



PramDepot

Annual report 2021/22

Introduction



As I write this in Spring of 2022, it feels like much longer than a year since Spring of 2021. In April last year, we were still under lockdown restrictions after the winter Omicron wave of covid, with a lot of uncertainty about what the coming months would bring.

We've worked hard this year to build our relationships with referral organisations, get to know their work better and develop our service to adapt to the changing needs of the women we support, as well as the organisations who referral them to us. It's been wonderful to learn more about the day to day work of our referral organisations, and to find out more from the women we support about what they need and value from us.

We've also been thinking hard about the purpose of PramDepot and what our little organisation can contribute to efforts to alleviate current suffering, as well as to building a better future. Even more than before, we've leant into our focus on supporting women unable to access existing support and services, either because of the government's hostile policies towards migrants or because of the lack of timely financial support on offer for women giving birth during a time of crisis in their lives. We want to make sure PramDepot is always a place to prioritise those women who are so often last in line everywhere else.

In particular this year, we've been reflecting on the importance of international solidarity, particularly as governments across the world seek to fortify borders and shut out those seeking refuge from wars, climate change and poverty. We've been heartened to see the incredible outpouring of support for people fleeing the war in Ukraine and, earlier in the year, people fleeing Taliban rule in Afghanistan. We have also felt the need to stand even stronger in our commitment to supporting all refugees, no matter where they are escaping from or why. The women we support, come from countries all over the world, including Eritrea, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Albania, Nigeria and many more. We hope for a future in which all refugees are welcomed with open arms and given everything they need to live a dignified life.

As always, it is our community that enables us to do what we do and we're so grateful for everyone who has supported us over this year. As you'll read in the report, we've had volunteer fundraisers, in kind donations from companies, beautiful baby items handmade for us and support from local leaders and creatives. It's a wonderful feeling to pack each baby box, knowing that it will be received not just as a gift from PramDepot but a whole community of caring people. Thank you so much everyone!

Karen

Director of PramDepot

Our work

This year we delivered 211 Baby Boxes to women who had no other way to access the items they needed for their new babies.

These boxes include

For sleeping:

- A mattress for the box
- Sheet
- Blankets
- Sleeping bag if available

For changing:

- Nappies
- Wet wipes
- Nappy cream

For feeding:

A silicone hand breast pump

- Electric or microwave steriliser
- Milk storage bags or bottles
- Bibs
- Feeding spoon

Clothes:

- Hats
- Baby grows and vests
- Cardigans and jumper
- Scratch mittens
- Extra outfits, depending on our donations received

For mum:

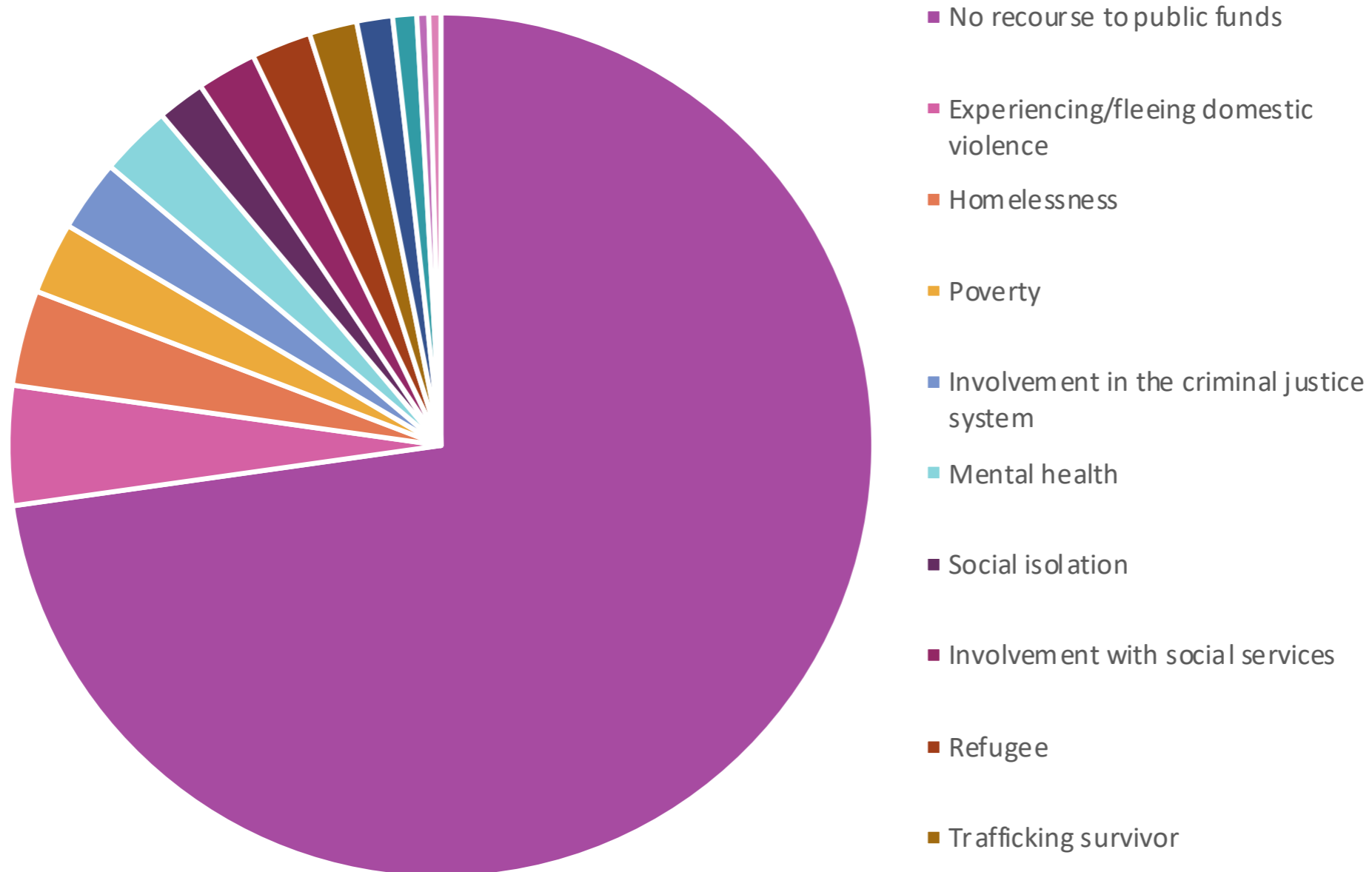
- A hospital hygiene bag, including
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Soap, shampoo and conditioner
- Maternity pads
- Breast pads
- Lip balm, Face wipes

Additional items:

- Wrap sling
- Dummy/soother
- Muslin
- Small toy
- Illustrated baby box guide explaining how to use all the equipment safely.



Who we support



Although we focus on women who are denied recourse to public funds due to their migration status, the women we supported experienced a range of challenges.

We have supported 14 organisations by sending Baby Boxes to their service users this year



Feedback from mums and organisations

"I'm really grateful for being able to be supported with a baby box. Before I received the box I was worried as I didn't have anything for my baby, this box was a spotlight for me! it was everything included, I really thank you all for the amazing job you do. Thank you so much. God may bless you all" From a mum from Happy Baby Community



"I genuinely think it's a nice gift with the right items every soon mom to be requires for herself and her baby. I'm very grateful and thanks again!"

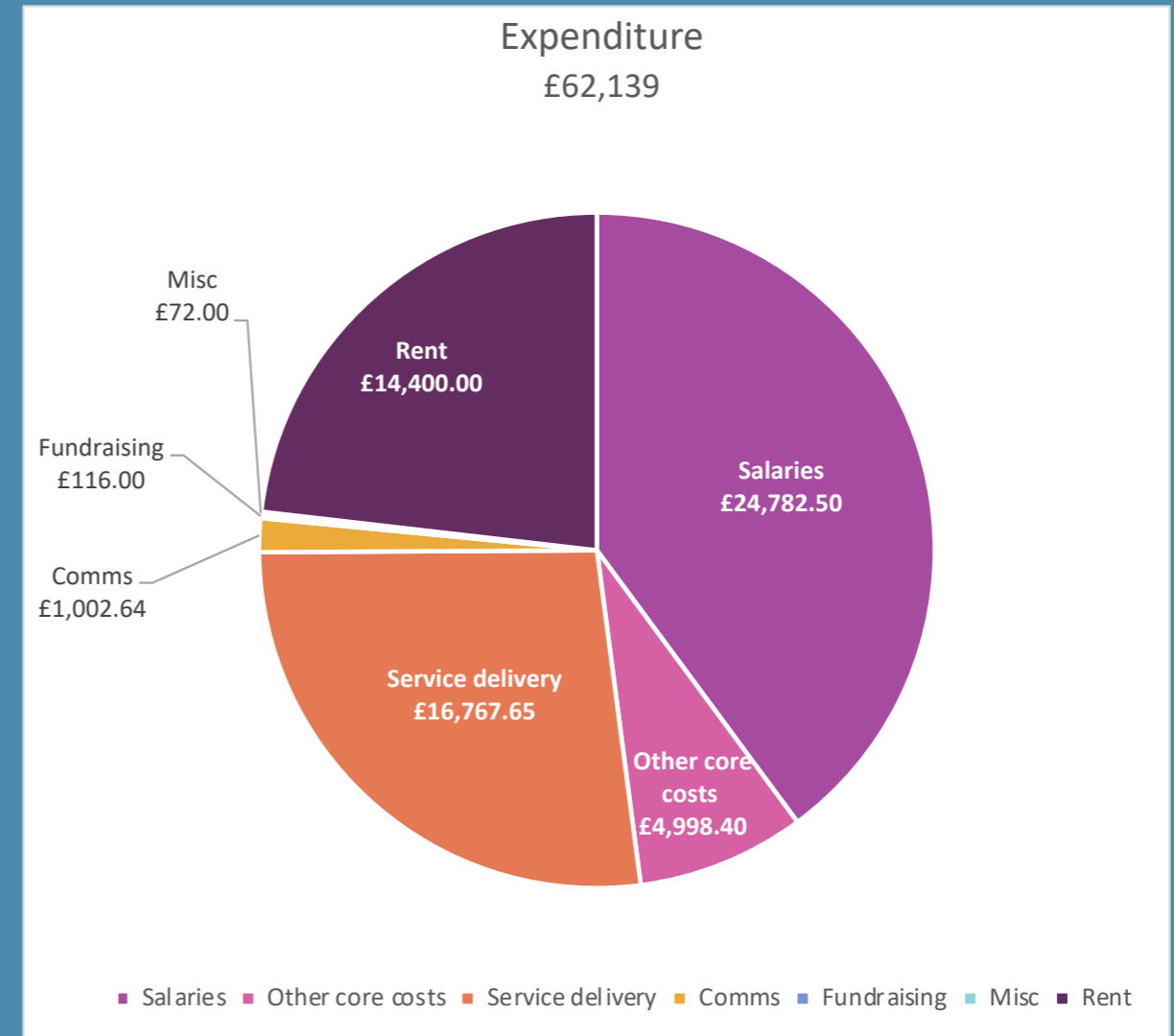
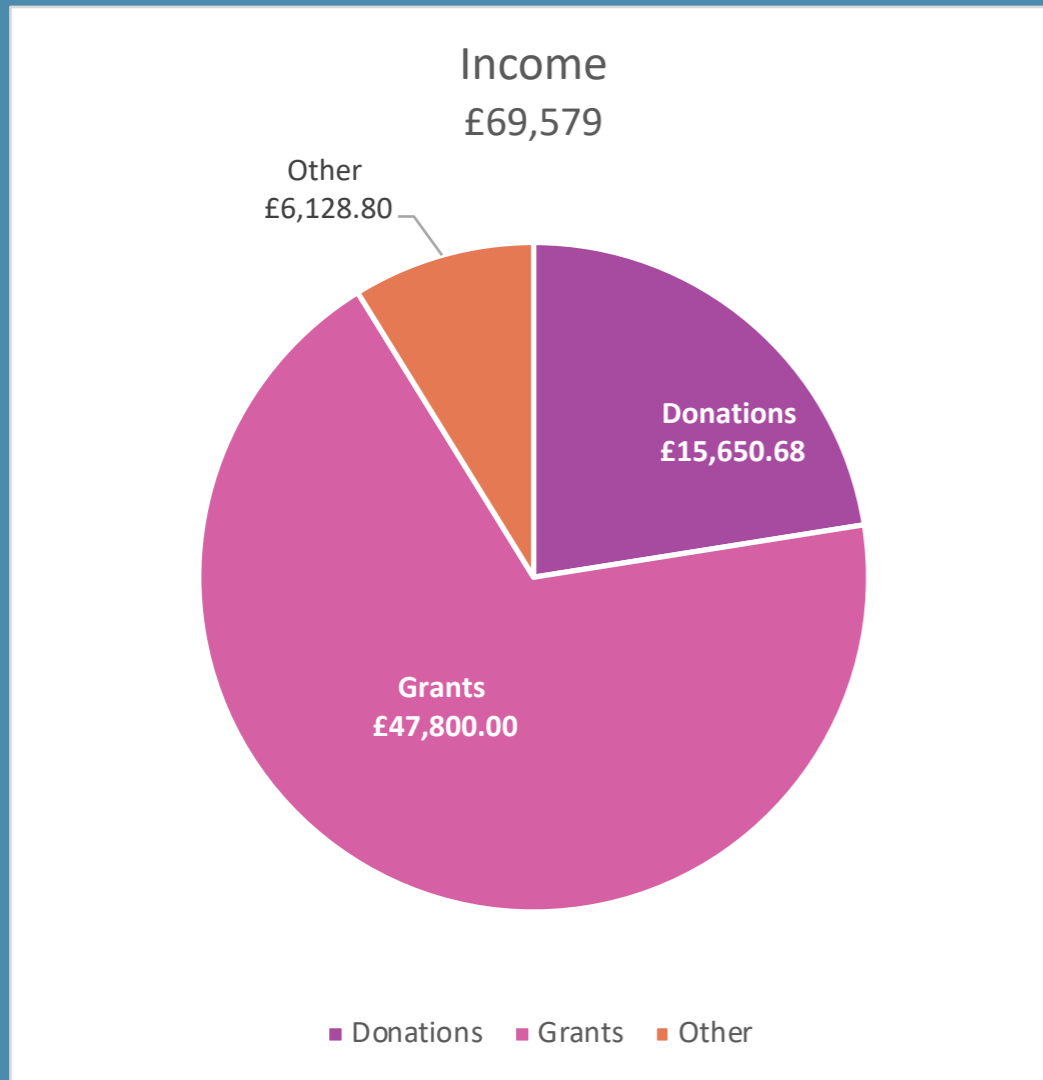
"I received the baby box just on time as requested. It mostly had all the items I needed for a newborn. It was packed beautifully with a heartfelt note wishing me good luck for the baby, which was so lovely. All the items were new or almost new, it helped me a lot as the baby items are really expensive. Thank you for the love and help PramDepot."

"The baby box was so thoughtful and incredibly helpful - we were very touched by it"

"We're so grateful to the support PramDepot offers through their amazing emergency baby boxes. These boxes, packed with incredible care and love, make a genuine difference to the lives of these women and their families. Please consider donating to support their wonderful work and allow them to support even more women in need!"

Kelly Whiting, Programme Coordinator for Maternity Mates

Finance



In 2021/11, our income was £69,6579. The majority of this income was from grants, as we saw a big reduction in donations from the public, compared to 2020/21. Overall, we saw a drop in income compared to the previous year, in which we received an outpouring of public donations to support PramDepot through the crisis of the pandemic.

The largest area of expenditure is on salaries for our two part-time members of staff, with almost all of the rest of our budget spent on core costs and service delivery. We kept our expenditure lower than predicted over the year by securing in kind donations from a number of sources, as well as grant funding from the previous financial year that allowed us to cover the some of the following year's costs in advance (e.g. paying up front for future storage).

Our reserves are healthy, currently at just over 18 months' running costs. As we emerge from the pandemic, we are now starting to see a relative stabilisation our predicted costs and, in the coming financial year, we plan to spend roughly a quarter of our reserves in order to bring them down. In the long-term we will aim to have no more than 12 months' running costs. However, in the short-term we plan to hold just over this amount due to the possibility of having to move premises in 2023 and the additional funds we may need for this.

The Mini Baby Box scheme

With our Emergency Baby Box scheme solidly in place, we decided this year to make a number of developments to the service. We wanted to improve the way we support women, to better understand their needs and adapt.

When we started the Emergency Baby Box scheme, we decided not to deliver them to women who were living in Home Office accommodation. This is because, in most cases, their accommodation provider is contracted to provide essential baby items. However, we heard from our main referral organisation that women often weren't receiving enough baby clothes and sometimes didn't receive slings or toiletries from their accommodation provider.

In consultation with Happy Baby Community, we developed the Mini Baby Box, a smaller box to be sent to pregnant women living in Home Office accommodation. The box contains baby clothes, a toy, hand gel, some toiletries for mum and baby, a sling, a blanket and other items.



We launched our new Mini Baby Box Scheme in January and delivered 34 boxes before the end of March.

Supporting Little Village and reducing waste in Haringey

In addition to collecting donated items for our Baby Boxes, we also do a monthly large collection for our partner organisation Little Village. On the last Tuesday of each month we ask our community to bring in larger items such as buggies, cots, high chairs, baby baths and much more! We also ask for clothes for babies and children age 0 – 5 years old. We then send this all off to Little Village to be distributed to families on low incomes.

Here's a list of what we might send to Little Village on a typical month:

- 7 buggies
- 2 travel systems
- 6 cots
- 3 breast-feeding pillows
- 3 bath buckets
- 3 baths
- 3 swing chair
- 1 bouncy chair
- 1 travel chair
- 5 large wooden toys or activity tables
- 7 slings
- 1 highchair
- 5 top and tail bowls
- 5 Moses baskets plus stands
- 3 bags of children's books
- 3 bags of toys
- 1 potty
- 1 scooter
- 1 steriliser



In return, Little Village provides us with packs of nappies, dummies and bottles for our baby boxes. Thank you Little Village!

Helping people in Haringey through the cost of living crisis

In March 2022 we were approached by Haringey Council to support them in distributing funds to people in Haringey impacted by the cost of living crisis. Knowing we have strong links to our local community and to smaller grassroots organisations, the council asked us to find a way to distribute £9000 directly to people in need, to support them with household costs for food, energy and other essential purchases.

After discussing with several organisations working with people severely impacted by the cost of living crisis, we decided to use these funds to purchase Tesco vouchers. There are several large Tesco stores across the borough and close to the borders of the borough, which sell clothes and essential items as well as food, so these vouchers would allow people flexibility in what to spend them on.

We primarily worked with the Holy Trinity Church in Tottenham, to distribute vouchers through their foodbank, attending for the day to hand these out to people attending the foodbank, with the help of the fantastic staff and volunteers there. Through the Church, we have distributed 220 vouchers worth a total of £5,500 and had lots of big thank yous from the people receiving them. Some literally danced out of the building with their voucher!

We also worked with Haringey Migrant Centre who distributed 78 vouchers to their visitors, worth a total of £1,950. Visitors to Haringey Migrant Centre are facing a huge number of challenges, coping with the UK government's 'hostile environment' approach to migrants, often meaning they are unable to access public services or benefits. Visitors said these vouchers were really helpful and a big boost for them at a difficult time.

The rest of the vouchers are being distributed to pregnant women supported through PramDepot, helping them purchase essential food and items during their pregnancy or their baby's early weeks.

A huge thank you to Haringey Council for supporting its struggling residents as the cost of living soars. This was a fantastic initiative and we were delighted to be a part of it.



New booklet with illustrations

After some women fed back to us that they struggled to work out how to use some of the items in their Baby Box (such as the sling), we decided to completely update our Baby Box Guide.

We reviewed and re-wrote the guide, using clear and accessible language and including essential information about safe sleeping, feeding and covid-19. We also decided to recruit an illustrator to make some fun and helpful illustrations for the booklet.

Asher Megan is a freelance illustrator based in Cornwall, who worked with the brief we gave her to create these absolutely beautiful illustrations! We love how colourful and fun they are, as well as how they represent the diversity of the women we support.

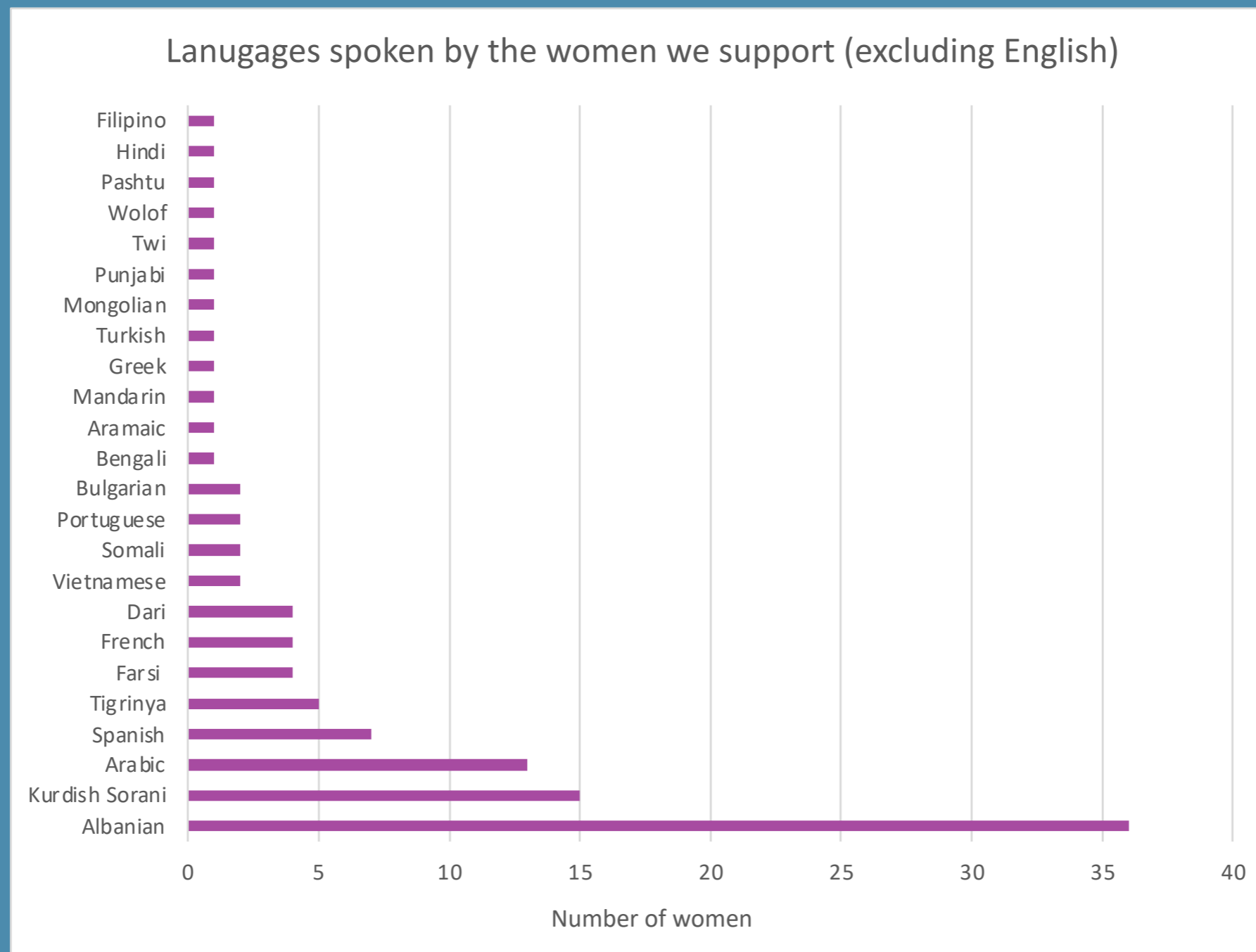


You can view more of Asher's work and contact her via her Instagram [@ashermegan.illustration](https://www.instagram.com/ashermegan.illustration).

Since we started sending out our new Baby Box Guide, with the illustrations, every person who has received a box has told us all the items were easy to use.

Translations

Another aspect of making our Baby Box Guide more accessible has been making translated versions of it. We have set a goal of translating the guide into every language spoken by the women we support.



We worked with Translators Without Borders, using their online platform to be connected with volunteers from all over the world to translate the booklet into several languages. We have encountered some challenges in getting the translated text into the design template for our booklets but with the help of Sam, our tech and website support person, we are getting there! Five translations are now ready and will be launched shortly. We hope to have all the translations complete and available by the end of 2022.

Instructional videos

We also wanted to make sure that the most important information contained in the Baby Box Guide is fully accessible to women who are unable to read or who find audio or video information easier to process. To achieve this we decided to make four videos, to outline how to use items in our Baby Boxes. The videos show how to use a wrap-around sling, how to safely sleep your baby in a baby box, how to use a steriliser in a microwave and how to sterilise in cold water using sterilising tablets.

We worked with Director Oyvind Aamli (who directed and produced our fundraising video) and actor Ebony Skerritt. We had a really fun day filming and now have four fantastic instructional videos to share with mums when they receive their Baby Box.



A new member of our community

In early 2021, supported by Collage Arts, we welcomed a new member of staff through the Kickstart Scheme – a government initiative giving short term work experience opportunities to 16-24 year olds. Kelaiah Amador joined us from April to October 2021 as Communications Officer, supporting us with social media and PR.

During her time with us, she made lots of social media content, developed our relationships with influencers and brands and brought a fresh new perspective to our strategy and planning as an organisation. Kelaiah will be joining the PramDepot Board in September 2022!

If you would like to contact Kelaiah to find out more about her work you can find her on LinkedIn ([linkedin.com/in/kelaiah-amador](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kelaiah-amador)) or connect with her by email hello@qntssntl.xyz.



PramDepot and prams

When the pandemic arrived, we had to pause our provision of buggies, as the mum and baby groups we would normally distribute these at had closed down. As we're such a small organisation, we just didn't have the resources to deliver these directly to people's homes. For the first year of the pandemic, we encourage referral organisations to refer their service users to Little Village for buggies.

However, we began to hear from the women we support and our referral organisations that women were struggling to find buggies. Some were outside of Little Village's service area, or weren't able to access their service because it was over-capacity at times.

While we still do not have the resources or storage space to provide a buggy along with every single Baby Box we deliver, we have now launched an Emergency Buggy process to make sure that those most in need can access a buggy from PramDepot if they are unable to get one from anywhere else.

Six weeks after their baby is born, we phone each person who has received a Baby Box to check if they have a buggy. If they are in need of a buggy at this point, we invite them to come to PramDepot and pick one up. We pay £10 towards their travel expenses to support them to do this.

While most women are able to access a buggy from another organisation or baby bank, this emergency process ensures that those who slip through the net can get a buggy from us.

This year we provided 15 buggies and plan to pass on many more next year!



Donating to PramDepot

One of our favourite parts of running PramDepot is getting to meet so many people from our local community who generously donate their baby items and clothes to us. We received hundreds and hundreds of baby items, bags of clothes, buggies, high chairs, cots and more this year. Keeping tons of baby items out of landfill.

Hundreds of people visited PramDepot this year to donate their baby items, to help the women we support and to keep their items out of landfill. A huge thank you to everyone who donated to us over the year!



We've been supported by so many people and organisations this year!



We are still being supported by Adam Jogee, the Mayor of Haringey, who has chosen us as one of his key organisations to support during his time as Mayor. We're looking forward to finding out how much he's raised for PramDepot very soon! He visited in July, doing a live chat with Karen on Instagram and learning more about PramDepot's journey through the pandemic. He then visited again on International Women's Day in March, along with Peray Ahmet, Leader of Haringey Council and long-time supporter of PramDepot.

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We love living and working in Haringey and it means a lot to us to have such strong support from local leaders. Thank you to Adam and Peray!

We received 1000 free Baby Boxes from the Family Co-op Limited, a West Sussex based company best known for their reusable bamboo nursing pads brand Jublies, significantly reducing our baby box costs for the next four years. We also received a huge donation from Milton of 500 combi sterilisers one of the highest value items in the box! Milton also donated hundreds of packs of sterilising tablets and hand gel to us earlier in the year.



Storing all these items was a bit of a challenge but with the help of Haringey Council, we were able to find space and receive this in-kind support. Next year, we hope to establish and develop more relationships with companies that are keen to use their stock and profits for good causes.



We were delighted to meet Erika and Lucy, the lovely founders of Cheeky Cherub this year. Cheeky Cherub is an online platform for parents to buy and sell pre-loved luxury children's clothes and items. Like PramDepot, the company wants to reduce the waste created by the kids wear industry and create more sustainable ways of living.

We happened to have some luxury children's clothes, donated to us by a friend, that were unsuitable for our Baby Boxes. Erika and Lucy kindly offered to set up a profile for PramDepot on their platform and sell these items on our behalf, with a reduced admin fee. The money from these sales will go towards items for our Baby Boxes.

Cheeky Cherub also kindly donated £100 to our Christmas Appeal!

We're so lucky to have a network of knitting and crafting volunteers, making beautiful baby clothes and blankets for our Baby Boxes. These handmade items make such a big difference to the women we support, really making the box feel like a special gift from our community.



The Queen Mother's Clothing Guild has provided us with over 200 blankets, cardigans, hats and pairs of booties and baby socks this year.



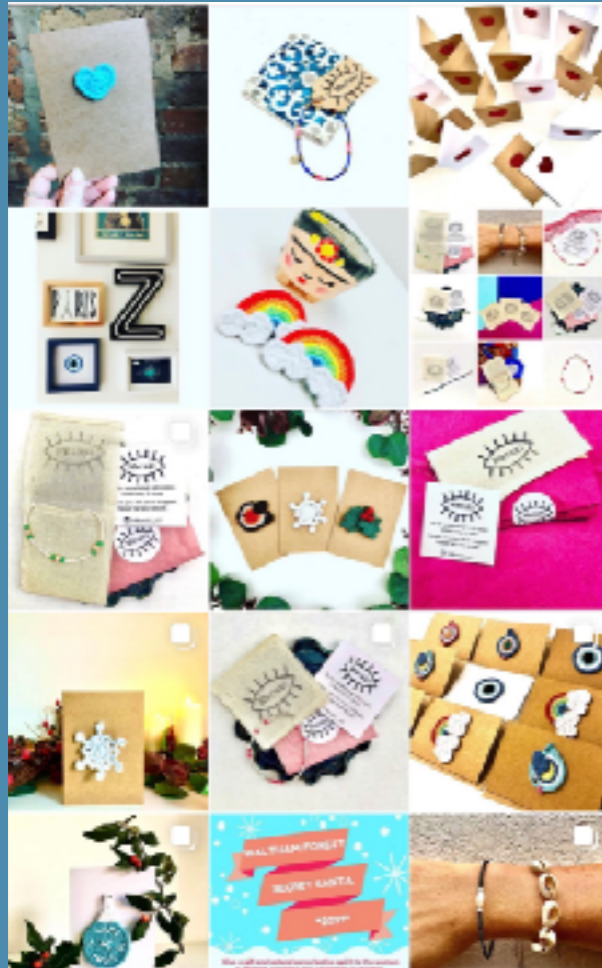
We are also supplied with handmade blankets by Jenny (@iamsimplyhooked on Instagram), a fantastic crocheter who kindly lends her time to PramDepot.



And last but certainly not least, Tessa Bracken makes these cosy fleece jackets for newborns. We love them and put one in every box!

A special thanks to

We were also supported by Meraki E17, who made a special gift card to sell in support of PramDepot



Long-time volunteer Tandy Deane-Gray has been supporting us over the year by donating the proceeds from sales of her micro-macrame jewellery. Tandy raised over £600 for us this year!

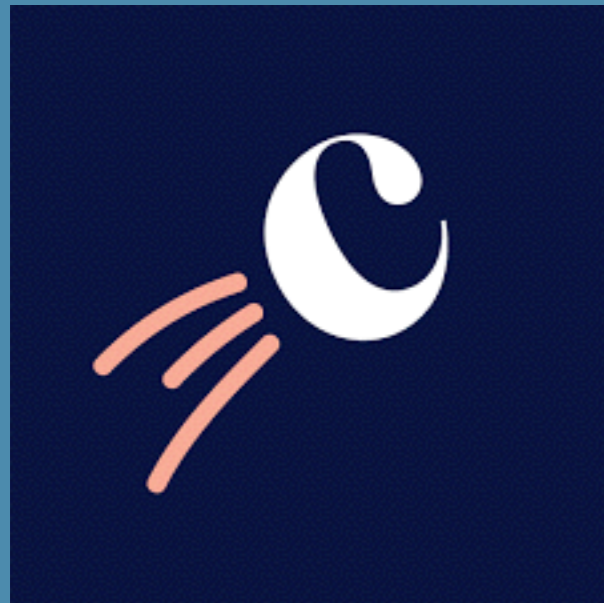


We were so pleased this year to see digital creator Alex Stedman at PramDepot. She dropped by twice to say hello and donate some high quality baby items for our boxes. She also used her platform on Instagram several times to shout us out, leading to more followers and more donations!



We were also supported by Tot Swap, a high quality, secondhand clothing exchange for kids (we stock ages 0-7yrs) and maternity wear in Wood Green. Shop owner Emma Harrison worked with The All Good Bookshop to put on story time sessions for young children, donating the money raised to PramDepot. Tot Swap and The All Good Bookshop raised over £250 for us!

Special thanks to all our supporters and collaborators...



Our funders 2021/22





Thank you to all the wonderful people and organisations who have supported us this year and all the incredible mums we support.