

# Impact Report

2021 – 2022



**SEPTEMBER 2021 – AUGUST 2022**

# Contents

<b>WELCOME MESSAGES</b>	<b>2 – 3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PILLAR 1: Providing expert care in London</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>JELIAH'S STORY</b>	<b>7 – 8</b>
<b>OUR COMMUNITY OF SURVIVORS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PILLAR 2: Influencing change</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>PILLAR 3: Running an excellent organisation</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>MAY'S STORY</b>	<b>12 – 13</b>
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>OUR YEAR IN PICTURES</b>	<b>16 – 17</b>
<b>JOIN US</b>	<b>18</b>

Photo front cover and below: Tom Price/Ella's



# A message from Ayesha



Photo: staff/Ella's

## Welcome to our Impact Report for 2021 – 2022.

For me, Ella's is unique among women's organisations because it feels like a family. So, I want to use this space to share some of the values of family that I have seen women benefiting from this last year at Ella's.

### **Togetherness**

Survivors need to know and feel that they are not alone. At Ella's, we become part of a community. I chose the photo above because it shows togetherness: me (centre) with one of my friends at Ella's (left) and my support worker Ava (right).

### **Independence**

As important as togetherness is, we need to be able to live independently of others. During my time at Ella's, I've been taught and guided, and had training to help me live safely day to day and build a bright, independent future.

Photo: Ayesha/Ella's



*'Ella's is unique among women's organisations because it feels like a family.'*

### **Kindness**

On my first day at Ella's I felt scared, but everyone was kind from day one. They helped me arrange my prayer mat facing the right way and have always been there when I've felt sad.... They are kind.

### **Respect**

We are respected at Ella's. Survivors and support workers problem solve together, so we as survivors know that we too are strong and free.

I hope you enjoy this report about our last year at Ella's.

**If you support Ella's in any way, you are like our extended family, so thank you.**

*Ayesha*

*Ayesha is one of the survivors at Ella's*

# A message from our directors



**It's been another full year at Ella's. We hoped to develop further as an organisation and to reach more women, and we're pleased to say we achieved both these goals.**

As Covid-19 restrictions have eased, we've been able to meet in person more with one another, funders and allies, as well as attend events and organise trips for the survivors we work with. It was especially wonderful to be part of the TRIBE Run for Love 4 in Croatia, an inspiring event with an amazing £125,000 raised to support our work next year. Community and connection are part of who we are, so all this has been a joy!

## **The power of team**

In the second year of our current three-year strategy, we have continued to strengthen our foundation as an organisation, implementing a new service model and becoming more survivor-led. We've also developed a social enterprise idea to pilot next year, to offer more pathways to employment for survivors. Our staff amaze us daily with their passion and skill.

## **The power of home**

The need for safe housing comes thick and fast, and so do the incredible stories of what a huge difference supported accommodation and tailored support work makes in the lives of survivors. Driven by these things, we had planned to open a third safe house this year, but it fell through for reasons outside of our control. This was disappointing, but we've used it as learning and have been progressing a number of alternative routes forward. Our hope is that we will open more than one new safe house this next year.

To ensure we could support greater numbers of women despite the delay with our new safe house, we expanded our community outreach work. In total, 47 women and 29 children benefited from our work between September 2021 and August 2022, an 18.5 per cent increase on last year.

The rising cost of living and decrease in support such as universal credit means our work is needed more than ever. We will continue to do all we can to help unlock freedom among women who have survived trafficking and exploitation. And we are thankful for all you do to be part of this work.

Enjoy the report,

*Emily Chalke*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Minke van Til'.

**Emily Chalke and Minke van Til,  
Co-Directors at Ella's**

# Introduction

**Our mission at Ella's is to do everything we can to ensure survivors of trafficking and exploitation have all they need to recover and build lives that are safe and free.**

To help us achieve our mission, we launched a three-year strategy in September 2020.

This strategy is focused on strengthening our organisation, to provide a sustainable foundation for our work and to maximise the impact of our work among survivors.

Our strategic goals and plans fall into three pillars of work:

- 1. Provide expert care in London**
- 2. Grow influence**
- 3. Run an excellent organisation**

This Impact Report marks the end of the second year of our current three-year strategy, September 2021 to August 2022.

It contains key highlights and numbers from the year, and a summary of our direction for year three.

Most importantly, it includes testimonials and stories\* from the women we work with, who will always be at the very heart of everything we do.

*'I am so happy to be starting a new chapter in my life. At Ella's, I've been made to feel like I am special for the first time. And because of that, I have come to know that I am indeed special!'*

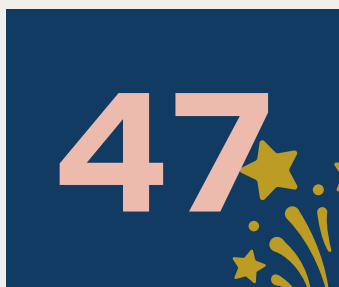
**SHIRENE**



\*Where we use names, please assume these have been changed for the protection of the women we work with.

# Our year in numbers

SEPTEMBER 2021 – AUGUST 2022



women benefiting



women in education/training/work



children benefiting



women supported through court



new individual givers



frontline partnerships



women supported pre- and postnatally



% staff recommend working at Ella's



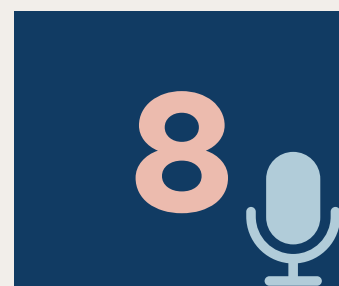
amazing volunteers



JustGiving pages created



speaking engagements



pieces of media coverage

# Pillar 1: Provide expert care in London

## ABOUT THIS PILLAR

The survivors we work with at Ella's have been through trauma and abuse worse than most people could imagine. The need for what we do is urgent and growing. This pillar is focused on providing excellent care for increasing numbers of women.

## THE HEADLINES

1. Building on our revised service model introduced last year, we embedded a third stage of support led by our newly recruited Community and Resettlement Coordinator. As a result, women have more of the social and community support they need to move on from Ella's confidently and step safely into independence. We were also able to open this work out to include a number of women from other support organisations, a first for Ella's and something to celebrate.
2. Our new safe house supported by WISH was due to open in early 2022, but, disappointingly, the purchase fell through at the last minute due to circumstances beyond our control. While WISH continue to search for a replacement property for us, we also began exploring new routes immediately and plan to open at least one new safe house in 2023.
3. We achieved our goal to increase our reach this year. Forty-seven women and 29 children benefited from our work between September 2021 and August 2022, an 18.5 per cent increase on last year.

## THE YEAR AHEAD

As well as expanding our safe house capacity this next year, we have received funding from the Ministry of Justice via MOPAC to recruit a outreach caseworker to support survivors affected by sexual violence and their children across London. We will also develop our approach to mental health provision for the women we work with, and will source new, safe community spaces to host our expanding programme of sessions for survivors.



# Jeliah's story

Jeliah (right) was born in a country in Africa. When she became a teenager, Jeliah was treated increasingly harshly by her family due to her sexuality. 'Because they were not happy with me, my life was not happy,' she says.

## Captive in marriage

To try and stop their daughter from being a lesbian, her parents took Jeliah out of school at the age of 13 and married her to a 50-year-old man.

'He was horrible to me,' says Jeliah. 'I was beaten so badly even though I was still so young, and treated as less than human.' She was in the marriage for seven years before she could take no more, and ran away.

## Persecuted

Jeliah fled to another part of the country where she tried to start afresh. She entered into a relationship and was happy, yet the two women suffered extreme discrimination and persecution due to their sexuality.

They moved around for a number of years trying to find peace, but in the end the discrimination turned to serious violence, the women were separated and Jeliah again fled for her life.

She met someone who said they could get her to another country to work as a housekeeper, and Jeliah, heartbroken and scared, accepted. It was then that she was trafficked to the UK, where she was held in a house with a number of other women and sexually exploited.



'They took everything from us, saying we owed them because they'd brought us to this country. This time that followed was so difficult, a really terrible experience. They even took our voices away from us,' says Jeliah.

*'They took everything from us, saying we owed them because they'd brought us to this country. They even took our voices away from us.'*

## Freedom at last

After some time, Jeliah and one of the other women managed to escape – they ran for their lives, sleeping in a forest for a week, and eventually found their way to the police.

When she moved into our safe house in 2021, Jeliah had been through years of pain and abuse, and she felt alone and hopeless.

Her support worker at Ella's helped Jeliah form a recovery plan, including getting medical help – mental and physical – building employability skills, friendships





and community connections, and rediscovering hope.

With care, community and empowerment, Jemiah started to flourish, and was able to move out of our safe house 10 months later. We'll continue to support her as she builds a stable, safe life.

'Ella's has been supporting me in so many ways – all ways,' says Jemiah. 'They've helped me to open up my eyes and my mind to see.'

'Before I came here, I was not myself, I was just existing.'

'Organisations like Ella's are so important for women like us, who have been through desperately difficult experiences.'

'We need people who can come close to us, to help us feel worthy and strong enough to move forward. It helps people turn their lives from what they have been, to what they can be.'

*'Before I came here, I was not myself, I was just existing.'*

Photos of Jemiah: Tom Price/Ella's

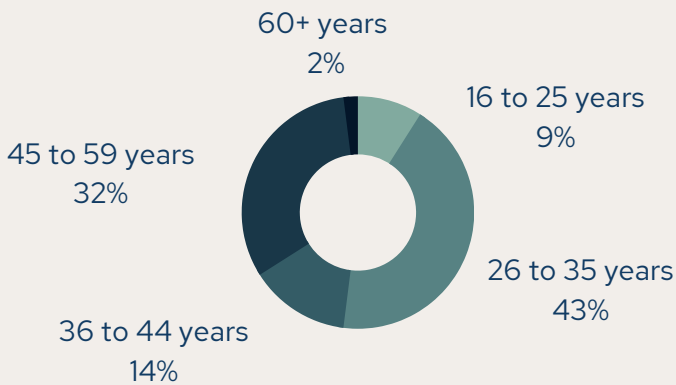


# Our community of survivors 2021/22

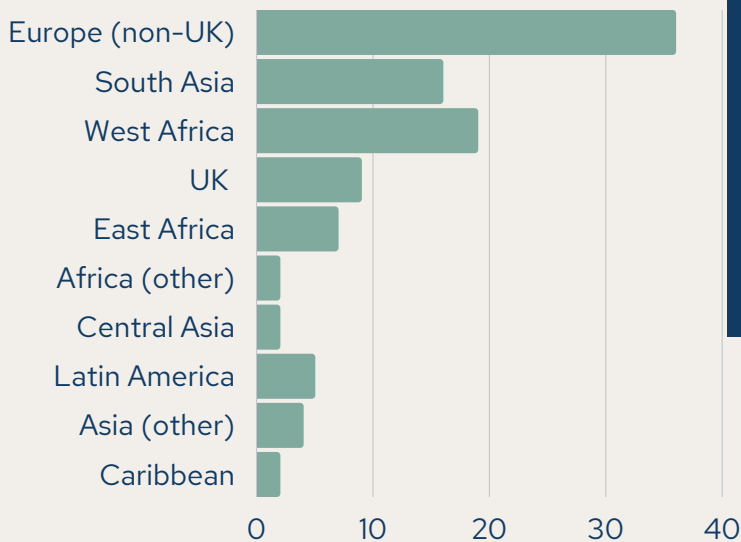


The women we work with are amazing. Here's some information on who they are and what they've been through.

## Age



## Place of birth



## Trauma

The women we work with have survived multiple kinds of abuse. Of the women at Ella's the last year:

**61%** have experienced trafficking

**70%** have experienced sexual exploitation

**88%** have experienced domestic servitude

**70%** have experienced other forms of abuse including honour-based violence, FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) and domestic violence

In addition, 11% of women had a physical disability and 84% had a mental health condition. Nine per cent were lesbian and one was non-binary. In terms of race and ethnicity, 30% of women were of Black African and Caribbean descent, 20% were Asian and Asian British, and 50% were White. Just over 43% of women said they were Christian, 39% Muslim and the remainder Buddhist or of no religion. One hundred per cent of the women at Ella's are incredible, inspiring, unique individuals and it's a privilege to walk with them during their time with us.



Amazing  
100%

# Pillar 2: Influencing Change

## ABOUT THIS PILLAR

To see survivors safe and supported, end trafficking and tackle violence against women and girls, we must all do our part and work together – organisations, individuals, media and those in power. This pillar is about raising awareness and making connections to influence change.

## THE HEADLINES

1. We joined two more coalitions this year: the End Violence Against Women Coalition (EVAW), and the new Coalition to Stop Slavery of which we are a founding and steering group member.
2. We worked closely with StopTheTraffik and others this year to deliver the Power of 10 project, to encourage and facilitate openness across the sector regarding the sharing of data to disrupt trafficking. We continue to be an active member of the resulting Trafficking Analysis Hub.
3. We have seen growth across all of our social media and other communications channels. We also worked with media outlets including the Daily Express and BBC, as well as brands such as TRIBE and North Face to raise awareness and amplify survivor stories among the public.

*I am ready. Everything is ready. Ella's has already given me everything I need.'*

## FAITH

Photo (not of Faith): Tom Price/Ella's

## THE YEAR AHEAD

We will grow our coalition and partnership working further to ensure survivor voices and interests are heard, and will invest in our website to increase digital reach and engagement.

We will seek new connections with networks and corporate partners, and pursue fresh opportunities to share stories from Ella's on film.



# Pillar 3: Running an excellent organisation

## ABOUT THIS PILLAR

This pillar covers safe and effective policies and procedures, providing a supportive and enjoyable working environment for our brilliant staff and volunteers, and ensuring the sustainable future growth of Ella's to reach more women.

## THE HEADLINES

1. To strengthen and complement our existing monitoring and evaluation framework, we designed an enhanced service user feedback process in order to further track, evidence and improve our work.
2. To ensure survivors are truly at the heart of all we do, we planned and pursued funding to recruit, establish and maintain a Survivor Advisory Panel, as well as a trustee with lived experience.
3. We have been working closely with survivors, as well as consulting with staff and external advisors, to lay the foundation for a social enterprise pilot next year. We have also been taking advice from property specialists to inform a new business plan, including the purchase of our own property for use as safe houses.

## THE YEAR AHEAD

We will roll out our expanded service user feedback process and our work to establish a Survivor Advisory Panel, and will ensure a trustee with lived experience is in place and supported. We will also pilot at least one social enterprise idea, and continue to explore the purchase of property. In addition, we will hold our first gala dinner event to strengthen and build new relationships with major donors, business and corporate partners.



Photo of Milana: Paul David Drabble/Daily Express

*'When I was at Ella's, I was surrounded by so many good people. And because of that, my life felt good again. You feel like you can live. Women need help to get their lives back on track. Otherwise they will just end up back in the bad situations they were in before.'*

## MILANA

# May's story

May was born into a poor family in an Asian country. 'I was one of seven children and my parents didn't have enough money to send all of us to school,' says May, pictured. 'Only the boys went to school.'

When she was 21, May got married. 'The first few years were ok, but then things got worse and worse,' she says. May was treated badly, and eventually her husband fell into debt with some criminal gangs. He was killed and the gangs came looking for May. Her life was in danger, so she left everything she knew and fled for her life.

'I was crying so much, the tears were washing my face,' says May. 'I felt like the sky was falling down on me. It was like my life had collapsed.'

## From one danger to another

In a desperate attempt to escape, May paid someone to get her out of the country. She was promised safe passage and work, but was trafficked to the UK where she was trapped in sexual exploitation.

*'It was like I was shut out of the world.'*

'I can't talk about it – there was nothing good in those years,' says May. 'It was like I was shut out of the world. I could go nowhere, call no one for help. I was helpless. I felt so scared.'

Eventually, May found a chance to escape. 'In the beginning, I was watched all the time, never left alone,' she says.



'But after a while, they relaxed off a little bit thinking we wouldn't try to escape. I finally had a chance to run away.'

## A way forward

May spent some time living on the streets, but eventually found help. She moved into one of our safe houses in June 2021.

May's support worker at Ella's helped her to take English lessons, access the crucial benefits, rights and services such as healthcare that she's entitled to, build life skills and make community connections. We also supported May to find safe work, one of her biggest goals.

May (below second from left) recently reached the point where she was ready to move out of the safe house. We helped her find suitable onward housing, and will continue to work with her for a while longer through our Community and Resettlement Service.



'The people at Ella's are really good to me. Without this help, I think I would have ended up back on the streets – I can't imagine what would have happened,' says May, pictured below with support worker Amelia.

'In the past, I was alone and helpless. But now I know what I need to know about, to live safely. It is really important that women like me are supported by organisations like Ella's. Otherwise, it's hard to describe, but we don't have the resources to build a good life. For me, that's why Ella's has been so important. I don't feel helpless any more.'

*'In the past, I was alone and helpless. But now I know what I need to know about, to live safely.'*

## Our support

Our support for women like May is tailored to every individual, including help with:

- Medical care/therapies
- Emotional support
- Education/skills training
- Employment opportunities
- Reuniting with family
- Finding and moving into new homes
- Immigration and legal support
- Bringing abusers to justice
- Emergency money and essentials
- Budgeting/managing money
- Confidence/life skills
- Community integration
- Attending appointments
- Moving countries if wanted

Photos of May: Tom Price/Ella's

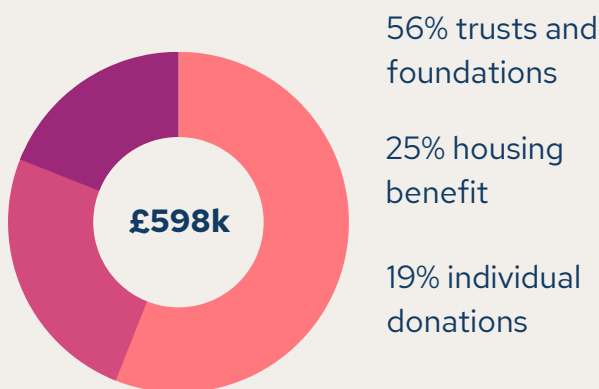


# Financial summary:

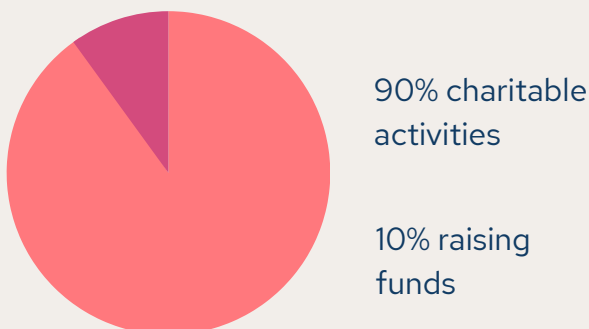
SEPTEMBER 2021 – AUGUST 2022

We are blown away by the support we have received over the last year, from funders and individuals new to Ella's as well as those who have been standing with us for longer. You make our work possible and we are so grateful.

## WHAT WE RAISED



## WHAT WE SPENT



## WHAT WE DO

For anyone new to Ella's, we are an organisation providing urgent and long-term support for women who have survived trafficking and exploitation.

Our mission is to ensure survivors of trafficking and exploitation have all they need to recover and build lives that are safe and free.

To achieve this, we offer safe house accommodation for women when they are most vulnerable, care to help them recover and move forward, and long-term community-based support to help survivors build safe, independent lives.

For more, visit [www.ellas.org.uk](http://www.ellas.org.uk)

## WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO



*'If someone is looking for you or if you fear something, you feel safe at Ella's. No one will judge you... You feel at home again.*

*The people who work at Ella's, they will help lift your mood when you're low. They can show you a new path, that everything can be fine again. You can find new things even if you've lost something.*

*They help us prepare in our minds for the future, so we have the right support and knowledge, in order to be ok after Ella's as well as while we are here.*

*I know the help, skills and people I've found at Ella's will benefit me long into the future. Although I won't be living at Ella's, the feeling of safety will stay with me.'*

**SHARON**





# Our year in pictures

SEPTEMBER 2021 – AUGUST 2022

We do everything we can to ensure survivors of trafficking and exploitation have all they need to recover and build lives that are safe and free. And we are a community. Thank you for being part of it.



**EXPRESS** 15°C

NEWS ROYAL CELEBRITY TV SPORT FINANCE

News > UK

### Organised crime gangs force 1,000 women a year into London sex trade

SCOTLAND Yard is warning at least a thousand women are trafficked into London every year and forced to work in a growing sex trade.

By **ROBERT KELLAWAY**  
00:01, Wed, Mar 23, 2022 | UPDATED: 13:59, Wed, Mar 23, 2022

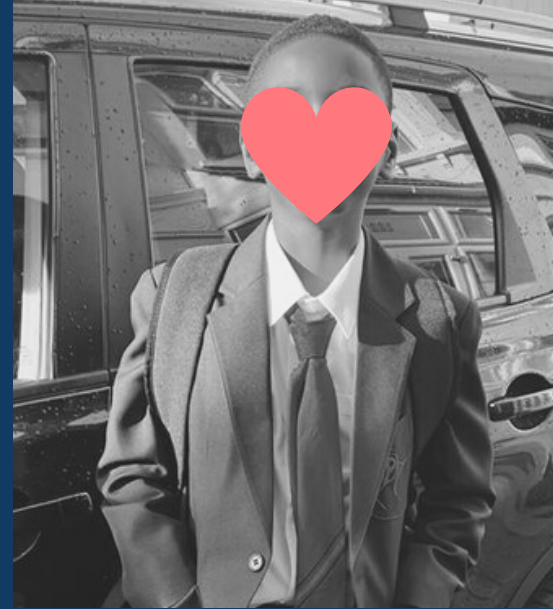
20

Over 1,000 women each year are trafficked to the capital for the sex trade (Image: Paul David Drabble)



- Left to right from top:
1. Our brilliant Hackney Half team raised nearly £4,000 for Ella's.
  2. We supported eight survivors during pregnancy and postnatally.
  3. Supporting survivors to get out and about, and build confidence and safe relationships is key.
  4. Ella's featured in the media eight times this year, including the Daily Express.
  5. Alvaro de la Camara Martin rode 1,430km from London to Madrid and raised £1.6k+ for Ella's. (Photo: Marcos Fernandez)
  6. Becky, Jamie (pictured), and Simba ran the virtual London Marathon for Ella's, raising £2,500+. (Photo: Jamie Corcoran)
  7. Lucia created this Pride outfit for her dog, saying. '[We are] proud to wear the name of an organisation that respects and fights to help restore the dignity of any woman who has survived trafficking.' (Photo: Lucia)





Left to right from top:

1. Safe house residents teaching one another to knit.
2. We are grateful to all of the trusts and foundations that supported us last year, including our long-term partner, TRIBE.
3. David aged 11 was one of more than 20 children benefiting as a result of the Back to School Appeal we ran last summer.
4. Birthday celebrations are a big thing at Ella's!
5. Jon Price cycled 1,126 km to mark his 60th birthday, raising more than £5,000 for Ella's. (Photo: Jon Price)
6. Twenty-nine children benefited from our work, including Agnes. 'My favourite thing to do is paint!' she says.
7. Forty-seven women benefited from our work last year.
8. We ran 41 community sessions online and in-person including art, fitness and day trips.

Photos where not otherwise credited: staff/Ella's

# Thank you

Every message of encouragement, every hour of time given, every financial gift and piece of advice has helped us this year.

Ella's is a safe place, but it's also a big community with big ambitions and a huge heart, and we're thankful for every member.

We are committed to continuing growing in order to have a greater impact among more women. If you would like to support or partner with Ella's, we would love to hear from you.

Together, we can help unlock freedom among women who have survived trafficking and exploitation.

*'I knew it [the room at Ella's] was my space. I'd never had new towels before, they were for me. It was my room, my space, my door. I didn't have to worry about men I don't know walking in, in the middle of the night.'*

**MARGARET**





## **ELLA'S**

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Ella's is a company limited charity (company number 12178531) with a registered office address (England and Wales). We are also a charity registered in England and Wales, charity registration number 1187529.

Photos: Tom Price/Ella's

