



Crime Victims
Helpline.ie

Freephone **116006**

Annual Report

2022



Chairperson's Statement

It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve as Chairperson of Crime Victims Helpline (CVH) over the past year and I am delighted to contribute to this Annual Report for 2022.

The impacts of crime are often far-reaching in physical, psychological, emotional and financial terms and it is important to ensure that victims are supported in dealing with the aftermath. We constantly strive to place victims, their friends and families, and all those affected by crime at the heart of what we do.

The substantial number of service users helped by CVH during 2022 is a tribute to the commitment and determination of our wonderful staff and volunteers. I would particularly like to thank the Chief Executive, Michele Puckhaber, for her outstanding management and leadership. We are extremely fortunate to have a pool of talented volunteers who, working with the staff, always demonstrate compassion, empathy, and selflessness in supporting victims of crime. The generosity of spirit in which they contribute to the Helpline is unparalleled, and they play a vital role in helping victims to weather the stormy conditions that crime often brings in its wake.

The development of a new strategic plan for 2023 to 2025 was a key focus of the Board and the Chief Executive Officer in 2022. Working with an external consultant, the Board received input from the staff, volunteers, other organisations working in the victim sector, the Department of Justice and other stakeholders. I am grateful to all who participated in the process which has resulted in a robust strategic plan for the next three years. While new challenges may well emerge, CVH now has a clear focus and direction with key priorities for its development and ultimately for the benefit of victims of crime. Details of the plan are contained elsewhere in this report.

I am proud to say that CVH is a well-run organisation with strong financial and other controls. The Board and management fully embrace the Charities Governance Code and all other requirements of the Charities Regulator for organisations of our size. We also comply in full with the requirements of the Grant Agreement issued to us by the Department of Justice. We believe that strong and effective corporate governance is critically important to the maintenance of public trust in charities.

CVH could not deliver its services without the funding it receives from the Department of Justice, and we are extremely grateful for this. I want to thank the Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee T.D., and the officials in her Department, for the encouragement and goodwill extended to us. We look forward to continuing the positive and synergistic relationship that we have in the years to come.

I am particularly grateful to the directors who served throughout the year. Their passion, determination and invaluable guidance has enabled the organisation to grow from strength to strength. In anticipation of two due-course retirements in 2023, two new directors, Clare Cresswell and Susan Leahy, joined the Board in 2022. They bring considerable experience to the Board and have already made significant contributions to the organisation.

With a very effective CEO, a strong team of dedicated staff, volunteers, stakeholders, and Directors, and with guidance from our patron (retired Judge Gillian Hussey), CVH can look forward with confidence to continuing its support for victims of crime and to enhancing and expanding the services it provides.



MICHAEL TYNDALL
Chairperson



Message from the CEO

2022 was a year of reflection and looking to the future for the Crime Victims Helpline. The uptake of CVH services has steadily increased over the past decade--increasing over 17 percent in 2022 alone. During this time, the landscape for victims has changed dramatically as the EU Victims' Rights Directive provided all victims of crime with substantial rights for the first time.

As uptake of CVH service has grown, so has the staff required to support service users and volunteers. CVH grew from one full-time and two part-time staff to two full-time (Chief Executive and Service Coordinator) and one part-time (Volunteer Coordinator) roles. It is essential that CVH continues to devote adequate resources to maintain the quality of the information and support provided as well as ensure ease of access and quick response times to our service users.

One of the highlights of 2022 was the European Day for Victims of Crime webinar that was held on 22nd February. Organised in conjunction with the Irish Tourist Assistance Service, Victim Support at Court, and the Victims Rights Alliance, we were honoured to have Minister for Justice Helen McEntee provide the opening address.

Another highlight of 2022 was CVH's presence at the National Ploughing Championships as part of the Department of Justice's "Supporting Victims of Crime" exhibition space. Events such as this are so important for raising awareness of the services provided by CVH, amongst the general public and entities operating in the criminal justice sector who interact with victims of crime.

A significant milestone in 2022 was the launch of the webchat pilot. Victims of crime should have the opportunity to access support and information in the format that feels most comfortable to them. Therefore it is important that CVH continues to expand the ways victims can contact us. Webchat is a natural addition to our text, email, call-back request, and phone services. CVH will continue to seek ways to expand the ease of access to services and remain responsive to the needs of victims of crime.

2022 also saw CVH embark upon a year-long strategic planning process. Feedback and input was sought from staff, volunteers, directors, other victim service providers, and the Department of Justice in formulating a plan for the focus, direction, and priorities for 2023 through 2025. I'm pleased to present the outcome of the process in this report.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors, Patron, volunteers and staff for everything they did in 2022 and continue to do in support of CVH and victims of crime in Ireland.



MICHELE RUCKHABER

Chief Executive



2022 in Pictures



European Day for Victims of Crime 22 February 2022 **Irish National Meeting**



Now providing information and support over webchat!

Crime Victims Helpline.ie

Freephone **116006**

About the Crime Victims Helpline

VISION - MISSION - PURPOSE



The Crime Victims Helpline is a national support service for victims, survivors, and anyone impacted by crime in Ireland. We listen with empathy and without judgement. We provide time and space for people to talk about their experiences in confidence. We answer questions about the criminal justice system, provide information about victims' rights and compensation, and provides information about and referrals to local and specialist victim support services.

 **Crime Victims
Helpline.ie**

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Strategic Plan 2023-2025

Under the guidance of Pink Flower Consultancy, CVH undertook the process of creating a plan for the future. During the process, volunteers, staff, directors and other stakeholders assisted in exploring and clarifying CVH's mission, vision and values. The evolving needs of victims and the criminal justice sector were considered and a strategic plan for 2023-2025 was created. The highlights are presented below. The full plan can be viewed [here](#).



Compassion - Respect - Person-Centred

At Crime Victims Helpline, everything we do is guided by our key values of compassion and respect for all who use our service, and all who we work with both internally and externally. Our key aim is to provide a supportive, empathetic service for anyone who has been impacted by a crime - being person-centred in our approach is key to that. We focus on the individual, their needs and what we can do to support them.



Integrity - Excellence

Integrity and excellence are the foundation upon which our services are built. We aim to provide a best-practice, evidence-informed service which is underpinned by the highest standards of ethical governance.



Collaboration

We seek to collaborate in a real and meaningful way with all of our partners within the criminal justice system and within the victim-support sector to ensure that all who have been impacted by crime can receive integrated support from organisations that are working in harmony with one another.

Strategic Plan 2023-2025

EXPANSION -- COMMUNICATION -- TRAINING

CURRENT

FUTURE

Position in Sector:



- Fulfilling a strategically important function on behalf of the Department of Justice.
- However public brand awareness is low.



- The Crime Victims Helpline is well-known to the public. It is a respected high-profile service.

Service Provision:



- Support at a distance - 116 006 helpline, email, text, and webchat with limited hours.
- Provide victim awareness training and events.



- Move to increase accessibility of services through expanded hours and explore viability and benefits of face-to-face meetings with victims who are not currently supported by existing services.
- Research/policy (collective advocacy).
- Expand training scope and expertise.

Organisational Structure:



- Company limited by guarantee/registered charity.
- Overseen by Board of Directors.
- Volunteer-base supported by small team of staff.



- Strengthen and expand volunteer programme.
- Add staff and increase specialisation to ensure high level of service to victims of crime.

Funding Model:



- Department of Justice (DoJ)- sole funder.



- Expanded agreement with DoJ + multi-year funding secured to support that.
- Diversification and supplementation of funds (such as through EU grants, sponsorships, corporate donations, etc.).

How We Helped

In 2022 CVH recorded 5,828 contacts with service users, which represents a 17.3% increase compared to 2021. This substantial increase reflects the high demand for CVH services.

The majority of contacts (82%) came directly from victims of crime. 6% came from a friend or relative, 6% from Garda Victim Service Offices, Gardaí or GSOC, and 4% from members of the public. CVH welcomes contact from anyone who is seeking emotional support, information about the criminal justice system, and/or referrals to local or specialist support services.

CVH records the gender of the person contacting us if they self-identify but we do not generally ask for this information or make assumptions about the gender of a service user. An exception to this is in relation to domestic abuse where separate services exist for men and women. In 2022 60% of service users identified as female while 40% identified as male.

The vast majority of CVH users (74%) contacted us via our freephone number 116 006. Emails (including those sent through the CVH website) were the second most popular means of contact at 14%, followed by texts at 10%. Post and webchat were the least popular means of contact at 1% each. The low level of contact via webchat reflects that our pilot project was only introduced from July 2022 onwards. It is expected that this figure will increase during 2023.

While service users usually contact CVH in relation to a number of issues, the CVH team member records just one primary purpose of contact. There are eight categories to choose from as captured in the table below. In 2022, 28% of contacts pertained to Emotional Support, 27% pertained to Information re: Criminal Justice System while 20% constituted a Follow-up (namely further contacts made to service users who request them). 17% of contacts sought referrals to or information about other services, most notably counselling services. Other purposes of contact included Information re; Compensation (2%), Ongoing Safety Concerns (2%), Requesting CVH Material/Info re: CVH (2%) and Making Victim Referral (2%).

Similar to previous years, assault and harassment were the main types of crime that CVH was contacted about. These crimes formed a higher percentage of total contacts compared to 2021. 832 contacts pertained to assault in 2022 (14% of total contacts) compared to 535 in 2021 (11% of total contacts). There were 671 contacts relating to harassment in 2022 (12% of total contacts) compared to 456 in 2021 (9%).

2022 witnessed an increase in contacts relating to the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. There were 109 contacts pertaining to this type of crime in 2022 compared to 29 in 2021. There was also a notable increase relating to fraud committed both online and in-person. In 2022 there were 172 contacts relating to fraud online and 100 relating to fraud in-person, compared to 86 and 82 respectively in 2021.

People do not always disclose the crime they have been impacted by and we also receive contacts from people who are not victims of crime such as those looking for support or advice around civil or family law matters. We assist these service users by making referrals to the appropriate resources.

A complete list of crimes can be found in Figure 1.

LGBTQ Hate Crime and Racist Hate Crime recorded respective percentage increases of 78% (albeit from low base figures). Crimes related to domestic abuse also increased by 7% compared to 2021.

Motivation	Number of contacts in 2021	Number of contacts in 2022	Percentage increase/decrease
Domestic abuse	205	220	7%
LGBTQ Hate Crime	9	16	78%
Racist Hate Crime	27	48	78%

CVH is a national helpline and it is a priority that we are known and accessible to service users all across the Republic of Ireland. Not all service users disclose their location to us – in 2022, just 31% of contacts disclosed the county in which they were living. Confidentiality and anonymity are a priority for many of our service users so this number is not unexpected. While the figures are therefore not fully representative, they are nevertheless useful in identifying the geographical distribution of our contacts.

In line with previous years, the percentage of CVH contacts was mostly proportionate to the population distribution across Ireland. However, Dublin, Kildare, Mayo and Kerry were overrepresented in our statistics while Cork and Galway were slightly underrepresented. In relation to Cork in particular, an improvement in geographical distribution occurred compared to 2021 – whereas contacts from this county were underrepresented by 10% last year, this has reduced to 4.5% this year.

It is also worth noting that 4% of CVH contacts came from international locations. A portion of international contacts are from people who were victims of crime in Ireland (often historical abuse) and are now living elsewhere (often the UK). We are also contacted by international victims with no connection to Ireland and in those situations we do our best to connect them with the appropriate services in their country. Due to the strong connections between victim support organisations within the EU, we are able to identify services for most EU-based victims.

A full breakdown of location of contacts is available in Figure 2.

In 2022, CVH made over 3,000 referrals to over 74 different organisations, supports and resources (Figure 3). This illustrates the wide-ranging and diverse needs of those affected by crime. Similar to previous years, the majority of referrals were made to the Gardaí and Garda Victim Service Offices.

CVH provides ongoing training, education and updates to staff members and volunteers to ensure that we are always aware of the various resources and supports available to our service users.

FIGURE 1

Type of crime	Number of contacts
Assault	832
Harassment	671
Rape/Sexual Assault	189
Threats to Harm/Kill	177
Fraud-ONLINE	172
Theft	147
Non-Consensual Sharing of Intimate Photos	109
Fraud	100
Burglary	90
Criminal Damage	89
Child Abuse (Historic)	76
Extortion	69
Harassment-ONLINE	68
Antisocial Behaviour	57
Hacking/Data Protection Breach	54
Robbery	52
Stalking	39
Road Traffic Incident	35
Coercive Control	33
Child Abuse (Recent)	29
Arson	29
Blackmail	26
Car Theft	22
Homicide	19
Violation Safety/Barring Order	9
False Imprisonment	8
Trespassing	6
Abduction	1

FIGURE 2

County	Percentage of CVH contacts	Percentage of ROI population
Dublin	40%	28%
Cork	7%	11.5%
Kildare	5%	4%
Mayo	5%	2%
Kerry	4%	2%
Meath	4%	4%
Wicklow	4%	3%
Galway	4%	5.5%
Tipperary	3%	3%
Limerick	3%	3%
Louth	3%	5%
Westmeath	2%	3%
Waterford	2%	1%
Kilkenny	2%	1%
Wexford	2%	2.5%
Laois	2%	3%
Donegal	2%	3%
Cavan	1%	2%
Clare	1%	3%
Longford	1%	1%
Sligo	1%	2.5%
Roscommon	1%	1%
Leitrim	1%	1%
Carlow	<1%	2%
Monaghan	<1%	1%
Offaly	<1%	2%

FIGURE 3

Referrals Made by CVH	
Gardaí	710
Garda Victim Service Office	598
Counselling General	253
Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC)	186
Counselling In Primary Care Scheme	98
Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal	88
GP	84
Hotline.ie	76
Garda Ombudsman (GSOC)	64
Women's Aid National Helpline	62
Rape Crisis National Helpline	48
Social Media Platform	46
Threshold	42
Local Councillor/TD	41
Director Public Prosecutions (DPP)	38
Samaritans	33
Support After Crime	28
Data Protection Commission	28
Victim Support at Court	24
Victim Assistance	24
Residential Tenancies Board	23
Fraudsmart.ie	23
International Victim Support Organisations	19
Crisis Text Line	19
INAR/iReport	18
Immigrant Council of Ireland	18
Parentline	17
Male Advice Line	17
Men's Aid	17
Sage Advocacy	16
Childline	16
Seniorline	15
Teenline	14
St Vincent DePaul	14
Dept. of Employment Affairs and Social Protection	14
LGBT Ireland	13
One in Four	13
Citizens Information	13
Pieta House	12
Connect	11
Sexual Violence Centre Cork	9
Friends of the Elderly	7
Care After Prison	7

FIGURE 3, cont.

Referrals Made by CVH, continued	
Alone	7
Age Action	7
Túsla	6
Shine	6
Courts Service	6
IRVA	6
Workplace Relations Commission	5
Senior Alert Scheme	5
National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities	5
Irish Prison Service Victim Liaison	5
Doras	5
Competition and Consumer Protection Commission	5
Accompaniment Support Services for Children (ASSC)	5
CARI	5
Your Mental Health (information line)	4
Advic (Advocates for Victims of Homicide)	4
Support After Homicide	4
Motor Insurers' Bureau of Ireland	4
Dignity 4 Patients	4
Patient Advocacy Service	3
Community Law & Mediation	3
Parole Board	2
Irish Tourist Assistance Service	1

2022 Finances

CRIME VICTIMS HELPLINE (A Company Limited by Guarantee)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Note	2022 €	2021 €
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	5	787	806
Cash at bank and in hand	6	39,229	37,979
		<u>40,016</u>	<u>38,785</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	7	(16,891)	(8,867)
		<u>23,125</u>	<u>29,918</u>
Net current assets		23,125	29,918
Total assets less current liabilities		23,125	29,918
Deferred Income		(7,766)	(9,853)
		<u>15,359</u>	<u>20,065</u>
Net assets		15,359	20,065
Reserves			
Income & expenditure account		15,359	20,065
		<u>15,359</u>	<u>20,065</u>
Members' funds		15,359	20,065

2022 Finances

CRIME VICTIMS HELPLINE
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**SCHEDULE TO THE DETAILED ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022**

	2022	2021
	€	€
Income		
Grant Income	150,000	121,000
Donations & other	3,007	867
Deferred income	2,087	10,184
Benevict Project	6,895	-
	<u>161,989</u>	<u>132,051</u>
	2022	2021
	€	€
Administration expenses		
Staff salaries	96,190	80,623
Employer's social insurance contributions	10,082	8,080
Employer's contributions to staff pensions	2,560	1,802
Awareness Raising	18,291	6,041
Bank charges	174	172
Computer costs	5,024	4,239
Conference & meetings	1,109	-
General office expenses	2,421	2,695
Insurances	1,411	1,389
Interpretation & Translation	188	260
Legal and professional	320	307
Postage	502	346
Sundry expenses	114	200
Telephone	10,951	10,050
Training and memberships	2,777	1,422
Travel and subsistence	870	201
Auditors' remuneration	1,845	1,845
Dormant Fund Project	2,087	10,184
Strategic Plan	9,779	-
	<u>166,695</u>	<u>129,856</u>

Board of Directors

Crime Victims Helpline is committed to having the highest standards of good governance. Directors are independently elected and no Director receives any remuneration whatsoever for their service.

The trust and support of the community are not something that we take for granted. Any queries in relation to the governance of Crime Victims Helpline can be directed to info@crimevictimshelpline.ie

Michael Tyndall, Chairperson
Eileen Brady (resigned 2023)
Clare Cresswell (appointed 2022)
Margaret Clapham (appointed 2023)
Naomi Coleman (appointed 2023)
Declan Harrington
Naoise Kelly
Susan Leahy (appointed 2022)
Simon Treanor (resigned 2023)

Staff

Michele Puckhaber
Chief Executive

Marie Murray
Volunteer Coordinator

Caoimhe McKeon
Service Coordinator

Charity and Company Information

Crime Victims Helpline is a registered charity
16894 (CRO)
20061890 (Charities Regulator)

Company Limited by Guarantee 409235

Registered Office
6/7 Hanover Street East, D02 W320

The Crime Victims Helpline is supported by



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice



ciste na
gcuntas díomhaoin
the dormant
accounts fund