



Refuge



For women and children.
Against domestic violence

4STEP CHANGE



FUNDRAISING CHALLENGE
International Women's Day: 8th March 2026



THANK YOU

FOR CHOOSING TO STEP4CHANGE
THIS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

By taking part in this year's Step4Change challenge, you're standing in solidarity with women and their children, and choosing a world where all women can live free from fear.

This International Women's Day (IWD), the theme is 'Give to Gain' – a reminder that when we unite to uplift women and girls, we create a ripple effect of opportunity, empowerment and lasting change. By giving your time, support and solidarity, you help build a more inclusive world.

We're asking you, your workplace, or community group to walk 4 miles on IWD in solidarity with the 1 in 4 women in England and Wales who will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. Your fundraising will make a real difference to women and their children experiencing abuse. We welcome individuals with all skills and abilities to take part in this challenge. By joining, you'll be helping to make a real difference to the lives of women and their children experiencing abuse.

Refuge is the UK's largest specialist domestic abuse organisation, providing lifesaving support through its network of 65 refuges, community-based services, and the 24/7 National Domestic Abuse Helpline. From providing safe accommodation and specialist support to driving advocacy and awareness campaigns, none of this would be possible without supporters like you.

This fundraising pack contains everything you need to take on Step4Change, including tools, guidance and advice.

Thank you again for supporting Refuge. A survivor's courage to escape safely begins with her strength – and the unwavering support of people like you.

Act now, for survivors, for freedom, 4Change.

Refuge Community & Corporate Partnerships Teams
community@refuge.org.uk



UNDERSTANDING DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse refers to physical, emotional, psychological, economic, tech-facilitated and/or sexual abuse that occurs between intimate partners or between people who are personally connected.

A common myth is that it's only domestic abuse if it involves physical or sexual violence. In fact, **many women experience domestic abuse without ever being physically harmed**. Remember: non-physical forms of abuse can be as destructive and as undermining as physical violence.

Type of abuse include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Coercive control
- Emotional abuse
- Tech abuse
- Economic abuse

1 in 4 women

in England and Wales will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime

Every 5 days

on average, a woman is killed by a current or former partner

Every 2 minutes

someone reaches out to Refuge for help

£52

could provide a woman and her children a safe night's stay in a refuge

£100

could provide a refuge with outdoor games for children to play with

£275

could cover the costs of running the Helpline for an hour

£320

could cover the moving costs for a woman who's ready to leave a refuge and restart her life

£700

could fund two volunteers to take part in a two-week Helpline induction training

£1,500

could fund furniture for a property for a family moving from a refuge into their own home

£4,900

could run an entire refuge for a week

£7,500

could provide baby essentials for 22 mothers arriving at a refuge

£10,000

could help 5 survivors with a deposit and one month's rent for a safe, permanent home

“Whether it’s to explore their options, reach a place of safety, or simply lend a listening ear – your support ensures we can be there for women in the moment, whenever they need us. Thank you.”

**Lucy, Refuge Team Leader,
National Domestic Abuse
Helpline (available 24/7)**

ORGANISING YOUR CHALLENGE



Step4Change is a walking challenge in solidarity with the 1 in 4 women who will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. This International Women's Day (8 March), we're inviting you and your team to walk 4 miles for Refuge - however you can and at your own pace. By taking on our challenge you'll be helping to make a big difference to the lives of women and their children experiencing abuse.

The challenge is completely flexible. If you're unable to complete the walk on IWD, your team can choose any day throughout March that works best for you. Set a date for your challenge: Decide if you wish to hold your Step4Change event on IWD or an alternative date.

To fundraise for the challenge, we recommend [setting up a JustGiving page](#).

CHALLENGE CHECKLIST:



Set a date for your challenge: Decide if you wish to hold your Step4Change event on IWD or an alternative date, to get everyone excited.



Set up a JustGiving page: This will allow you to collect donations well ahead of the challenge. Please see page 6 for more information.



Sign up: Once you've finalised the challenge details, send out a communication and get everyone who is interested to sign up. You might want to have a spreadsheet so you can organise teams or you can get everyone to sign up individually to a JustGiving team page.



Communications: Send out reminders about the challenge, two months, a month and a week before the event. The communications could include FAQs and walking tips (e.g. stretching, staying hydrated). [Click here to download internal communications templates.](#)



Challenge day: Send out a good luck email before your challenge kicks off and encourage everyone to take and share photos.



After the challenge: Thank everyone who took part and share the fundraising page again. You can do an announcement about how much was raised once you've reached your final total.

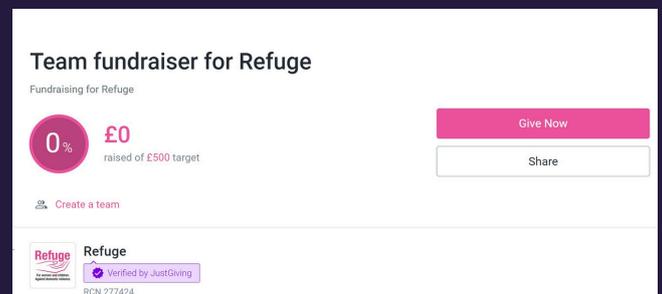
SETTING UP YOUR JUSTGIVING PAGE



Remember to kickstart your fundraising for Step4Change by setting up a JustGiving page. Track your progress towards your fundraising goal and promote your International Women's Day celebrations. If you have any issues, reach out to your Refuge contact for support with getting set up.

Encourage competition by fundraising with team pages!

JustGiving Team Pages allow you to join individual fundraising pages together to contribute to an overall total. They're great if you want to raise money separately whilst still contributing to a larger team goal – and have a leaderboard going!



Firstly, set up the JustGiving page for yourself or your group. Then:

Go to your page and click 'Create a team'. Give your team a name.

Press Continue.

Include a photo and a brief explanation of why you're fundraising for Refuge.

Set a team fundraising target and add a name to your team page link.

Then click on 'Create your team'.

You can then invite other people/departments to join your team.

BOOSTING YOUR FUNDRAISING TIPS & IDEAS

Encourage your donors to opt in for the Gift Aid box, which increases their donation by 25%. This extra funding is crucial to helping Refuge provide vital services for women and their children.

Ask friends and family to share your fundraising page with their contacts. Expanding your reach through your network can significantly increase the number of potential donors.

Generate a QR code for your fundraising page to make donating simple and convenient by adding "/qrcode" to your link. For example: justgiving.com/campaign/Lucy-Step4change/qrcode

Add your fundraising link to your email signature to create awareness and improve the visibility of your campaign with every email you send. It's a simple way to maximise your reach and invite more donations.

Check if your employer, or someone in your network, could offer matched funding on your campaign. Doubling the donations you receive can have a powerful impact and raise more support for Refuge's services.

Share your fundraising page on payday. This is a great time to remind your network that their support can make a real difference to the women and children in our refuges.

Keep your donors engaged by sharing regular updates on your campaign progress on your social media. You can [download Step4Change social media assets here.](#) Share news about thanking them, your fitness challenge, how much you've raised, your motivation, or reflections on why you're passionate about Refuge.

Start your campaign by making the first donation. This sets the example for others and shows your dedication to Refuge's cause, encouraging others to follow suit.

Share, share, share! Use hashtags in your posts. It's a great way of connecting and sharing your challenge.
#IWD26 #Step4Change #Refuge #GivetoGain

Connect your fitness app to your fundraising page and join our Refuge Strava Club here. Sharing your progress in real-time adds a dynamic element to your campaign and keeps donors invested in your journey.

Plan your route ahead of time. Plan your route to ensure it is accessible and flat. If you want to challenge yourself and stretch your muscles, why not take on an uphill path.

Use supportive devices. Mobility aids, canes and walkers can provide you with stability. Ensure your device is properly adjusted for comfort and height.



TIPS FOR WALKING



- Reach a pace that makes you feel a bit out of breath, but not so much that you can't have a conversation.
- Wear comfortable clothing - check the weather and wear comfy shoes with good grip and cushioning.
- Stay hydrated! Carry water and a light snack. Bananas are great at keeping your energy levels up.
- Choose safe and accessible routes - for better accessibility use routes with ramps, curb cuts and tactile paving.
- Pace yourself - take frequent breaks if you need to and use rest areas and benches.
- Keep motivated with a high-energy playlist to listen to as you walk. Why not create one to share with the rest of your team?
- Maintain good posture to ensure you don't strain your back muscles.
- As with all forms of exercise, make sure to stretch before and after your walks to reduce the risk of injury.

Did you know?

4 miles equates to approximately 10,000 steps (on average)

Walking 4 miles takes between 60 and 80 minutes, depending on your pace. You can plan a walk to complete the 4 miles in one go, or include it in your day-to-day activities – whatever works best for you!



COMPLETED THE CHALLENGE?



Well Done! Here's what to do next.

Thank you for standing in solidarity this International Women's Day with the 1 in 4 women who will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. It's now time to pay in your fundraising so we can celebrate your brilliant efforts! Choose one of the simple ways below to send us your total.

ONLINE FUNDRAISING PAGE

If you've been fundraising on JustGiving and have any cash donations to add, you can pay them in directly to your page. Otherwise, you don't need to do anything – JustGiving will process the funds and send them to us automatically.

BANK TRANSFER TO REFUGE

If you haven't been fundraising online, or if this isn't convenient for you, you can pay in your fundraising via bank transfer. Please reach out to your Refuge contact or email: community@refuge.org.uk to request our bank details and your reference for the transaction.

SEND A CHEQUE TO REFUGE

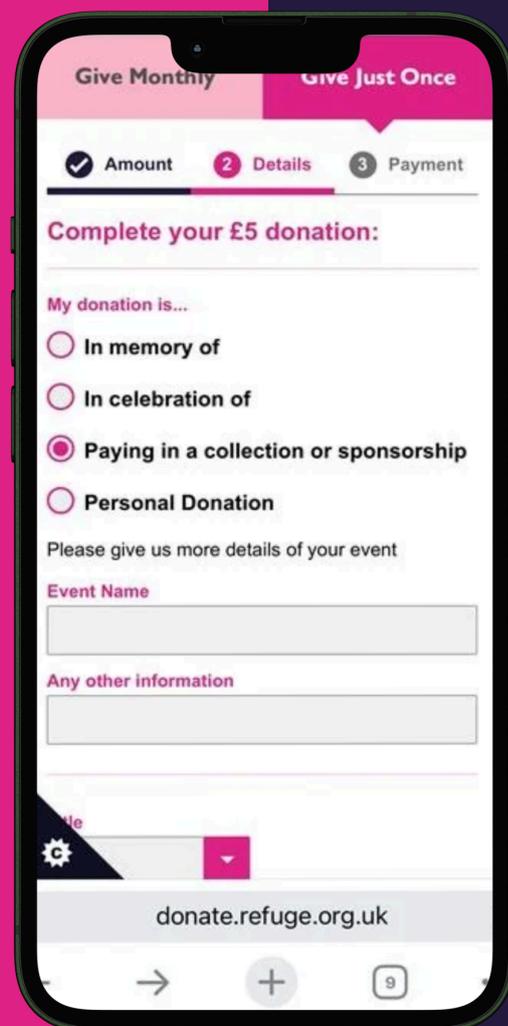
If you have a cheque donation to send which you would like to send to Refuge, please use the following address:

Refuge, c/o Fora Tintagel House, 92 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TY.

Please make cheques payable to 'Refuge'. We would be grateful if you could please include a letter/note with your donation, providing your contact details and the purpose of your donation (e.g. Step4Change 2026). This will help us properly thank you for your amazing fundraising.

PAY THROUGH OUR WEBSITE

You can also pay in your donation [via our website](#). Click on 'Donate', then select the 'Give Just Once' option, and tick the 'Paying in a collection or sponsorship' box.



Survivor Story:

Beth*

Trigger warning: domestic abuse story. Beth's name has been changed to protect her identity:

When Beth* called the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, she was in a desperate situation. After an incident with her ex-partner the night before, she knew she had to get herself and her child to safety.

“My ex-partner had been escorted by police from the flat we shared the night before. I was afraid of what his reaction would be when he came back, so I started packing our things to leave. I was worried and I was really scared for my child as well. When you're under that amount of stress, you're afraid, you're lost and you don't know what to do – especially when you have a little one. I really needed someone to believe me and someone who would give me immediate advice and help.

“When I got through, I felt reassured because the lady on the phone was quite firm – she knew what she was talking about and she was giving me really straight forward, practical advice. When you're in that situation, time is of the essence and so being able to speak to someone knowledgeable who understands the situation, and who believes you, is really important. The Helpline Advisor was really clear and told me what I can do and who I can call for emergency accommodation.

“I would say the Helpline has had a big impact on my life. I never thought I would be in this situation, but I don't know what I would have done if I wasn't able to have access to a service like the Helpline. I cannot count the number of people who are dismissive and who don't want to get involved. And so to find somebody who wants to get involved and help, really made a difference.

“When you're drowning it's not enough for somebody on the shore to just tell you to swim. You're drowning, you're panicking and you're scared. You need someone to give you a hand. I think in my case the Helpline was able to offer a lifeline. It was like a hand when you cannot manage anymore.”



INSPIRING STORIES FROM OUR SUPPORTERS

In 2025, Hartley Law were excited to take on the Step4Change challenge in aid of Refuge. *"The team at Hartley Law have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the Step4Change for such a vital cause to help women and children of domestic abuse. We have all been inspired to take part in the challenge as we all have an understanding and empathy for people who may need the services of Refuge. This is a rewarding challenge and has been great for our wellbeing too. We have been walking throughout March, taking meetings outside to walk during work and catch up with colleagues on a brisk, fresh Spring walk."*

Karen
Hartley Law



"I do love a walking challenge and over the years have completed many to fundraise for Refuge as part of Benefit Cosmetics' Bold is Beautiful project! I've walked a marathon overnight, climbed Ben Nevis (with a brow wax at the top!) and walked the 96 miles of the West Highland Way. This year my walk was much shorter, but was over burning hot coals – so I've now completed a firewalk to add to the list! I've enjoyed the physical and mental challenge of all these walks and I'm hugely grateful to all those who have sponsored me to do so; supporting me to raise thousands of pounds to fund the vital work that Refuge does. If you're thinking about a walking challenge, my advice would be to go for it!"

Susan
Benefit Cosmetics



The Voices of Women at the WJ Group had a great uptake on completing the Step4Change walk during their lunchtime in 2025. *"The Step4Change challenge not only raised awareness about a sad but real statistic, it also helped us get more active and raise funds for Refuge."*

Mai
WJ Group



THANK YOU!



Thank you so much for taking part in this challenge – we couldn't do the life-saving work we do without amazing supporters like you.



To stay up to date with the work we're doing and learn more about Refuge, visit our website and social channels:

Website: www.refuge.org.uk/

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/refuge/

Instagram: [@Refugecharity](https://www.instagram.com/Refugecharity)

Registered address:

Refuge, Fora, 92 Albert Embankment. London SE1 7TY



For women and children.
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Registered charity number 277424