

# NOTTINGHAM WOMEN'S CENTRE

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023-2024



Run by women, for all women



Nottingham  
Women's Centre

come on in

Charity Registration 1105837  
Company Limited by Guarantee 5113835  
Registered in England and Wales

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## OUR BOARD

Diana Ali	Claire Eden
Paula Black	Dr June McCombie
Laura Breach	Shazia Nazir
Deborah Gordon Brown	Maria Pearson
Sian Kirsten Caulfield	Justine Weston (Chair)

**Thank you to our trustees who have stepped down this year:**

Dr Angelina Bartoli, Balbinder Watkins, and Louisa Matthews.

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# CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am proud to present our Annual Report for the financial year April 2023–March 2024. As we reflect on another eventful year at Nottingham Women's Centre, we are proud to highlight our many achievements while also acknowledging the challenging environment charities like ours are currently operating in. The need for our services continues to grow in the face of economic and health crises, while the funding landscape becomes more difficult. However, thanks to the dedication of our brilliant staff, volunteers, and trustees, and the support of our wider community, we are pleased to be able to evolve and adapt to meet these changing needs. We also continue to campaign for change to tackle the root causes of inequality, amplifying the voices of the women who use our services and making sure that they are heard by decision makers, locally and in Westminster.

**Justine Weston**

Chair of the Board of Trustees

I also want to take a moment to reflect on our partnerships work, with this year marking the end of the Communities of Identity: Gender and Sexual Orientation funding from the Council after ten years. This funding enabled us to build stronger relationships with other women's groups in the city and has been key in shaping our work and identity over the past decade. While the funding has ended, we remain committed to working with our partner organisations in new ways and will continue the Women's Organisations Network as a vehicle for this.

Looking ahead, there is plenty to look forward to in the coming year, with a new strategic plan, new projects, and new campaigns.

Thank you for your support over the past year and I hope you will continue to work with us in achieving our mission for women in Nottingham.



## CEO'S REFLECTIONS

Hello,

**And welcome to my first Annual Report as the Interim CEO for Nottingham Women's Centre.**

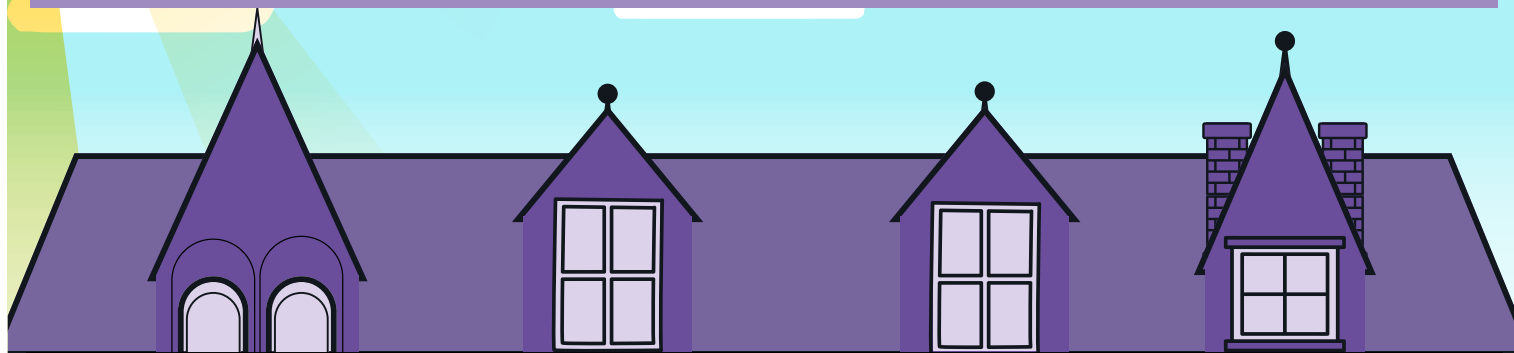
I joined, in my new role, in the summer of this year and have spent the first 3 months getting to know the Centre and the wonderful team that work here. I had been a Trustee for 2 years before this but rolling my sleeves up and stepping into the organisation has given me a new depth and breadth of understanding of who we are and what we do. What is clear to me is that the Nottingham Women's Centre is more than the sum of its parts. We are a safe space and a provider of case work services, mental health services and a wide selection of activities alongside our sister women's sector organisations including VAWG. But this is not a list – this is a holistic network of support for women to meet them on their journey wherever they are and provide means of increased empowerment and agency in moving forward with their lives.

**Louisa Matthews**  
CEO

My work as CEO needs to concentrate on increasing our ability to provide and evidence our value adding delivery and outcomes, reducing the burden of aging infrastructure and building further financial resilience in what remains a context of ever reducing funding and sadly, ever increasing demand. We need to do this in a way that prioritises the needs of our clients and our staff – and we have developed a Strategy On A Page to give ourselves a values-based framework in which to deliver on this. I am honoured and delighted to be in this role with the Nottingham Women's Centre and excited to lead the organisation in these ongoing developments.



# STRATEGY ON A PAGE



## NWC Vision

A world where there is social equity and justice for all women to lead safe and happy lives, free from inequality, violence and oppression.

## NWC Mission

Provide a women's community space dedicated to helping women to overcome barriers, have their voices heard and seek solutions that create a better future for themselves.

## Our Feminist Values

Led by Women,  
For Women

Feminist,  
Anti-Racist,  
Intersectional &  
Transformational

Person Centred,  
Strengths Based &  
Responsive

Inclusive,  
Accountable &  
Accessible

Collaborative  
& Partnership  
Oriented

## Our Strategic Priorities

### OUR PEOPLE

To harness and invest in our staff and volunteers, take care of their well-being and ensure that women with lived experience are at the centre of our workplace.

### OUR SERVICES

To provide holistic support, services, and activities for women through a trauma informed, gender responsive way.

### OUR CAMPAIGNS & COMMUNITIES

To champion women's expression powerfully so that they have a stronger voice to influence policies and plans.

### OUR SUSTAINABILITY

To ensure we are financially secure and forward thinking to remain as an anchor for the provision of services and support to women.

### OUR HUB

To create a safe, secure and welcoming space for women and women's organisations, fostering learning, personal growth, connections, and mutual inspiration.

Resilience & Resources

Voice & Influence

Space & Connection

## OUR FEMINIST PILLARS

# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

**937** individual women  
accessed our services

**310** received counselling  
**405** received casework support  
**212** women attended a course or activity

**75%**

of the women who identified  
**emotional wellbeing**  
as an area of need said their circumstances had improved.



**40**

**placement counsellors**  
in the Renew service



**£415**

worth of **support packages**

**£72,961**

**Total direct financial benefit**  
created for women



**£42,105.70**

accessed in benefits for women

**£2,487.10**

in benefit arrears

**£25,422.52**

debt resolved

**£1,260.00**

in emergency vouchers

**£295.00**

worth of festive hampers

**£46.50**

in travel expenses

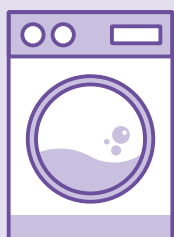


**71**

women in  
**urgent financial crisis**  
received support

Our shower, laundry  
facilities, resting space  
and kitchen was used

**220 times**



**£930** **Tesco Vouchers**  
purchased with the money raised  
from a member of staffs skydive

**106**



**total number of volunteers**  
who supported us with a range  
of activities including managing  
our library, administration and  
supporting with preparing  
support packages for women.



**11,202**

**women used the Centre**

An increase of **39%** on the previous year





# OUR SERVICES

Nottingham Women's Centre is here as a women's community space and hub for women's services, providing a one-stop-shop model for women. This enables us to take a holistic approach, identifying the support women might want, and making sure they can access it in a way that works for them. Our space is forever evolving based on women's aspirations and needs, and we enable women to take action on the issues they care about.

This means that we operate as a network of services, offering multiple pathways to women that they can step in and out of depending on where they are at in their journey. Our services are centred on women, ensuring that every resource and tool, from assessment materials to group session resources, is gender-responsive. These tools are continuously refined to deepen understanding of women's specific needs.

Our approach aims to create a safe, non-judgemental space where women feel free to discuss sensitive issues, such as domestic abuse, sex work, and experiences of hate crime. With 50 years of experience, we know that a holistic, woman-centred approach effectively supports women's unique challenges, fostering empowerment and resilience

.....

**Our services operate online, in venues across Nottinghamshire but primarily from our base in Nottingham which is a welcoming community centre where women can come to get warm, cook, have a hot drink, use the shower or laundry, rest and relax, visit our library and make friends.**

.....

“

You believed in me, and what I was capable of achieving which gave me the courage to believe in my self. I have a better understanding of my emotions which I know now is a strong tool to have especially in times when I need to control my emotions or express them, as previously I would struggle and shut down. Today, I make it a priority to communicate how I feel instead of bottling up as I understand the long lasting effects of carrying resentment.





# THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

Photo credit: Elizabeth Brown Photography

## RENEW

Our affordable, in-person counselling service for self-identifying women had a hugely busy year, underscoring the critical need for low-cost, women-only therapeutic spaces. Over the past year, our dedicated therapists supported approximately 202 women, delivering a total of 2,408 hours of vital counselling. This service, which is unfunded and operates on a sliding fee scale, ensures that women who might otherwise have no access to long-term mental health support can receive the care they need. Funded solely through client fees and occasional donations, RENEW continues to be a vital resource to those who need it most.



“

For me, I was kind of in a really dark place when started therapy. Partying and drinking every weekend. Haven't drank for 6 months. Definitely through therapy that helped give the tools, resilience and coping mechanisms. Found the root cause, it took nearly a year. There was a moment, during a counselling session, where I just got it. Didn't think I needed it but did.

## DOMESTIC ABUSE THERAPY SERVICE

The core of our Domestic Abuse therapy service continued this year with funding from Nottingham City Council. After successfully trialling six-week sessions in 2022/23, we expanded our offering to up to eight sessions per client, ensuring they have the best chance to achieve their desired outcomes during what is an incredibly difficult time. This expansion was warmly received by both clients and funders, highlighting the demand for sustained, meaningful support. For the most complex cases, we were also able to offer up to 20 sessions, providing intensive care to those facing the greatest challenges.

In total, the service supported **93 women** and delivered **347 therapeutic sessions**

In addition to this core service, funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner allowed us to launch a transformative new initiative: the '**Surviving to Thriving**' therapeutic group. This group offers a safe, supportive space for survivors of domestic abuse to explore the lasting impact of trauma and find ways to deal with anxiety, anger, shame and other challenging emotions. It's a vital program that empowers women to reclaim their lives and find connection over shared experience.

“

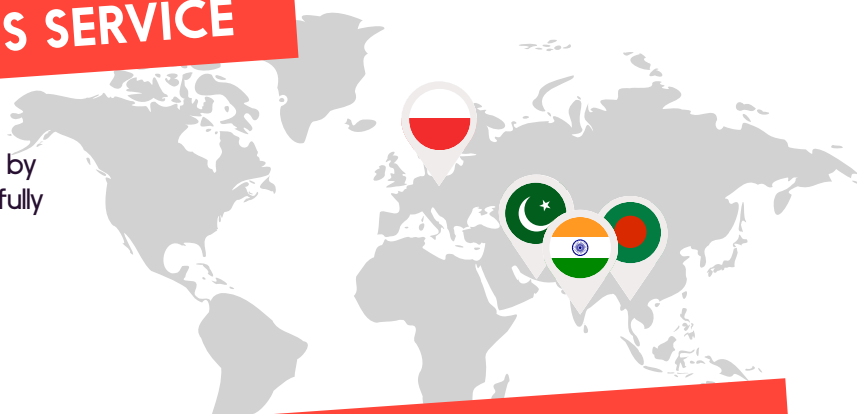
At the start I just wanted to survive, thriving wasn't even possible in my mind. But now after the course I am thriving.



## COMMUNITY LANGUAGES SERVICE

Our Community Languages Service, also funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner, was successfully launched to provide survivors with therapy in different languages and cultural contexts. We engaged eight skilled sessional therapists to offer online counselling in Urdu, Punjabi, Mirpuri, Bengali, Hindi, Kutchi, Gujarati, and Polish, ensuring that survivors can access therapy that feels personal and accessible. By offering therapy in a language that resonates with women's experiences alongside greater cultural understanding, we are able to make it possible for more survivors to be supported in a way that feels safe and meaningful to them.

**139 women** were supported within the domestic abuse side of the service.



“

I don't talk about it with other people, too hurtful. In Counselling you can open up and share what happens. Ex-husband said nothing happened, I thought, is it me? Made to feel like your feelings are valid and it really helped. Thank you to you all at the Centre, it turned my life around.

## SEVERE AND MULTIPLE DISADVANTAGE

We are proud to have expanded our therapeutic services to support women facing severe disadvantage and complex needs. This highly specialized work is a vital addition to our support portfolio, providing therapy to some of the most marginalized women—those who are often overlooked and undeserved by other services and with experiences of severe trauma.

In the first year alone, we were able to support **15 women**, offering them the therapy and support they so urgently need. This is a critical addition to our service, and one that we hope to build on.



## EMPOWERING PLACEMENT COUNSELLORS

We had 40 placement therapists in the service working towards their qualifications and developing their understanding and experience of the wider world of mental health in modern society through our service.

We pride ourselves on supporting our trainees to achieve a thorough understanding of trauma therapy in the real world, and to help prepare them to work with women in the next stage of their careers.





# CASE STUDY

## Sue's\* Story

Sue was referred to our Domestic Abuse service by a local domestic abuse support organisation. Sue had severe anxiety resulting from ongoing domestic abuse marked by physical violence, threats, and harassment. The emotional toll had left her in shock, struggling to manage her overwhelming reactions to recent incidents. Her mental health and wellbeing was further impacted by significant sleep disturbances as a result of the abuse.

Sue's goal for therapy was to make sense of what was happening and to understand the implications of the domestic violence and abuse she had experienced. As part of the short-term trauma informed approach to Domestic Violence and Abuse therapy, her therapist aimed to create a safe environment where Sue could begin to stabilize her emotions and find a greater sense of security as a stepping stone. Given the sensitive nature of her situation—Sue had reported incidents to the Police and was preparing for court—the therapy was tailored to avoid disrupting any legal processes.

The therapist focused on building a trusting relationship, providing Sue with the space to explore her feelings and make sense of things. Over the eight weeks of therapy, Sue developed increased self-awareness. She began to identify her emotional responses and learned coping techniques like breathwork and grounding exercises. This increase in self-awareness was validating for Sue, and supported her in minimising feelings of anxiety while being able to access a more self-compassionate framework.

\*not her real name



“

Giving space to the trauma and letting me have space and time to acknowledge the extent of trauma at a pace and speed I could cope made all the difference.

By the end of therapy, Sue expressed immense gratitude for the supportive relationship she had built with her therapist. She emerged with an increased sense of clarity and reduced feelings of guilt and shame. Importantly, her improved mental state positively affected her communication with family and friends, enhancing her relationships and boosting her confidence and self-esteem. Sue also went on to share her story with local employers and decision makers, becoming an advocate for change for women and men experiencing domestic abuse.

# HOLISTIC CASE WORK SUPPORT

Our caseworkers provide vital support to women both currently involved in the criminal justice system and those at risk of entering it. We work closely with probation services and women's prisons to provide gender-responsive support, upon release and for women on community orders or licenses. Since 2010, we have been committed to supporting women within the criminal justice system, using a trauma-informed, person-centred approach that prioritizes each woman's unique experiences. We work with women at their own pace, ensuring they have the autonomy to make decisions that are right for them.

“

My caseworker has gone above and beyond for me. She has been patient and understanding of my difficulties and has been flexible with appointments when I have struggled. I appreciated the short 'wellbeing' calls on weeks when I didn't have a formal appointment.

Many women have shared that timely support could have helped them avoid involvement in the criminal justice system altogether. This has led to the establishment of our New Changes project this year, our preventative casework programme that focuses on identifying the specific challenges women face and supporting them to overcome these.

## **New Changes Service** (from October 2023)

Supported **78 women in 6 months**

.....  
**90%** of the women supported reported an improvement in their needs

.....  
Supported **36 women** with dependent children – a total of **84 children** in their households

The pathways through which women become involved in the criminal justice system are often shaped by factors such as limited education and job opportunities, economic disadvantage, poverty, homelessness, or insecure housing. Women may face a lack of support from family or partners, substance dependency, or a combination of these challenges. Experiences of domestic and sexual abuse, as well as childhood trauma, especially undermine women's ability to lead fulfilling lives, increasing their vulnerability to entering the criminal justice system.

“

Through your support, I have been empowered to do more self-centred things such as walking more regularly, gardening and reading books which specifically target emotional wellbeing and through this I have identified behaviours that I recognise I would like counselling for. I am so grateful for the door of empowerment that with your support has opened up for me and I genuinely feel as though I have turned a page since being released from prison.

## **Based on this knowledge, we deliver outcomes across the following service areas:**

**Employment, Training, and Education:** Helping women remove barriers and increase skills to improve their employment prospects.

**Finances, Benefits, and Debt Services:** Assisting women in overcoming financial challenges such as low income and debt, and improving financial security.

**Accommodation Support:** Helping women find and sustain safe housing while preventing homelessness.

**Family and Relationships:** Supporting women in building positive relationships and reducing reliance on harmful or negative relationships.

**Dependency and Recovery:** Providing a range of substance misuse-related support to aid in recovery and long-term well-being.

**Emotional Well-Being and Social Inclusion:** Offering lifestyle support to help women integrate into their communities and improve their mental health.

This important work is funded by the Ministry of Justice through the Commissioned Rehabilitative Services strand, and through funding for Women's Preventative Services, aimed at breaking the cycle of re-offending.



Ministry  
of Justice

# CASE STUDY

## Janet's\* Story

Janet self-referred to our New Changes project, seeking help after previously receiving support from the Centre years ago. She was facing significant housing issues, namely dealing with mould and dampness throughout the house which had damaged her furniture and clothing, including her baby's toys, clothing and her eldest child's mattress. She was also dealing with issues around training and employment, finances and social isolation as a single mother.

Janet's New Changes caseworker worked with her to identify the support she needed, connecting her to services within and outside the Centre. This included referring her to the Furniture Project and Sharewear, through which Janet was supported to get a mattress and clothes – which she was 'really thankful' for.

Her casework referred Janet to Home Start where she was able to get specialised, and tailored support with her feelings of isolation as a single mother with young children. Janet was also connected to activities at the Centre so that she always felt welcomed and able to engage with wider services and events here.

Janet had also expressed a desire to upskill and find alternate employment, but could not afford the courses she wanted to do. Janet's caseworker looked for the right opportunities for her that would meet her aspirations as well as give her the flexibility to fit education and training around looking after her children. Based on this, she signposted Janet to accredited websites Alison.com and Open Learning to be able to access business related courses she could not previously attend, as these courses were free and reputable, as well as flexible. She also found a regular job fair event for Janet to attend be able to explore and network with employers.

\*not her real name



“

It's nice to talk to someone  
and I'm not being judged.  
I'm getting somewhere.

**By the end of the casework, Janet had built her confidence in managing her finances through conversations about budgeting as well as external. She had access to a wider range of options and networks, and was better connected to support available locally. Janet told us that she especially felt listened to and not judged about her circumstances, which had always made the Centre a place she felt comfortable coming to.**





“

I will use the voucher to buy food from Tesco. I often buy reduced healthy food. I had no food and no fuel or phone for a number of days. Also cut off phone. I can now sustain myself whilst paying bills and repaying rent arrears.

# COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

Our services are always changing to meet the most current and immediate needs of women and we responded to the escalating cost-of-living crisis in 2023-24. The cost-of-living crisis has significantly affected women, particularly asylum seekers and those facing unstable housing, homelessness, or poverty. Rising prices for essentials such as food, housing, and transportation disproportionately impact women, who often earn less than men and are more likely to work in low-wage jobs.

Our services have responded to this in many ways. We opened up our shower facilities and kitchen for women and introduced access to a washing machine. Over the year, these facilities were used more than **200 times**, providing access to basic necessities to the most vulnerable women.

Some of the women using our space in this way may be street homeless, while others might be "sofa surfing" to avoid burdening friends or family. Some lack access to hot water due to issues with prepayment electricity meters, and others live in shared accommodation where they may not feel safe using communal bathrooms. We respect their privacy and do not inquire about their circumstances – creating a 'no questions asked' space that they can walk into without fear of judgement.

“

Thank you for the Argos and Tesco Vouchers. I plan to buy an Air Fryer and do a big food shop for me and my two children. You do so much to help others like me and it's appreciated.



We ensure that shower gel and fresh towels are always available, providing moments of comfort and welcome. We also have a store of food and hygiene items, such as period products, that women can access in times of crisis.

Women using these amenities also frequently access our fully equipped kitchen, where they can prepare meals, eat, and relax in our welcoming space. A small group of asylum-seeking women shared that while living in a hotel, they lack facilities to prepare nutritious, culturally appropriate meals, often resorting to sandwiches or takeaways. When they gather, however, they enjoy cooking and sharing meals that remind them of home.



**This unfunded support that we provide here is vital, fostering a safe, supportive atmosphere and helping to meet basic needs with dignity.**



# VOLUNTEERS: HEART OF THE CENTRE

We had 104 incredible volunteers in the past year, many of whom first came to us as clients. We have student groups from both Nottingham Trent University and University of Nottingham who bring their skills to the Centre and these groups have been thriving. We also are supported by corporate volunteers, who improve and enrich our environment such as by redecorating rooms.

.....

**Our volunteers run many of the activities and events that happen at the Centre and are truly the heart of our space.**

.....

They represent us at community events as well as supporting with the valuable behind the scenes admin support and training. We have also had volunteers provide informative talks around Trans Inclusion and Women's Health. They collect and deliver weekly donations and pull together festive hampers for our Caseworkers to give to their women at workshops, as well as fundraise for us.

“

I love this little community and want to continue, it's a crucial part of who I am. Generally don't think I would have got this job if hadn't been for here. Staff lovely and I want to be here. Volunteering really grounded me and made things worthwhile.

Alongside being a vital resource for us, volunteering at the Centre also offers a pathway to our clients, supporting them to build confidence and develop skills in a safe and trusted environment.

It is always a pleasure to get together with the volunteer team and celebrate all they do. This year we had an evening out at the Panto and a lovely picnic in the park for Volunteers' Week with our wonderful community of volunteers.



## CASE STUDY

### Paula's Story

I came to the Women's Centre when I was ready for killing myself. I started with confidence building but was still feeling negative. When I came again I was told about the peer support group and I went, and thought "What have I let myself in for?" The next week I attended and came back for more. I listened but I was hardened. One of the women was sat crying opposite me and it melted me, seeing her being vulnerable in front of me. Vulnerability was a dirty word to me but it broke something in me for the better. Broke open the egg and the positivity came out. Coming to the Women's Centre I have met positive people who have encouraged and supported me.

The first time I became a volunteer I was a ghost, I was dark and there was no life in me. I never believed I could be positive after 52 years of negativity. I still suffer with my mental health but I've learnt a lot of ways to cope. When they asked me, I didn't think I had anything to offer or was good enough to volunteer. I know my experiences can help other people and running my own group gave me confidence and I believed in myself for the first time, that I could be a help to people. If I can get through it, other people can.

Photo credit: Elizabeth Brown Photography



# ACTIVITIES, COURSES AND EVENTS

Nottingham Women's Centre is home to many different courses, activities, and events – from one-off celebrations to regular courses and group activities. Many of our groups and activities are run by volunteers, and emerge directly from women's interests and demands. Activities and events are a really important part of our offer, providing space for women to come together over shared interest, build confidence and reduce isolation.

Alongside our own programme of events, partners run activities from the Centre too such as the popular Equipped to Succeed courses run by Second Change Learning, and Own My Life delivered by Juno Women's Aid.

## A flavour of some of our activities and events from the year:

### COFFEE AND CHAT



Monthly sessions – run by volunteers – provide women with a valuable opportunity to visit the Centre, learn about our offerings, and engage with our community.

Participants receive an introduction and a tour, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere that helps reduce social isolation by creating new connections. These gatherings often have themed sessions such as for Black History Month, Diwali, and other dates in the year.

“I believe in the Women's Centre; it does such a good job, and I want to be a part of it.”

### ALL ABOUT DRAWING



An evening workshop run by a volunteer artist for women to learn and explore different ways to draw by being introduced to techniques and references that allow them to develop their own style.

### UNITED VOICES CHOIR

Our United Voices Choir creates a supportive environment by combining the joy of music with a sense of belonging and community. The choir focuses on inclusivity and empowerment, making it a safe space for self-expression, stress relief, and emotional well-being. The choir works towards regular performances at community events around Nottingham including at 'Light Night'.

### WOMEN WRITE



*Photo credit: Elizabeth Brown Photography*

Successfully running once a month in the evenings, offering a hybrid space for women to come together to explore their creativity to produce poetry. It was great to have members perform their poetry at our International Women's Day event!

### QUILTING AND TEXTILES

A friendly, informal group facilitated by volunteers where women can bring their sewing, knitting, and textile projects to work on in a warm and welcoming environment. As part of a Winter Warmer fundraiser, they sold their crafts and raised enough money to buy a new sewing machine.



*Photo credit: Elizabeth Brown Photography*



# ACTIVITIES, COURSES AND EVENTS

## CRAFTY CLUB



Our popular Crafty Club, also run by volunteers, has continued to grow, with 50 registered members and a strong base of regular participants. The group's success lies in its informal structure, allowing women to attend at their own pace without feeling any pressure to come regularly. Many participants even arrive early to chat and catch up, which has fostered genuine friendships and a supportive atmosphere. Thank you to Nottingham Contemporary for supporting these sessions!

## STAR CONVERSATIONAL ENGLISH CLASSES

**(Student Action for Refugees)**

Aimed at giving any women with English as a second language the opportunity to practise and improve their day-to-day English. They are joined by women of many cultures and backgrounds, and they often share recipes, food and get creative.

## WOMEN UNITED

Each year the Women United team put on a fantastic day of sports in memory of Tara Newbold, who was a family member and friend to those that organise the tournament. Tragically, Tara lost her life as a result of domestic violence in October 2016 and the group wanted to turn something devastating into something positive. We came together for a fabulous day of fun, football and fundraising through the incredible raffle they organise which is used to support our vital services.

## LEGAL ADVICE CLINICS

At the popular Legal Advice Clinics women benefited from advice on welfare benefits, employment, housing, family law, crime and general civil/small claims matter through free legal advice clinics by Nottingham Law School students, supervised by qualified solicitors.



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

We welcomed 110 women to the Centre for an empowering day of celebration and connection. Highlights included a talk on the history of the Women's Centre, banner-making, a dance workshop, hand massages, and badge-making. By bringing women from diverse backgrounds together, the event promoted solidarity across our communities.





Nottingham Women's Centre was built on the foundation of campaigning for change right from where it started at a sitting room on Pelham Street, and this is the core pillar of our work. We work with clients and partners to identify the overarching issues affecting local women so we can address them on a wider scale - driving change for women and making sure women's voices are heard at a policy level locally and nationally.

“

I raise up my voice—not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard

**Malala Yousafzai**



## CAMPAIGNS AND ISSUES WE WORKED ON IN 2023-24:

### Endometriosis:

We continued to lobby for a specialist endometriosis clinic in Nottingham and submitted evidence to the Government Women and Equalities Committee revealing the very painful treatment journey and experiences of women who suffer from endometriosis in Nottingham. In May 2023, over 50 women in Nottingham attended our Endometriosis Event led by specialist Gynaecologist Debs Shilpa and Dr Sanya Kurmani.

### Policing:

Following our report on Women's Perception of the Police based on a survey and focus groups with over 80 women (report was internally disseminated to the Nottinghamshire Police Force), we led several strategic meetings with the Office of the Nottinghamshire Police Crime Commissioner to ensure women's voices inform the Police's processes of and systems towards women's safety on the street.

### Cost of Living Crisis:

In December 2023, we gave oral evidence at Westminster calling the attention of the Government to the significant disadvantage women in Nottingham are facing due to the combined impact of the cost-of-living crisis, childcare costs and other intersectional challenges.

### Alcohol Monitoring Tags:

In February 2024, we questioned the Secretary of States for Justice through Nadia Whittome MP to publish a women-specific impact and health needs assessment conducted by his department prior to the roll out of the use of alcohol monitoring tags.

### Women's Political Participation:

We hosted two workshops to encourage women to be more politically engaged. We Vote! Women in Nottinghamshire! was a brilliant workshop to celebrate the power of women's voices & our right to vote. There was discussion on how Parliament works, voter registration, and how to vote. Get to Know Women Councillors in Nottinghamshire was an inspiring and insightful event, where women could connect with local women councillors to discuss the experiences of being a politician and the different pathways to starting a political career.



# OUR PARTNERSHIPS: WORKING IN SISTERHOOD

## Communities of Identity: the end of an era

This year, after 10 years, our Communities of Identity – Gender and Sexual Orientation strand funding from the City Council ended. This work was transformative for the Centre as it supported us to make better, wider connections with many organisations working with a diverse range of women, girls and LGBT+ people.

.....

**It also allowed us to support new grassroots organisation through our small grant funding to more than 80 groups.**

.....

It gave greater weight to our influencing work as we were able to reach a wider range of women through the partnership to share their voices in our policy and influencing work.

During Covid we were rapidly able to adapt the way that grants and funding was delivered so that groups could support their communities in the most appropriate ways, be that buying energy top up cards, phone data, providing culturally appropriate food parcels arranging online meet ups and much more.

We are very grateful to Nottingham City Council for this funding over the years, and hope that in time a similar source of funding can be found again.

## Women's Organisations Network

Our Women's Organisations Network is a space for organisations, projects and groups who work with women and girls to come together, network, discuss issues and collaborate to better support women in Nottingham. The Network is also a vital source of peer support for groups.



Since being established in 2015 through the Communities of Identity funding the group has grown and developed, becoming a conduit for women's voices with over 100 members. Although the funding has ended, we have made a commitment to continue running the Network to support and bring together our local women's sector.



Photo credit: Elizabeth Brown Photography

## Our co-located partners

Nottingham Women's Centre is a hub for women's services and we are proud to work with other women's organisations co-located with us.

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**Notts SVSS** – support survivors of sexual violence and abuse, and have been doing so for over 35 years. They offer a range of support services including a helpline, counselling, CBT, EMDR, groups and much more.



**Juno Women's Aid** work with women, children, and teens who have been affected by domestic abuse, offering a range of support including accommodation and advocacy. They operate a drop-in on certain days from the Centre.



**Nergis** – grassroots community group supporting Kurdish women and their children.

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**Thank you to the organisations that left us at the end of 2023/24 – while they might not be based at the Centre anymore, you will still see them around and we continue to work together!**

**Nottingham Muslim Women's Network**– grassroots community organisation ensuring local Muslim women's voices are heard and their needs are met.

**Heya** – offer a safe space for all Arab women to reduce social isolation, support and improve mental health and well-being.

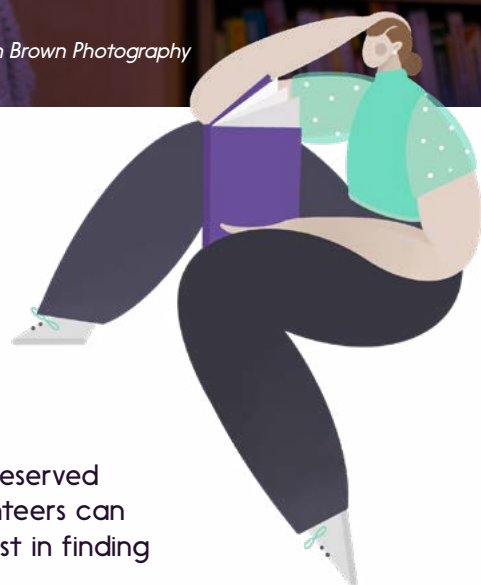


# NOTTINGHAM WOMEN'S LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE

Photo credit: Elizabeth Brown Photography

Our Library and Archive is a unique resource in the City Centre, hosting a wide range of books, magazines, and articles by female authors, including rare feminist literature from the 70s & 80s in our extensive archive. Any woman is welcome to come in and browse the library during the Centre opening hours, to sit and read a book, and to borrow books by becoming a member. Women can also access our catalogue online and request for books to be brought down to Reception for collection.

The volunteer team have done an amazing job of cataloguing and preserved our archive and now we offer inductions in how to access it. Our volunteers can also support researchers, students and anyone with a particular interest in finding relevant materials.



## DEAR SISTERS:

In March 2023, the Dear Sisters exhibition was launched at Lakeside. This exhibition presented an archive curated by Nottingham-based activists who brought their personal memories, magazines, photographs, posters, papers, campaign badges and T-shirts for safekeeping in Manuscripts and Special Collections. The Centre is represented in this exhibition for our important role in Nottingham Women's Liberation Movement. We have also given some of our duplicate items to a Feminist Archive at University of Nottingham, preserving our history for future generations.

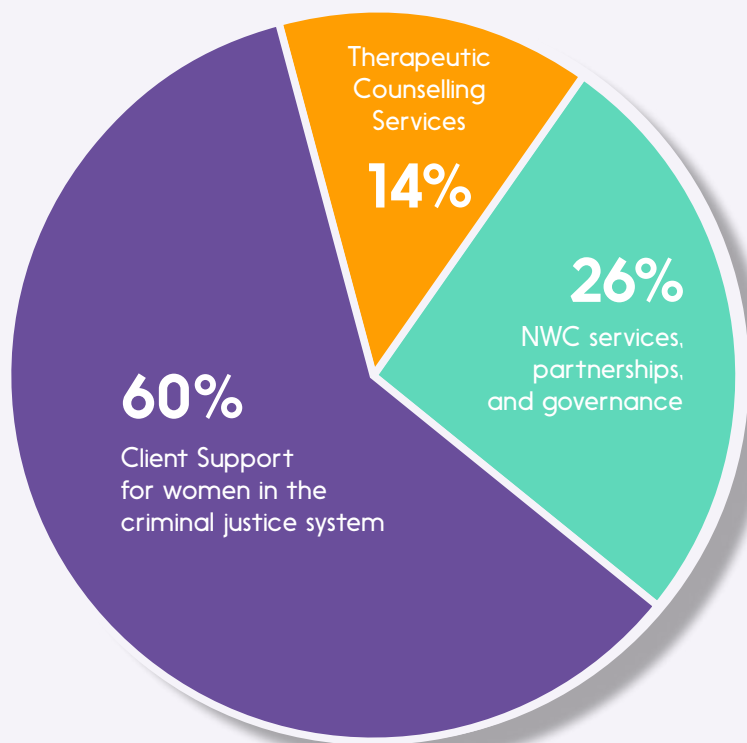


## GREEN FESTIVAL:

Every year the Library and Archive volunteers run a stall at the Green festival, where we take a cross section of library books and archive materials. This is an excellent opportunity to share with the community about the safe space we offer.



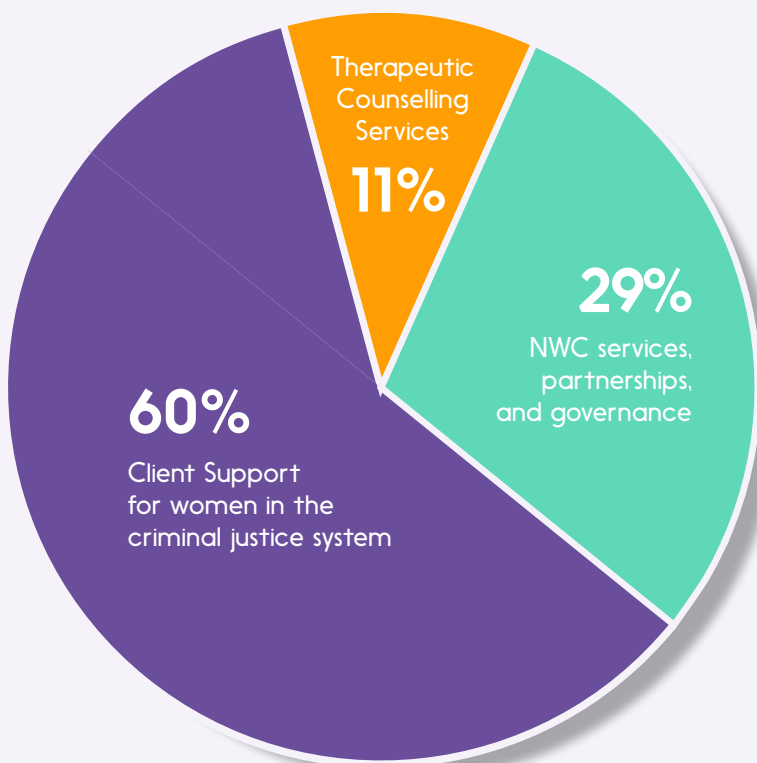
# OUR FINANCES 2023-2024



## INCOME

Our income comes from a variety of sources including Grants, Room and Office space rentals, contracts to deliver services and donations.

We received a yearly income of £1,257,636 for the year over 86% of which was for restricted for direct service delivery.



## EXPENDITURE

We spent £1,031,644 this year delivering services to our clients and running the organisation.

96% of our expenditure was from restricted funds which enabled us to deliver our direct services.

At the end of March 2024 we had unrestricted reserves which were in line with our reserves policy and enables the organisations to be viable and sustainable into the coming years.

# OUR FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2023-2024 FUNDERS



Huge thank you also to the many organisations, businesses, individuals, charities, supporters and fundraisers who support us in many different ways:

Anita Davies – In2People

Bonington Gallery

Castle Rock Brewery

Center Parcs Sherwood

Coosh Micro Bakery

English Tea Shop

Hellfire Harlots

Hygiene Bank

John Lewis

John and Marion Brian

Lidl

Local giving donations

Multiplayer Group

Neighbourly

Nottingham College students

Nottingham Contemporary

Nottingham Ladies Golf – charity of the year 2023

Nottingham Soroptimists

Nottingham West Lions Club

One-off private individual donations

Private family donation

Sainsburys

Saltbox

Slumber Party

Tara's Angels

The Village Ladies

VF Northern Europe Ltd

Women United

## SUPPORT US:

As a small local charity, we rely on the generosity and support of people like you to help us keep our doors open.

Anything you can spare – whether money for donations, or time for fundraising activities, or thinking about how your work place or organisation could support us is so appreciated. Every pound makes a difference to the women we support here at Nottingham Women's Centre.

CLICK HERE TO DONATE

Photo credit: Elizabeth Brown Photography



Nottingham  
Women's Centre

come on in

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