

NOTTINGHAM WOMEN'S CENTRE

ANNUAL REVIEW 2024-2025



Run by women, for all women



Nottingham
Women's Centre

come on in

Charity Registration 1105837
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OUR BOARD

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

Introducing our new trustees (to be co-opted onto the board at the AGM):

Kay Carpenter, Kanana Mbogori, Niamh Brooks, Davina Kaur Sohal

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

Maria Pearson



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Design and layout credit: Debora Link Creative studio@deboralink.co.uk

CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends and Supporters,

We're delighted to share our Annual Report with you—celebrating the achievements of the past year and looking ahead to an exciting future.

Our year began and ended with bringing women together in the spirit of activism and community. We started off with a busy election period that had three major elections happening in the city and we worked hard to ensure women's voices were heard. We hosted women-only hustings and created powerful manifestos reflecting the priorities of women in Nottingham. Through our Women's Organisations Network, we were proud to unite groups across the city to speak with a collective voice.

We closed the year with our biggest International Women's Day celebration yet—welcoming over 230 women to a joint event with our sister organisations. The theme: self-care, activism, and the power of community.

These values ran throughout the year. We co-designed new projects with women, such as our programme of activities for Ukrainian women, our work supporting women seeking asylum, Women's Health Matters, and our new therapeutic group for Black and Dual Heritage women. At the same time, we strengthened core services like our women's justice services, New Changes, and RENEW, our therapeutic service. Nearly 11,000 visits this year reflect the trust women place in us.

Our new strategy places campaigning at the heart of our mission. We proudly co-hosted a powerful Reclaim the Night march with over 300 women and continued to push for change on the issues that matter.

Looking ahead, we're focused on securing long-term investment and turning 30 Chaucer Street into a permanent, welcoming home for Nottingham Women's Centre. We're excited for what's next—and grateful to have you with us on the journey.



Justine Weston
Chair of the Board of Trustees



CEO'S REFLECTIONS

Hello,

I am celebrating a whole year with NWC as I pause to write my reflections for this year's Annual Report and look ahead.

I realise that I have spent a considerable part of the last year listening and learning, and then testing where I can add value for the staff and volunteers at the Centre and into the services and activities that we offer. This has been a wonderful experience for me and enabled a feeling of rich appreciation for what everyone is able to contribute.

I remain focused on 3 key themes to take us forward and all need to be applied throughout the priorities of our wider strategy and the values we hold close. Both priorities and values are captured in our current Strategy on A Page (page 23).

Firstly, we need to move the infrastructure of the organisation to a place that meets the needs of a modern feminist tea. Our infrastructure needs to enable us to maximise our valuable expertise and effort into the services that we provide and the women we support. "Infrastructure" might sound a bit dull – but it will ensure we are working as efficiently and effectively as possible, and can increase the value we put into working directly with women. We have begun this work through a series of process and technology reviews, and we are gradually making improvements to both what we use and how we use it.

Secondly, we need to ensure that the significant additional value that we create, through the wonderful combination of opportunities we offer, is better understood and actively invested in.



A Centre wide evaluation has been commissioned to develop that insight and we can look forward to building from there to inform partnerships, fundraising, and the design of activities and services. It is very exciting to see how we can define this additional value and how we can develop it further with our funders and partners.

And Thirdly, NWC is about women, the women who work here, the women who volunteer here and the women who use the Centre and access our county-based services. We need to ensure that these women continue to be supported toward their personal goals, and that we continue to do this as needs evolve and challenges seemingly continue to increase, all the while ensuring that our values remain at the heart of what we do and who we are.

I am so excited to be part of leading that journey.

Louisa Matthews
CEO

Did you catch us on the news recently?

SKY NEWS:

Our community rehabilitation services were highlighted by Sky News in a feature on alternatives to prison for women.

NOTTS TV:

The launch of our Warm Space was covered by Notts TV.

ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE:

We were formally designated an Asset of Community Value by Nottingham City Council, news covered by several media outlets.





WHAT CAN YOU EXPERIENCE AT NOTTINGHAM WOMEN'S CENTRE?

ACTIVITIES OPEN TO ALL INCLUDE:

- **Counselling & mental health support groups** (subject to triage)
- **Casework support to identify need and signpost to services**
- **Use of kitchen, shower, laundry facilities**
- **Peer to peer engagement events** eg Coffee and Chat and Crafty Club
- **Activities that can be creative, educational or active**
- **Services** eg Legal advice drop in
- **Health & Wellbeing** eg Writing for Wellness & Anxiety Recovery Room
- **Celebration events** eg International Women's Day

REFERRED SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Support for women coming through the criminal justice system
- Therapies for survivors of domestic violence and abuse
- 121 support for those experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage

AMPLIFICATION OF WOMEN'S VOICES THROUGH:

- Dedicated policy work responding to issues common to our Centre users
- Co-ordination and facilitation with sister organisations to campaign and lobby decision makers, political policy makers and funding controllers

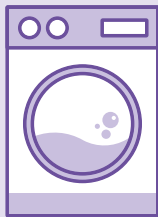


Free and open access to a safe women-only space with no obligation other than to respect the needs of all women in the Centre

2025 | OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

11,202

centre footfall



742

used facilities
(shower, kitchen, laundry,
welcome space)



115

used the
library

622

number of women
accessing casework services

425

Commissioned Rehabilitative Services (MOJ)

188

New Changes

9

Changing Futures

Of women accessing case work support:

65% reported improved financial circumstances through our work with them on benefits and debt.

67% reported improved social inclusion and sense of community and belonging

61% reported increased personal emotional well-being.



98

number of
individual volunteers

41

Number of individual
placement therapists

2,523

volunteer hours
(excluding placement therapists)

2,305

placement therapist hours
(therapy delivery)

Volunteering outcomes

100% of volunteers described their experience as positive, rewarding or fulfilling.

86% reported that volunteering contributed towards increasing their skills

No of women accessing courses, activities & events **1,259**

Events **590**

Courses and activities **669**

291

number of women
accessing therapeutics services

126

Renew counselling

131

domestic abuse service

20

community language enabled therapy

14

severe and multiple disadvantage service

89%

of women receiving domestic abuse
therapy reported **improved mental
health and well-being**



£114,190.76

financial benefits for women

£101,090

benefit claimed

£1,887

debt resolved

£4,295

clothing, food bank & shopping vouchers

£559.00

NWC toiletries & travel

£3,225

NWC food bank & hampers

£1,864

charitable grants &
external support packages



£1,170

Mobile Sim Cards

OUR SERVICES & PROJECTS

We provide a network of services that women step in and out of, at different points in their journeys. This section covers the main projects and achievements for the year, with a brief overview of plans for the year ahead.

THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

Our therapeutic services continued to provide vital mental health support to women across Nottinghamshire, meeting a wide range of needs through a holistic, accessible approach.

Our low-cost **Renew counselling service** delivered 2,305 hours of in-person therapy to 126 women, offering long-term support to those who might otherwise be excluded from mental health services. Alongside this, our **Domestic Abuse therapy** service, funded by Nottingham City Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, supported 131 women with specialist.

Specialist counselling - We expanded access to our therapeutic services further through our **Community Languages** service, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner, delivering therapy in nine different languages and cultural contexts, ensuring survivors could engage with support in ways that felt safe and relevant to them. This year, we have added to this service through dedicated provision for women arriving through the Homes for Ukraine scheme funded by Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council. We also continued to support women facing **severe and multiple disadvantage**, offering intensive therapeutic input to those often excluded from traditional services.

“

Counselling has motivated me and given me confidence...I feel more secure now where I live and where I now talk to my support worker...I did not have confidence in myself before, but now I have my own confidence.

“

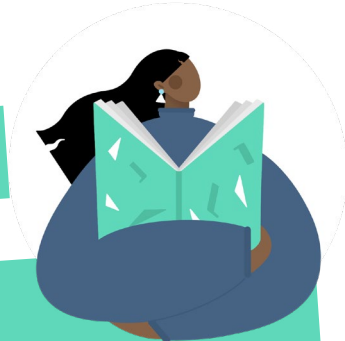
I had a wonderful therapist that made me feel heard, seen and understood for the first time in my life. She provided a safe space, non-judgemental and accepting. I am grateful to her and the service.

“

Yes, it's been a lot different. I felt understood, I felt I connected with the therapist and what they said. It was consistent - therapist wasn't off sick all the time or didn't run off screaming! Also, the therapist didn't frighten me away - I felt safe.



PIONEERING GROUP WORK ROOTED IN IDENTITY AND HEALING



This year marked the powerful launch of our Black and Dual Heritage Women's Wellbeing Group, funded Thomas Farr Foundation and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Developed in collaboration with women from these communities, the group offers a unique and affirming space for survivors of trauma to reflect, heal, and grow. It recognises the intersecting impact of racism, culture, and identity—creating space for honest conversations, shared understanding, and collective care. This work is bold, overdue, and driven by the voices and needs of the women it serves.

Alongside this, we continued to evolve our Surviving to Thriving Programme with support from the Police and Crime Commissioner. This trauma-informed group supports survivors of domestic abuse to better understand the long-term effects of trauma and build emotional resilience around anxiety, anger, shame and more. It's a lifeline for women looking to move beyond survival—towards confidence, connection, and hope.

“

I feel reassured that I didn't cause the abuse. It's helped me to forgive myself...I feel stronger and my mental health has improved. I have hope again, which I'd lost. Thank you for helping me in my journey to finding my new self and feeling like I want and deserve a future again.

“

You get a lot of knowledge and understand a lot about culture like with my parents and what they have been through even down to understanding my mum as a middle child and the impact of racism on my dad and what that has gone on to me. I realise and understand that I have the knowledge whereas my parents didn't know - and understanding that, especially for mixed culture as its two different cultures is what I have learnt from - so now I know how to move forward and do better. And I have shared it with my sister and it's helped her, it was amazing.

“

I don't feel alone even though I might never see the others women again, they are in my mind - we shared that experience and it was really nice to have that.

EMPOWERING PLACEMENT COUNSELLORS

At NWC we believe in the life changing power of therapy for the individual, and world changing potential of women supporting women. We supported our team of 41 trainee counsellors to develop into integrative feminist therapists, competent and confident to enter the therapy workplace after graduation, and prepared to work with women from a wide range of backgrounds with empathy and empowerment.



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In the coming year, we are looking at piloting a 'Writing for Wellness' course as well as exploring other ways to enable women to explore their mental health in group settings where they have the support and guidance from a therapist alongside the valuable support and shared experience of peers.

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CASE STUDY

Freya's story

How NWC supported Freya

"One of the caseworkers accessed the NHS funding service and they gave me a little grant to get me through. I didn't even know anything like that existed but that got me through.

"Healthy relationships course – I've attended that. And for the loneliness, because you can visit between 9:00 and 5:00 every day. You don't have to attend anything. You can just walk in and sit if you want. And this room where we are, it can be a private room where you can lie down and have a blanket, if you don't feel like talking to anybody. [but if you do] you meet new people, you do, you meet new people.

"And you can learn a complete new skill that you never even thought of.

“

I was a nurse in the past and now retired. And I got lonely and things like that. I went to the doctor's, because I just didn't know what to do. I'd worked all my life.

I accessed the women centre one and half years ago. I joined the quilting group, but then I was asked, because I can quilt and knit, I was asked if I would be a volunteer. And I started to do this. But I've needed the services from this place. I retired earlier this year but I don't get my first pay of my pension till tomorrow. So I had no money.



The value for Freya

"But it's the interest in each of us as an individual. And the knowledge that they've got. You never feel like you're left on your own. In the outside world, the doctor will send you to somebody at the well-being centre, and it's like for 10 weeks and then that's it, it's gone. But we have some wonderful days, is it once a month? When we have the tea... coffee & chat mornings, where there's cake and everybody gathers and it's lovely. It's a very positive place."



CASEWORK SERVICES:

CREATING PATHWAYS TO STABILITY

At Nottingham Women's Centre, our casework services support women at risk of or already involved in the criminal justice system, many of whom have experienced trauma, abuse, poverty, and multiple disadvantage.

This year, across three core projects, our trauma-informed, woman-centred approach has helped hundreds of women stabilise their lives and take steps towards recovery and independence.

COMMUNITY REHABILITATIVE SERVICE (CRS)

Now in its third year, our CRS team supported 425 women on probation, whether leaving custody or serving community sentences. Delivered in partnership with probation and prisons, the service addresses the distinct needs of women in the criminal justice system—offering 1:1 casework, group activities, and access to the wider facilities at the Centre. This year we expanded our group programme, co-located with probation in Nottingham and Mansfield, and hosted officers in our own space to improve communication and continuity.

We also continued to work closely with other regional partners through the East Midlands CRS Providers Group to develop the pathways, strengthen outcomes and share good practice.

“

One woman told us,

I was so glad to have arrangements made to pick me up from prison, and to bring me to my appointment... the help I was given helped me to feel more confident about staying out of trouble.



NEW CHANGES

“

As one woman said, You came at a point I really needed someone. You listened and you were the only one that helped me at the time.

Through New Changes, now in its second year, we provided intensive casework to 188 women across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire who are at risk of criminal justice involvement. The service supports women to address multiple, interconnected needs—such as housing, mental health, relationships, and financial hardship—while helping them build confidence and avoid crisis. This year we exceeded our targets for engagement, including evening and weekend support, and continued expanding our reach into county areas through events and partnerships. Looking ahead, we plan to launch a dedicated drop-in to make the service even more accessible and connect more women with our community kitchen, food support, and group activities.

CHANGING FUTURES – SPECIALIST NAVIGATOR

As part of the national Changing Futures programme, we employed a Specialist Navigator supporting women experiencing Severe and Multiple Disadvantage (SMD) with a focus on domestic and sexual violence. Working intensively with nine women this year, the Navigator offered focused, long-term, relationship-based support—coordinating across services and helping women begin to stabilise and re-engage after long periods of disconnection. The Navigator has also strengthened our internal practice, upskilled staff, and supported fast referrals into Changing Futures from across our services. This work complements our counselling and probation-linked casework services, creating a joined-up offer for women who are often overlooked by mainstream systems.

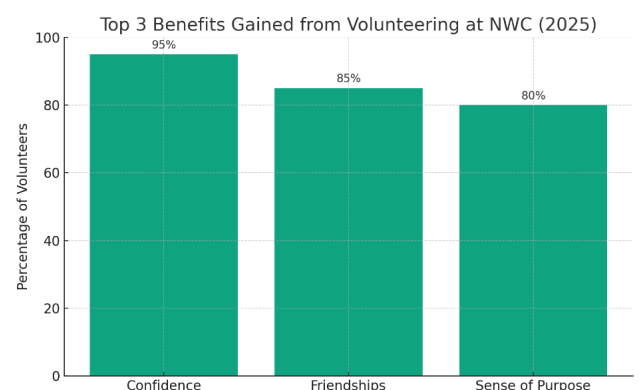
Looking ahead we will be linking this service expertise into a new Navigator who will be focussing on support for women in hostels.





KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2025 VOLUNTEER SURVEY:

100% of volunteers described their experience as positive, rewarding or fulfilling.



The top three benefits volunteers gained were:

Confidence

Friendships

A sense of purpose

- Over **75%** of volunteers said they feel included, supported, and well-informed through team meetings, WhatsApp groups, and check-ins.
- **Many volunteers joined after receiving support from the Centre themselves** — turning personal experience into peer support.

Volunteers also valued the freedom to shape their roles, the trust placed in them, and the joy of connecting with women from all walks of life. Suggestions for improvement — including more weekend opportunities and social connection — are helping us continue to grow our volunteer programme.

“ You’re doing amazing work!
I’m proud to be a volunteer here.”

Activities supported by volunteers included:

Coffee & Chat, life coaching, Crafty Club, Quilting and Textiles, Laughter Yoga, Women Write, Art Studio, Legal Advice and Conversational English. Volunteers look after our library and archive, collect surplus food from supermarkets for clients to take, helping with events, fundraising, supporting policy and campaigns.

We also worked with corporate volunteers and in the past year, this has involved a team from John Lewis redecorating our welcome space and Nottingham City Council Women’s Network collecting donations for us.



CASE STUDY

Sarah's Story

Sarah first came to Nottingham Women's Centre through the Changes programme in 2021. With a conviction for arson and experiencing high levels of anxiety and severe panic attacks, she was referred by her probation officer for support across six pathways, including accommodation and emotional wellbeing.

Sarah's first referral

From the start, her caseworker focused on building trust and creating a safe, welcoming space where Sarah felt able to open up. Together they developed an action plan that broke her goals down into manageable steps. Recognising that group workshops felt overwhelming, the caseworker delivered the programme one-to-one, ensuring Sarah could still access the same content without the added pressure of a group setting. Practical support around housing applications, alongside regular wellbeing sessions, helped Sarah achieve all her outcomes – including securing stable accommodation for the first time in years.

Sarah's return to NWC

In 2024, Sarah returned for support around emotional wellbeing. This time she attended all her sessions and felt ready to take part in group work. She completed a 3-week emotional wellbeing workshop and a self-esteem workshop, before asking to join our Healthy Relationships course. Later that year, she referred herself for support under the 'Family and Significant Others' pathway and successfully completed the Healthy Relationships course.

“

Thank you for all you have done but most importantly for housing me as I did not ever believe that this would happen. The sessions with you have been fun, supportive and I will take away what you have said throughout. You have been a star.



Giving back to the Centre

Encouraged by her progress, Sarah applied for the Ministry of Justice's Peer Support Training scheme and graduated in July 2025. She told her trainer she had enjoyed working with Nottingham Women's Centre and wanted to 'give back' as a volunteer.

.....

After a successful interview, Sarah is set to start volunteering with us. Her time with Nottingham Women's Centre has supported her to secure safe and stable accommodation, improve her emotional wellbeing and confidence, take part in group learning and personal development programmes, and train as a peer supporter.

Sarah's journey shows how tailored, consistent support can help women make progress at their own pace and build the skills and confidence to move forward.

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CAMPAIGNING AND ACTIVISM

Our campaigning and influencing work at Nottingham Women's Centre is shaped by the lived experiences of women, community voice and evidence. We continue to champion the rights of women, amplifying women's voices, and working to influence policy through direct engagement with decision-makers.

“

I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own.

Audre Lorde

From influencing election agendas to shifting narratives on women's health, we have continued to campaign for women's voices.



In April 2024, we welcomed candidates standing to be East Midlands Mayor and Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to our 'She Votes hustings'. Ahead of the event, we launched our Women's Manifesto, setting out our demands for what we would like to see from the newly elected Mayor and from the PCC alongside our Women's Organisation Network manifesto, co-created with over 100 local organisations. Ahead of the General Election, we sent every Nottingham parliamentary candidate six critical questions—shaped by the priorities of women in our city—and published their responses to empower women to make informed choices on who to vote.

We link up with sister CRS services through the Women's Justice Coalition wearewjc.org.uk to influence the development of an improved Justice System, that is responsive to the needs of women and the context of their lives. And that Coalition also has members who sit on the Partnership Delivery Group of the new government led Women's Justice Board. The purpose is to reduce the numbers of women in the system gov.uk/government/groups/womens-justice-board



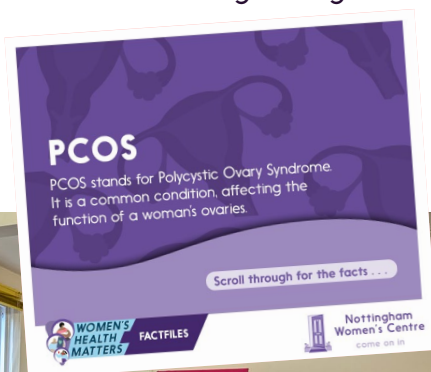
Rae Dowling Photography @raedowling raedowlingphotographyuk

We intensified our campaign against the criminalisation of mothers for their children's absences at school. In September 2024, we co-signed a national letter led by Place2Be, addressed to the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP, calling for a whole school approach to wellbeing to make school cultures inclusive, with a focus on mental health, and support for families. With support from the Priority Education Investment Area (PEIA) Nottingham Attendance Project, we hosted a series of listening sessions (between Oct-Dec 2024) with over 50 women including those affected by prosecution for school non-attendance. Our upcoming report sets out our findings and recommendations for a more holistic and compassionate approach to attendance that recognises the structural barriers women and their families face.

Our work on women's health continues to grow, following on from our campaign on endometriosis



in 2023, which saw our research with local women featured in the Women and Equalities Select Committee's report on women's health. In September 2024, we launched our Women's Health Matters campaign (funded by Women's Health Community Fund, run by Wellbeing of Women and Holland & Barrett) aimed at educating and empowering women about their gynaecological health and well-being through a series of workshops and events celebrating women's bodies.



In collaboration with sector partners from the NHS, University of Nottingham, and local women's organisations, over 100 women joined us at our Open Day - a vibrant day featuring stalls, expert Q&As, laughter yoga, and free health checks. We continued to run workshops and panel discussions on women's health and gynaecological conditions throughout the year, working with partner organisations and other groups.



Looking ahead, we are set for another year of campaigning and amplifying women's voices across three key themes: violence against women and girls, health, and the criminal justice system. Watch out on ways to get involved – our voices are always stronger together!

CASE STUDY

Malia's story

"So my story started a long time ago in the Women's Centre. I left quite a serious domestic violence relationship. I was police-protected at the time. And I came here because I was trying to get re-housed, you know, away from the ex-partner. He could take my children to a country where I wouldn't have any rights. But the Women's Centre helped me with that, supported me. So with other people helping as well I got the right support for me and my children – we were safeguarded. And we started again.

But then one of my children caught up with something called county lines. They are fine now. But I came here because I had a nervous breakdown. I was so isolated. I was moved to a community where I didn't have my family or friends, for our safety. I couldn't talk about what had happened to me, because people that have not lived it don't understand. [And so] I came here and my life turned around straight away.

How NWC supported Malia

"I was made to feel welcome, made to feel supported. Made to feel that I wasn't an alien, you know. And there's more women that go through this than you think. Because there's a lot of bad opinions [about what women experience], even in services. I've worked 50 hour weeks, but people just think, you don't work, but I did – to the point that I had a nervous breakdown – because I was trying to keep the roof over our heads, trying to keep my children safe and [do normal things] like university. I just broke because of the whole pressure of it all.

.....

And then coming here, I got a caseworker, who's absolutely amazing. Just talking to people, just getting all that out, and saying, "I need help, this is what's happening, I need help". And for someone to say, "right, we'll start here, we'll do this", and it helped.

.....

You come here and do courses – any course that's going, I do. A lot of services, they're only for so many weeks, where here it's open ended. And I've even started to come out in the evenings because they do early evening courses here.

The value for Malia



“
I wouldn't even leave my house, I was so isolated. But now I leave my house and come here and actually look forward to it. I just feel alive again. It stopped that rollercoaster of isolation, depression. I still deal with things, but it's more bearable.

And I've met other women, we've got WhatsApp groups, we go and meet for coffees or we come here for coffee, we go for pack lunches up in the library, or in the Arboretum. To the point that I want to volunteer here now. Some days they give you a bouquet of flower or you can get some bread, or ... just community.

"It has reduced my need for health services, for mental health support, yes. It's better understanding here, it's empathy here, there's no judgement, there's no like, "ohh, take antidepressants". It's about talking, sharing, communicating and understanding that you're not that one alien in the world, that it's happening to. It's happening to lots of women. And it gives you that empowerment here.

It's life changing.

WOMEN'S HUB AND WARM SPACE

In continuation of our work supporting women through the cost-of-living crisis, we formally launched as a 'Warm Space', joining a national network of Warm Welcome spaces. We are grateful to the support of John Lewis Nottingham, who redecorated our Welcome Space, donating new furniture and making it warm and cosy ahead of the winter.

Our warm space offer included hot drinks, access to a kitchen, a quiet room, shower and laundry facilities, and our women's library. The value of this space in meeting a need for safety, community and an accessible way to start using the wider services has become increasingly clear over the year - the domestic facilities were used 742 times, highlighting the stark demand for these basic necessities.

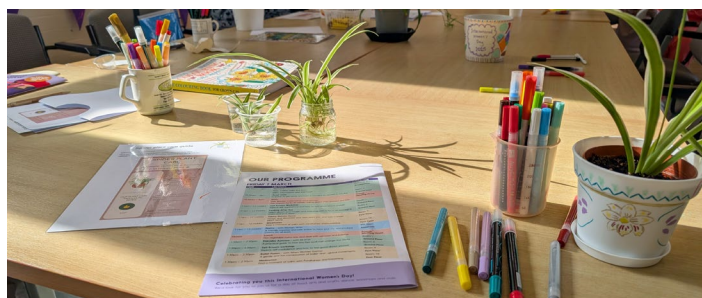


Our open-door Warm Space remains central to our Women's Hub, where services like Juno Women's Aid and Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services operate. We built on these partnerships over the year, hosting groups such as Refugee Roots, Second Chance Learning Academy, Nergiz Kurdish Women's Group, and When Women Gather. Our one-stop-shop model that brings together different women's groups and services means that women are able to access a wide variety of provision based on where they are in their journey, all in one place.

Towards the end of year, we said goodbye to Nergiz Kurdish Women's Group as they take a break from activities – it was a pleasure having them with us over the past few years and we hope to see them again.



BUILDING COMMUNITY: activities, courses and events



Nottingham Women's Centre hosts a wide range of courses, activities, and events — from one-off celebrations to regular groups and ongoing programmes. Many of these are led by volunteers and grow directly out of the interests and needs expressed by women themselves. These activities and events are a vital part of what we offer, creating opportunities for women to connect, build confidence, and combat isolation through shared interests and community. Other organisations and groups also run activities from the Centre, such as popular courses by Second Chance Learning Academy, Own My Life by Juno, and When Women Gather. We are also pleased to have been hosting the Refugee Roots' Women's Group over the past year.

We held a number of celebration events and open days that welcomed many new women into the Centre and created valuable networking opportunities for other organisations in the sector. One highlight was our Women's Health Matters Open Day in September. Our biggest event of the year was our International Women's Day celebration in March, which brought together over 240 women! It was a joy to deliver this in collaboration with our sister organisations – When Women Gather, POW, Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services, Juno, and Nottingham Muslim Women's Network.

NOTTINGHAM WOMEN'S LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE

Overseen by a dedicated team of volunteers, Nottingham Women's Library is the jewel in the attic – tucked away on the top floor of Nottingham Women's Centre. Any woman is welcome to come in and browse the library during the Centre opening hours, or to sit and read a book. The collection hosts a wide range of books, magazines, and articles by female authors, including rare feminist literature from the 70s & 80s.

The Library and Archive are a great way to introduce us to new audiences and our brilliant volunteers are always out there, doing outreach at community events and telling people about all we have to offer. Last year, they spoke to over 100 people at the annual Green Festival and had a stall at the Nottingham Central Library for International Women's Day.



Photo credit: Elizabeth Brown Photography



Rebecca's story

Rebecca came to us having returned to the community from custody. She had a gambling addiction but was also faced with significant barriers to progress including her own confidence, self-esteem and shame & guilt alongside financial debts, estranged family relationships and no belongings in her temporary accommodation. But she retained a sense of her goals and desire to move past this period in her life

Our immediate actions:

Provision of toiletries to encourage self-care and a foodbank voucher to ease her immediate anxieties around her income, together with a clothing bank referral and supermarket vouchers.

Our immediate actions:

Worked with R to create a budget and set up a small savings plan together with supporting her reach agreement with most of her creditors to accept a minimum payment until she was able to work. This helped to remove immediate stress and anxiety. One of the creditors would not accept a lower payment so we were able to sign post R to Step Change and Citizen's Advice and she was able to get a debt relief order and gain control of her finances.

Housing needs required guidance through housing costs and how the system worked to enable her develop strategies to manage using the private rented sector whilst on benefits.

R attended both healthy relationships workshops and emotional wellbeing workshops held at Nottingham Women's Centre and gained practical skills as well as making friends. And these sessions remain constant in her use of the Centre.

As R increased in confidence and her financial set up stabilised we used tools with R to see what she valued from work and supported her make college applications and grant support through Boots and unison. We also referred R to Second Chance Learning and their Equipped to Succeed for new business advice. R was inexperienced in using technology and was awarded a laptop from her local Job Centre Plus to support with her online college course.

Impact and Outcomes

PERSONAL:

- improved coping strategies and a greater sense of purpose and self esteem
- working on rebuilding her relationship with her daughter
- writing for wellness course at NWC to address past trauma

SKILLS & LEARNING:

- online study with Nottingham College

ENGAGEMENT:

- volunteering at Evolve CiC (textile course) after attending for various weeks



This year saw two new initiatives, which enabled us to expand our activities and better meet the needs of women:

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIAN WOMEN

Homes for Ukraine Integration Grant

This project provides tailored support to Ukrainian women who have arrived in Nottingham as a result of the war, helping them rebuild their lives, regain confidence, and integrate into the local community. Our aim is to create safe, inclusive spaces where women can connect, grow, and continue pursuing their personal and professional goals in a new environment.

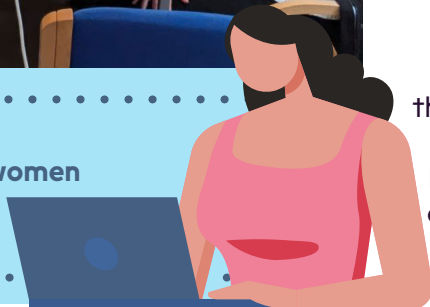
Over the past year, we have delivered English classes specifically adapted for older women, alongside practical workshops – including a session on using ChatGPT for everyday life and professional tasks – and a confidence-building workshop designed to address challenges such as job rejection due to unrecognised qualifications, as well as the experiences of isolation and loneliness. Cultural events, such as a Ukrainian-style Christmas celebration, have played a key role in fostering community and mutual understanding. We have also supported Ukrainian women in continuing their professional paths from Ukraine – for example, enabling dance and fitness instructors to lead classes here in Nottingham. In total, more than 126 women have taken part in the activities organised throughout the year.



Looking ahead, we plan to expand our language provision, introduce more creative and wellbeing-focused activities, and build new partnerships to broaden our impact. A core priority remains supporting women's integration and empowerment, so they can feel at home, engage confidently in the community, and pursue their ambitions with renewed strength.



Over the past year, around **180** women benefitted from this project.



DIGITAL INCLUSION

Thanks to a Digital Capital Grant from Nottingham City Council, we've been able to support women in developing their digital skills and accessing technology. Two of our rooms are now fully equipped with digital resources, making it possible for women to take part in workshops and courses. We've also introduced a laptop loan scheme for use within the Centre – a lifeline for those without personal access to devices. Our weekly tech drop-in sessions have helped women with everything from job applications and managing utility bills to building essential digital confidence.



FINANCIAL REVIEW 2024-2025

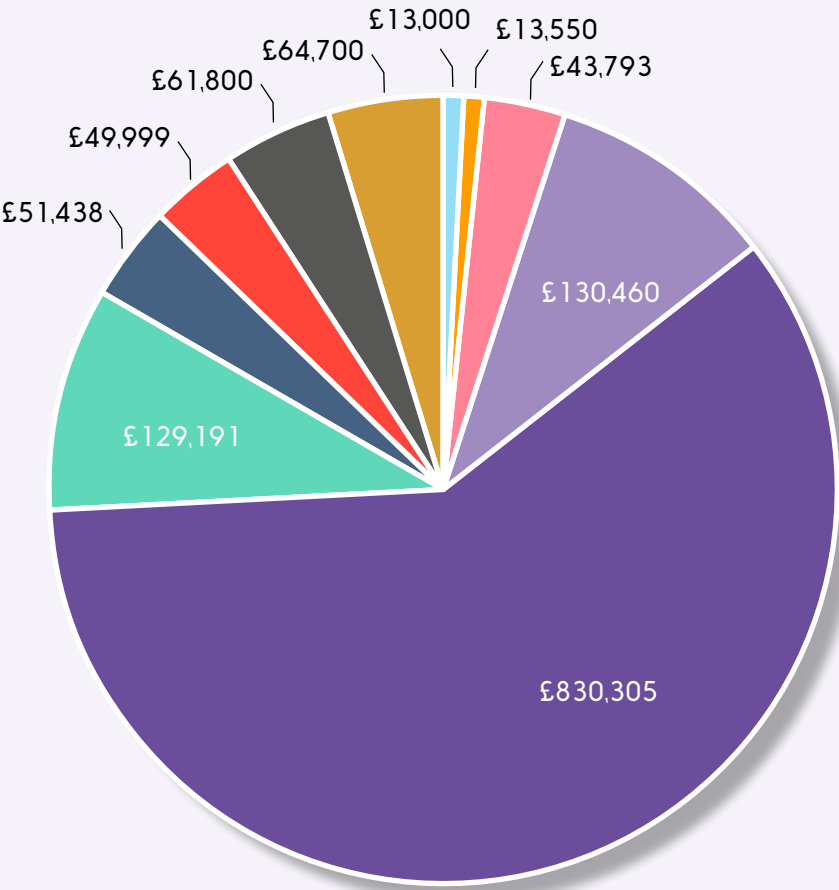
Summary of Income & Expenditure

We would like to thank all our supporters and partners who financially supported the organisation and our service users during the year - be that through contracts, grants or donations. Your generosity, partnership and commitment to NWC and our clients has been vital in helping us pursue our aims and mission, and provide vital front-line services to Women.

All are equally important in enabling the rich breadth and depth of what we can offer to the women of Nottingham.

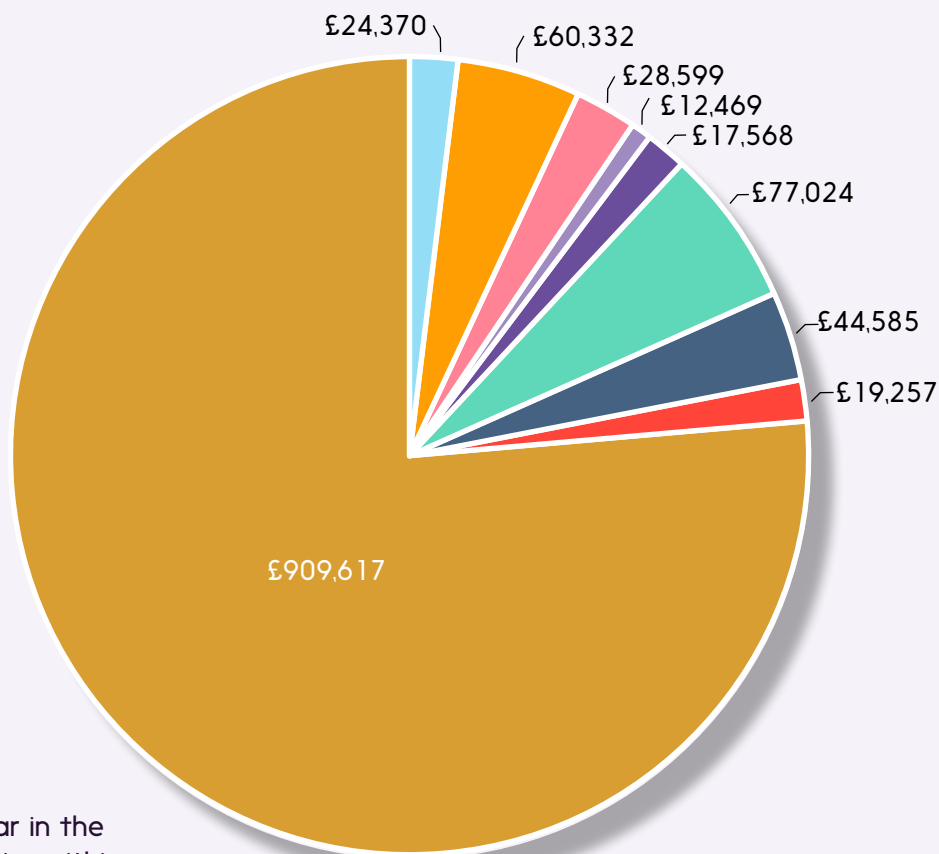
INCOME

- Bank interest / investments / earned income
- Donations / fund raising inc RTN
- Rental Income
- Designated Building Funds
- Ministry of Justice
- Nottingham City Council
- Nottingham PCC
- Changing Futures (Various funders)
- Counselling fees and donations
- Foundation Grants (various)



EXPENDITURE

- Adjustments & repayments
- Building Project / Ongoing Maintenance
- Events, Comms & Marketing
- Hardship fund
- IT support & Maintenance
- Organisational Development
- Professional fees / Insurances
- Rent & utilities
- Salaries, NI & pensions



This has been another challenging year in the financial environment for many charities within our sector including ourselves. Faced with funding ending, higher competition for available grants coupled with the cost of living increasing, maintaining a balance book for the year was a challenge.

However, due to the strength of a great team, we built on our work in 23-24 and successfully re-secured existing contracts as well as obtained additional funding to extend service delivery into new areas. This demonstrates the confidence funders have in our organisational strength and our ongoing ability to deliver high-quality services while growing to meet emerging needs.

As a result, we have successfully managed to maximise on the opportunities which arose in 2024-25 and end the year with a surplus. As a result, we have sufficient reserves to meet the Charity Commission requirements of a minimum 3 months running costs. And we also hold additional restricted reserve funds allocated to projects and unrestricted but designated reserve funds to cover building investment and some initial renovation costs.

This creates a very healthy position for us going into 2025-26 and we believe we can continue to invest in our people and our organisation to set up for further success in supporting the women of Nottingham achieve their personal goals.



PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

**Our 2024 Strategy defines our direction for the coming 3 years.
The key Priorities and focus for the coming year are defined as:**

OUR PEOPLE

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.

In 2025/26, the focus is on recognising the existing strengths and skills within our team, while also investing in areas that need development. This will help improve the experience for our people and create meaningful development opportunities for staff — even in a setting where a traditional career path isn't always possible.

OUR SERVICES

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

In 2025/26, we are focusing on the development of our mental health services through accessible, affordable paid-for support as part of a self-sustaining model. This includes dedicated services for women who have experienced any form of domestic violence, and targeted support for minoritised communities such as through our Black Women's Mental Health group. We continue to expand prevention-focused services that proactively engage women at risk of deterioration, offering practical support, casework and signposting to help them move forward. A third strand of our work focuses on shaping a more intentional programme of Centre-based activities that foster peer support, build skills and boost social confidence—supporting women at every stage of their journey.

OUR CAMPAIGNS & COMMUNITIES

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

Our focus for 2025/26 is to continue to develop a bespoke approach for the amplification of women's voices and ensure increasing impact on decision makers. Alongside this we lead on the provision of key community events with our partner organisations to promote the causes and voices of women from multiple communities and drive 3 key policy initiatives over the year.

OUR SUSTAINABILITY

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

For 2025/26 we are looking to consolidate our strong financial position whilst hopefully making an investment in our building as a secure long-term home for us. We will be developing an improved model for the future which increases both income and the variety of income streams we benefit from. Our focus will also be continuing innovation in a self-sustaining service model and improving leverage of our expertise in the sector.

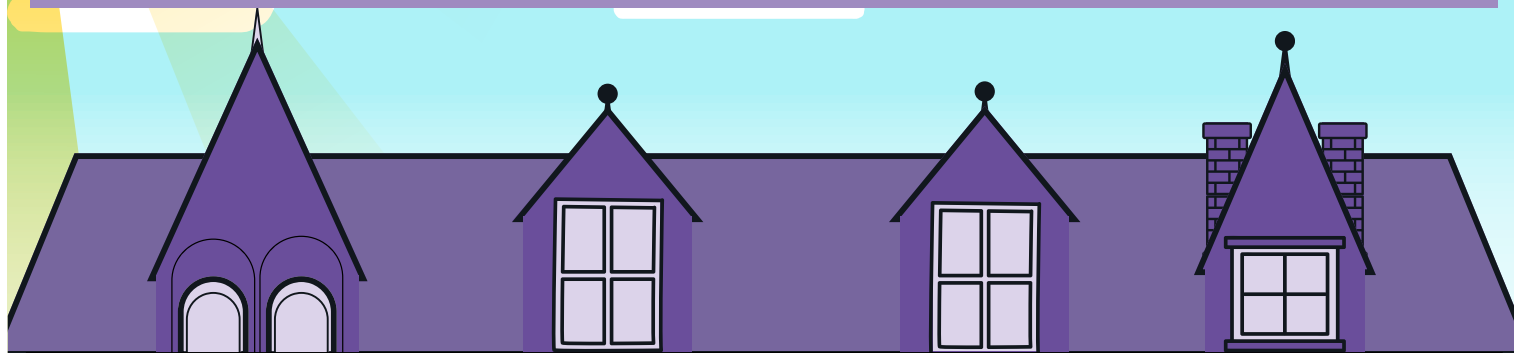
OUR HUB

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

The big ambition for 25/26 is to purchase the building that has been our home for approximately 35 years in which we currently have no security of tenure. This step will cement our position as an anchor organisation for the sector and city and set up NWC for the future with an asset that we can utilise for the benefit of women in Nottingham city and county. This will enable closer working and more shared space with our sister organisations in the provision of services for our common cause.



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 FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

THANK YOU TO OUR 2024-2025 FUNDERS



Funded by
UK Government
Digital Capital Grant

The
Henry Smith
Charity



Thomas Farr
Charity



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

Individual donors through
Local giving

Browne Jacobson

Castle Rock Brewery

Charities Trust

Center Parcs Sherwood

Hockley Hustle

Neighbourly

Nottinghamshire
Fire and Rescue Service

Inner Wheel

Women United

Nottingham women golf

Women In Construction

Five Leaves

CPMG

Nottingham Contemporary

Hygiene Bank

Lidl Nottingham Bridge

Nottingham City Council
Women's Network

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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