

*"I thought every door was closed.
I thought I had no options.
Then I found your website."*



Annual Report 2015

Vision

A world where women have the information and means to access safe, legal abortions wherever they live.

Mission

To provide information, financial assistance and accommodation to women who may be forced to travel to England to access a safe, legal abortion.

Values

- We believe that all women have the right to safe and legal abortions.
- We believe in providing practical support to enable women to exercise this right.
- We are compassionate and respectful of women and their decisions.

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Director's Letter

Dear Supporter,

We spend a lot of time talking about ASN's clients, the people forced by a combination of poverty and draconian abortion laws to call on us for help. I want to take this opportunity to talk about our supporters.

ASN supporters are the BEST. Every day, we are contacted by people who need help. And every day, because of our amazing supporters, we – people like you – we have been able to say “YES” to the people contacting us for help.

One of the most supportive, incredible things you have made possible is enabling ASN to be led by a Director who is paid. This has meant that in addition to our committed volunteers, someone has been there to help raise awareness of ASN's work, coordinate fundraising efforts, and manage the most difficult and complicated client cases.

ASN is an abortion fund, and we can only exist as long as there are others out there who believe, as we do, that “I can't afford an abortion” shouldn't be the reason someone becomes a parent. We are humbled by, grateful for, and invigorated by your support.

Here's to another year of helping people, together.



Mara Clarke
Founder & Director

About ASN

Founded in 2009, Abortion Support Network is a grassroots charity that provides financial help, advice on how to arrange the least expensive abortion and travel, and accommodation in volunteer homes to women* who may be forced to travel from Ireland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man for abortions.

Women travelling abroad for an abortion do so legally, but must pay the cost. This includes the financial cost of the abortion (£400–£2000 depending on gestation and other circumstances), plane or ferry tickets, childcare and travel documents, as well as the emotional cost of having to lie to friends and family and flee your country to get a medical procedure that those resident in England, Scotland and Wales can access free on the NHS.

While other organisations campaign for much-needed law reform, ASN is the only organisation providing what our clients need most immediately: money.

**ASN does not ask gender when communicating with clients, nor does gender identity influence grant eligibility.*

“Being pregnant when I don’t want to be is taking over my life. It’s a never-ending nightmare and I’m in a state of panic.”

Why ASN is needed

Abortion is illegal in almost all circumstances in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man.

This forces thousands of women to travel. For those with money, this is an inconvenience. Those without finances face obstacles ranging from not having a passport to being misinformed by so-called crisis pregnancy centres.

ASN volunteers provide information on how to arrange the least expensive abortion and travel, funding and accommodation to women travelling. Some callers to ASN need a little help – others a lot. In each case, they face a situation they cannot resolve in their home country.

In our newsletter, we share quotes and stories from people we've helped in order to show our supporters how their funding is spent. We don't share the most horrible stories – not only to protect our readers but because the details that make these cases so heart-breaking are details that could be used to identify the people involved.

Client contacts ASN by phone, email or text



ASN calls back



ASN gives info on how to arrange the least expensive abortion and travel, or how to access safe but illegal abortion pills online



We conduct a financial assessment



We arrange accommodation if needed



We arrange the grant

Who we've helped in 2015

In 2015, we heard from 648 women. We were able to provide information, financial assistance or somewhere to stay to many, but some we never heard back from. At ASN, we do not require people to divulge tragic stories or other details to receive help. If someone has financial need, and we have the funds to help, we do. As a result, the statistics below reflect only the limited information that clients have chosen to share with us.



12 were pregnant from rape



24 needed a visa to travel

29 had medical issues



5 tried to self-harm or abort



9 were dealing with foetal anomalies



27 were migrants, refugees or Travellers

29 were dealing with domestic violence



5 were homeless

12 were suicidal



“It’s gotten to the stage where I’m starting to wonder is there any point in me continuing with my own life, never mind my pregnancy. It’s incredibly scary.”

How we've helped in 2015

10,096
minutes

ASN volunteers spent over 168 hours on the phone, responded to over 1,300 texts and thousands of emails, providing practical information and assessing financial need.

42 nights of
accommodation

Our volunteers opened their homes to 33 women for 42 nights of accommodation. Hosting was provided near clinics in Manchester, Liverpool, West London and South London.

154 funded

ASN funded 154 people travelling to terminate pregnancies.

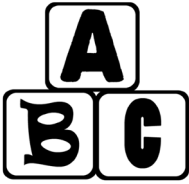
£43,484
in grants

We spent £43,484 on grants to clinics to pay for abortions, and also, less frequently, paid for plane tickets when clients couldn't, and for B&Bs when ASN hosts were unavailable. Grants ranged from £27 to £1593.

£8,500+
in clinic
discounts

This amount is in addition to the reduced fees that clinics offer to women resident in Ireland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man. We are forever grateful to the compassionate, professional providers who make sure women receive the healthcare they need.

For many women, travelling for an abortion is the first time they've left their home country – or county. There are many obstacles facing them over and above the need to raise the £400–£2000 it costs to travel to England.



Finding
childcare

Cancelled
flights



LIES

Misinformation
from crisis
pregnancy centres



Unscrupulous
money lenders

Keeping it a
secret

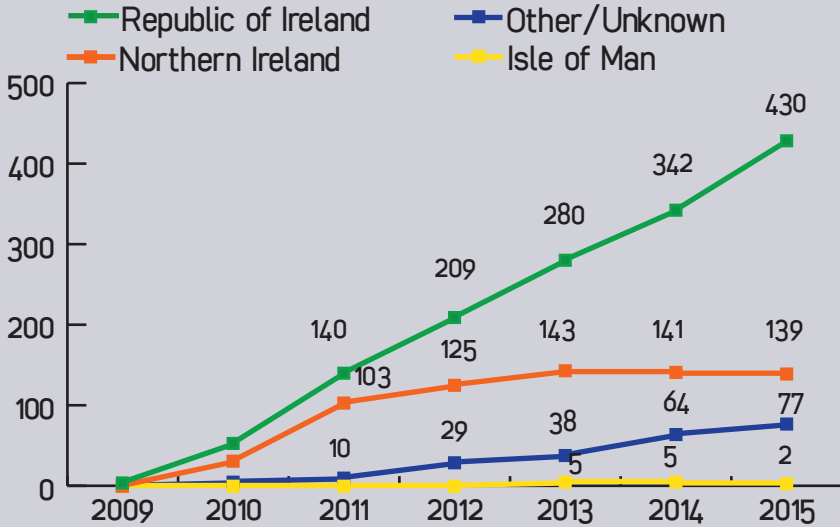


Needing a
passport

Our work 2009–2015

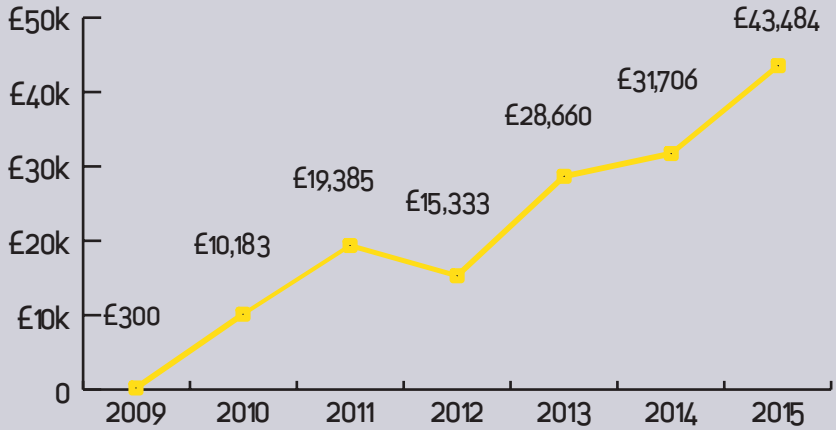
In December 2009 ASN hosted and funded our first client. As word spread, we heard from more and more women who needed financial support to travel for an abortion. In 2015 we heard from our 2,375th person, funded our 653rd client and hosted our 117th client. Until the draconian anti-abortion laws in Ireland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man change, we'll continue to answer phone calls, emails and texts from desperate people. With your support, we'll continue to liaise with abortion clinics, find accommodation and provide grants.

Where clients contacted us from

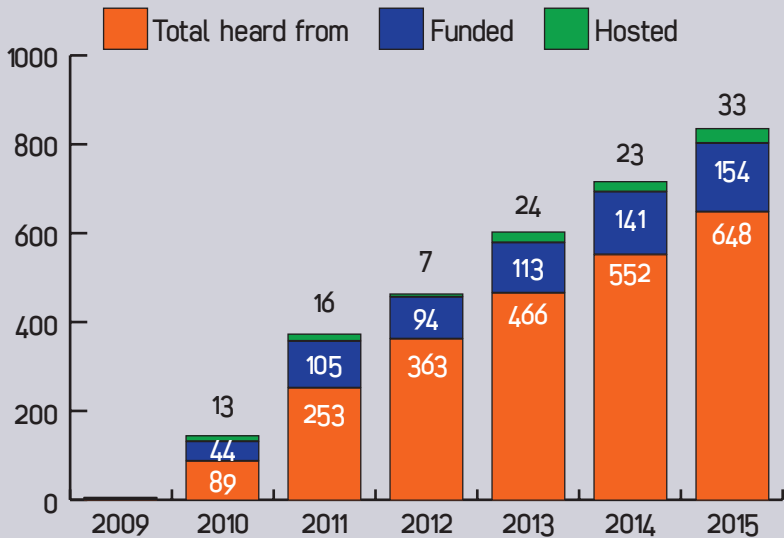


In 2009 we started out with 4 clients from the Republic of Ireland. In 2010 that jumped to 53, along with 31 from Northern Ireland and 5 from other places.

How much we funded



How many clients we helped



In 2009 we heard from 4 women, funded 2, and hosted 1.

How you helped in 2015

ASN is almost entirely funded by donations from individuals but we also receive valuable support from other sources. In 2015, we increased our efforts to secure funding from trusts and foundations, as well as reminding donors to complete a Gift Aid registration. This year, we received £117,202 total income from all sources which is made up of:

- **£48,937 from one-off donations**

We received 579 single donations, ranging from £2 to £3,195. Every penny is appreciated and provides direct support for women forced to travel for abortions.

- **£37,522 from regular monthly donations**

Or an average of £3,126 per month. Thanks to the 380 people who give from £1-125 and enable us to know how much support we can give each month – you are our bread and butter!

- **£8,677 in Gift Aid**

Donors who signed up for gift aid helped us raise an extra £8,677 of income in 2015. Gift Aid means that ASN can reclaim the tax you have already paid on the value of your donation – so your donation is worth 25% more to us, at no cost to you! Make your donations worth even more at www.abortionsupport.org.uk/gift-aid or email fundraising@abortionsupport.org.uk for further information. In 2015 we were able to collect Gift Aid dating back to 2013, so many thanks to every supporter who filled out their Gift Aid form!

- **£7,200 in sponsorship**
ASN has partners who sponsor our website. Their logos will appear on the ASN site throughout 2016.
- **£6,560 from our 2014 crowdfunding efforts**
While most of the funds from this amazing campaign were donated in 2014, £6,560 was pledged in early 2015.
- **£4,097 from community fundraising and events**
Many thanks to all the people who organised and attended fundraisers. Email community@abortionssupport.org.uk if you want to fundraise for ASN.
- **£3,198 in grants**
We received a £3,198 (US\$5,000) grant from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to further our work.



- **£1,011 in travel subsidies**
In 2015, we received travel subsidies from the National Network of Abortion Funds so our volunteers could attend their conference.

“My ex abused me and there’s no way I can have a baby that will tie me to him. I tried to get a scan at the hospital but they refused to give me one when I said it was for an abortion.”

We also received invaluable support from other organisations and the media. We'd like to shout out to two in particular.



In June, ASN was one of five charities chosen to be part of the second Mumsnet Giving Week. With over nine million users, the website is the largest community of women in the UK. Selected by users of the website, ASN was showcased alongside charities providing support for women and families. The campaign raised £5,454 for ASN, of which £5,075 was then matched by Mumsnet for a total of £10,529.

theguardian


On 31 October, The Guardian's Observer Magazine published a piece entitled, *"It was the scariest thing I've ever done": the Irish women forced to travel for abortions*. While ASN has been highlighted in the media in the past, this feature on the experiences of people forced to travel from Northern and the Republic of Ireland, including stories from clinics, ASN hosts and ASN clients, struck a chord with readers. The impact was more than £7,000 given by first-time donors and more than 20 inquiries from people wanting to volunteer.

"I've never felt such a weight lifted from me. I'm now looking forward to a bright and happy future with my children."

Statement of financial accounts

Please find below Abortion Support Network's Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 December 2015. If you have any questions about our accounts, please contact our treasurer via email at treasurer@abortionsupport.org.uk.

Statement of financial activities					
Year to 31 December 2015					
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Capital funds	Year to 31 December 2015	Year to 31 December 2014
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Incoming resources</i>					
Individual donations	86,459	-	-	86,459	41,238
Gift aid	8,677	-	-	8,677	8,322
Fundraising events and crowdfunding campaign	4,097	6,560	-	10,657	22,833
Grants	3,198	-	-	3,198	9,900
Website sponsorship fees	7,200	-	-	7,200	-
Travel subsidies and leaflet campaigns	-	1,011	-	1,011	-
Total incoming resources	109,632	7,571	-	117,202	82,293
<i>Resources expended</i>					
Grants to clients	43,484	-	-	43,484	31,706
Cost of generating funds	2,444	379	-	2,823	1,300
Operational expenditure	5,238	1,011	-	6,249	4,333
Consultancy payments	3,422	26,103	-	29,525	15,900
Total resources used	54,588	27,492	-	82,080	53,239
Net incoming resources	55,044	(19,922)	-	35,122	29,054
Fund balance brought forward	16,014	19,922	-	35,936	6,882
Fund balance carried forward	71,058	-	-	71,058	35,936

Approved by the trustees on 10 April 2016. and signed on their behalf by 

Goals for 2016

ASN is proud of how much we've grown since we started in 2009. Thanks to our incredible volunteers, donors, and supporters ASN has largely been able to keep up with a client demand that has increased every year. We present our three-year plan to strengthen our people, our revenue and our infrastructure so we can continue providing critical support to people who need us.

- **Clients**

We want to be able to help every person who contacts us. We expect this to be 720 clients in 2016 and 900 by 2018.

- **People**

We will create a staff and volunteer structure that safeguards our capacity to deliver client services. We will create a plan in 2016 and aim to implement it by 2018.

- **Governance**

ASN will transition from an operational Board to an oversight Board, including recruitment of a new Secretary, Chair and Treasurer and outsourcing and staffing certain roles.

- **Infrastructure**

We will introduce a multiple-phone telephony solution as well as updating our data and file management systems.

- **Fundraising**

With the continuing support of donors, we aim to diversify revenue and increase our income to meet need. Targets are total income of £140k by 2016 and £270k by 2018.

How you can help

Donate

As an abortion fund, our ability to help women is governed by our bank balance. Our regular donors are what keep us going but we also gratefully accept one off or occasional donations. Visit www.abortionsupport.org.uk/donate for more information.

Register for Gift Aid

If you are a UK tax payer and an ASN donor, registering for Gift Aid gets ASN an extra 25p for every £1 you donate – at no extra cost to you. Go to www.abortionsupport.org.uk/gift-aid to find out more.

Give us your time

Go for a sponsored run, host a movie night, hold a bake sale – there are lots of ways to fundraise for ASN. Email community@abortionsupport.org.uk for ideas and support. Or if you'd like to become more involved with ASN, you'll find our current list of available volunteer roles at www.abortionsupport.org.uk/volunteer

Keep in touch

Sign up for our newsletter, like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter. You can find all our handles at www.abortionsupport.org.uk

Leave a legacy

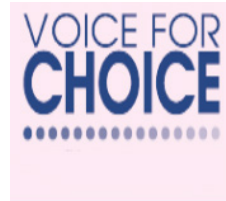
By leaving a gift to Abortion Support Network in your Will, you can help us to be there for women struggling to access safe, legal abortions long into the future. Email our trustee Caoileann Appleby at fundraising@abortionsupport.org.uk for further information.

Thank you

At ASN we focus on helping women access safe, legal abortions now. We are not alone and cannot do our work in isolation. Here we'd like to shout out to some of the many organisations fighting for abortion rights and helping people access safe, legal abortions. We can't wait until you make us obsolete!



Abortion Rights



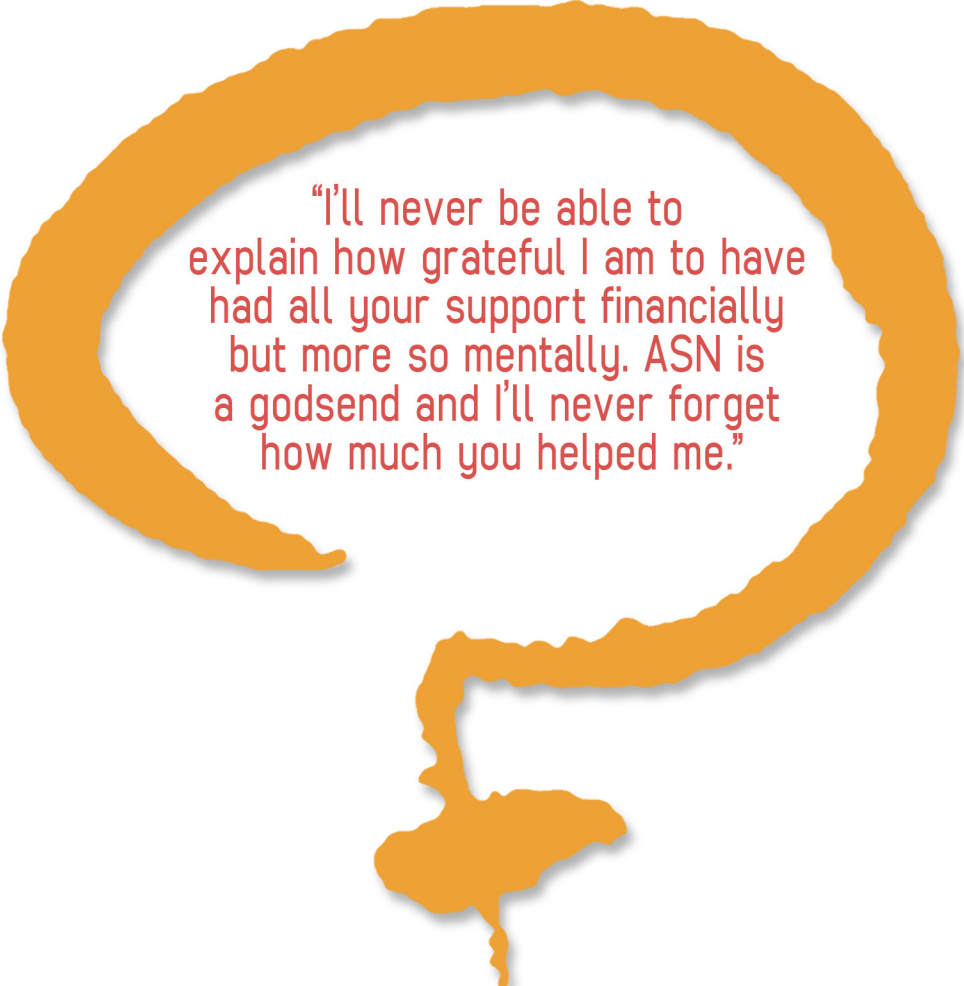
“I just want to thank you, you have no idea how much weight you have lifted. Thank you.”

“It’s been a long time since I’ve spoken to you. You helped me back in 2011. I’m in a much better place since back then and cannot thank you enough for the help you provided for me.”

“Just wanted to say a massive thank you for the amazing help. My treatment is done with so much less stress due to your support.”

“We would like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the support you have provided. At such a devastating time, you reached out to us both and helped us through the hardest days of our lives.”

“The work you do is really amazing. I was in a situation with no way of getting out it – it was really depressing and soul-destroying. I can’t tell you how grateful I am.”



“I’ll never be able to explain how grateful I am to have had all your support financially but more so mentally. ASN is a godsend and I’ll never forget how much you helped me.”



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