

RASASC

Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre



February 2017 Newsletter

Who we are: RASASC is a Guildford-based charity, working with the Surrey community since 1992. We provide support to male and female survivors of rape and sexual abuse, recent and non-recent.

We provide a confidential helpline, counselling, self-support groups, Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, family support, pre-trial support, survivor cycling, coffee mornings, presentations and awareness raising.

All services are available by self-referral.

Welcome

I thought we would start the New Year reflecting on some of our achievements for 2016 and celebrating the wonderful contribution our staff and volunteers have made to RASASC's continuing success:

- Our team of five Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) provide a wide range of practical and emotional support to survivors and their families. In 2016 they supported 454 clients; women, men and young people from age 13 upwards through our ISVA service.
- We offer long-term, face to face counselling (for up to two years) for clients. Our counsellors are 'professional' volunteers whom are fully qualified and experienced in the field of sexual trauma. We provide specialist crisis counselling, which is shorter term support for very recent trauma. We also offer family support, where a survivors' loved ones can access 1-3 sessions that allow them to find out more about how best to support survivors and explore and share their own feelings. In 2016, our counselling service conducted 249 client assessments for counselling and provided 4176 counselling sessions to clients.
- Our RASASC Helpline is staffed by a team of highly trained volunteers. The Helpline provides a confidential space where people affected by rape or sexual abuse are believed, valued and listened to without judgement. In 2016, the Helpline took 2331 calls from members of the public who have been affected by rape or sexual abuse.
- Our new counselling hub in Leatherhead opened in November and four new counsellors were recruited.
- Our 12-week confidence group and fortnightly coffee mornings provide peer support and increase survivor's self-esteem and confidence. In 2016, we held 25 coffee mornings and delivered 36 confidence group sessions.
- As part of our planned programme of awareness raising events, we delivered 21 presentations and workshops to a wide audience, including Surrey Police, Anglican churches, Citizens Advice Bureau, Prison Service, the Indian High Commission delegation on violence against women (organised by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office), and many more professionals.
- Two helpline volunteer training programmes were delivered in 2016, providing new volunteers with the skills to support callers.

We hope you will agree that the contribution to supporting our clients is immense and I would like to thank you all for your continued support.

Lesley Devonport, Operations Manager

Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week 6th – 12th February 2017

The awareness week is a national initiative which was established to give an opportunity for the general public, statutory and third sector organisations to participate in a discussion about sexual abuse and sexual violence. During the week people raise awareness about sexual abuse and sexual violence and how to prevent it in the UK.

RASASC took this opportunity to raise awareness of RASASC and its important work. On Thursday 9th February, braving the coldest day of the year, we held a stand outside the Guildhall in Guildford High Street and was able to outreach to passers-by.

In addition to raising awareness, the team were also able to fundraise and promote the need for new volunteers. Passers-by gave generously and £66.44 was raised from the event. In addition, a number of people enquired about the volunteering opportunities, both at RASASC's new Leatherhead Hub and for our Helpline service.

We also raised awareness across Surrey through a radio interview on Radio Surrey with Caroline Holton our Fund-raising Manager.

Operations Manager, Lesley Devonport said *"it was a great opportunity to support the awareness week and to showcase our work to local people. As always, while standing on the stall we met with survivors of rape and sexual abuse. Having people come and talk to us about their experience is always humbling and underpins the importance of our work in the community"*.



Running for RASASC



Update: Grace Sobey who will be running the London Marathon on 23rd April on behalf of RASASC has told us that *"her training has been going well and she has run an incredible 25km"*. That's no mean feat especially if you are like me and can barely manage 5km and that's on a good day!

Grace has pledged to raise £1,000 (and hoping for much more) and has so far received donations of £506. You can follow Grace's progress on Instagram @gcsobey.

To donate please visit <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/gracesobey> or send donations to: RASASC, PO Box 1009, Guildford, Surrey GU1 9EE. Please make cheques payable to

RASASC, thank you.

Every donation will help us support survivors of rape and sexual abuse – **please give what you can and help us spread the word by sharing the above link where possible.**

Good luck Grace for 23rd April, we will be cheering you on.

Chelsea Football Club – WE NEED YOUR VOTE

We are delighted to have been shortlisted by Chelsea Football Club to be the Community Beneficiary Charity for their Match Day Collection at Stamford Bridge on Saturday the 6th May.

However, we are up against stiff competition and to get through we need lots of votes! Voting opens for shortlisted charities in the 'Community' section in March and closes at the end of April.

Please vote for us during **March - April 2017** at the website address <http://www.chelseafc.com/the-club/foundation/foundation-fundraising/match-day-collections.html>

Please share this far and wide as Every Vote Helps...

Bridge Masterclass 2017

The date has now been set for our next Bridge Masterclass, Monday 6th November 2017 from 10:00 – 15:30 at Normandy Village Hall, Guildford.

The Bridge Masterclass is delivered by Andrew Robson, The Times Bridge correspondence, who is considered by many to be the best Bridge teacher in the world. If you would like to book a table please contact Vivien on vivien@rasasc-guildford.org.

Due to the past success of this event it is advisable to book early to avoid disappointment.

Community Matters

We are very pleased to be one of the three local charities selected by the Bagshot branch of Waitrose, for their Community Matters scheme for February. If you are shopping in or are passing Waitrose's Bagshot, please pop in and help support our cause.

Thank you



Make a Positive Change in your Community, Start Volunteering Today

Have you got time to spare? Are you looking to be more involved in the community? We have volunteering roles to suit different skill sets, time commitments and interest.

Our volunteers are passionate about supporting survivors of rape and sexual abuse and we would love it if you would join us.

Our current volunteer opportunities

Upcoming Helpline Training Course

Our next Helpline Training Course is due to **start on 26th February**. We still have spaces available and if you are interested in applying for this volunteer opportunity to support survivors of rape and sexual assault please request an information pack from Vivien on vivien@rasasc-guildford.org

Our volunteers come from all different backgrounds and previous experience is not required.

Trustee Recruitment

We are currently recruiting for new Trustees to join our Management Committee. We are particularly interested in hearing from you if you have expertise in fund-raising although we welcome all applications.

If you have time and energy to spare, are a good communicator and enthusiastic about working with an organisation supporting survivors of rape and sexual abuse, we are interested in hearing from you. Please forward your CV to lesley@rasasc-guildford.org by the **closing date of 28th February**.

These challenging but rewarding roles are unpaid, although expenses will be reimbursed.

Term: Minimum of one year from election. **Interviews are expected to take place the week of the 13th March.**

Would you like to fundraise for RASASC?

If you have an idea for an event or challenge to raise valuable funds for RASASC, we'd love to hear from you!

Please contact caroline@rasasc-guildford.org for help setting up an online fundraising page, or to submit your story for our newsletter.



Check out our [Helpline podcast](#) to find out more about what our Helpline offers and the importance of our wonderful volunteers!

New Leatherhead Hub

Exciting opportunity for Volunteer Counsellors now available in Leatherhead, Surrey.

Guildford RASASC are recruiting qualified counsellors to work on a voluntary basis with survivors of rape and sexual abuse. We have vacancies at our new Leatherhead Hub on a Wednesday evening from 6pm. Supervision and CPD workshops are provided free to all volunteers and travel expenses will be paid.

If this sounds like an opportunity you would like to be involved in, then please forward your CV to admin@rasasc-guildford.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Four volunteers complete their Helpline Training

Our congratulations go to four volunteers, Andreea, Rebecca, Sarah and Vicki on the successful completion of their Helpline Training. The 30-hour training course provides our volunteers with the necessary skills to support callers. They are now putting their new skills into practice and are a welcome addition to the team.

Thank you...

Although we hope all our volunteers will stay with us forever, we do understand that this is not always possible! A very big thank you to those we've said goodbye to in recent months:

Emma, Katie, Louisa and Tori