



abortion
support
network

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ASN, that was it.
The stress was gone.
I can't give enough
thanks and praise."

Annual Report 2014

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Our Vision

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

Our Mission

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

Our 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.

About ASN

Founded in 2009, Abortion Support Network is a grassroots charity that provides financial help, information on arranging 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. While other organisations campaign for much needed law reform, ASN is the only organisation providing what these women need most immediately: money.



Women travelling abroad for an abortion do so legally, but must pay the financial and emotional costs. This can include the fee for the abortion, plane or ferry tickets, childcare, accommodation, travel documents and the emotional trauma of needing to flee your country simply to access medical care. The financial cost ranges from £400-£2,000 for someone travelling and paying privately. For those resident in England, Scotland and Wales, abortion is free on the NHS.

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

Director's Letter

Now we are FIVE!

Abortion Support Network began in October 2009 with a mobile phone, a few volunteers and what felt like a handful of loose change. Five years later, the majority of our work continues to be carried out by volunteers and funded by private individuals. This reaffirms our belief that the world is full of super, amazing, pro-choice, pro-human rights SUPERSTARS who think that "I can't afford an abortion" shouldn't be the reason someone becomes a parent.

By the end of 2014, 1,727 people had sought out ASN's mix of practical information and financial support, from 89 clients in our first full year of operation to 552 in 2014. That's an increase of 520%. Women as old as 51 and girls as young as 13. Women in or escaping abusive relationships, pregnant as result of rape, with serious mental or physical health issues. Women with children, women with grandchildren, women with no children. Married couples who felt they had enough children already. Students wanting to continue with education rather than pregnancy. People who didn't want a child, or another child, now or possibly ever. And what did these people all have in common? They were pregnant. They didn't want to be pregnant. They were poor. And they never thought they'd be calling a stranger in England to ask for money.

"I was raped last month but never did anything about it as I blamed myself. I have now discovered I'm pregnant. I can't possibly bring a child into this world at this time in my life and I would rather die than go through with this pregnancy."

ASN's phone never stops ringing. So far, we've been able to meet the need with similar increases in funding and volunteer support. While we wait for campaigning groups to liberalise the abortion laws that make our services necessary, Abortion Support Network is the right-now solution for the people who need abortions today. And we are so, so grateful for the support we receive.

Here's to another year of helping, together.



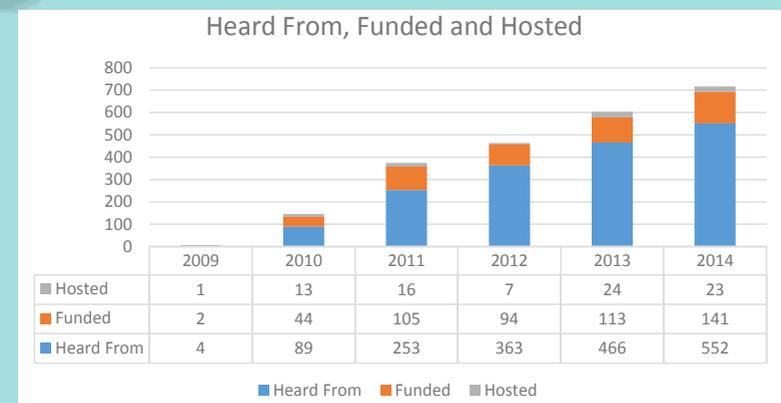
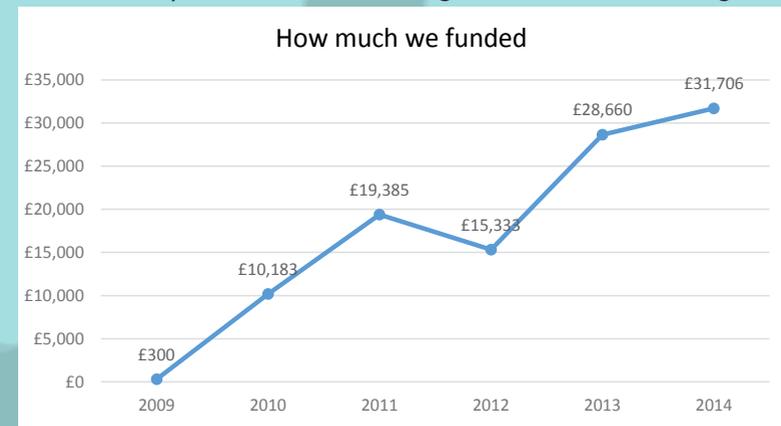
Mara Clarke
Founder & Director

How ASN works

ASN is an abortion fund, financed primarily by individual donors and run almost entirely by volunteers. We are a tiny charity working to meet a large-scale problem: thousands of women and girls in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man need abortions and face restrictive laws that leave them with limited options.

While our main function is raising money to help offset the £400-£2,000 it costs to travel and pay privately for an abortion, we are able to help many women by providing practical information about the least expensive methods of travel and accessing abortion services and, for those women under 9 weeks gestation, how to access Early Medical Abortion pills from a reputable online provider. Our ability to help people without providing them funding is the main reason for the disparity between the number of client contacts and the number of clients funded.

Other factors include women who continue their pregnancies, women unable to travel as they can't leave home or obtain travel documents, and women who reach out to us who we are unable to contact due to circumstances beyond our control, e.g. no answer at the phone number we are given or emails bouncing back.



Women We've Helped, 2009 - 2014

1,727 women, men, couples and concerned family and friends have contacted ASN since we started answering calls and emails in October 2009. We heard from people in every possible circumstance – women with physical and mental health issues, wanted pregnancies found to be unviable due to fatal foetal abnormalities, students choosing to continue school rather than drop out to parent, women pregnant as result of rape. ASN does not ask women how they became pregnant or why they want an abortion, and we are not always able to collect complete statistical or demographic information on our clients. What we do know is:

35 were dealing with foetal abnormalities

35 were Migrants, travellers, or refugees

71 were dealing with serious medical issues

62 were pregnant as result of rape

26 needed a visa to travel

9 arrived too late to obtain an abortion

90 were dealing with mental health issues



36 were suicidal

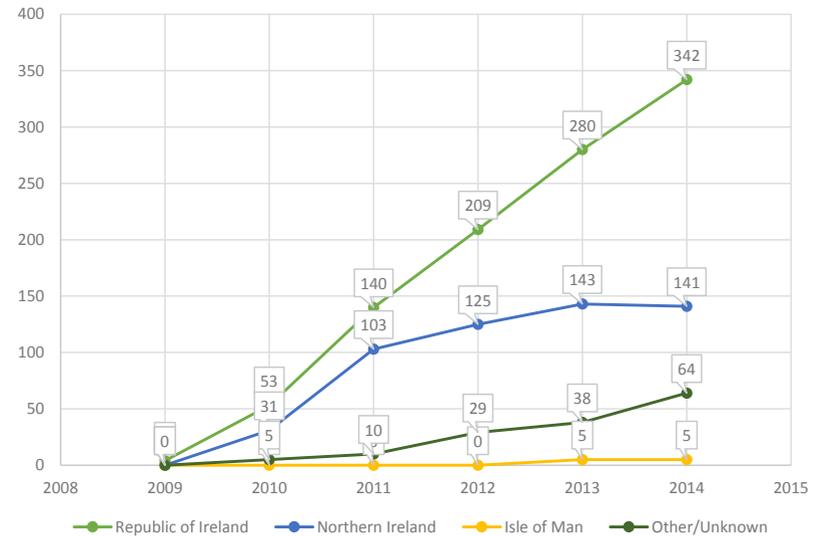


15 tried to self harm or self abort

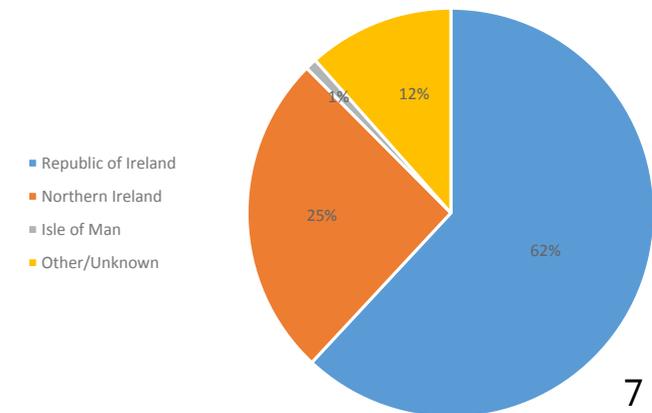


"Please help. I've tried everything to try to miscarry...I've been drinking excessively, I've tried throwing myself downstairs, and even tried to overdose. I can't have this child. I don't want it!!! I'm completely on my own. No one else knows and I'm at the end of my tether, I feel like I'm going to have a breakdown."

Countries clients contacted from



Countries clients contacted us from, 2014



How we helped in 2014

- 8,700 minutes on the phone
ASN volunteers spent over 145 hours on the phone and responded to thousands of texts and emails, providing practical information and assessing financial need.
- 27 nights of accommodation
Our volunteers opened their homes to 23 women for 27 nights of accommodation. Hosting is provided near clinics in Manchester, Liverpool, West London and South London.
- 141 funded
ASN funded 141 people travelling to terminate pregnancies.
- £31,706 in grants
We spent £31,706 on grants to clinics to pay for abortions, and also, less frequently, paid for plane tickets and B&Bs when ASN hosts were unavailable. Grants ranged from £20 to £1,271.
- More than £7,500 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.

"I didn't even know abortion was still illegal in this country - I was naive enough to think things had changed. It's so wonderful to know, during this difficult time, that there are people like you who are working to help."

ASN step by step

ASN is an abortion fund and the only organisation providing financial support to women living in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man. While many organisations campaign for much-needed law reform, ASN focuses on providing information and financial support to women who cannot wait for the law to change – they need abortions now.

A woman contacts ASN by phone, email or text message.

"I'm looking for some help to travel to England. My partner has lost his job and I cannot afford to travel over at this time. We're struggling to pay bills and feed the kids."

ASN contacts her.

"Please I need help. I am pregnant. I have been evicted from my home and I am homeless. No one will help me and I am suicidal. I don't know where to turn."

ASN assesses financial need and provides confidential, non-judgemental information on how to arrange the least expensive abortion and travel.

"This situation is an absolute nightmare. It's soul destroying and there is nobody in this country I can turn to".

The woman books her appointment and travel.

"Any help you could give, even if it is £10-20 off the procedure fee, it could mean me not sacrificing a couple days without proper food."

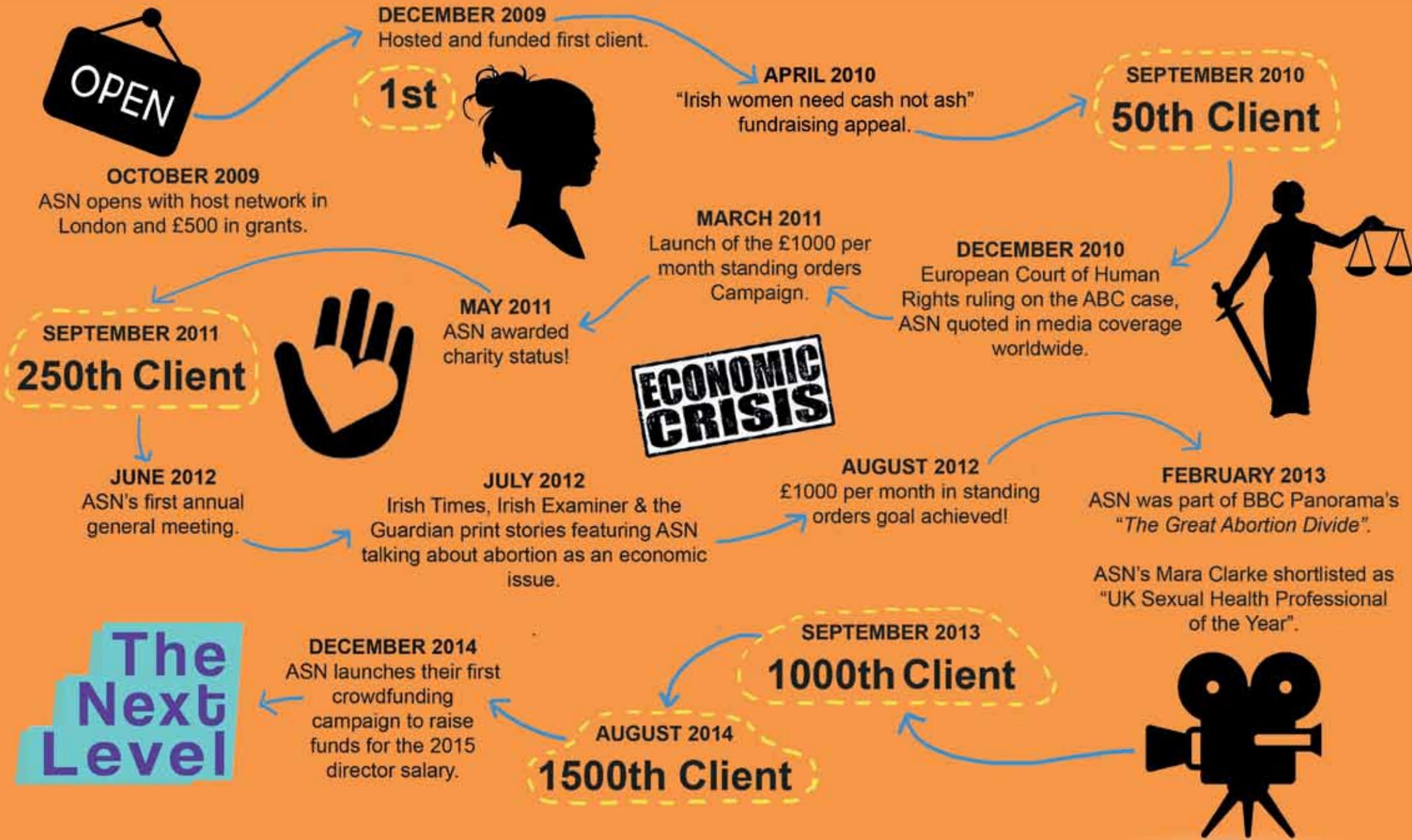
If accommodation is needed, ASN arranges a volunteer host.

"I can't have a child, I'm 20 and I'm just starting my life and still in college. I want to have an abortion but I can't have one legally here."

If a grant is awarded, ASN pays the clinic directly, reducing the amount she pays.

"I am completely distraught and suicidal, I cannot have this baby as if I do not work my kids will not have food or a house, this baby was a complete accident. Please please help me."

2009 - 2014 Timeline



How You've Helped

In 2014, ASN received £61,121 in donations (in addition to income from #TheNextLevel detailed on page 16). Donations from individuals are our main source of income and we appreciate you all! You make it possible for us to say "yes" to the people who come to us for help.

- **£17,970 from one-off donations**
We received 10 single donations, ranging from £2.00 to £2,500.
- **£23,268 in regular monthly donations**
Or an average of £1,939.04 per month. Thanks to the 224 people who enable us to know how much support we can give each month.
- **£1,661 from fundraising events**
Big ups to the people who ran marathons, drew portraits and held events. Email events@abortionssupport.org.uk if you want to fundraise for ASN.
- **£8,322 in Gift Aid**
Donors who signed up for gift aid helped us raise an extra £8,322 of income in 2014 (this amount includes £2,410 of gift aid on 2013 donations which was not included in the prior year's accounts).
- **£9,900 from trusts and foundations**
In 2014, we continued to receive an unrestricted donation from one of the clinics we work with. In addition, the Feminist Review Trust granted ASN £7,500 towards a part-time staff member. This helped ASN pursue additional revenue streams, reach out to additional clients and improve our monitoring systems.
- **More than £7,500 in clinic discounts**
This amount is in addition to the reduced fees that clinics offer to women forced to travel to England to access a safe and legal abortion. We are forever grateful to the compassionate, professional providers who make sure women receive the healthcare they need.

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How are we doing?

In 2014, we began a project to reach out to women who were funded by ASN or who had been given information on how to access early medical abortion pills online. Our intent was to use client feedback to improve service delivery. We were able to speak with 64 women who used ASN between 1 January 2013 and 30 September 2014. That many of the phone numbers we had were no longer in service was one of the factors limiting the number of people we were able to reach. The feedback we received was almost entirely positive. In fact, two of the three negative comments were due to circumstances outside of ASN's control.

Here were some of our favourite comments:

"Bloody hell, what a relief. I can't put into words what a relief it was. There was no judgment so different to Ireland. Once I spoke to ASN, that was it. The stress was gone. I can't give enough thanks and praise."

"This was a horrible time in my life and it was nice that there was someone who didn't know me that could help."

"I can't believe there are people like you who do this."

"Think the biggest thing was not feeling judged AT ALL. Because that was my biggest worry, that it would be really judgemental and that I would feel judged. Because of the way I was treated it lessened the blow."

"When I get back on my feet I will send you as much money as I can – what you do is amazing. You have saved my life"

"I already set up a monthly donation so I could help women like me."

Thank you for helping ASN help these people.

Our financial accounts

In 2014, 59% of the unrestricted funds raised were spent on abortion procedures, travel and accommodation. This is lower than in years past due to an increase in fundraising, operations and staffing costs, including a consultancy payment to ASN's director and increased outreach efforts to organisations serving marginalised communities.

Statement of Financial Activities Period from 1 January 2014 – 31 December 2014

Statement of financial activities					
Year to 31 December 2014					
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Capital funds	Total 12 months to 31 December 2014	Total 15 months to 31 December 2013
	£	£	£	£	£
<i>Incoming resources</i>					
Individual donations	41,238	0	0	41,238	36,867
Gift aid	8,322	0	0	8,322	1,566
Fundraising events and crowdfunding campaign	1,661	21,172	0	22,833	4,993
Grants	2,400	7,500	0	9,900	4,000
Travel subsidies and leaflet campaigns	0	0	0	0	1,621
Total incoming resources	53,621	28,672	0	82,293	49,047
<i>Resources expended</i>					
Grants to clients	31,706	0	0	31,706	32,969
Cost of generating funds	50	1,250	0	1,300	664
Operational expenditure	4,333	0	0	4,333	6,267
Consultancy payments	8,400	7,500	0	15,900	3,825
Total resources used	44,489	8,750	0	53,239	43,725
Net incoming resources	9,132	19,922	0	29,054	5,322
Fund balance brought forward	6,882	0	0	6,882	1,560
Fund balance carried forward	16,014	19,922	0	35,936	6,882

Approved by the trustees on 27th April 2015 and signed on their behalf by

Please note that the prior period shown in the SOFA was a long accounting period of 15 months, due to a change in the accounting date in that year. This is in accordance with standard accountancy practise.

2015 priorities

In 2015, we'll be keeping our main goal front and centre: raise more money to help more women. Here are a few of our exciting plans for next year:

- Keep raising funds**
 we need to meet increasing client need as well as continue to invest in a part-time staff member, so we'll be working with our amazing supporters to both improve upon current fundraising and explore new sources of revenue.
- Expand our board**
 to bring new skills, ideas and energy to complement our existing trustees.
- More outreach**
 to help us reach those people who may be in most need of our help, such as women in rural areas, migrants, and those experiencing violence.
- Volunteer engagement**
 continue to improve how we support, manage and consult with the awesome volunteers who are essential to what we do.
- Continued client follow-up**
 to inform our client-centred approach.
- Development of a longer-term strategic plan**
 to ensure ASN can continue to be here for as long as we're needed.

Only with your help can we raise more money and help more women. We hope you'll continue to support ASN as we work towards these goals.

"I am really finding this whole situation very overwhelming."

#TheNextLevel



In 2014, the continual increase in demand for ASN's services and the fact that we were an almost entirely volunteer-run organisation put us at a crossroads. We had a decision to make: scale up by paying someone a living wage to keep ASN running, or scale back and reduce the services we offer and the number of people we are able to help.

We decided it was time for us to move our charity forward. On 1 December 2014, we launched The Next Level campaign with the aim of raising a part-time salary for ASN's Director. ASN's Director had worked on a voluntary basis from 2009 until 2013, when she received payments under a consultancy agreement. In 2014, this was supplemented by a one year grant from the Feminist Review Trust. Moving from being an all-volunteer charity to one which is almost-all-volunteer is a step ASN has taken in the full belief that it's the best path forward for the organisation and the women we help.

Having a director paid for her time will enable ASN to think more strategically, raise more money, reach out to more women who need us, contact more press and ultimately help more people in Ireland and Northern Ireland access safe abortions.

The campaign exceeded our wildest expectations. We launched with £10,800 raised from three generous (and anonymous) supporters and reached out to "the crowd" for the rest. 259 of you lovely people donated an additional £27,732 in 42 days (of which £21,172 was raised in 2014 and the remainder in early 2015). We can't say thank you enough for helping bring ASN to The Next Level and helping to ensure that ASN is here for the long haul for the people who need us.



Following are some of the pro-choice superstars who contributed to The Next Level:

Adele Jolliffe	Joanne Koukis
Ann Rossiter	Katha Pollitt
Amanda Mvllenhoff	Kelly Rust
Anna Currado	Madhavi Shah
Breda Corish	Mark William Troman
Bruce Griffin	Michelle Thomson
Cathy Brennan	Nancy Mackeith
Christopher Burns-Cox	Nathan Kelso
Christopher Ellingham	Niamh Appleby
Claire McCann	Nichole Bahrt
Damian O'Broin	Nicky Devaney
Daniel Hoffmann-Gill	Nigel Danby
Darren Byrne	Patricia Lohr
Dave Fisher	Paul & Colette Appleby
David Sammel	Paula Nic Cionnaith
Debbie Cameron	Rachel Coleman
Emily Wright	Ruth Fletcher
Emma Haley	Ruth Jackson
Emma Hill	Sally Hyman
Ethel Casey	Sam Dodsworth
Evelyn Milne	Sarah Diehl
Fiona de Londras	Sarah Panzetta
Fred Cairns	Sheelagh McGuinness
Gautamkumar Appa	Sorcha Um Chonnachtaigh
Ger Hatton	Stephen Bitti & Nudge Associates
Goretti Horgan	Stephen Boyle
Greg Rose	Susan Cox
Hannah Mason	Susan Triesman
Helen Heenan	Tamsin Wallbank
Inish O'Doherty	Thomas Johnson
Irene Dillon	Tina Walker
Isabelle Fraser	Tony Baines
Jean Alexandre	Tricia Sheehy Skeffington
Jemma Walton	Vicky Conway
Jennifer Goldstein	Yvonne Roberts
Jessica Connor	Zoe Anderson

THANK YOU!

Five Ways You Can Help

1. Donate

As an abortion fund, our ability to help women is governed by our bank balance. Donate once or donate monthly: all donations are gratefully received.

Visit www.abortionsupport.org.uk/donate for donation information.



2. 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. <https://www.abortionsupport.org.uk/gift-aid/>

3. Volunteer

Go for a run, host a movie night, loan out your spare room for a night . . . ASN is often looking for skilled, compassionate people to help us out. Volunteer roles include fundraisers, hosts and trustees. Email your interest to volunteer@abortionsupport.org.uk



4. 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



5. 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.

Contact fundraising@abortionsupport.org.uk for further information.



We Couldn't Do It Without You!

ASN does not, and cannot, work in isolation. Here's a shout out to some of the many organisations who have supported ASN, fought for abortion rights or helped people access safe abortion.



"Honest to God, I can't thank you enough. Words can't express how much you've helped me. I couldn't have done this without you."

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Registered Charity Number 1142120

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Design by Danielle Harley and Doreen Manning