

Edinburgh residents rally round to save rape crisis centre

Campaigners working to rescue Edinburgh's only rape crisis centre from funding cuts have raised over £4,000 as part of efforts to save the cash-strapped organisation.

Edinburgh Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (EWRASAC) has provided free and confidential support to survivors of rape and sexual violence for over 35 years, but now faces huge funding cuts that threaten many of its essential services.

EWRASAC's manager Caroline Burrell said:- "Last year the centre supported 416 people. We provided 2,616 support and counselling sessions, and 1,066 hours of helpline support responding to 2,802 calls. We currently have a 12-month waiting list for long-term services to 55 survivors."

When the centre's funding sources dry up on May 31, 75% of the frontline support and counselling services will be at risk.

The Save EWRASAC campaign has been working to raise awareness of the funding cuts that the centre faces, as well as promoting fundraising efforts to help keep the centre running. Since the group began campaigning last February, they have managed to raise close to £40,000 for the centre.

Speaking to The Edinburgh Reporter, campaigner Lorna said :- "Edinburgh Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre helped me through the worst time of my life and helped me get my self-respect back."

Laura Mulcahy, who started the [Save EWRASAC](#) campaign, told us:- "Save EWRASAC started off last February after I found out about how dire the funding situation was, and felt something

needed to be done. To my complete shock it took off and people really care about it. As a Facebook fundraising group we organise events to spread awareness and raise money for the centre by making a variety of different events which will attract different crowds. We have raised by ourselves over £4,000 but have helped to encourage the public to donate £40,000.

“They are always welcoming, and they make uncomfortable conversations easier. The free specialised support they offer is invaluable and is the only way some women can get the care needed when they can’t afford it privately.”

She said, “During this past year we have done everything from spoken word nights, open mic nights, pub quizzes, bake sales, clothes swaps, gigs, comedy gigs – anything and everything.”

“They help bring people back to life and we are trying to give a little back.”

The EWRASA website is [here](#) and you can contribute to the fundraising appeal [here](#).