



ANNUAL REPORT & IMPACT STATEMENT 2023-2024

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FRONT COVER:

The Road Victims Trust holds a service of remembrance and hope to mark the World Day of Remembrance for all those who have lost their lives on the road globally.

Pictured: Paul Cook (Chief Executive), Lyn Hesse (Chair of Trustees) and the Bedfordshire Police Cadets outside St Paul's Church.



The Roads Victims Trust's contribution is invaluable in helping to support those who have been affected by serious injury or death on our roads.

The role of the RVT in supporting people through a horrific time is important. No other organisation offers this support, and the specialist counselling provided by the Trust.

The RVT have been delivering this service in Bedfordshire for an incredible thirty years after they were founded by Clifton Ibbett following the tragic loss of two of his children in a collision in Bedfordshire in 1982.

I would like to thank all their staff and volunteers for providing this vital service to the people of Bedfordshire and more widely.

I am pleased that I am able to fund the Trust which I know is well regarded by those who have benefitted from its services.

Our Road Safety strategy for Bedfordshire is committed to reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads but as long as there are serious and fatal collisions, the work of the Trust will sadly be needed. Therefore, I committed to continuing the partnership between the RVT and the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Police Roads Policing Unit.



John Tizard

Police and Crime Commissioner of Bedfordshire

OUR TRUSTEES

Lyn Hesse (Chair), Paul Jones, Robert Panton, Ian Pears, Tim Sharpe, Diane Stevens, Kevin Vincent & Rosaline Wong

OUR STAFF

Paul Cook (Chief Executive), Sam Baker (Director of Operations), Sarah Jones (Clinical Lead), Lucy Hancock (Lead Coordinator), Janet Cantor (Senior Coordinator), Diana Joy (Senior Coordinator), Vicky Rankin (Coordinator), Sarika Shah (Administrator), Amy Barrett (Administrator), Terry Wilding (Treasurer)

PATRONS AND ADVISORS

The Trust is able to call upon the services of a number of distinguished individuals for specialist advice and support:

Susan Lousada
HM Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire

Robert Voss CBE CStJ
HM Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire

Lady Dannatt MBE
HM Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk

Lady Clare, Countess of Euston
HM Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk

Helen Nellis CVO CStJ
Retired Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire

Dr Tim Dalgleish
MA, PhD, MSc, CPsychol, AMBPsS

Lady Sue Acland

Rt Revd Richard Atkinson OBE
Bishop of Bedford

Rt Revd Stephen Conway
Bishop of Lincoln

Nick Dean
Chief Constable Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Charlie Hall QPM
Retired Chief Constable Hertfordshire Constabulary

Tom Osborne
HM Coroner Milton Keynes

Dr Jo Barnes FHEA
Transport Safety Research Centre

Tanya Fosdick
Research Director at Agilysis Limited

Andrew Hopkinson
Chief Fire Officer at Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Darryl Keen DL
Retired Director of Community Protection and Chief Fire Officer for Hertfordshire

Dr Jennifer Heath
PhD, DClinPsy, MSc, BSc

MESSAGE FROM CHAIR OF TRUSTEES AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE



In 2023, a total of 1,624 people lost their lives on the roads of the United Kingdom, with nearly 30,000 left with serious and life-changing injuries. These figures mark a 5% decrease in road deaths compared to the previous year. The number of fatalities in 2023 is the lowest recorded, outside of years affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The devastation caused by these collisions is immeasurable. Lives are lost in an instant, and countless more are irreversibly changed forever.

Since 1994, the Road Victims Trust (RVT) has provided a professional, timely, and unconditional package of post-collision support to those affected by fatal and life-changing collisions. Through close partnerships with front-line Roads Policing and Family Liaison Officers, we receive referrals within 24 to 48 hours of a collision. This allows us to provide early intervention, offering support to individuals overwhelmed by the haze of trauma and despair. This pro-active, case-managed and professional support extends to over 600 people each year across the areas in which we operate.

At RVT, we firmly believe that the local commissioning of services—delivered by local people to local people—ensures the highest levels of post-collision support. Our case-managed approach, strengthened by a growing cohort of highly skilled professional counsellors who volunteer their time and expertise, makes a tangible difference. We help individuals at their lowest point move toward a place where they can begin to cope with their trauma and rebuild their lives.

This vital work would not be possible without the support and understanding of so many within our communities. We are immensely grateful for the partnerships we have developed with Police Forces and Police and Crime Commissioners across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk, who fund or have previously funded part of our services. We also value our collaborative relationships with Road Safety Partnerships, community groups, and associations that recognise the importance of our work. Our vision is that no human being should be killed or seriously injured as the result of a road collision and our goal will always be to collaborate effectively to reduce the number of serious collisions on our roads, working with partners to deliver a Safe System approach that promotes a shared responsibility for road safety.

Nationally, we are proud to work alongside the Department for Transport and other leading charities to amplify the victim's voice. Together, we aim to shape the conversation and ensure a robust, quality package of support is available to all those who are affected across the UK.

There is undoubtedly more work to be done, but we remain proud of our dedicated team and our cohort of over 65 volunteer counsellors who strive to bring hope to hundreds of people each year.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to everyone who has supported the RVT over the years. The continued belief in our service continues to make a life-changing difference.

Lyn Hesse
Chair of Trustees

Paul Cook
Chief Executive

ROAD VICTIMS TRUST VALUES



The Road Victims Trust (RVT) is a registered charity (1142336) that operates across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk to provide the following services to all residents of the five counties affected by fatal and life-changing collisions:

- **Regular weekly emotional and practical support for individuals and families for as long as it is useful.**
- **Space to express the whole range of feelings that come with the loss and horror following a fatal road collision.**
- **Time to discuss the repercussions of the collision that is a life-changing event for all those involved.**
- **Information on the investigation, inquest and court hearings, and preparation and support for inquests and hearings.**

SERVICE TEAM REPORT

01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024

During 2023/24, a dedicated team of 7 Coordinators have contacted 620 individuals who have been affected by the death or serious injury of someone on the roads of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. Of these, 380 have accepted a level of our service – with 204 having one or more calls from an individual case manager providing emotional and practical support, and 176 have received free, regular weekly counselling sessions. We have also continued to support 104 people who continued to receive counselling from the previous year.

The counselling is provided by either a Coordinator or Counselling Volunteer and is free to the client, and for as long as both the client and The Road Victims Trust (RVT) feel it is useful. This may range from a few weeks to a couple of years and will often remain an important part of the support through inquest or criminal court proceedings that may follow.

This year we have provided input on Family Liaison Office training across the 5 counties. We love doing this as our relationship with the Police and their trust in us is key to being able to deliver the service. We have engaged with colleges and students to talk about how they might be able to work with us, and how we might support them to achieve their counselling qualification in an organisation that recognises the need to support counsellors physical and emotional wellbeing if they are to be fully available to work with their clients.

During 2023/24, we ran two intensive (45 hours over 5 weeks) training courses for counsellors who are either senior trainees or qualified, who have the potential to become counselling volunteers with the RVT. The first was in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire and the second in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. From these courses we successfully recruited 15 new counselling volunteers who have now joined the team.

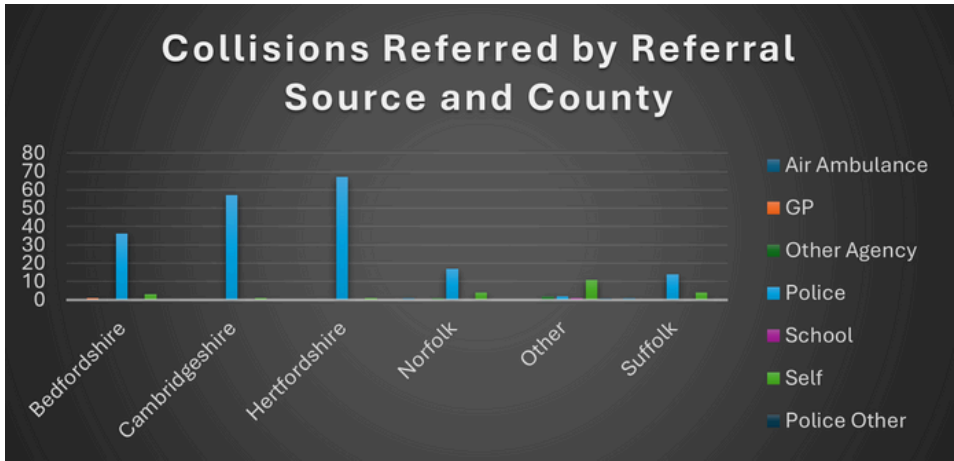
All of our counselling volunteers receive a high level of support to ensure they are offering best practice, including 1:1 fortnightly or monthly clinical supervision and continuous professional development. Our counselling volunteers do a difficult but often rewarding job and we value their commitment and expertise which is at the core of what we do.

Sarah Jones
Clinical Service Lead

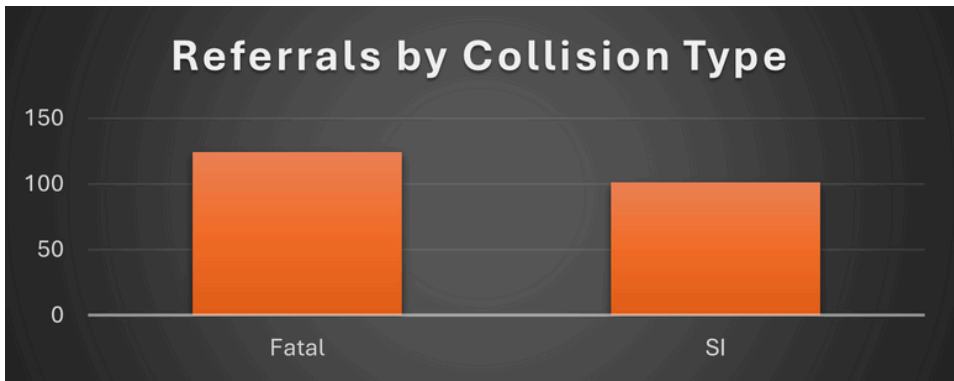


Collision Referrals

During 2023/24, 225 Fatal or Serious Injury (SI) were referred to RVT. Each referral represents a collision that resulted in one or more individuals receiving life-changing injuries. The referral may therefore contain just one or several people wanting our service. This becomes apparent as we begin to make contact with all of those affected.

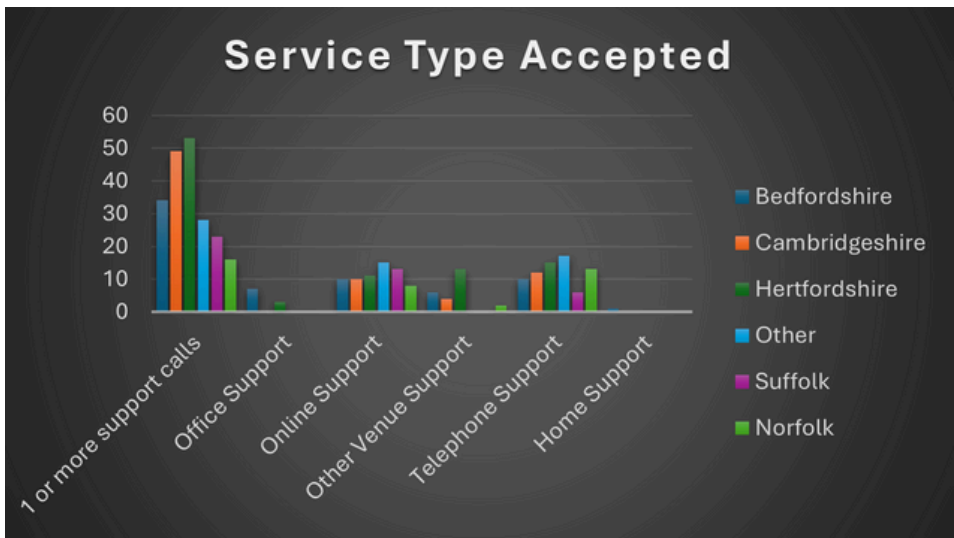


The chart below shows the split between Fatal and Serious Injury collisions referred to us during this period

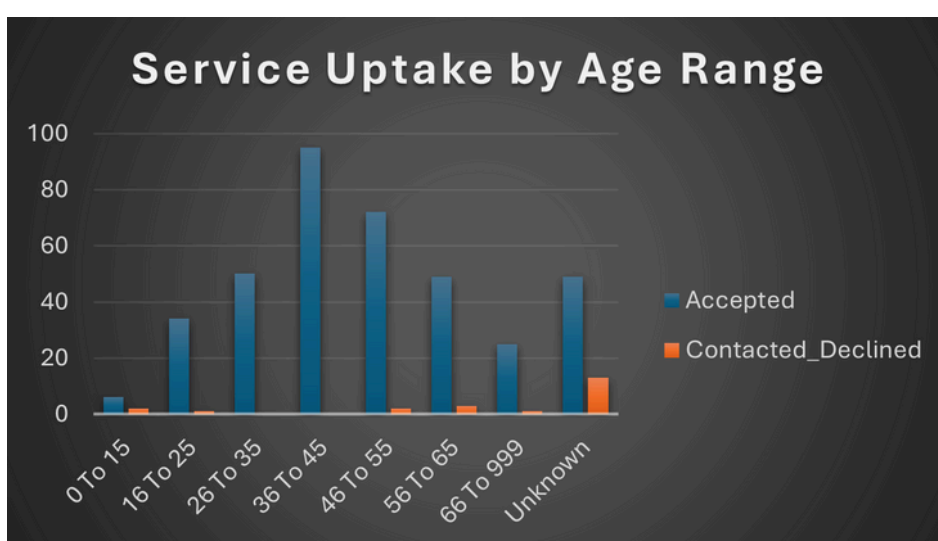
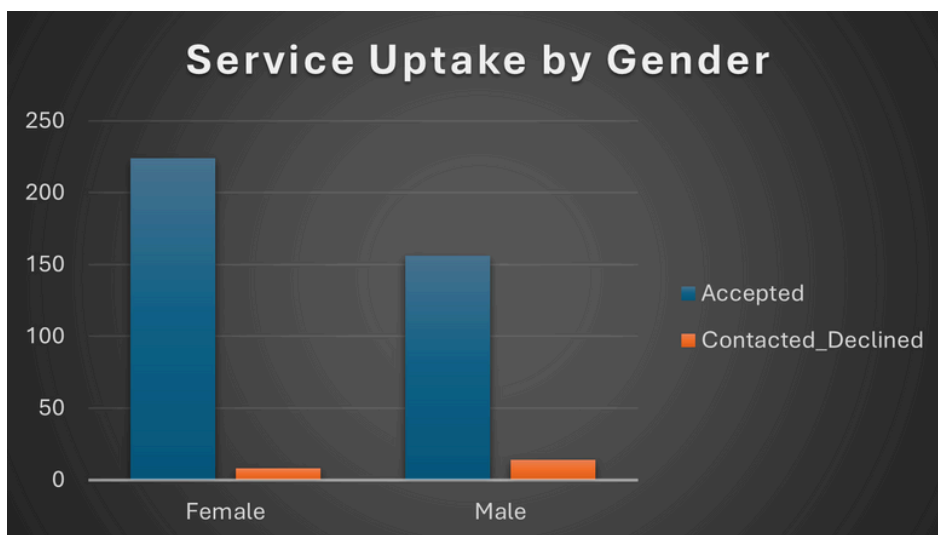


Service Provision

The chart below shows the service delivery type accepted by county.



The demographics of the clients taking the service this year is shown below.



Accept/Decline by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Accepted	Declined
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	1	1
Asian or Asian British: Indian	3	3
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	1	1
Asian: Other	4	4
Black or Black British: African	4	4
Black or Black British: Caribbean	1	1
Black: Other	2	2
Mixed: Other	7	7
Mixed: White and Black African	1	1
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	1	1
Not Stated	24	30
Other: Any Other	1	1
Other: Arab	1	1
White: British	301	316
White: Irish	1	1
White: Other	26	27

THE DIFFERENCE THE ROAD VICTIMS TRUST MAKES - THEIR WORDS SAY IT ALL

“(Case Manager) was lovely and explained everything fully. She was very empathetic and really helpful. There was a wait to be connected to a counsellor but she kept in touch through that time.

I am so grateful for the help and support that I have received from RVT. (Counsellor) was amazing, she listened and really helped me work through everything that I was going through. I have experienced lots of loss and I had been carrying my grief like a heavy weight for years, I finally feel like it has been lifted from my shoulders and I feel lighter. (Counsellor) was brilliant, she really helped me to take control of my life and relationships, I now realise my own worth and that for me has been very empowering. I feel like I have a strategy to cope for the future and I know what I can do if I have a relapse.

Thank you so much!”
(Emma McFarlane, Suffolk)

“My counsellor was outstanding from start to finish across the 18 month period. As someone who was new to counselling she let me move through the process in my own time and was hugely supportive through all of this. I understand she is now moving on from the RVT but I would like to extend my upmost gratitude to both her and the RVT as a whole over the last 20 months.”

(Harri Clarke, Cambridgeshire)

“I wasn't put in contact with RVT due to bereavement, but due to my role as an FLO. I think it's quite often forgotten how difficult this role can be at times, and as well as the trauma of attending collision scenes, there is then the trauma experienced when dealing with the families.

RVT were fantastic and (counsellor) really did help to pull me back out of a very dark hole, until finally opening up I didn't quite appreciate how affected I had become over the years of dealing with fatal collisions. I can't thank you enough.”

(Jonathan Turner-Evans, Norfolk)

“The support from (counsellor) and the wider RVT organisation has been amazing. After being plunged in a completely new and traumatic experience RVT was there from day one offering compassion and support. In my view, had they not been there from the very beginning then I believe my ability to cope with the situation would have been greatly diminished.

I cannot begin to describe what an amazing and positive change your help has made to me and my family, you were there when we needed you most and I knew I could also always call the office should I need any further help. Thank you so much for everything and I will forever be grateful.”

(J C, Cambridgeshire)

“I would like to thank the service for the counselling my son received. It helped him, although he was a bit reluctant at first to talk. It is also reassuring to know that he can access the service again in the future should he need it.”

(Parent of O M Cambridgeshire)

“RVT is an exceptional service. Specific and to the point when needed.”
(Anon, Other County)

“The support I received during counselling was crucial. Without it I would not have coped. Because of this counselling I have been able to move on with my life in a stronger and more positive way. I have a greater understanding of myself and a better ability to deal with life's curve balls.”

(Susan Baker, Hertfordshire)

“14 months of support given, helped every session. Helped to find me and my family our new normal after the tragedy. Working within the NHS gave me strategies in that situation but I do not feel I would be where I am today without my RVT counsellor.”

(Anon, Bedfordshire)

“A big thank you to (counsellor) for the time and support at a time I was feeling quite alone.”

(Anon, Bedfordshire)



THE WORK OF A ROAD VICTIMS TRUST COUNSELLOR - GIVING HOPE TO REBUILD LIVES

I am *Jenny Howard* and I joined RVT as a volunteer in March 2024 and as a coordinator in September 2024. I am based in Stevenage and live with my husband and two children (must not forget the cat and dog). I consider myself as kind, caring and friendly with an interesting sense of humour who wants to help others.

My background saw me qualify as a Nursery Nurse and work in a variety of roles starting with 2-year-olds up to my previous job with teenagers in secondary schools and colleges. It was my previous job working with young people with complex and vulnerable home lives attempting to navigate the education system with trauma that gave me the confidence to pursue my training into counselling.

Whilst in training and searching (as many of the volunteers do) for a second placement, I wanted to step outside of my comfort zone working with young people and gain new experiences. My tutor recommended RVT and their amazing training. Only a week went by between sending in my application to interview and the next week we started training, yes it was all very last minute on my end.

The training lived up to my expectations and I met the best group of people who I spent the training weeks getting to know.

I nearly didn't make it due to WIFI cutting out during one of the evening training sessions but a dash to my mothers-in-law across the town meant I made the 100% attendance!

My 'Mary' interview was exhilarating and terrifying at the same time and I have just had the opportunity to BE 'Mary' for the new training group. I would rave to anyone that would listen about how amazing the training was, how supportive coordinators were. YOU GET FREE SUPERVISION too.

Working in a different field certainly stretched my skills and I loved it! So much so that when the email popped into my inbox advertising for a coordinator I replied straight back and here I am now that coordinator.

Moving into a role as a member of staff initially made me anxious, would the RVT bubble burst? I have to say I haven't been this happy in years or worked in an environment where people truly care about others and me.

As a coordinator I am lucky enough to be a cog that makes the service available to those who need us at a time they are suffering so much. I get to ring volunteers with the offer of clients which is exciting but also arrange the visits to Funeral Directors and Crematoriums to provide volunteers with experiences only RVT are providing.

I also have a placement on my day off working with neurodiversity which is a passion of mine.

The whole team at RVT have blown me away with their genuine care and support and welcomed me into the RVT family.



CONTINUALLY IMPROVING THE SERVICE THAT WE PROVIDE

2025 provides an opportunity to continue to collaborate with other partners and stakeholders in the road safety world to improve the services we provide within our region; increase the volume of our voice at the national level; and to look wider afield to share and learn from best practice.

Working with road safety partnerships to achieve Vision Zero

Many road safety partnerships (collaborations between local and national highways authorities, police, and fire and rescue services) are creating new road safety strategies, adopting the Safe System and Vision Zero approach. Vision Zero is the philosophical imperative that no-one should be killed or seriously injured whilst using the roads and the Safe System is a proactive methodology used to work towards this goal. It embeds a shared responsibility that we need Safe Roads, Safe Speeds, Safe Vehicles, and Safe Road Users to have a system where collisions can't result in death or serious injury. A fifth key component of the Safe System is post-collision response – this encompasses everything from immediate emergency care; learning what went wrong to inform future preventative measures; through to providing psychological support for all involved.

We obviously have a key role to play in providing bereavement support, but we should also have a seat at the table of these local road safety partnerships to help shape preventative measures across the Safe System. Ultimately, success in eliminating road risk will mean that our services should not be required.

Having a national voice

The Road Victims Trust is not the only bereavement charity for road victims in the UK. We are collaborating more closely with other national charities to share our activities, identify collective funding opportunities, and provide a united voice when we are sharing messages and lobbying for road victims' justice.

Looking further afield

The unacceptable burden inflicted on society from road death is not limited to the UK. In fact, low and middle-income countries are facing unimaginable challenges – of the 1.35 million people killed on the world's roads each year, over 90% are from low and middle-income countries.

There are international collaborations, such as the International Road Victims' Partnership and the Global Alliance of NGOs for Road Safety, which bring together road safety charities from across the globe to share best practice, build capacity, undertake research, and provide advocacy services. The Road Victims Trust is exploring how we can work internationally to benefit from others' experiences and share what we do.



Tanya Fosdick

Patron - The Road Victims Trust

FUNDRAISING FOR THE ROAD VICTIMS TRUST

This year has been a brilliant year of fundraising, there has been a special focus on commemorating 30 years of the Road Victims Trust providing our services across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire. In order to continue these services throughout these counties we rely on the friendship and support of individuals, groups and businesses within the local communities.

In light of this milestone, many individuals have reached out to us to raise funds through JustGiving pages, marathon events and personal events and challenges. By the end of 2024, our fundraisers had raised £20,741 through individual JustGiving pages alone. In actual fact, the funds raised are much higher than this as this does not include all of the events and donations.

As always, we are extremely grateful to our wonderful friends and supporters who continue to do so many amazing things for The Road Victims Trust, helping us to raise awareness and much needed funds, some of whom are pictured below.

We truly could not do the work that we do without them!



FUNDRAISING STANDARDS

The RVT conforms to all recognised fundraising standards. We are a member of the Fundraising Regulator and the Institute of Fundraising in the UK. The Road Victims Trust recognises and conforms to the 6 guiding principles expected by the Charity Commission.

- Planning Effectively
- Supervision of Fundraisers
- Protecting Reputation, Money and Other Assets
- Following Fundraising Law and Regulation
- Follow the Recognised Standard for Fundraising
- Be Open and Accountable



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

