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EDINBURGH RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

Strategy 2023-2028

Contents

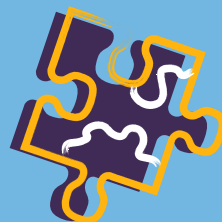
| | |
|---|---|
| Vision, mission, values | 3 |
| Context | 4 |
| Where are we | 4 |
| Our priorities | 5 |
| • Invest in our people, culture and systems | 6 |
| • Reach and include survivors | 6 |
| • Build community, networks and solidarity | 7 |
| • Empower people to influence change | 7 |

Vision

Until we have a world free of sexual violence, we act in solidarity with survivors.

Mission

Our mission is to ensure that all survivors of sexual violence, harassment and abuse in Edinburgh, East and Midlothian receive the support, solidarity and healing they need, when they need it. We challenge attitudes towards sexual violence through educating our community, collaborating with allies, and influencing change.



Our values

LOVING

Love is at the centre of ERCC – we care for survivors and offer them the love they need and deserve. We believe that healing is possible and create a safe space for people to find it. Being loving is our commitment to hope and also our act of resistance.

EMPOWERING

We work to empower survivors by honouring their views, supporting them to be independent and make informed choices about their healing journey.

INCLUSIVE

Being inclusive means that we are committed to acting in solidarity with marginalised groups by actively challenging the systems – both internal and external – which oppress us.

ACCOUNTABLE

We welcome discussions about our actions, share our approaches, and we listen to feedback from our staff, volunteers and survivors. We acknowledge our failures so we can grow and learn.

BRAVE

We are committed to being brave – even when we don't feel it – by striving for growth, taking risks, and being bold.

Context

Sexual violence continues to be a global epidemic – this is the ‘Rape Crisis’ referenced to in our name. ERCC is facing increasing challenges stemming from austerity, the cost-of-living crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic, global conflict and the rollback of human rights. There have also been strong political and ideological divisions within the gender-based violence sector – and wider society – bringing into sharp focus the need for inclusive and anti-oppressive service that supports and advocates for survivors. ERCC continues to strive to offer specialised support to survivors despite the challenges and remains committed to our mission and values.

In Edinburgh, ERCC has been actively working to create awareness and break barriers to accessing support. We have created as efficient and survivor-centred a service as possible within the available resources. We are seeing increasingly complex cases of trauma. This is due in part to lack of access to other services, and in part to the limitations the wider system has in caring for survivors of sexual violence.

While our income has grown, helping to bridge a historic funding deficit for rape crisis services in Edinburgh, East and Midlothian, we have seen an ever-increasing demand for our services without a proportional rise in funding to meet it. This is leading to the closure of waiting lists, increased waiting times for support, and impacts staff wellbeing.

1,149

SURVIVORS SUPPORTED IN 2023

Where are we?

ERCC published its last strategy in 2018. In the years since we have experienced significant change in our capacity and ability to deliver services to survivors. Since 2018, we have seen our annual income increase from £568,108 in 2018 to £1,504,975 in 2022 and are a team of over 50 staff and volunteers. In 2022, we supported 1,023 survivors of sexual violence and received a total of 663 referrals across our services.

ERCC established new services ‘by and for’ survivors from marginalised and particular interest groups. These include:



- Our SIA project for minority ethnic women offering support in Polish, Urdu, Hindi, Greek, Mandarin and Arabic.

- The Student Survivors project for University and College students.



- The Learning Disability and Needs service for those with learning needs and disabilities.

We have also seen growing demand for our adult services in Edinburgh, East and Midlothian, and the STAR service for young people aged 12-18. ERCC offers services online, in-person, on the phone and via email. We deliver our in-person services from our base in Edinburgh as well as a number of accessible outreach locations in Edinburgh, East and Midlothian. From 1 April 2023, we support survivors of all genders aged 12 and over, no matter when they experienced sexual violence.

Challenges of insecure, short-term funding and growing demand for our services continue to create difficulties in our ability to deliver services to survivors. At the time of writing, we have closed our waiting list to referrals for survivors for most of our services.

Our priorities

Our strategic priorities for the 2023-2028 period are to:



1. Invest in our people, culture and systems.

We will create a self-aware organisation which is flexible, reflexive and ethical by:

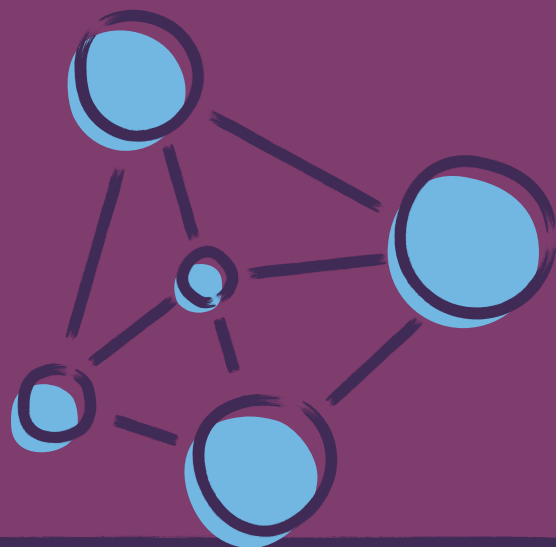
- Investing in the wellbeing, skills development and ambitions of our people;
- Building an inclusive, values-based culture where people can be their authentic selves;
- Developing and reviewing our systems to ensure they are anti-oppressive and work for people;
- Practicing leadership which is transparent, accountable, collaborative and feminist.



2. Reach and include survivors.

We will work to ensure all survivors can access our support and steer the direction of our work by:

- Developing alternative approaches to support for when we cannot be available;
- Expanding our service to offer more days and times to survivors;
- Supporting service-users to have a voice in decision making spaces and drive change within the organisation.



3. Build community, networks and solidarity.

We will work in collaboration and solidarity with marginalised groups, organisations, and individuals to achieve our vision and mission by:

- Developing 'by and for' approaches to our services;
- Building and maintaining relationships with sister and like-minded organisations;
- Learning, collaborating and sustaining relationships with the ecosystem of support services in Edinburgh.

4. Empower people to influence change.

We will be a radical voice to create systemic change on tackling sexual violence by:

- Acknowledging, recording and sharing the impact of our work;
- Building consensus in the community - including men - on understanding sexual violence and how to end it;
- Creating space for transformational dialogue and action;
- Advocating, instigating and supporting political pressure for change.



EDINBURGH RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

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All our support and information services are free.
If you would like to support our work you can
fundraise or donate securely at:

justgiving.com/ERCC



Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre is a charity registered in Scotland SC 006208
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