

*Windsor
Women's
Centre*

Celebrating 25 Years

*Annual Report
2015/2016*



**Windsor Women's Centre is a place for learning and growing,
through education and personal development, women are gaining
skills, knowledge and confidence to make a better life for ourselves
and our families and to have a stronger voice in the wider Community.**

Chairperson's Introduction

It is with pleasure that I introduce the Annual Report in this very special year of the Centre's 25th Anniversary. The Centre has been a welcoming hub, of friendship and learning for women and their children in this community, with many of our past "Crèche children" now bringing their own children to the Centre. Despite the uncertainty of the financial climate and lack of long term funding the Centre has managed to maintain its services through the Advice, Education, Childcare and Health & Wellbeing Departments. With approximately 300 people each week using the services.

As we predicated last year the cuts in funding have severally impacted on the level of services we can deliver, we can no longer offer the same range of accredited training courses and are dependent on volunteers to deliver some courses. Many of the parents who use the Children's services depend on the high quality, and above all affordable Daycare to allow them to access education, training and part-time work, again the funding for our Day-care is in jeopardy as the funding for the Women's Centre's Childhood Fund is under review. The resilience of the staff team and the women of this community to carry on with the work of the Centre in spite of such uncertainty is commendable and on behalf of the Management Committee I would like to extend our thanks to all the staff team. I've no doubt their efforts will ensure that the Centre will continue to be the vibrant place of activity, support, safety and empowerment for all women in our community.

Nuala McAuley
Chairperson

WINDSOR WOMENS CENTRE

The Windsor Womens Centre works within a community development framework to develop and promote equality of opportunity and champion practices and policies to better the lives of women and their families.



Chief Executive Officer Report

It's hard to believe that 25 years have passed since I first took up my Job-share role with Job Poots to develop the Windsor Women's Centre. It was hard work, but an exciting time, working with fantastic local women who wanted to make their community a better place for their families to grow up in. From small beginnings in a house in Rockview Street the demand for services and the aspirations of the women culminated in a successful application to enable us to create the first purpose built Women's Centre in Northern Ireland. Our history and development is rooted in the foundations of local women's activism and we continue to respond to the needs of women through the delivery of services and projects which address disadvantage and inequalities for all women.

Our newest addition the TATE building is now dedicated to delivering therapeutic health and wellbeing services for women. Along with the Community garden the TATE provides an excellent community resource to support the health needs of our services users. We have provided a free professional confidential Counselling and Complementary service that was accessed by 122 people this year. The Harvest Health, Community Pharmacy Project and the Revive project utilised the garden to promote awareness of sustainable living along with harnessing the power of nature to heal and live happier and healthier. The progress of the garden from rubble to a little oasis has been followed by regular slots on Radio Ulsters Gardeners Corner and is a source of great pride for our staff and Volunteers to be contributing to a positive image of this community.

This year we launched a new service to support families when they need it most – The South Belfast Family Support Hub 2; which we have named CASA, Collaborative Approach to Services for All families. CASA which will be administrated by our new member of staff Karolina Morgan, will bring together agencies from across the statutory, community and voluntary sector to work collaboratively and provide a joined-up response to families who request support. We hope CASA will be another valuable strand to add to our delivery of services which improve the lives of women and families in our community and South Belfast.

Chief Executive Officer – Eleanor Jordan



Education & Capacity Building

The fundamental ethos of women's community based Education is that every woman should have the right to access education, training and life enhancing opportunities in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.

Our education department acknowledges the additional caring roles of women, and how lack of childcare has a major impact upon their ability to access opportunities which would reduce their vulnerability to poverty and economic disadvantage. Therefore, we take a 'holistic' approach with participants which ensures that their educational needs are supported by the dovetailing of the Centre's other services such as Childcare, Family Support, Advice, Counselling and Health and Wellbeing programmes.

The impact of the loss of funding for our education programme and staff redundancies has severely limited the Centre's education programme. As we are operating with a reduced staff team we have reduced office hours to provide support for our service users. As the only Women's Centre in South Belfast we know we provide not only a much needed wrap round service to local women but to Women across South Belfast. This includes a wonderful diversity of students using the Centre from other countries such as Bangladesh, Bulgaria, China, Czech Republic, Eritrea, Iran, Italy Malta, Nigeria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Thailand. This diversity was harnessed on International Women's Day when we had talks given by our service users on how life was for women in their countries of origin, along with a feast of international food and activities and thanks to our volunteer tutors we have managed to continue to offer ESOL classes.

This year 124 women engaged in our education and capacity building programme:

VTCT Diploma in IHM

DVTCT Diploma in Reflexology

OCN Essential Skills, Literacy, Numeracy, I.T.

C& G Level 1 Award Business Admin,

CPCAB Certificate in Counselling Level 3

3 ESOL – Beginner Intermediate and Advanced English as a Second Language

Additionally we also ran short professional and personal development courses: First Aid, Child Protection training and Steps to success, Nutrition and Healthy lifestyle courses, crafts and gardening.

Satya Roberts,
Education Manager



Activities and Events



Cooking Alfresco

June 12th 2015

TATE Garden



Gala Ball at Malone Lodge Hotel





Opening T.A.T.E. our dedicated community Health Hub in Oct. 2013, was a great achievement for us, earning us a William Keown Prestige Access Award and a nomination from Belfast City Council for a Pride of Place Award. Previously, we could not accommodate on-site counselling services and had limited non-dedicated space for delivering health services. Now we have a beautiful 3 floor facility and garden providing us with the increased capacity to deliver services and facilitate work with regional organisations such as Mindwise and Solas' Autism specialists.

We have a Public Health Agency Health project to build mental health resilience by delivering free, professional support such as Counselling, Complementary therapies, therapeutic art, horticulture and Mindfulness,

This year we provided:

200 counselling sessions

317 complementary therapy sessions

3 Public Health Information Days

We have a holistic approach to health and wellbeing and support the health needs of users with integrated projects such as the Community Pharmacy Partnership -Harvest Health Project and our Gardening and partnership working with the Conservation Volunteers. With our local Pharmacist partner Martin Kerr we have for the past year developed a participant-led health programme on a range of health conditions such as health and lifestyle choices, managing long term chronic conditions, mental health, depression, and advice on medication and dependency on prescription drugs. Participants have 1-1 support from the pharmacist and we have included collaborations with specialist agencies on issues the group prioritised e.g. FASA, Aware Defeat Depression. Evaluated by CDHNS 'Tool-Kit', this projects outcomes were that: Participants gained information on their health issues and were enabled to make healthier choices and improvements to their lifestyle.

Martina Magee
Business Development Officer

Harvest Health Project

Spring Fair

Tuesday
21st April

10.00am—1.00pm

Windsor Women's Centre 136-144 Broadway

Welcomes you to the Launch of our new project

"Harvest Health" aims to improve participants' physical health and emotional well-being. Through interaction with the pharmacist and activities such as gardening and cookery participants will learn how to manage their health, improve their mental resilience and be more physically active.

Come along and enjoy a morning at Windsor.

Get info on up & coming courses

"Digital Memories" project is a fantastic opportunity to explore mental health & wellbeing through family generations & photography.

Local Pharmacist Martin Kerr will be holding an information session on Herbal Health to welcome the return of our Pharmacy project.



Sample some delicious smoothies

Take a Mindfulness class

Observe our new loveliness of ladybirds and watch them being released into our community garden.

Wander through the garden

Blossoms at Larne Lough will be on hand for gardening tips and advice

Enjoy a healthy nutritious lunch



Come along!
Everyone welcome



Windsor Women's Centre

invites you to celebrate

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On Friday 6th March from 10am to 1pm

10am- Mindfulness session to help you change the way you think about experiences and help to manage stress and anxiety

11am- Introducing our exciting new "HARVEST HEALTH" project to help you with physical health and emotional wellbeing

12pm- Self-defence for women to help highlight how to protect yourself with a few special moves

1pm- Lunch

For further information contact the Education team on 90235451 or call in to the Centre



Mind Full, or Mindful?

Don't let stress harm your mental health. Take our Mindfulness course and discover a positive way of reducing stress.

Mindfulness is an ancient Buddhist practice which is very relevant for life today. Mindfulness is a very simple concept. Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgementally. This increases awareness, clarity and acceptance of our present-moment reality.

Tuesday 21st April 2015

10.00am-12.00noon

5 weeks

To enrol on this course, contact a member of our Education & Training team on: 90235451.



Don't just look. observe.
Don't just swallow. taste.
Don't just sleep. dream.
Don't just think. feel.
Don't just exist. live.

The Revive Project

Windsor Women's Centre takes the issues of protecting and respecting the environment seriously. We won the Green Dragon Award for organisational environmental good practice in 2010 and have continued to pursue a strategy to promote the ethos of sustainable living and the role nature can play in wellbeing within our service delivery. Not only do we have a policies in place to reuse and recycle, but we also want local people to be able to do the same, particularly given the disadvantage and financial hardship they face and their need to maximise the resources they have. Therefore we were delighted this year with the support of the Challenge fund to be able to deliver the Revive project to 11 families and 22 children from our Crèche and After-schools service. The Revive project had three elements.

A Children's Programme: which enabled children to participate in a series of sessions in our community garden where they engaged in educational activities related to the outdoors and got involved in plot to plate cookery. They will also helped to develop an outdoor sensory area in the garden, particularly of benefit to children with additional needs, which stimulates their senses in a calm outdoor environment e.g. musical chimes, plants with scents, different shapes and sounds.

A Nutrition programme: for mothers to learn from a qualified nutritionist how to make healthier choices and lead a sustainable lifestyle using limited resources. Jayne hosted cookery classes, demonstrating family friendly recipes to try at home and where possible using ingredients grown in the garden.

A Well-being programme: In collaboration with Blossoms Nursery and Liz Hanvey a horticultural Therapist women participated in activities aimed to enhance health and well-being within a restorative outdoor environment. The healing power of nature to help to reduce feelings of anxiety, depression and stress is widely recognized. Liz guided participants in activities to build mental health resilience and use nature as a resource to manage stress.



Petals Day Care & Afterschools

Petals Daycare and Children's Services make a real difference to the life chances of children and young people in our area. Our Daycare is delivered on-site and is provided by a fully vetted, qualified and dedicated childcare staff team. Our ethos is to support parents and enrich children's lives through a quality programme of activities aimed to facilitate children's learning and address any delayed developmental issues. We have 5 childcare units with capacity for 76 children under the age of 4 daily and an After-schools unit for 15 children daily. The services delivered by Petal's childcare department this year included

Quality day-care for 0 - 4's 135 children registered

Pre-school Nursery – 12 children registered

A Summer scheme for 56 children

An additional needs 1-1 support project for 8 children

Respite care places

Activities for children such as Jujitsu, dance and monkeynastics.

The Children's Services play a big part in the life of the Centre and the Daycare staff are great at organizing occasions during the year to ensure that the Children experience a wealth of diversity and cultural experiences. In addition to the annual Summer Scheme which has great opportunities for the children to try new activities. The Daycare staff celebrated St Patrick's Day and Diwali and held a Halloween party. The Christmas extravaganza with a frozen theme, complete with a visit from Santa himself was a magical event for children and their families. The highlight however of our calendar was our Gala ball and the Family Fun Day for our 25th Anniversary. An enormous amount of organization went into these events which were a fantastic memorable way to mark our 25th year.

A magical Christmas at TATE in the garden – snow provided!



Celebrating 25 years with a community fun day - July 2015



Windsor Women's
Centre
celebrating
25 YEARS
of excellence



Fun Day!

11am-2pm
Thursday 2nd July

Magic
Show!

Burgers &
Hot Dogs

Balloon
Modelling!

Inflatables!

Face
Painting!

Special
Guests!



Glitter Tattoos!

PARTY



Advice service

Our Advice service continues to be a much needed vital service for many in this community. The introduction of welfare reform have left many people, particularly the elderly and vulnerable, fearful of how these changes will affect them and their families.

We offer an open door service, and a friendly welcome to all who seek our help. No matter how small or large the problem we will endeavor to assist service users with solutions to problems whether that entails signposting to other specialist advice units or to our wide network of organisations and agencies that can support the varied needs of our community.

This year we had 783 Clients and answered 1,613 enquires

We provided Clients with the following services:

Benefit Advice

We carry out an assessment that will indicate if you are entitled to any benefits, especially if you are elderly or disabled, as new policy changes may be able to provide extra help for you.

Application help

We help you to fill in applications for benefits and assist in the application process. We can help you respond to requests or contact from benefit providers and keep you informed.

Financial Advice

Should you find yourself in debt or overwhelmed by your financial commitments we assist with practical steps to put you back in control. We also provide tips on how to better organise your income

Housing help

If you are having housing problems of any kind, whether you need housing, need repairs or require assistance in any other way, we can help. We can also help with accessing social housing.

Additionally we continue as an Advice unit to contribute to the lobbying for human rights and equality to be central to Government policy. We liaise throughout the year with other agencies to support the vulnerable in this community such as Storehouse who can provide vital food parcels for service users on a six weekly basis and the Salvation Army and Depaul Christmas toy Appeal.

Advice Opening Times

Mon/Wed/Friday	9.30am until 12.30pm	Drop in Service
Monday/Wed/Friday	1.30pm until 4.30pm	Appointments including home visits
Thursday	1.30pm until 4.30 pm	Outreach at Morton Community Centre.

We can be reached on the following telephone numbers:

02890235451/07590429200.

Joanne Smit
Advice Worker



CITY OF BELFAST

Office of the Lord Mayor

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

PRESENTED TO

South Belfast Advice Consortium

In recognition of your outstanding service to your local community. Your tireless efforts and professional service demonstrated by your staff and volunteers is paramount in improving the quality of life for local people.

Arder Carson

Arder Carson
LORD MAYOR OF BELFAST

4 December 2015



Acknowledgements



Belfast City Council



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Ballynafeigh Community
Development Association
N.I. Community Health*

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