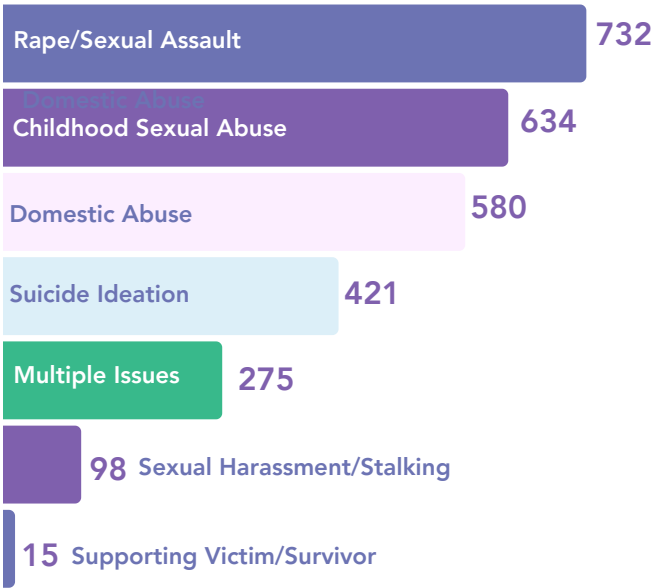
Survivors we support



Area



Survivor Experience



What Survivors Say “

“ It has helped me go from feeling suicidal and that my children would be better off without me to feeling like I could have a future. I don't feel completely hopeless at the moment. I am grateful for the help that I received.”

I joined this group in the hardest season of my life. At times I had to force myself to engage with conversations that were difficult as they were so fresh but I found as I did that, I was comforted by the fact that I was not alone.”

“ You are attentive to detail and listen well. You made me feel seen, appreciated and acknowledged, and you were able to engage me even when I struggled. Thank you for sharing your strength as a thriver and survivor with us in this way.”

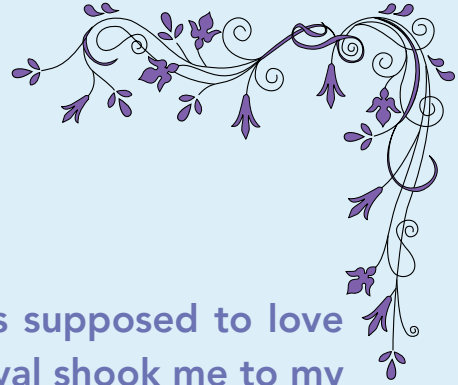
“ My ISVA worked with me for a year, and I can truly say I wouldn't be where I am today if it's wasn't for the support she gave me. Not only with relocating for my safety but also with emotional support and appearing alongside me at court. I'm really thankful for the service and for all the help I've received. My ISVA advocated for me at times I really felt I couldn't mentally speak for myself, and I felt supported whenever I needed it.”

“ “For the first time I felt that I could open up and trust the person who I was talking to about the abuse that I had experienced and valued the advice that was given to me.”

“ Many thanks for the safety plan and other useful information. I really got a lot from the assessment on Monday, so thank you again for the time and care you put into it. It felt good to be heard.”

“ “It was lovely to speak with you last week. I felt that R's mood really lifted after the call and she kept saying how lovely you were. Also, I just wanted to say a huge thank you as I felt you 'read' R brilliantly and made her feel at ease.”

A Survivor's Story



After experiencing sexual assault from someone who was supposed to love and protect me, I felt lost and broken. The pain and betrayal shook me to my core, and for a long time, I struggled to understand who I was anymore.

But slowly, through therapy, self-reflection, and the support from the weekly group T2G who truly care, I am learning to reclaim my identity. I am rediscovering my strength and worth, and though the journey is difficult, I am determined to heal and find peace within myself again. Without this group I know there would be only one place I would be right now and that hurts me to even think of. I am still not the happy bubbly person I was before the trauma but I can slowly see bits of myself coming back. I am slowly learning there are good people I can trust and talk to.

Being a member of the group T2G I don't feel like a victim, I don't feel scared, I see more and more of myself coming back. Being in a room where everyone knows and understands everyone's feelings and worries is like a breath of fresh air. I can relax, I don't feel like I Have to look over my shoulder, I don't have to paint the smile on my face. I can be me!

It's so nice to know no matter how I am feeling on the day of the group I can go there to spend time with others join in with arts and crafts, as well as go there to have time for myself and just sit there. No matter how I choose to spend my time in group I know I come away feeling lighter and free from my thoughts and worries. I do come away wishing we could have more then the one session a week just two hours I feel it goes so fast. And find myself waiting for the next session. But in my mind it means the group is really helping me if I am waiting for the next sessions.

Being a survivor of sexual assault left me feeling isolated, broken, and unsure of who I was. For a long time, I carried the weight of shame and pain alone. But joining T2G support group changed everything. For the first time, I felt seen and understood by people who shared similar experiences. Their strength, compassion, and it reminded me that I'm not alone. With their support, I'm learning to heal, rebuild my life, and find the courage to reclaim my voice again.

Our Team



Our Volunteers

Thank you to the 78 volunteers who delivered support across our counselling and telephone support services. All our volunteers undertake a robust specialist training programme that ensures they are trauma informed and equipped to work with survivors.

"To have found a placement whilst training that has shaped the direction of my career, is simply amazing. I didn't realise this was the work that I needed to do. Providing the space and time for service users has humbled me and taught me so much about the impact SAASSBMK can have. It can literally transform lives, I have seen first-hand the progress and changes it can provide."

"I am proud to now be a volunteer and sessional counsellor, I continue to be offered training, development, guidance and support. I am committed long term to the service users, professionals and organisation that provides a vital service to the community."

Our Staff

Thank you to the 13 members of staff who make SAASS what it is day after day, the team work tirelessly and selflessly, and without their concerted efforts we'd be unable to deliver the service to survivors that we do.

"Our service users show such incredible strength and courage by asking for our support. Their resilience is inspirational, and I feel privileged when someone trusts me with something that they have never spoken about before. I feel thankful to work as part of a team who challenge rape culture, raise awareness within the community and empower and support survivors through their journey towards healing."

What we say to our Team

Thank you

Simply put, we could not deliver the services that we do for survivors without you.

Our Supporters



Donors, Regular Givers and Fundraisers

Thank you to all the individuals, community groups, businesses and organisations who have donated, dressed up, baked, run, walked, taken on challenges raising money for SAASSBMK and supported us in some way. Your support means the world to the team.

Our Funders and Partners



Thank you

"I had been living a nightmare and still live in it. I have NEVER been able to speak my truth and neither acknowledge it with truth. No matter how traumatic, painful and bitter my past has been, I have whole heartedly had compassion and non judgmental support from staff. I am genuinely grateful for the support as I know I would have been worse. I live with this nightmare but I try to remember that it is only burnt toast."



**Sexual Assault & Abuse
Support Service**

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes



**The King's Award
for Voluntary Service**
The MBE for volunteer groups

www.saassbmk.org.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1175021