

Looking backwards, facing forwards

Summary 2019
Business Plan

*Our vision is that
all women and
girls enjoy good
mental health
and flourish*

Women's Counselling
and Therapy Service



Chair's introduction

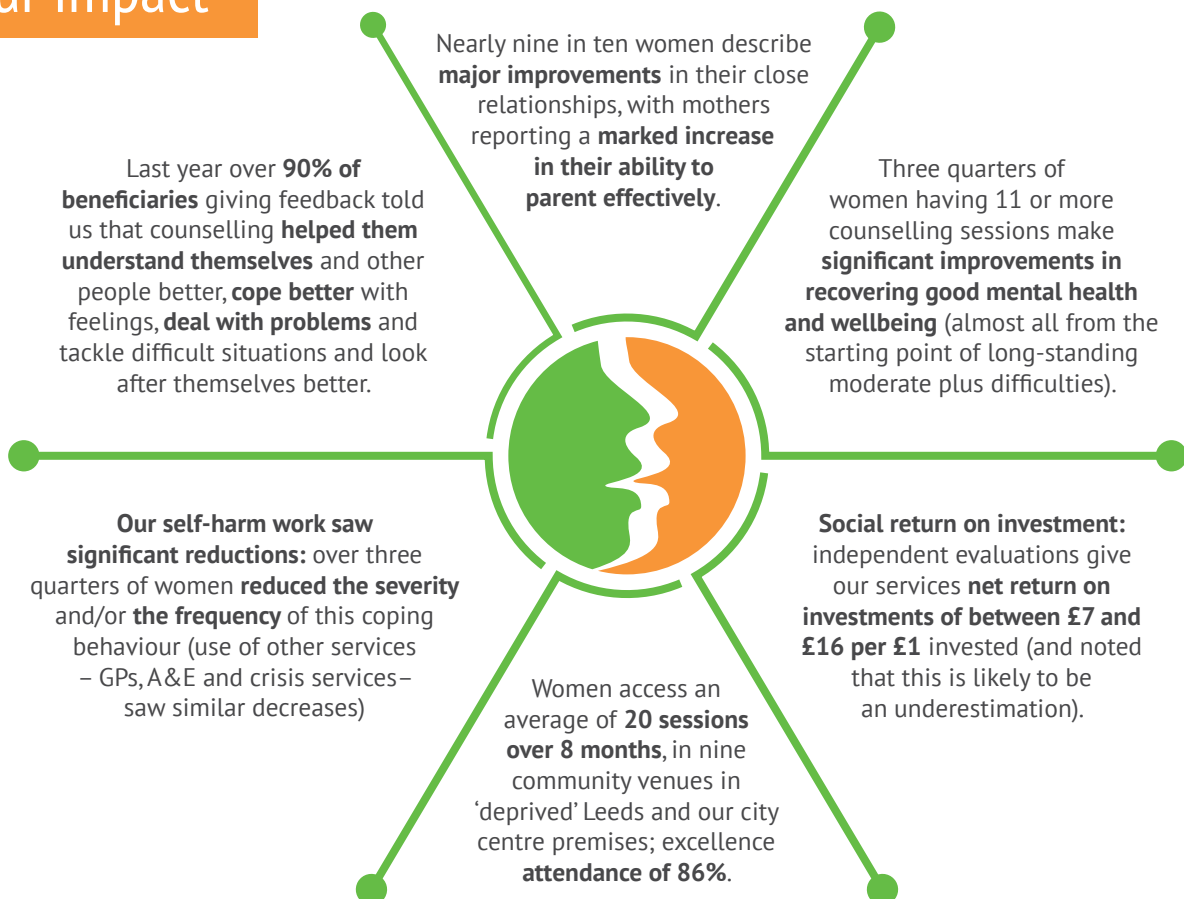
As the Chair of the Trustee Board, I am delighted to introduce the summary business plan for WCTS.

Our plan builds on the excellent work that the organisation has delivered over the past 38 years whilst clearly articulating our desire to develop. These innovative developments will enable WCTS to remain responsive, relevant and flexible to the needs of women and girls today and in the future.

We remain committed to ensuring a space for our work with women and girls remains in the city, and that we use the positive and meaningful outcomes of our work to influence service delivery across Leeds and beyond.

Alyson Scott

Our impact





We support disadvantaged and marginalised women and girls facing complex health and social situations to recover from experiences of abuse, violence, neglect, trauma and mental ill health.

Through our 2015–2018 strategy we achieved great progress.

- 🌀 We reached over 400 women and girls a year; helping them to stop feeling suicidal, reduce self-harming behaviours, feel better about themselves, make great choices right for who they are, feel better about their relationships, get a first job or a better job, be happier with their parenting, achieve important goals
- 🌀 We supported women who are leaders in their communities to do more of what they want helping other women, young women and girls with shared challenges, getting more from life in Leeds and giving more
- 🌀 We strengthened our relationships with partners working together to make more of a difference
- 🌀 We hosted Visible – a cross sector partnership improving health and wellbeing for adult survivors of child sexual abuse
- 🌀 We are part of Women's Lives Leeds, empowering women and girls to influence and shape Leeds life and supporting those with the most complex needs.

And we want to do more...

One in five women and girls experience child sexual abuse, exploitation or sexual assault or rape. 25% of young adults have been severely maltreated during childhood. One in ten experience severe neglect.

More and more women and girls are coming forward to disclose non-recent child sexual abuse.

One in four women experience sustained domestic abuse for an average of three years before finding effective help. Two women a week in the UK are killed by their current or ex-partner.

The wellbeing of girls and young women is declining:

- 14% of under 16s experience mental health problems.
- Young women aged 17–19 are two-thirds more likely than younger girls (and twice as likely as their male peers) to experience poor mental health.
- There has been an almost doubling of hospital admissions for self-harm among girls since 1997.



We are...

...strengthening, empowering

- We strive to offer relationships that strengthen and empower; we support individual autonomy.

...women and girls centred

- We focus on working with women and girls because of deep and persistent gender inequalities; we are informed and shaped by the views of women and girls who use the service.

...diversity minded

- We work to be holistically accessible and responsive; we develop innovative and sensitive solutions appropriate to need.

...safe, thoughtful, kind

- We seek to be attentive, attuned and connected; we listen carefully and respectfully.

...unique

- We are the specialist women's mental health charity in Leeds, with expertise in understanding women's psychological issues, experiences and dilemmas.
- We offer services up to two years within a commitment to long term work believing that long-term work is needed to overcome traumatic experiences and entrenched difficulties.
- Central to the service is our relational approach: seeing each woman as a unique individual, listening to and understanding her experiences and building trust in a psychotherapeutic relationship.

How our service works

Our expertise

- 🌱 Qualified experienced practitioners
- 🌱 Therapists have over 16 years' experience, on average' with this client group
- 🌱 Commitment to Continuing Professional Development
- 🌱 Culturally-appropriate, kind, rigorous, personalised, flexible services

Determined women and girls improving their lives despite multiple disadvantages and challenges

Evidence-based practice

- 🌱 Proven therapeutic models
- 🌱 Deep understanding of issues through research and application of theory
- 🌱 Working with partners to ensure access to holistic responses to needs
- 🌱 Constant evaluation and learning

Our service elements – opportunities for reparative relationships promoting healing and recovery

- 🌱 **Counselling** for stabilisation and resilience; building internal strength and safety
- 🌱 **Case work** for practical issues impinging on therapy: domestic abuse relate housing, benefits, accessing wider health services, legal advice, parenting and schools etc
- 🌱 **Community provision** in 'deprived' Leeds reaching isolated and marginalised communities of women and girls. Training and support for community leaders and peer supporters.
- 🌱 **Psychotherapy** to gain better understandings of how we think and act, the ongoing impacts of formative years and of traumatic experiences
- 🌱 Fast access, **brief intervention**, face to face support and signposting service around mental health
- 🌱 **Improving access** – supporting the professional development of trainee BME counsellors (partnership with LYPFT)

Improved mental health and wellbeing

Better resilience – responding well to life's setbacks

Healthier choices

Increased self-confidence, self-esteem and self-care

Effective, loving parenting

More positive thoughts, feelings, understandings

Safer lives

Realising potential

Achieving goals

Healthy relationships

Our approach

Adaptive: In our complex, rapidly changing and unpredictable work we take an adaptive approach to move forward with focus and flexibility. We respond creatively to opportunity and adversity. We learn from our actions, and act on our learning.

Innovative: We collaborate with others to develop and test new ideas. We pursue long-term goals and look for innovation.

Interdependence: We believe every part is connected to the whole, we work with others.

We have five main goals for 2019–2024

GOAL ONE

Deliver an increasing range of effective psychotherapeutic / mental health services with a focus on trauma, continuing to work in partnership across Leeds.

- 🌀 Reaching 550+ women and girls annually by 2024
- 🌀 Maintaining high quality and outcomes
- 🌀 Increasing services at community venues and consolidating access for those particularly marginalised through innovative outreach in partnership

GOAL TWO

Increase the breadth of intervention to cover mental health promotion – prevention/targeted. Specialist, with services including short / brief, medium and long-term relationship / connection.

- 🌀 Communicate key messages for women and girls' mental health
- 🌀 Raise awareness and publish mental health resources focused on women and girls self-help
- 🌀 Work with commissioners to target high risk groups



GOAL THREE

Promote understanding of and support for women and girls' mental health, and increase awareness and perception of WCTS – including developing an integrated marketing / fundraising plan, increasing funder partnerships and undertaking research.

- 🌱 Capture and publish learning from first 40 years of service
- 🌱 Develop and implement digital marketing and media / PR strategies
- 🌱 Recruit, train, support and deploy a team of spokespeople

GOAL FOUR

Build unique benefit and expand income-generating activity, to include trading, through developing training, consultancy and educational workshops, improving the effectiveness of others' work with women and girls.

- 🌱 Sustainably increase income by 10% annually; turnover reaches £800,000+
- 🌱 Source funding for dedicated Business Development capacity
- 🌱 Develop and establish net trading income of 5% of turnover by 2022

GOAL FIVE

Consolidate organisational excellence, capacity and resilience through innovation and improvement, assuring quality throughout.

- 🌱 Continue to develop our offer to ensure our services are fit for the evolving needs of our beneficiary group
- 🌱 Establish a strategic approach to User Involvement and Leadership
- 🌱 Undertake Investors in People benchmarking exercise

WCTS reaches 40 years of service in 2021. Established by thoughtful, passionate psychotherapists and psychologists determined to help others, we are fortunate to have had the support of many such women and allies over the years. In our trustee board, our staff team and our partners and stakeholders we continue to do so.

I believe my journey is long but my therapist really helped me gain an understanding I was looking for and now I can begin to start moving forwards, I will forever be grateful.

This has been an incredibly helpful experience for me. I got further than I thought I would, it helps me daily in dealing with ongoing challenges.

Your service is outstanding.



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