

Surviving and Thriving – social enterprise and social investment as a means to financial sustainability for feminist women’s organisations in the voluntary and community sector

Interim Findings

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# Background

Winner, the Preston Road Women’s Centre (PRWC) and its associated companies have been operating in Hull since 1999 providing a range of services for women and children with a key emphasis on supporting those fleeing violence and abuse. The organization is located in an area of very high deprivation in Hull on an inner city estate.

Services include:

* Safe dispersed accommodation
* Specialist Domestic Violence and Abuse support
* Affordable Justice Family law firm
* Specialist Nursery childcare provision
* Young Women’s Participation and support project
* Comprehensive Volunteering programme
* Accredited training opportunities
* Community shop

Over the lifetime of the organisation, these services have been funded by grants and contracts but since 2007, PRWC in conjunction with sister organisations began to develop safe housing for women and children as a means to providing a service but also developing alternative income streams based on social investment.

The property portfolio has been expanded in the interim until there are now just under 150 properties of differing sizes (1-4 bedrooms) across the city which are owned, leased or managed by the centre’s wholly owned subsidiary Trading Arm, which is also a Registered Provider of Social Housing.

Latterly in 2016, PRWC founded Affordable Justice, a family law firm aimed at supporting women and children fleeing violence and abuse whose eligibility for Legal Aid was withdrawn as a result of LASPO (Legal Aid, sentencing and punishment of offenders Act 2012). Affordable Justice is a social enterprise which (after an initial operating capital grant) is funded entirely through earned income.

In the financial year 2006/7 all of the organisation’s income came from revenue grants or contracts and the organisation had approximately £60 000 of capital asset (its own premises).

In the financial year 2017/18 the consolidated income of the group of companies which PRWC has evolved into, comprised only 17% grants and contracts, the rest being earned income. In addition to this, the capital assets owned across the group are valued at between £6.5million and £7million.

This financial resilience and sustainability has been a key factor in enabling the organisation to attract £1.65million of grants and loan investments to plan and deliver the UK’s first purpose-built women’s centre.

# The Research

PRWC’s treasurer, Lisa Hilder, has been instrumental in planning and executing the income generation strategy for the organisations and became curious as to the reasons why this approach has not been adopted by women’s organisations elsewhere, given its suitability in relation to meeting service need as well as providing an income source.

With this in mind she decided to embark on a piece of research with feminist women’s organisations to explore the incentives and barriers to using social enterprise and social investment as a means to surviving and thriving.

The PhD proposal was put forward and accepted in 2015 by Hull University Business School and after an initial planning year in 2016, the research plan was approved in 2017 and the data collection commenced in 2018, using Action Research methodologies.

22 women’s organisations took part (most of whom participated in one of 12 workshops) and 70 one to one interviews were conducted with staff and trustees

10 organisations were affiliated to the Rape Crisis England and Wales network, 4 to the Women’s Aid Federation, 8 were independent women’s organisations and 2 were focussed on the needs of BME women.

Lisa used an approach of storytelling about PRWC’s journey from grant-dependence to financial resilience in order to engage with the organisations and inform about social enterprise and social investment income generation.

The workshops then looked at a snapshot of where organisations thought they were at that point in time and where they would like to be in the future, identifying their thoughts and opinions on the barriers and incentives to using social enterprise and social investment.

She then followed up with individual conversations with staff and trustees to expand on their thoughts and views on what would help or hinder them to taking this approach to becoming more financially self-reliant and surviving into the future.

# Themes

A range of common themes began to emerge which ran through each of the organisations to a greater or lesser extent – these are described in the sections below

## Burning platform

Many organisations described a total reliance on grants and contracts to fund their work, with a range of associated frustrations which meant that this way of supporting their organisations is becoming increasingly unsatisfactory. They were also able to cite many examples of neighbouring women’s organisations which had demised as a result of grants finishing or long-held contracts being awarded to other organisations (sometimes housing associations, sometimes large national organisations not focussed on women’s services).

Some of the frustrations articulated included:

* + Reducing amount of money available (grant sizes were smaller and competition was greater – more organisations chasing the same reducing pots of money)
	+ Reducing volume of funders (a smaller number of grant-making organisations offering opportunities and those focussed on women’s services increasingly rare)
	+ Increasing demands on level of delivery and reporting (Required volumes of services/outputs delivered were increasing and monitoring information was also increasing in volume and complexity, placing onerous demands on already overstretched staff)
	+ Increasing requirement to be non-gender specific, particularly from Police and Crime Commissioners (Some organisations reported moving from women-only services to non-gender specific services in order to hang on to funding for their organisations and remain open)
	+ Decreasing autonomy to decide what is needed and design effective responses (grant funder requirements and commissioning requirements were decreasingly aligned with organisational aspirations).

Some organisations and individuals described a level of anxiety about maintaining services in the context of reducing grant availability and increasing monitoring requirements and significant concern about organisations being able to survive beyond the short term if alternatives were not forthcoming.

## Knowledge and skills

Organisations expressed a feeling of lack of knowledge and skills in the areas of social enterprise and social investment – the language and the operational delivery were seen as unfamiliar and daunting.

There was a perception that it was a whole area of work about which they didn’t know anything and would not really be relevant to the day to day operations of their organisations.

There was apperception that there would be a requirement for in depth knowledge about loans, investments and other financial matters that would be at a level far beyond existing knowledge and more importantly would be hard to acquire.

Coupled with the perception of lack of knowledge and skills, was the anxiety that engaging with social investors would be a relationship with a power imbalance and that the organisation would be at a natural disadvantage. Not only that, but the word investment in itself conjured up negative imagery of unscrupulous bankers and disastrous financial transactions, enough fr organisations to be put off from pursuing these avenues further.

## Capacity

Many organisations articulated pressures of workload on paid staff and volunteers linked to a variety of factors including:

* Increasing volume of service users and complexity of their needs
* “Fire-fighting” operational issues
* Lack of funding for infrastructure posts meaning staff members working way beyond a reasonable workload to deliver infrastructure functions as well as coal face service delivery
* Drains on energy to run around the hamster wheel to meet unwelcome demands from funders and to write many funding applications for sometimes small amounts of money

These factors mean that there is very little thinking time or energy to devote to developing alternative income streams or launch social enterprise based initiatives.

## Risk

Many organisations and individuals discussed risk from a range of perspectives. The initial reaction to social enterprise or social investment was almost universally defined as “too risky”, however on reflection and with discussion a number of issues around risk emerged.

Risk associated with social investment – “Loans are bad!” There was some fear of the concept of utilising loan to fund services or expansions with a knee jerk reaction that repayments would be difficult or impossible to make. There was much discussion about interest rates and the shift from grant to loan finance as a concept. After discussion of revenue income streams to service loan, and capital assets as security (particularly with dispersed safe accommodation), women started to relate that to their personal lives and experience of using loans and rationalise the concept.

Perceived risk of social enterprise (underlying assumption that it will go wrong!) – women were not aware of successful social enterprises and found it hard to translate the services they were offering into revenue-generating models

Women’s services manage significant risk operationally already – skills are transferable. Discussion centred around risk management processes and protocols to deal with service users with significant vulnerability and safeguarding concerns. Risk management approaches in women’s services are highly sophisticated and evolved in this context, but the link had not necessarily been made to managing financial risk approaches. After discussion, confidence increased in individuals’ and organisations’ risk management skills and their transferability.

Current organisational risk due to limited grant funding is significant

Women were very aware that they were facing organisational risk due to shrinking grant and contract resources but initially felt that reserves needed to be maintained in order to bridge any funding gaps – this approach was familiar

On balance, the managed risk of doing something new is equal to or less than the risk of carrying on as we are

After discussion, and weighing up the risks of continuing in familiar pathways or trying something new, the conclusion was reached that trying social enterprise or social investment was no more or less risky that sticking with traditional methods of income generation.

## Leadership

Leadership in the organisations participating was delivered differently and from differing perspectives. In some organisations, the Trustees were clearly providing leadership and setting the direction for the organisation. In others this was the role of the paid workers with trustees providing scrutiny and oversight. In a small number of organisations, leadership was provided in partnership by Trustees and paid staff. In these organisations, there was evidence of “distributed leadership” where individuals (paid or unpaid) led on their particular area with autonomy and lines of accountability clearly defined but unencumbering.

Some organisations favoured a more traditional hierarchical approach with a CEO type role and direct reports into that individual.

Some organisations relied on active engagement and collective input to facilitate key decisions

There was a consensus that whatever the leadership approach it needed to be clear and effective in order to enable the organisation to develop and deliver social enterprise and social investment initiatives.

## Feminist framework

All of the participating organisations identified as feminist although this was not reflected in the conversations with individuals, some of whom did not believe that they themselves or their organisations were feminist. This tended to depend on their own interpretation of feminism with some women retaining the stereotypical image of radical feminists as the only type of feminism and one they struggled to embrace.

All the organisations were run by women, with the majority of services targeted at women. A few organisations also worked with men and a small minority employed a few men as well.

These choices were either coerced as a stipulation of funding or made as a result of wanting to work with perpetrators as another means of tackling violence against women.

## Charitable culture

With one or two exceptions, all of the participating organisations were registered charities and relatively long-established. Some had staff and Trustees who had been involved for more than a decade.

Each of the organisations had developed its own culture but within a framework of charitable operation with the expectation that the organisation behaved as an archetypal charity – deriving its income from grants, contracts and donations. Trustees were to a greater or lesser extent inured iinto patterns of behaviour constrained by Charity Commission guidance which steers towards stewardship and maintaining status quo rather than promoting entrepreneurship and development.

This generates an organisational expectation of treading familiar paths and receiving money from traditional sources. One trustee pointed out that most women became involved as they were interested in the particular cause being addressed rather than in how the organisation operated and derived its income – more interested in making an impact than the “wiring in the box”.

It raised broader questions in one workshop about the continuing suitability of charities as suitable legal entities to deliver women’s services effectively and sustainably – can a model designed for the 19th Century still be relevant for the 21st Century?

# Attractions of Alternative Funding Approaches

When the conversation turned to different sources of income without the encumbrances of traditional sources, there were many attractions identified:

* Autonomy – freedom from the constraints of grant funders/commissioners and the ability to decide how and when to spend tranches of money
* Authentic identity for organisations – free to be feminist. One staff member talked about having to be “selectively authentic” in her dealings with partner organisations/funders who may not find a feminist agenda palatable
* Getting off the hamster wheel of short term restricted funding – freedom fro the draining and soul-destroying toil of applying for small pots of money which would not really enable the organisation to do what it wanted to do but would just about keep the doors open. The attraction of working positively to generate self-determination rather than continue to carry the yoke of prescriptive requirements from funders.
* Longer term planning horizon beyond the lifespan of short term funding
* Modelling the approach we take with service users – taking back control over our own organisational lives
* Ability to develop in directions we choose instead of following commissioner-led requirements – being able to be truly needs-led and respond to the needs women identify to us.

# Barriers

When asked about barriers to adopting social enterprise and social investment thus far, organisations cited some of the issues related above and also the simple fact that they did not feel these means bore any relevance to their type of operation and therefore had not considered it. The lack of tangible examples in the feminist women’s sector was also seen as a barrier.

In addition one staff member talked about the perception of banking, bankers and investment in the wake of the credit crunch and austerity – a natural suspicion of “men in suits” looking to make a profit with an underlying subtext of unscrupulousness. Assumptions had been made that social investors are cut from the same cloth and simply looking to make money from vulnerable people.

There was a recognition that a change in mindset would be required from traditional charitable modes of operation and a perception that knowledge and skills would be difficult to acquire.

# Using PRWC as an example

Each of the workshops began by relating the story of PRWC and its development over the last eighteen years, including its journey with social enterprise and social investment. This generated a lot of interest and lots of questions about the strategic planning and the operational delivery of a property portfolio and the development of an autonomous law firm.

Overwhelmingly the response was positive, with some organisations grasping the potential for their own contexts and resolving immediately to take it forward.

The most specific piece of feedback was one of hope – a way out of a seemingly hopeless situation towards self-determination. There was real enthusiasm for the tangible, successful example of a feminist women’s organisation that has transitioned from full dependence on grants and contracts to financial independence and sustainability of core services, with a platform to innovate and respond to emerging need. It’s not theory, it’s reality and that was very appealing and reassuring for organisations, giving confidence that they too could achieve something similar.

There was also discussion about whether this type of income generation could be adopted as a feminist approach to delivering service – the elements of self-determination and autonomy chiming in well with the empowerment model adopted by most feminist women’s organisations in the way they work with women.

Discussion also took place about the time and effort put into current methods of income generation and how this was draining as it was limiting in its scope and delivery, whereas although working on social enterprise and social investment would also be hard work, it would be for a self-determined purpose and outcome and therefore liberating and energising.

# Conclusion

Women’s services in different parts of the country are experiencing similar pressures in terms of the increasing demands on their services and often the decreasing levels of income from traditional funding sources such as grants, contracts and donations.

For those organisations working with local authority or health commissioners, funding requirements are becoming more onerous and less relevant in relation to the purpose of the organisations and there are struggles to maintain service whilst avoiding mission drift. Organisations have been forced to deliver services in ways which are unpalatable and don’t necessarily meet service user need.

These combined frustrations have generated a siege mentality and thrown organisations into survival mode with little energy to think creatively or innovatively not only about service delivery but about income generation.

Social investment and social enterprise in this context had previously seemed irrelevant and unhelpful concepts, however having had the opportunity to consider tangible successful examples relevant to the women’s sector, this reignited the latent enthusiasm and creative energy which had been dampened and subdued by years of funding constraints.

In the same way that women in abusive relationships experience control over thir behaviour and finances, organisations are experiencing the same control from funders and commissioners.

Social investment and social enterprise represents one way to empowerment and emancipation from that situation and amove towards self-determination for organisations, modelling the work we so with women.

Organisations were curious and motivated to do more towards breaking out of a seemingly hopeless, deteriorating situation. Social enterprise and social investment represent an opportunity for organisations to take back control of their own destinies and revert to being able to fulfil their mission.

The interest and engagement in the research from 22 organisations is an indicator that the time to ask this question has come – the next question is what can be achieved individually or collectively by this group? It remains to be seen.

# Participating organisations

## Affordable Justice

Affordable Justice is a Family Law Firm based at Winner, the Preston Road Women’s Centre in Hull.

We want to ensure that women can access legal advice and representation by offering affordably-priced, non-profit making legal services, provided by qualified solicitors who are experts in this field. You do not have to live in Hull to access this service. Our hourly rate is less than a third of commercial rates and we can help you with payment plans or to access your local Credit Union. Our Affordable Justice service is led by Sue Sedgwick, a Hull solicitor experienced in family law. Sue and her team can help you with:

* Divorce, separation and cohabitation - resolution of relationship breakdown.
* Non-molestation orders to provide some personal protection for you and/or your children.
* Occupation Orders to regulate who lives at the family home, to help you and your children to live in safety.
* Representation in Proceedings concerning child arrangements.
* Specific Issue Orders – for example for the return of a child who has been forcibly removed.
* Prohibited Steps Orders – for example to stop the other party from removing the child from the care of the Applicant.

While legal proceedings are underway, we are also able to support you and your family with our other services, including domestic violence support, safe housing and nursery provision.

<http://www.affordablejustice.co.uk/>

## Bradford Rape Crisis

Email: contactus@brcg.org.uk

Phone Number(s)

Referrals & Appointments - 01274 308271

SERVICES

Helpline: a woman who will listen, provide emotional support and useful information.

Counselling & art therapy: free and confidential with no pre-set limits on the number of sessions.

ISVA service: advocacy and emotional support throughout the criminal justice system.

Advocacy & Support service for refugee & asylum seeking women who have experienced sexual violence.

Jyoti services: specialist services for BAME women and girls delivered by BAME women.

Shared support groups

Young women & girls groups

Courses: Mindfulness & Self- esteem/Assertiveness

HMP New Hall Counselling & Art Therapy Service

Counselling service at Bevan Healthcare

## Bradford Women’s Aid

Bradford Women's Aid was established in 1985 to provide short term refuge accommodation for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. Today we provide of refuge, resettlement and outreach services for around 850 women and children each year. We offer district wide community support services to clients living in their own homes and we also provide accommodation and support services in our Bradford and Keighley refuges including our specialist BME refuge in Bradford. All of our services are staffed by trained, experienced support workers who provide client led support to meet the individual needs of women and children.

Our specialist services include Asian staff who provide language and cultural support for women from Bradford's local South Asian community. We are also developing services which support Eastern European and LGBT women and their children and our DARE2 Team provide a specialist Family Support service which supports our community based clients and their children.

<https://www.bradfordwomensaid.org>

## Bromley and Croydon Women’s Aid

BCWA aims to empower anyone suffering domestic abuse so they can make informed choices about their future. Our services are confidential, non-judgmental and respectful of diversity.

BCWA puts anyone who contacts us for support at the heart of decision making, so that they can gain the confidence, strength and self-respect needed to free themselves from abusive relationships.

Our services include refuge accommodation, advice & support, One Stop Shop, support groups, children’s services, school programmes, awareness talks.

<http://www.bcwa.org.uk>

## Cambridge Rape Crisis

Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre offers support to women and girls who have experienced rape, childhood sexual abuse or any other form of sexual violence.

We listen and believe. We are run by women, for women. We are confidential and non-judgemental. You are not alone.

We use the word ‘survivor’ to describe the women and girls who have survived their experiences. It may not feel like a word that describes you right now, but you have survived and are still surviving.

If you are a survivor of sexual violence, we are here for you:

Our helpline is open on Wednesday 7pm-9.30pm, Thursday 7pm-9.30pm and Sunday 10am-12.30pm.

Our email support service is available at support@cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk and we respond to all emails within 7 days.

We offer counselling in Cambridge and Ely.

Our Independent Sexual Violence Advocate service supports anyone, any age, gender or background, who has experienced sexual violence and wants help to navigate the Criminal Justice System.

We can also support family, friends and professionals who are supporting a survivor.

<http://cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk/>

## CARA

CARA (Centre for Action on Rape and Abuse) works with victims and survivors of sexual violence and child sexual abuse, providing independent, specialist support and promoting and representing their rights and needs.

CARA is a registered charity working with adult women and men, young people (aged 13-19) and children aged 12 and under from across mid and north Essex. We provide our services from our head office in Colchester and from outreach premises in Braintree, Chelmsford, Clacton-on-Sea, Great Dunmow and Harwich.

Services for women can be provided in a women-only environment, on request.

At present, we are only able to deliver our play therapy services for children aged 12 and under from our Colchester premises.

<https://caraessex.org.uk/>

## CSASS

Chester Sexual Abuse Support Service (CSASS) was founded in the mid-1990s and is a registered charity. We are affiliated to Rape Crisis England and Wales, and adhere to their National Standards. We are also an organisational member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Who we support

We provide free independent counselling, as well as a telephone support line for any individual aged 18 years and over who has been affected by any form of rape, sexual abuse or sexual violence at any time in their lives. Our core work is with women survivors of sexual violence, and, as such, we provide women-only space on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays.

We also work to support people who may not necessarily have been abused directly, but who might have witnessed the abuse (partner or sibling) or been affected by someone’s disclosure to them (professional such as a nurse, social worker etc).

In addition, we provide an empowering, supportive community, with opportunities for participation in regular groups, one-off events or in awareness-raising work.

We are based in Chester city centre in an easily accessible and discrete location. There are no geographical restrictions on who we can support, so we work with individuals who are living in a range of locations including North Wales, Shropshire, East and West Cheshire, Merseyside, and Chester.

<http://csass.org.uk>

## Hull Women’s Network

Hull Women’s Network provides safe accommodation for women and children fleeing violence and abuse in dispersed properties across the city of Hull. Its office base is with Winner, the Preston Road Women’s Centre

## Humraaz

Humraaz Support Services provides confidential specialist support to Black and Minority Ethnic women who are experiencing Domestic Abuse and all forms of Harmful Traditional Practices.

Harmful Traditional Practices are forms of violence which have been committed primarily against women and girls in certain communities and societies for so long that they are considered, or presented by perpetrators, as part of accepted cultural practice. The most common of these are Forced Marriage, “so called” Honour based Violence and Female Genital Mutilation.

We are an independent organisation founded in 2002 and registered as a charity in 2005. We work in partnership with local and national statutory organisations and have vast experience with the voluntary sector.

Humraaz Refuge provides sanctuary and holistic support to women and their children. We are a culturally sensitive service and understand the intersecting and diverse needs. These include gender, race, social class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, age, mental disability, physical disability, mental illness, and physical illness as well as other forms of identity. Part of this work includes addressing personal issues, concerns around family life, the community and also the environment in which the women live.

Humraaz aims to empower service users by teaching life skills which enable them to become independent, take control of their lives and determine their own future. They are encouraged to participate in challenging and stimulating activities within a safe environment, the ultimate goal being to build self-esteem and confidence. This develops the ability to access services and make the most of opportunities to provide their own security and financial independence.

<http://www.humraaz.co.uk>

## Idle Women

idle women create vibrant and adventurous spaces with women and girls in places where they are least imagined

idle women on the water

on the water is a slow touring canal-based project in Lancashire and West Yorkshire.

The Selina Cooper is a tailormade narrowboat, serving as a resource and arts centre for women, as well as hosting residencies and other opportunities for women.

idle women on land

idle women are developing the UK's first Physic Garden dedicated to and in trust for women and girls.

idle women in bricks and mortar

in bricks and mortar includes a new partnership project in St Helens with Heart of Glass and Anu Productions and establishing a new premises in Blackburn Lancashire in partnership with Humraaz support services.

<https://www.idlewomen.org>

## Krasacc

Kirklees Rape & Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre

Helpline

Counselling

ISVA

## My Sister’s Place

My Sisters Place is an independent specialist domestic abuse service for women, aged 16 years and over.

As a feminist organisation, we offer a confidential women only space to discuss your concerns.

Our Purpose

To deliver accessible, responsive, adaptable and effective services that are informed and evaluated by service users experiences promoting individual freedom and quality of life.

To explore new and innovative ways to address domestic violence issues with a range of partners, and share best practice locally

To challenge inequality in access to safety, justice, health and well-being and campaign for change to shape future policy and practice.

To work with the wider community through education and community involvement to create a cultural shift in a zero tolerance of domestic abuse and better equip families to protect one another.

<https://www.mysistersplace.org.uk>

## Osarcc

We are a feminist organisation committed to supporting survivors of sexual abuse, rape, domestic abuse, and harassment. We offer a free and confidential service to women and girls who are dealing with the effects of sexual violence, and to anyone who is supporting them.

We listen, and we believe.

<https://www.oxfordrapecrisis.net>

## Peterborough Rape Crisis

Peterborough Rape Crisis supports female survivors of rape and sexual abuse.

Peterborough Rape Crisis support and empower female survivors of rape and sexual abuse. We offer a telephone helpline, face to face support sessions, email support, and advocacy work. This support is confidential, non-judgemental and is aimed at enabling Surviviors to overcome their problems and regain control of their lives, leading to an improvement in health and wellbeing , a reduction in social isolation and an overall more positive attitude to life.

<https://www.caprcp.org.uk>

## Saheli

Saheli Asian Women’s Project provides advice, information and support services to Asian women and their children fleeing domestic abuse and/or forced marriages and is based in Manchester, UK.

Saheli gives Asian women a chance to get away from violent domestic situations by providing an environment which is safe, culturally familiar and which helps them come to decisions of their own about the next steps. If you are an Asian woman, with or without children and you are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse and would like support, you may call us in confidence. Our staff can speak English, Urdu, Punjabi and Hindi.

<http://saheli.org.uk>

## SARSVL

We are a feminist organisation offering a women only safe space for women and girls in Leeds who have been affected by sexual violence of any kind at any time in their lives and need our support. Nearly half the survivors we speak to are adult survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA). We are trans inclusive.

<http://supportafterrapeleeds.org.uk>

## SERICC

South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC) opened in 1984 and provides specialist, free services in South East Essex areas.

SERICC is a registered charity (Registered Charity Number 287762). SERICC is a confidential service and independent from social services, the police and other official agencies.

SERICC provides specialist services any individual who has or who is experiencing any form of sexual violence at any time in their life. You can also phone if you are worried about your child, someone else in your family, or someone you know.

If you ring us we can offer telephone counselling and 'one to one' counselling, emotional support and practical information, we will not tell you what to do or judge your actions.

[www.sericc.org.uk](http://www.sericc.org.uk)

## Southend on Sea Rape Crisis

SOS Rape Crisis is a specialist service that is dedicated to supporting women, men, transgender persons, young people, and children, who have survived sexual abuse and violence in Southend, Castle Point, and Rochford. If you are a survivor that lives outside of these areas but still in Essex please click here to find your nearest centre. If you live in any other areas of the England and Wales please click here.

SOS Rape Crisis provides confidential and non-judgemental support for survivors of any form of sexual abuse that has occurred at any time in their lives – whether it has happened recently, a long time ago or is still happening.

<https://www.sosrc.org>

## WEWAG

West End Women and Girls Centre is a registered charity which has been working with women and girls in the West End of Newcastle since 1981.

The Centre provides support through group work where the members have the opportunity to meet, have fun, learn skills, look at issues relevant their lives and generally build confidence in a safe and supportive environment.

We also provide individual support offering advice, information, advocacy and referrals to relevant agencies.

<http://westendwomenandgirls.co.uk>

## Winner the Preston Road Women’s Centre

WINNER, the Preston Road Women’s Centre provides information, support and advice to women in Hull. It is a multi-purpose organization run by women for women offering a wide range of services under one roof.

Women can drop into WINNER anytime between 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday to access any of our services or to meet other women in a safe environment.

We are situated in the big Purple House on Preston Road at the corner of Bilton Grove.

We offer the following services and activities:

* Drop in for relaxation and informal support
* Specialist domestic violence support and advocacy
* Safe, affordable housing across the city
* Accredited training in a variety of subjects
* Registered Nursery provision for 0-5 year olds
* Comprehensive volunteering programme aimed at improving quality of life and job opportunities
* Young women’s participation project
* Rainbows Charity shop offering affordable, quality second hand goods
* Crafts group

[www.purplehouse.co.uk](http://www.purplehouse.co.uk)

## Winner Trading Ltd

Winner Trading is the wholly owned subsidiary company of Winner, the Preston road Women’s Centre. It is a Registered Provider of Social Housing and oversees all the dispersed properties associated with the Winner Group that house women and children fleeing violence and abuse. It also oversees 32 properties on behalf of private landlords

## WomenCentre

We offer a wide range of services for women throughout Calderdale and Kirklees.

* Domestic Violence Support - Support for any woman experiencing domestic abuse. We also provide specialist services for children and families.
* Counselling - A free counselling service open to all women.
* Women Making Changes - The project support team provide tailored support, advice and advocacy to enable women to address difficulties and be in a better position to improve circumstances and plan for their future
* 1325 – Girls & Young Women Project - Big Lottery funded project for girls and young women between the ages of 13 and 25. We work across both Calderdale and Kirklees and our aim is to work alongside girls and young women in our community to support and empower them to reach their full potential.
* Sister shhhOUT! - Our lesbian and bisexual women’s service and twice-monthly support group.
* Learning and Skills - A programme of courses which aim to offer new opportunities for women, including practical course, health and wellbeing groups and more.
* Drop-in - All centres operate an open-door policy. Call in for a chat and a brew and find out more about what we do and how we can help you.
* Women in Exile - A Huddersfield-based service offering practical and emotional support to women asylum seekers and refugees, and their children.
* Bradford Maze part of Domestic Abuse Community Support Services - Delivered by WomenCentre Limited, Domestic Violence Services (Keighley) and Staying Put
* Connecting Opportunities - Working with new migrants to develop their skills and opportunities to find work and be part of the local community.