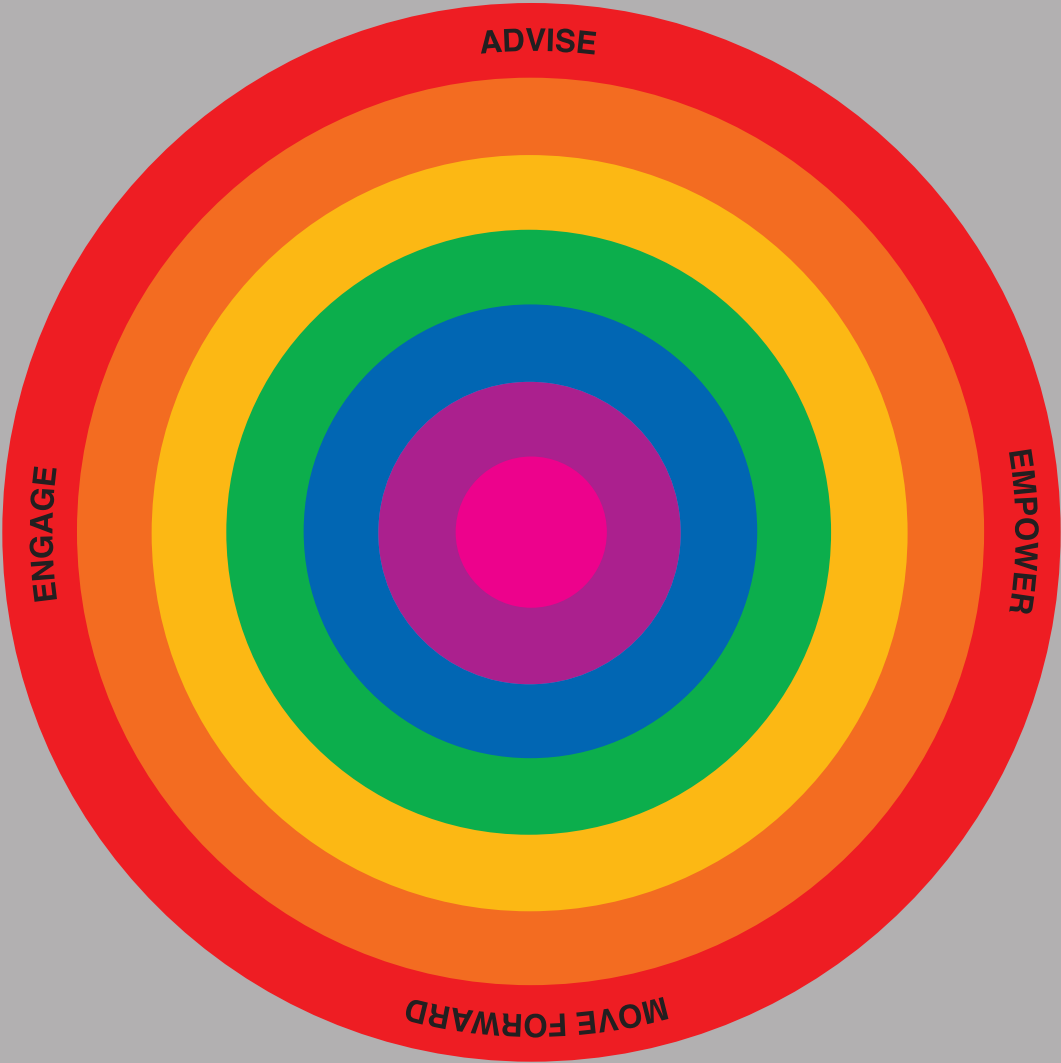


Her Centre
Annual Review
2016



To engage, enable and empower women to move away from abuse,
and to move forward with their lives



Her Centre is a local women's advice and support agency, providing practical and legal advice for women escaping domestic and sexual abuse through our Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy (IDSVA) team. We also offer training and group activities including individual and group counselling, confidence building, Basic English courses and parenting training, in order to engage and support women experiencing abuse. We promote women's equalities through consultations and awareness sessions to women's groups, and run 4 open events each year on key issues affecting women. Our service works in the Royal borough of Greenwich and provides a young person's service in Bexley, and support to victims of sexual abuse in Lewisham.

To eradicate violence against women and girls.

To engage, enable and empower women to move away from abuse, and to move forward with their lives.

Her Centre is a woman-focused, women-led organisation. We believe that domestic and sexual abuse must be tackled by empowering women and acknowledging social inequality that perpetuates and legitimises violence. We are resilient and inspire resilience in the women we support.

S d

- Major celebration event for International Women's Day on what women can do, with volunteer speakers from our user steering group and Equalities Champions group, and over 70 attendees, run jointly with Greenwich DVA
- Increase in overall referrals (811) experiencing domestic violence, as well as increased referrals of women experiencing sexual abuse, forced marriage and FGM
- Increase in levels of engagement, especially with younger women (54), against referrals
- Increased referrals and engagement of women with disabilities
- Secured ongoing funding for young people's prevention project New Leaf in Greenwich
- Secured new funding for young people's project in Bexley, jointly with Little Fish Theatre
- Began a quality accreditation with PQASSO to evidence our service quality
- Worked with our Greenwich wide user steering group to ensure women who have direct experience of abuse influenced the local domestic abuse awareness campaign and new service development.



Director's Report

Her Centre continues to grow, and now has 13 paid staff and 13 volunteers over the year who all work together to provide a holistic women's service. Our focus is on frontline services in our Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocacy service, providing emergency safety planning, practical support, legal advice with follow up counselling to victims of abuse. Our work continues to be of high quality, recognised in our SafeLives (formerly CAADA) accreditation.

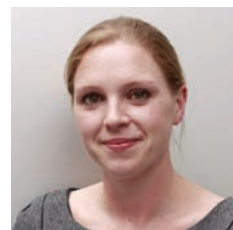
Our volunteers provide additional counselling (a student therapist), run support groups (from our peer support partner service, Hope, and from an ex service user working with our counsellor), and give feedback on our services and on Greenwich services for women experiencing abuse (our user steering group). We also had 3 Equalities Champions raising awareness on women's issues, including training in harassment for bar staff and money management for ex clients, and 4 volunteers who teach 3 Basic English classes.

Our IDSVA service works closely with other domestic abuse service providers, including the police, Greenwich DVA, and Victim Support. Our role includes active membership of the Greenwich Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference main group and steering group, and we are represented on the Violence against Women and Girls Strategy Board. Our Young IDVA, part of the New Leaf service, worked in partnership with Little Fish Theatre Company and Tryangle Project 2011 to raise awareness of abuse with young people and to provide support to those already involved in abuse. We have renewed this project for 5 years with Big Lottery funding, and also expanded into Bexley working with young people, continuing our partnership with Little Fish. We lead the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop, which gives urgent advice on law and safety planning on a drop in basis. We are active members of the Greenwich Equalities Forum.

Our staff feed into service planning and policy reviews, and the user steering group has influenced our service development, leading to a pilot post providing follow up support to women coming out of abusive relationships. This has increased our ability to keep women engaged and we are now looking for joint funding to develop a back to work service for women who have left abuse.

I would like to thank my very hard working staff team, and I would especially like to thank all the volunteers who give so much to Her Centre, both the trustee board, and those who teach, counsel and advise the women we work with.

Stacy Smith Director



Chair's Report

Her Centre has gone from strength to strength over the past year, continuing to build on our core services to women and families in Greenwich and young women in Bexley. The senior management team has expanded, meaning staff are better supported whilst delivering crucial services to clients.

Her Centre has also had a major overhaul of governance structures, reviewing our constitution and appointing new trustees who bring a wealth of relevant knowledge and experience to the board. The staff have worked tirelessly to balance the ever-growing need of evidencing outcomes while still delivering a high-quality, holistic and individually-tailored service. This has been demonstrated by the achievement in October of the PQASSO quality mark.

The Director and her team have worked hard to ensure Her Centre is financially stable, looking for funding not only for the coming year, but for the next 4 to 5 years. This forward planning has enabled the Board and the staff team to consider key priorities for the future growth and sustainability of the organisation.

Over the coming years we look forward to developing our work, particularly with young people, and consider new partnership with local organisations to support delivery of high-quality local services. We will also look further afield to share best practice and showcase the unique holistic crisis and counselling service that we offer at Her Centre.

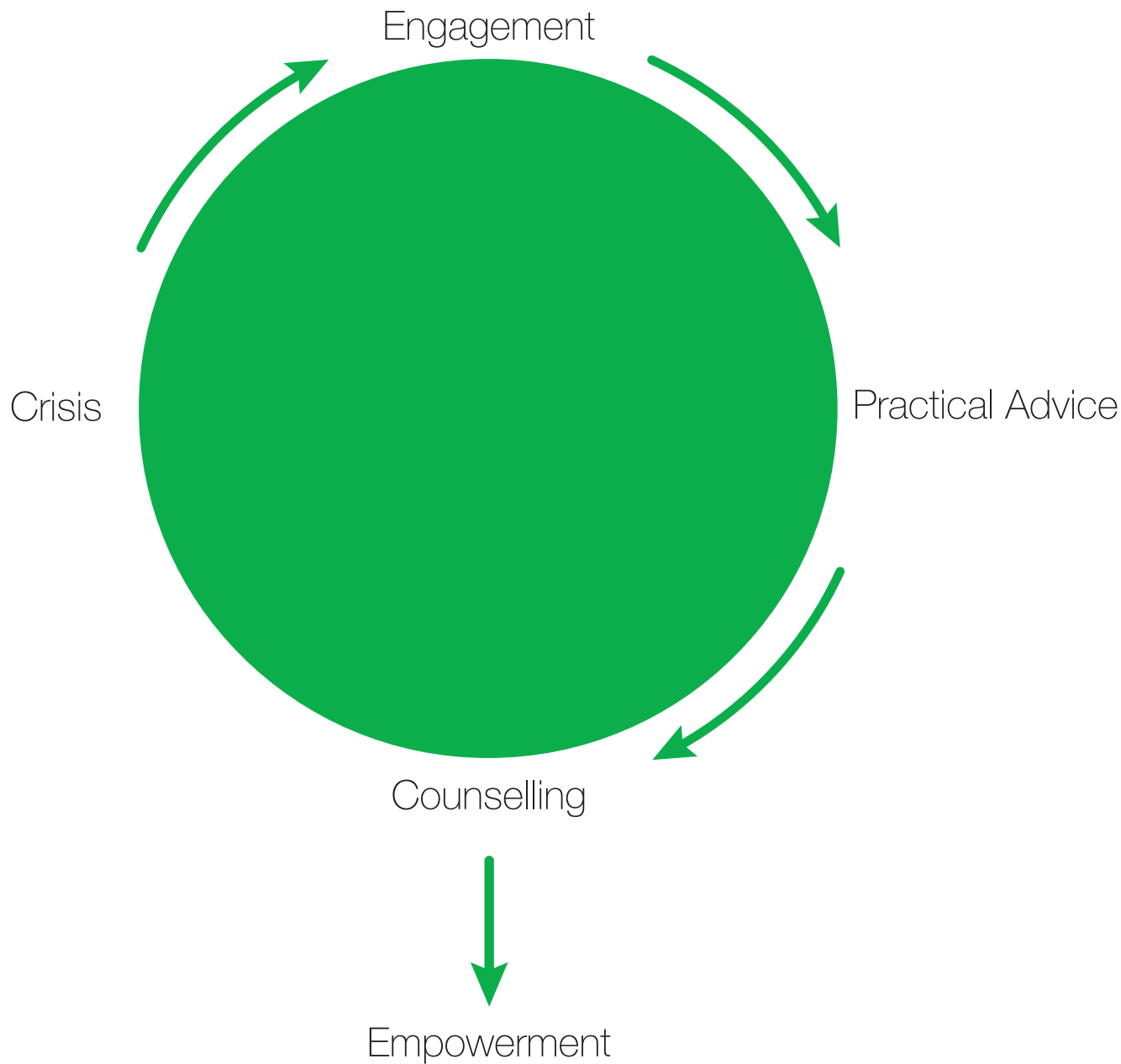
On behalf of the Trustee Board, I would like to thank the team for their hard work and dedication to the aims, mission and values of Her Centre, and in particular Stacy, for her tenacity and vision in leading the team, who will continue to provide crisis and counselling services for women in crisis in Greenwich and the surrounding areas.

Elly Virgo Chair of Trustees



Right: Guests at our holiday celebration

Her Centre's Holistic Model



Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence and Advocacy Service (IDSVA)

The IDSVA service is the heart of Her Centre's support to women. Working with the holistic model of crisis support and engagement, through to legal and practical safety, with the ability to move immediately into counselling groups rather than facing a 4 to 6 month wait as with most services, Her Centre can offer women the ability to address both the immediate risks and the long term trauma that they have experienced.

Through the hard work of the IDSVA team we have provided support to 612 clients who were affected by domestic and sexual violence in the past year. This includes our Young Women's service (part of New Leaf), which continues to provide support to young women aged 13 to 19 who are affected by domestic / sexual violence and those at risk of sexual exploitation. Our Young IDVA service now also operates in Bexley, where we are already seeing referrals and engagement through schools, police and children's services.

The IDSVA service continues to be the lead advocacy service in the Greenwich Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). The partnership meets fortnightly to discuss an average of 15 of the highest risk cases in Greenwich with the aim to reduce risk and to protect those at significant risk of harm.

The IDSVA service works in close partnership with the Metropolitan Police Domestic Violence Intervention Team (DVIT). IDSVA's liaise with DVIT to assist clients being escorted to refuge provision, appointments with local solicitors and to court to obtain civil injunctions protection orders and for criminal cases. IDSVA's are also able to

utilize the DVIT services to safely visit high risk clients at their homes to provide support. This helps us to reduce repeat victimisation for those high risk cases heard at

MARAC, by engaging women too frightened to reach out for help. The police presence with the clear advocacy options from Her Centre better enable women to risk leaving a dangerous partner.

Her Centre works with University of Greenwich Law students as volunteer advisors. Due to the Legal Aid cuts, some women are no longer able to access support from solicitors outside of emergency injunctions. With the volunteer students we are able to assist women in obtaining orders such as Child Arrangement Orders and Divorce, through advice and support with form filling and with practical non-legal support at court. Where a woman is working, students can also assist with forms and court attendance for D.I.Y. injunctions.

Our full time BME engagement IDVA assists women from the BME community who may be suffering from domestic abuse and/or be affected by issues such as Forced Marriage, FGM and No Recourse to Public Funds. These women can often be the hardest to engage due to the cultural barriers they may be facing. By speaking about our services at our basic English classes, and at women's groups across new communities, we are increasing the women from BME communities who use our service.

Her Centre remains formally endorsed by the SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation. We have recently renewed our PQASSO accreditation at a higher level (Level two).

Domestic Violence Outreach Service (One Stop Shop)

The One Stop Shop is our weekly run confidential advice drop in. With the continued commitment from our partnership with Greenwich DVA and Adelle Banks (now Angela Simpson) from Hudgell and Partners, women are able to access free legal advice and support to deal with any form of domestic abuse or basic advice on family law matters. The service, now moved to the YMCA, provides advice for women who may not be at high risk or may not be eligible for Legal Aid funding, or who are simply not

ready to take forward any action, and just want to learn more about their options and their rights.

The general nature of advice that can be provided also means that many who do not wish to receive support from mainstream services have an opportunity to reach out for help. The One Stop Shop has successfully engaged 72 women this year wanting advice.



Sexual Abuse Advocacy Service

Thanks to renewed funding from Henry Smith, Her Centre has been able to continue the service to women who have been sexually abused, with a further increase in the referrals from the specialist police unit. From 100 referrals we engaged 84 women with this specialist support work for victims of rape and sexual assault, in part by providing police training and widening our referrals catchment area. The sexual violence advocate also provides support to those sexually abused within a violent long term relationship

Counselling

Our Counselling Service recognises the devastating effects of domestic and sexual abuse on a woman's well-being, often leading to post traumatic stress disorder and depression. The service has developed a holistic pathway where a woman can engage with us whilst still in an abusive relationship, through the process to ultimately being safe and making the journey of healing.

The free service offers access to long term counselling through three groups, one focusing on crisis recovery, followed by a more long term therapeutic group. There is then an option of one to one counselling. The groups are particularly effective as this reduces isolation which is so often experienced by victims. Our trauma therapist, a Registered Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, also provides training, volunteering and psycho-educational opportunities, such as parenting and confidence building courses.

This year we engaged 96 women and were able to report feedback from 86% of clients, showing a marked increase in well-being and positive outcomes.

Our counsellor has recently completed CBT training.

New Leaf and Bexley DSV Projects

The New Leaf service for young people 13 to 19 years old, is completing its 3 year programme and funding has just been renewed for a further 5 years. The revised programme, called New Leaf Project for Young People, will be run in partnership with Little Fish Theatre. In the initial 3 year programme, the project worked with 3762 young people over the three-year period. Most of these young people have participated in theatre workshops performed in schools, pupil referral units, colleges and academies. Her Centre has engaged 162 young women providing individual awareness raising sessions, safety planning, legal support where required and counselling.

Her Centre works closely with the police and Children's Social Services, and takes a high number of referrals from the Multi Agency Panel for those at risk of Child Sexual Abuse. Following our analysis of our programme data, we have found that over 50% of young women experiencing relationship abuse have been subjected to sexual abuse, so this is now a major emphasis of our work written and performed by Little Fish, which looks at consent and abuse through social media. It has led to Little Fish and Her Centre expanding into Bexley with a matching programme, again funded by Big Lottery.

We fed our data into Ms Understood's Greenwich-wide mapping of responses to young people's peer-on-peer abuse and have been mentioned in their report as an important part of the borough's response to young people experiencing abuse. We continue to lead for SafeLives work on young women in Greenwich, gathering data to inform this new area of support work. We are also providing data for the council's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy from this work.

Also we believe, our reach among young people has been very representative:

- 42% have been from a White/White British background, 14% from a Asian/Asian British background, 28% from a Black/Black British background and 16% from a Mixed or other background;
- 38% have been female, 62% male;
- 10% of young people so far have had a disability.

Our engagement on ethnicity is higher than the council populations according to census data. Our focus now is to get better engagement with LGBT young people through work with Metro and their young people's group.

Bexley DSV began in 2016 with a launch event in February. Little Fish began their drama programme soon after, as Her Centre recruited a new young IDVA.

Equalities and awareness-raising

Her Centre ran 4 open forums last year, with key equalities themes, and ran many training and awareness sessions with professionals and community groups.

- Young People and social media in June 2015 – 63 attended, including 22 secondary school students, covering how sexting and other abuse on Social Media can occur, and how to stay safe
- What's in your Community in September 2015, covering English and confidence classes and info on counselling, with 54 attendees
- Know Your Rights Under The Equalities Act, January 2016, run with other equalities agencies and our equalities champion volunteers – 51 attended
- Celebrating Women's Strength for International Women's Day in March 16 – with volunteers speaking about their work, a self-esteem session and self-defence. Over 70 women attended this event.

The impact from the first event has been a greater understanding of risks and abuse from using social media and more connection between avoidance of domestic abuse and children's future expectations of relationships. The second event led to more women having knowledge about free local training available, and our third event gave women more grasp of their rights under the new Equalities Act. Our International Women's Day event was a day of empowerment

Her Centre brought representatives of our user steering group to the Council Community Safety Scrutiny Committee to give their views on local services for women experiencing abuse, and fed into the local domestic abuse awareness campaign, specifically asking domestic violence be changed to domestic abuse, which was a recommendation from our user steering group. We also gave feedback at 3 other local policy discussions, on health service changes, on tenancy changes, and on harassment in late night venues, and 2 national consultations on legal aid and the impact of benefits changes on women. Our Equalities Champions started a local branch of the Good Night Out campaign, which challenges harassment in public places, especially in late night bars and clubs. This led to Her Centre running two training sessions for staff in local late night venues.

Her Centre ran 16 courses for professionals on domestic abuse awareness, training 228 professionals, spoke at an event on hate crime for 25 people from the faith communities, ran 4 sessions on young people and abuse for 119 professionals, and ran two sessions for women at risk on dealing with abuse with 65 in attendance.

Basic English classes

Her Centre has been running Basic English classes for women for 6 years now. Started as one class run twice a year, we now run 9 courses a year of 10 sessions each, averaging 15 students in each class. Our 3 teachers are ESOL qualified volunteers and the programme recently expanded when we secured partial funding from Time Bank. As many of the women attending have no English at all, some retake the course in order to build their confidence and be better prepared to move to more formal English courses with qualifications, as provided by the local Greenwich Community College.

The courses are advertised through leaflets and on our website and other local media, but also through word of mouth from former classmates, who sometimes bring their friends and help them in the class. In all, 105 women have attended our Basic English courses in 2015/16.

“*It has helped me to talk with my children, teachers, work colleagues and doctors.*”

“*My English class gives me more confidence.*”

Quotes from students on the ESOL English course

Plans for 2015/20

Below are the agreed future goals for Her Centre for our new business plan. We develop all our services based on the holistic model of support, as shown on page 6. We have added updates where we have already moved forward in the past year to meet these goals.

Engagement

- Improve our engagement from women who are vulnerable due to health, ability, or understanding, or who are less confident to take up services, to ensure all who need support around abuse are able to access this support
- Build on our successful partnership work addressing wider issues of abuse, and on our joint planning approach to identify unmet needs and developing new services
- Expand our young people's work to best meet the needs of those more resistant to engaging with services or identifying their own risks. *We have been successful in jointly securing funds with Little Fish Theatre to work in Bexley with young people at risk.*

Crisis Support

- Expanding our holistic domestic violence support services outside of Greenwich to neighbouring boroughs, where there may be limited services
- Strengthen our work addressing wider violence against women, including increased referrals to our Sexual Violence Advocate and more work on areas of FGM, forced marriage and honour based violence
- Widen our service to provide for women not at high risk but needing intervention to avoid further increase in risk to her and her children, enabling them to build on our holistic model but avoid high levels of crisis – *our counsellor now runs a group for women whose children are under child protection with social services, where domestic abuse is known to occur but may not yet be high risk, helping them to understand the abuse and their options.*

Counselling and after Support

- Ensuring women can access counselling so that more of our clients are able and supported to address trauma and rebuild their lives
- Address the gap many women experience after crisis support by providing follow up support that builds confidence and practical skills – *our pilot follow-up support worker helps keep more vulnerable women engaged and helps address wider practical challenges they face, to help keep them from returning to abuse.*



A Woman's Experience

I created a prison for myself for a period of time after the trial and didn't go anywhere on my own after dark, I also refused to leave my flat during the weekends until I had to go to work on Monday mornings. The therapy supported me through to re-identify myself and realise I shouldn't feel guilty...

I would like to thank the support that Her Centre provided for me over the past one year with this email. I received help straight away after I had been assaulted last year August 2015. I have attended therapy with Anuk from September 2015 till October 2016. Following the assault my life has changed upside down, my relationship broke down and on March 2016 I attended to court as well. The man was found guilty and has to remain in prison for three and a half years. The therapy really helped me to have the courage to go to court, the trial was traumatic, and I felt really low afterwards for a period of time but the group sessions with breathing techniques and one to one with Anuk helped to overcome my fears and low periods.

I created a prison for myself for a period of time after the trial and didn't go anywhere on my own after dark, I also refused to leave my flat during the weekends until I had to go to work on Monday mornings. The therapy supported me through to re-identify myself and realise I shouldn't feel guilty or shamed because of what happened and I was

able to come in to terms with my relationship breakdown as well.

After the incident I had to notify my employer as I was off from work for a period of time. It was really difficult to return back to work. I feel like without therapy I would not been able to cope.

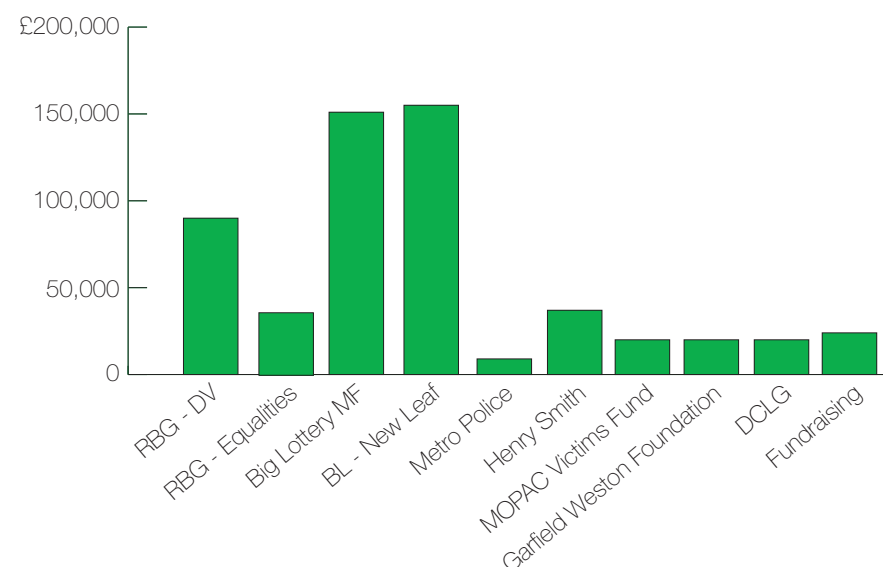
October 2016, I changed my job and now work in a qualified career which was my goal for a long period of time. I now know that I have a choice in life and can change things, and for me it was important that the therapy was not a short period of time as after the assault things spiralled in all aspect of my life. At one point I felt I didn't want to live anymore and planned to take my life, but with Anuk's support I was able to overcome the darkest moments in my life and was able to change things positively.

I would like to thank for the support I have received through the ISVA as well and that Dipa could attend to the trial with me.

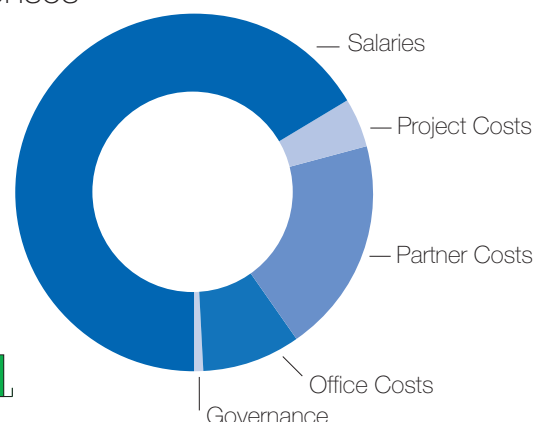


Finance charts and graphs

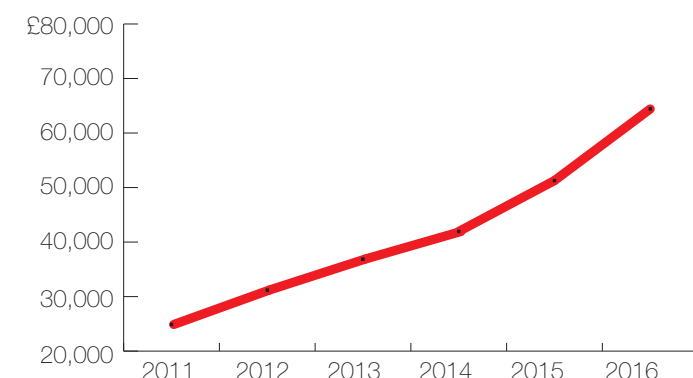
Incoming funds



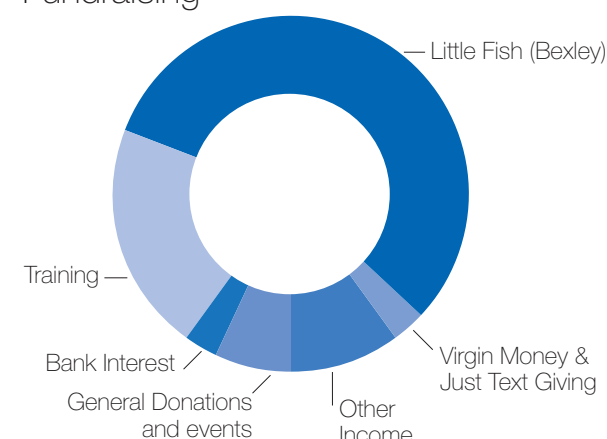
Expenses



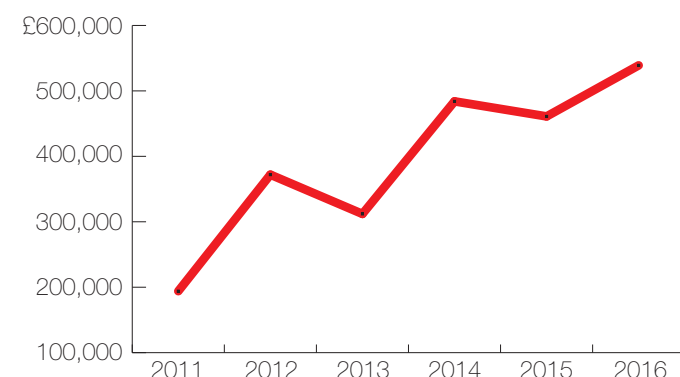
Reserves



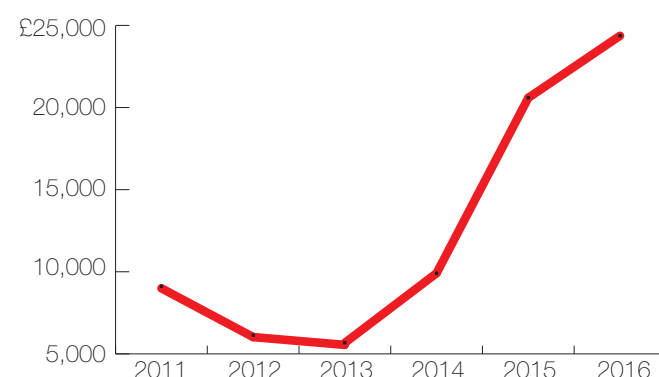
Fundraising



Grants



Fundraising Income



How you can help...

There are 3 ways to help Her Centre

Fundraising

Diversifying our funding continues to be a major focus for us in the year ahead. We are grateful for all the financial support provided by the Royal Borough of Greenwich and our other key funders, which include The Big Lottery, Lloyds Foundation, Henry Smith Charity, Garfield Weston, DCLG, and MOPAC. We will continue to deliver value to our funders by meeting and often exceeding our targets, while providing real and measurable impact within our community. We wish to say thank you for all the fundraising support provided by volunteers and friends of Her Centre. A special thank you to our fundraising sub-committee chair, who has improved our monitoring and planning for funding through a detailed fundraising strategy. Thank you to all those who have donated to us directly, be it via our text giving service or via our fundraising events, which have included everything from face painting to buckets in Tesco's. Every penny raised has and will make a huge difference. This year we have managed to fundraise £7,479, through a combination of one off and on going donations and appeals. We will continue to look for effective and fun ways to raise donations to help us continue our work to empower women in Greenwich.

1

Give your time

We are always looking for volunteers to help support our work, be it joining our board of trustees, running a stall at a fundraising event or donating your skills, such as counselling or legal advice.

2

Fundraising events

If you are interested in fundraising for us, volunteering at our next fundraiser or if you wish to be contacted about upcoming events then please get in touch.

3

Donate

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Where your money goes

£5

buys materials for one of our English language classes helping to reduce isolation for women from minority ethnic communities.

£10

pays for a woman to attend our motivational group, empowering women to take control and move on from an abusive relationship.

£20

provides an emergency phone for an abused woman whose phone has been submitted as police evidence.

£100

funds specialist in-court support for a victim of abuse. Or seven hours of risk assessment and safety planning for a woman experiencing domestic abuse. Or a day working in the police station providing support to women who report being raped or beaten.

For more information on fundraising contact us at info@hercentre.org.uk



ccc

These are
who
Her Centre
helps

641

Domestic Violence
referrals

105

Women attended Basic
English class

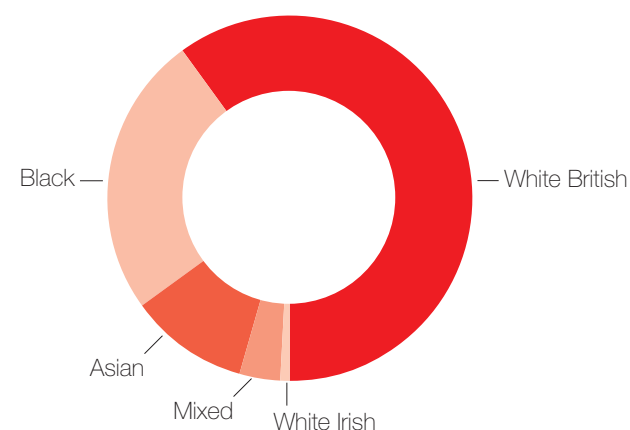
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Domestic Violence
Women we
supported

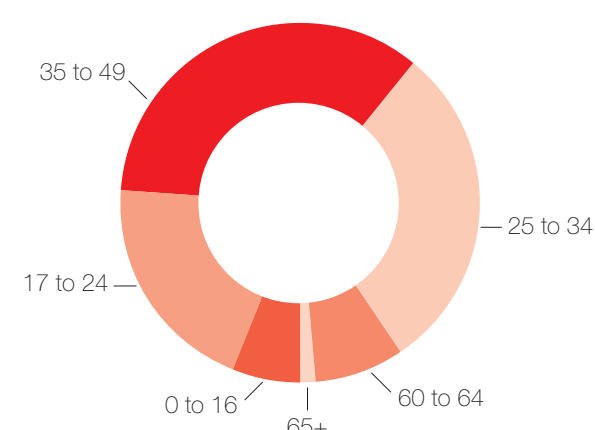
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Domestic Violence
Counselling
clients

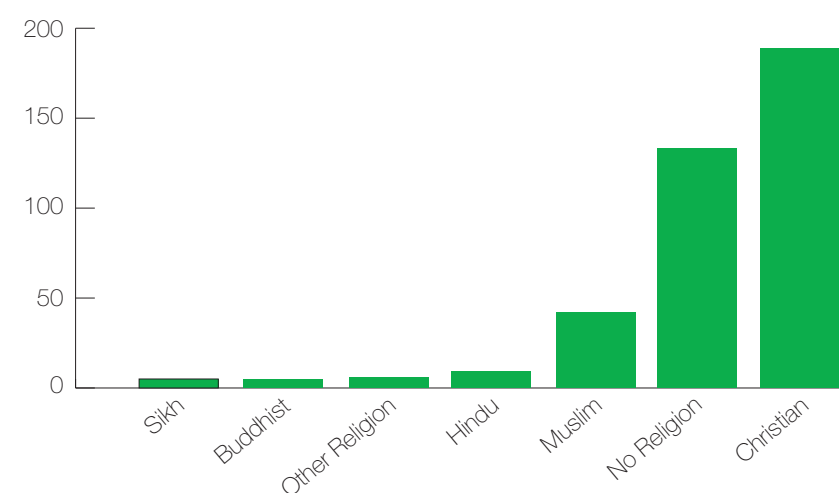
DV Client distribution by Ethnicity



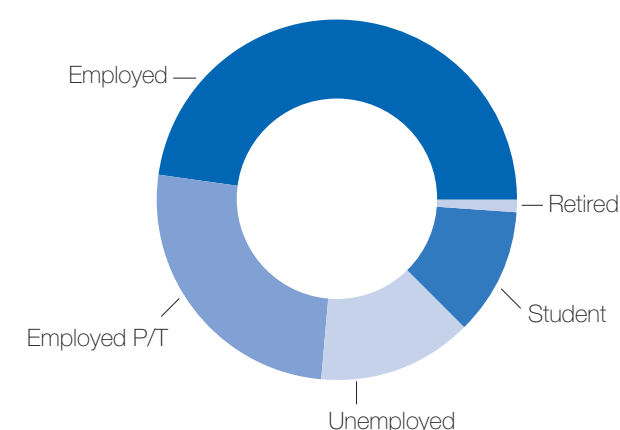
DV Client distribution by Age



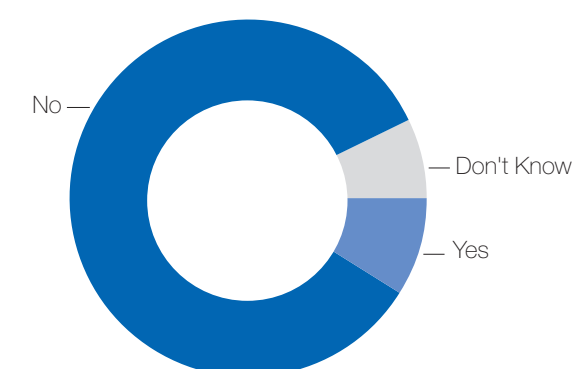
DV Client distribution by Religion



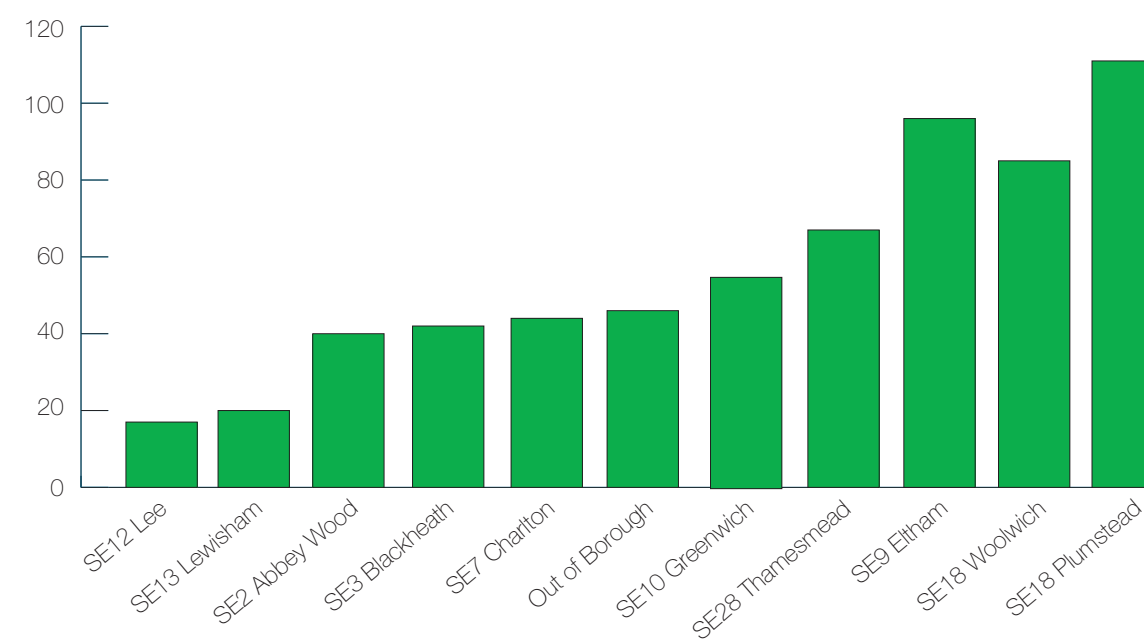
DV Client Distribution by Employment



DV Client Distribution by Disability



DV Client Distribution by Postcode





Two volunteers at young people's event

Her Centre Board of Trustees '15 -'16

Mariam Lolavar
Chair

Sinead Mandlik
Treasurer (resigned November 2015)

Samantha Woodgate
Fundraising sub-com. chair (resigned Feb 16)

Petra Galloway
Secretary (resigned February 2016)

Roxana Bucur
Fundraising chair from April 2015

Elly Virgo
Acting Chair from June 2016

Joanne Edwards

Chau Woeste

Vicky Creed
Treasurer from December 2015

Zabrina Smith
resigned February 2016

Jackie Wilks
joined February 2016

Sarah Partridge Smith
joined February 2016

Roschong Sedgewick
joined November 2016

Sophie Dixon
joined February 2016

 @HERCentre

 Her Centre

Our Thanks to our funders, supporters and volunteers

Royal Borough of Greenwich, Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, Lloyds Foundation, Henry Smith Charity. We would also like to thank all those who regularly give to Her Centre for their ongoing support.

Thanks to our English teaching volunteers Liz Fairclough, Leana Mover, and Leona Ellis, our law student volunteers Nistha Sharma, and ???, our steering group members Cassie Taylor (chair), Laila Nasery, Claire Wheeler, and Benedicte Ogunmefun, (who both also volunteered with the motivational group) and to Rose Wairega, our volunteer therapist.

Our thanks to our partners

We would also like to thank our partners for their ongoing and valuable support: Little Fish Theatre Company, Tryangle Project 2011, The Met Police Community Safety Unit, Walpole Residents Association, The SCD2 Unit, Brookhill Children's Centre, Hope, The Point, Metro Centre, Greenwich Association of Disabled People, Greenwich Inclusion Project, Greenwich Housing Rights, Homestart, Plumstead Law Centre, Meridian Money Advice, Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network and Greenwich DVA.

Our individual thanks to

Adelle Banks from Hudgell and Partners, James Appleton and all the Pilot Light volunteers (Geeta Gopalan, Navin Raina, Amy Malik and Rupy Malizia), Teresa Pearce MP, Matthew Pennycook MP, Councillor Jackie Smith for her support to us and to our peer support partners, and Councillor Gary Parker for his support to our organisation.



Some of Her Centre Staff



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