

Annual Report 2021-2022

A member of Relationships Scotland **RELATIONSHIPS**
counselling, mediation & family support across **SCOTLAND**



Who we are

We are an independent registered Scottish charity based in Orkney, providing specialist support for adults, children, couples and families affected by relationship difficulties and family breakdown.

The charity has been operating since 1994, originally as Family Mediation Orkney, which merged with Couple Counselling Orkney in 2006 to form Counselling and Family Mediation Orkney. In 2008 this organisation joined Relationships Scotland, the national body for counselling, mediation and family support in Scotland, and adopted the name Relationships Scotland Orkney, operating as RS Orkney. We are a registered Scottish charity and became a Company Limited by Guarantee in 2010.

As a Relationships Scotland (RS) member, we are part of a Scotland-wide network of locally run services, are Organisational Members of COSCA (the Professional Body for Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland) and the College of Mediators. RS are also a Signatory of The Scottish Mediation Charter.

Our Values

- We work to the highest possible standards in accordance with the requirements of professional bodies.
- We respect and value diversity in our clients, practitioners, staff members and volunteers.
- We work in partnership with other organisations and individuals who share our aspirations for the people of Orkney.
- We are transparent and accountable, acting with openness and integrity at all times.

Our charitable objects

To relieve the needs and promote the welfare of individuals, families and children affected by relationship difficulties by providing support services, principally family mediation, child contact and confidential counselling services, and to develop other appropriate services to meet the changing needs of those disadvantaged by such difficulties.



What we do

Counselling

We provide a safe, confidential place for individuals and couples to talk to a professional counsellor about problems of any kind such as anxiety, depression, anger, relationship difficulties, to explore feelings and find ways to move forward. We also offer specialist counselling for those struggling with alcohol/drugs.



Mediation

Family mediation is a voluntary process which can help separated parents and family members when communication becomes difficult or has broken down. With the help of a trained and impartial mediator, long, painful and expensive legal battles can be avoided. We also offer specialist workplace mediation for conflicts arising at work.

Family Support

Our **Child Contact Centre** provides a safe, friendly, neutral and child-centred environment where children affected by family breakdown can meet and maintain their relationship with the parent they no longer live with or with other family members.

Family Support Workers help individuals and families to identify their strengths and build capacity, so they become better able to cope with relationship issues, parenting and other life challenges. They provide a range of specialist support including specific evidence-based interventions such as Parenting Apart, and programmes to support individuals who are involved in harmful substance misuse and their loved ones (e.g. Motivational Interviewing, Community Reinforcement and Family Training).

Our Aims

- Children and their families, couples and individuals, are supported to have better, stronger relationships.
- People in Orkney make the best possible transitions through relationship difficulties, separation and divorce.
- Relationship and family support is fully integrated within national and local policy and practice.

Our Objectives

- To provide and support high quality services across Orkney, including relationship counselling, family mediation, child contact centres and other related forms of family support.
- To demonstrate the effectiveness of our services and help local policy makers, politicians, the media and others understand why relationships matter.
- To achieve long-term, stable funding for the Relationships Scotland Orkney services.



A word from our Chair

The COVID pandemic has continued to affect our clients and our activities this year, and we have worked hard to support the community at this challenging time. Thanks to funding from a range of sources described in this report, we have been able to continue offering free, professional services to help adults, young people and children in Orkney affected by family breakdown and a range of relationship and other difficulties.

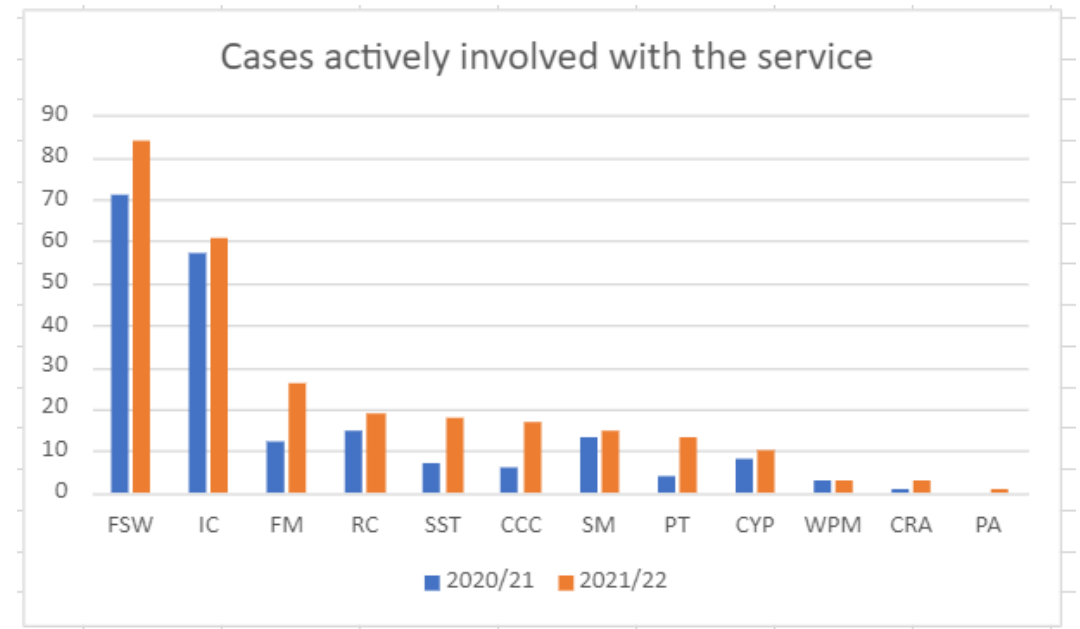
Demand for our services continues to be high. Clients attended 2,234 sessions across all services April 2021-March 2022. This is 27% more than the previous year, and that year showed an increase of 23% from pre-pandemic levels. This demonstrates the significant level of need and is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of our staff, who have continued to offer appointments online or by phone throughout the pandemic, as well as face-to-face as COVID restrictions allowed.

We are grateful to our colleagues at Relationships Scotland for helping us to ensure that standards continually improve and keep pace with codes of good practice and current legislation. They have secured core funding for the Relationships Scotland network via the Scottish Government Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund (CYPFEIF) and Adult Learning and Empowering Communities (ALEC) Fund, and from Scottish Government towards the provision of Child Contact Centre services, including support for our work in Orkney.

Following the retirement of two long-standing board members Heather Tait and Edith Pirie in July 2021, three new directors joined our board this year: Amanda Bettison, Luigi Borsotti and Mark Causer.

Looking ahead, RS Orkney's organisational aims and objectives remain a good fit with national and local government priorities, with a focus on prevention, early interventions and work with families. This year we undertook a review of our activities and have adopted a new strategy and plan for 2022/27 which will see further development of our services and capacity so we can continue to respond to evolving local needs.

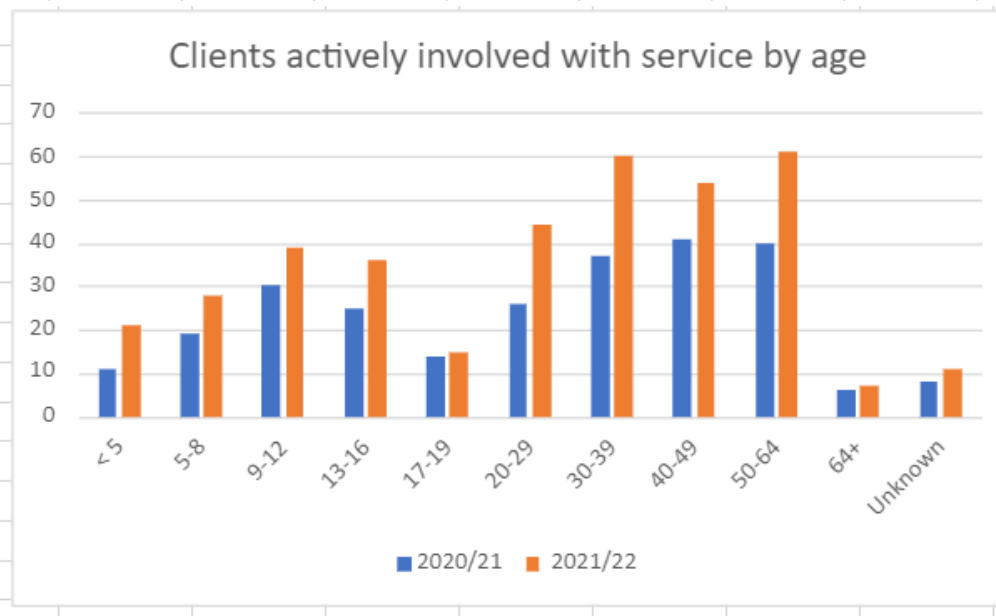
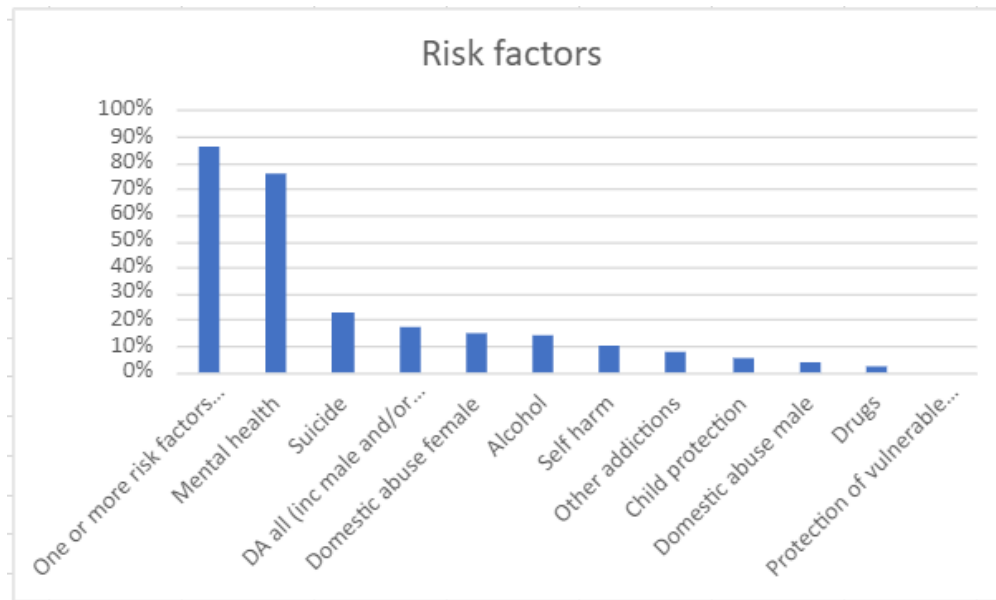
We remain committed to providing services for the Orkney community free of charge, and are grateful to all of the funders who enable us to continue doing so.



OUR SERVICES

- FSW Family Support Work
- IC Individual Counselling
- FM Family Mediation
- RC Relationship Counselling
- SST Single Session Therapy
- CCC Child Contact Centre
- SM Substance Misuse Counselling and Support
- PT Play Therapy
- CYP Children & Young People Counselling
- WPM Workplace Mediation
- CRA Community Reinforcement & Family Training
- PA Parenting Apart

Our clients



The client's view

"This is an invaluable service, without it our relationship would not have survived. Thank you so much."

"It has been great for me from the beginning... admin staff are friendly, welcoming & supportive. Arranging appointments / communications / etc. well organised & efficient. Utterly delighted with my appointed counsellor who made my first ever experience of the process so constructive, even enjoyable!"

"Relationships Scotland Orkney has been an immense help to my state of mind, my ability to cope and my overall wellbeing. My first year with a support worker I feel has saved my life. I cannot recommend this service enough to anyone dealing with any issue."

"Excellent! I felt I was listened to and understood. My counselor really helped me to unscramble all the thoughts in my head. I truly feel that I have a handle on my mental health for the first time in a long time."

Across the Relationships Scotland network:

- 98% said that at this stage counselling had helped improve their relationship/family situation.
- 83% said that at this stage mediation had helped improve their family situation.
- 78% of parents reported an improvement in their ability to deal with relationship conflict.
- 75% reported an improvement in their ability to cope with their current situation.

An update from the Service Director

This has been another busy year at RS Orkney, with strong demand for all our services, and new services developed in response to local needs. A total of 238 new cases were opened during the year, and 271 cases attended sessions, involving 237 adults and 139 children, some of whom accessed multiple services. This represents a 46% increase in the number of people helped, compared to the previous year.

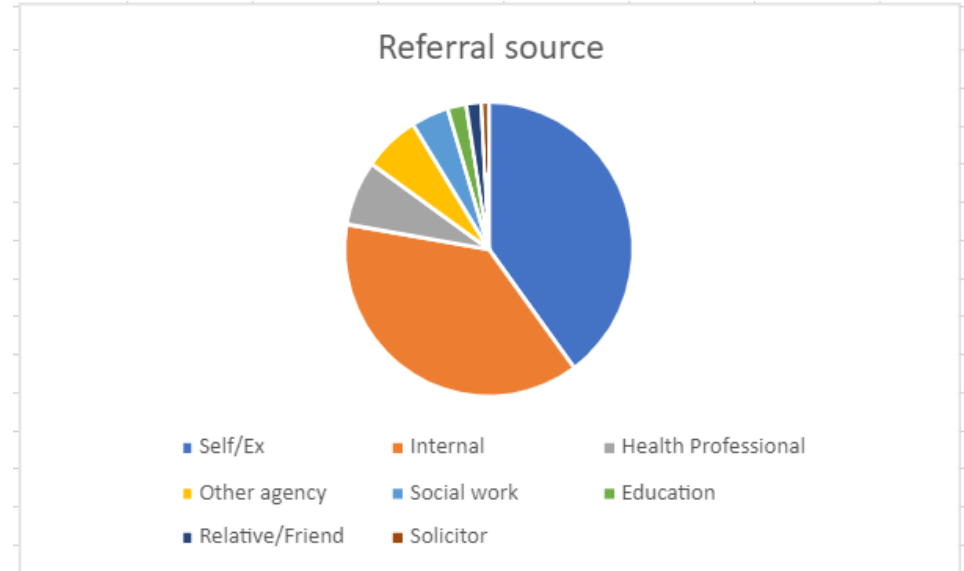
The cases handled by the Service are increasingly complex, reflected in the risk factors identified at intake (see table on previous page). These show some worrying trends: 86% of clients identified at least one risk factor (compared with 75% the previous year). Recent data shows that 45% of our counselling clients present with a diagnosed mental health condition, 40% with undiagnosed depression and 18% with anxiety about their physical health. We completed 132 Fast Alcohol Screening Tests during the year, and 21% of respondents reported consuming alcohol at what is deemed a hazardous level.

These numbers clearly demonstrate the extent of need within our community for the specialist services we offer. As shown opposite, we receive referrals from a variety of sources. The majority of people self-refer or are referred within the service for specialist help. This reflects our flexible and integrated approach, responding to client needs as they change over time. We work hard to make links with other services both in the statutory and third sectors, so that we can offer a holistic approach to meeting client needs.

Our growing and varied caseload creates additional administrative demands, resulting in a 50% increase in the time spent arranging appointments and liaising with clients. Improvements made to our IT systems, and new procedures including providing online forms for clients, have helped to make processes more efficient and to facilitate blended home/office-based working. The online forms also help us with monitoring and evaluation of the client experience, which informs service development and improvement.

We have secured additional funding this year enabling us to grow our staff team. However, short term funding remains a challenge, with much of our income only secured to March 2023. We will continue to work hard to explore different funding options and to evidence the benefits of our work to our funders, so we can continue to support the Orkney community through the period of recovery from the pandemic, and beyond.

Tamsin Bailey



We acknowledge the support of the Scottish Government through a Children, Young People & Families Early Intervention Fund (CYPFEIF) and Adult Learning and Empowering Communities (ALEC) Fund grant.

In addition we are grateful to all those who have generously funded our work through grants this year:

CORRA Foundation - Drugs Improvement Fund
The Henry Smith Charity - Improving Lives Fund
Inspiring Scotland - Healthy Islands Fund
Mind On
Orkney Alcohol & Drugs Partnership
Orkney Islands Council
Voluntary Action Orkney - COVID Emergency Fund

We also receive generous donations from clients and members of the public. Without this funding we could not continue to provide these vital services for the Orkney Community.

Counselling

"This service comes highly recommended and has saved our marriage."

Demand for counselling continues to be strong, with 55 new referrals this year for **Individual Counselling** and 23 for **Relationships Counselling**. Clients attended 776 counselling sessions during the year.

Capacity remains a challenge in responding to this level of need, particularly for individual counselling, but we have plans in place to increase our capacity going forward. We can also offer **Single Session Therapy**, where appropriate, and 18 clients accessed this service in 2021-22.

"It's been absolutely brilliant, I've learnt so much, the help and advice was invaluable."



Counselling for Children and Young People and **Play Therapy** were impacted by the pandemic but have now resumed, with 252 sessions attended, and 23 new referrals received for these services this year. We have plans in place to develop our capacity for Play Therapy going forward, in response to strong local need particularly for Primary School age children.

Mediation

Family Mediation work has increased significantly, with 26 cases attending 121 sessions (a 120% increase). There has also been some uptake of our specialist Workplace Mediation, with feedback showing this can be a constructive and helpful way to resolve conflict in the workplace.

"I think the mediation service has saved us...At times my ex-partner and I have been completely unable to communicate in any way apart from through the mediation service."

Child Contact Centre

The **Child Contact Centre** has been busy, working with 17 cases over the year. 205 contact sessions were attended, enabling 29 children to spend time with a parent they no longer live with. These are often complex cases with high conflict between parents. The service is vital in enabling children to maintain contact with their non-resident parent and families often progress from supervised or supported contact to managing handovers through the Centre.



"The contact centre managers and staff have been unfailingly warm and kind and both they and other staff at RS Orkney have been extremely supportive.."

Family Support Work

"My support sessions have been hugely helpful and I can't emphasise just how beneficial they have been"

Another busy area of work has been **Family Support**, with 84 active cases and 699 sessions attended, an increase of 68% on the previous year. Our Support Workers work with people of all ages, providing help with issues from anxiety and depression to parenting challenges and relationship breakdown.

Support is closely integrated with other services, for example providing additional assistance to parents who are using the Child Contact Centre or involved in Family Mediation. The family support work is generously funded by a grant from The Henry Smith Charity 'Improving Lives' fund, with some Scottish Government Child Contact Centre funding going towards supporting families who use our Child Contact Centre.

"The sessions i have had with [the support worker] have been hugely beneficial to myself and ultimately restored our family unit amid some very challenging circumstances, i cannot recommend these services highly enough as without we would be a split family unit. many thanks indeed"

The team developed a new initiative this year, supporting local people and helping to re-build their confidence to go out and about after the pandemic. This involves providing informal LINC (Lonely? Isolated? Network Connect) sessions in the community. This was funded through COVID Emergency Funds distributed by Voluntary Action Orkney.

"It gives me a reason to leave the house."

"You are the only people I speak to in the week."

Our Family Support work is supported by:

The
Henry Smith
Charity

founded in 1628

Drug & alcohol services

Our specialist **Substance Misuse Service** has developed this year with additional funding for a Support and Outreach Worker secured from the CORRA Drugs Improvement Fund. They work alongside the specialist Substance Misuse Counsellor commissioned by the Orkney Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. The Support Worker focuses on helping the client to reduce consumption and, once their situation is more stable, the client can benefit from therapy to help address issues underlying their drug/alcohol use. This approach has helped a number of clients to make really positive progress this year.

orkney alcohol and drugs
partnership

"The service is brilliant and friendly, and I feel like I can say anything without being judged. The sessions have helped me to reduce my alcohol intake and stick to my goals."



 Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

 CORRA
FOUNDATION
voice • power • change

We really appreciate clients taking the time to give us feedback, as this makes sure we can continually improve our services.

- 100% felt their counsellor/support worker listened, understood things from their point of view and accepted what they said without judging
- 100% said the counsellor fostered a safe and trusting environment

"This is a very valuable service and without it I'm not sure how I would have coped."

"Excellent and professional service provided. This counseling has saved our marriage at a time when I thought it was beyond saving. I cannot thank the service enough and only hope enough funding is provided for it to both continue and expand."

"After my sessions I have more confidence and am happier and this has been noticed by others. I'd strongly recommend this service to someone who is struggling."

"[the support worker] was brilliant at supporting me and giving me tools to help me. It was really helpful to speak to her and offload about things I couldn't talk to friends or family about"

Our staff

All of our Counsellors, Family Mediators and Play Therapists are trained to nationally recognised professional standards.

Minimum training for **Counsellors** is Diploma level, which takes approximately 3 years to complete. We support counsellors in training, who usually begin working with clients part way through the course, once they have been properly assessed and deemed ready to practice.

Our **Family Mediators** have trained for 4 years and, once registered, and they are added to the national list of family mediators held by the Lord President of the Court of Session.

All practitioners receive regular clinical practice supervision, and support from their line manager. They must attend training for their continuous personal and professional development, in order to ensure standards are maintained and that they comply with the requirements of Relationships Scotland and the professional body appropriate to their particular discipline.

Support Workers have regular training and supervision, and are experienced working with mental health issues like anxiety and depression, parenting difficulties, parental conflict and other life challenges. They work one to-one with individuals of all ages, and can work with parents and children together or individually.

Our **Child Contact Centre Workers** are experienced working with children and families, and like all our staff their approach is person-centred and trauma-informed. They are trained in line with Relationships Scotland national requirements. In all the work we do with families, we seek to ensure that the voice of the child is heard when decisions are being made or actions taken which affect their future.

Board

Ray Knox (Chair), Lucy Stansfield (Vice Chair), Huw Gwynn-Jones (Treasurer), Amanda Bettison, Luigi Borsotti, Mark Causer, Colin Nisbet, Uka Summers

Service Director

Tamsin Bailey

Administrators

Cecily Cromby (Client Liaison Worker)
Deborah Rhodes (Finance)

Counselling	Mediation	Individual & Family Support			Parenting Apart	Drug & Alcohol Support
		Child Contact Centre	Individual, Family & Community Support	CYP Counselling & Play Therapy		
<p>Counsellors Rosie Alexander June Anderson Barbara Cordukes Katie Eaton (trainee) Helen Hiscoke Rachel Spence Hannah Stanger Sharon Stephen (trainee) Sue Wall Eimear Young</p> <p>Supervisors Renate Andrews June Anderson Helen Hiscoke</p> <p>External Supervisors Judith Bale Manda Balfour Nicola Kelly Margaret Kimmet Angela Montgomery Jacqueline Sharpe Shirley Sim</p>	<p>Registered Family Mediators Tamsin Bailey Barbara Smith</p> <p>External Supervisor Rhona Wilson</p>	<p>Co-ordinator Jade Baxter</p> <p>Support Workers Cynthia Chaddock Gillian Charlesworth Mary Foubister Lesley-Anne Millar Edith Pirie Ruth Fogg Ria Leslie Roxy Tait</p> <p>Volunteers Helen Baxter</p>	<p>Team Leader Helen Pepper</p> <p>Support Workers Jade Baxter Yvonne Drever Mary Foubister Lorinda Logan Carrie Rendall</p>	<p>CYP Counsellors & Play Therapists June Anderson Renate Andrews</p> <p>Supervisor (Play Therapy) Renate Andrews</p> <p>External Supervisors Susan Atkins</p> <p>Trainee Play Therapists Kayleigh Shaw Sarah Wood</p>	<p>Facilitators Jade Baxter Helen Pepper Barbara Smith</p>	<p>Specialist Substance Misuse Counselling Hannah Stanger</p> <p>Substance Misuse Support & Outreach Worker Samantha Davies</p> <p>CRAFT Family Support Lorinda Logan</p>

During the year our Board led a review of our strategy, with input from staff and clients. Our new Strategy sets out our priorities and outcomes for 2022-27:

RS ORKNEY

counselling, mediation & family support



Services

Priorities 2022-27

Outcomes

A member of Relationships Scotland



How to access our services

Individuals can self-refer or someone (e.g. a professional) can contact us on their behalf.

They will receive a phone call or email within 1 working day, and an initial appointment is usually offered within 5 working days. There may be a wait for some services, but support is available meantime.

We put the client's needs at the centre: we will work with them to find out which of our services best suit their needs. If appropriate, we can refer on to other services, and will support them through the transition from one service to another.

If you are concerned about a family member or someone else you know, you can contact us to discuss confidentially whether we may be able to help. If you think we can help you or someone you know, please get in touch.

RS ORKNEY

counselling, mediation & family support

Relationships Scotland Orkney

First Floor Right
Kirkwall Travel Centre
West Castle Street
Kirkwall
Orkney KW15 1GU
01856 877750
enquiries@rsorkney.org.uk
www.rsorkney.org.uk

Our services are free and confidential.



A member of Relationships Scotland



www.relationships-scotland.org.uk