



saffron

Our Impact

Saffron Sheffield Impact Report 2021-22

*How our work changes the lives
of women in Sheffield*

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Welcome

“Saffron is an invaluable service that has literally changed my life.”

A Message from our CEO

Sometimes, when surrounded by the everyday pressures of my job, I can lose sight of why I choose to do what I do.

And then I read a sentence like the one above from a client’s feedback and it stops me in my tracks. Leading an organisation that impacts a woman’s future in this way is such a privilege. I don’t know her history or the traumatic events that led her to us, but I do know that her time with us has allowed the darkness to lift, the pain to lessen, and new hope to begin to grow.

Her story is just one of many that we have attempted to reflect in this report. Every number represents a woman who has suffered from significant trauma but is healing and has started to thrive again.

Joining Saffron’s story at a time when the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted almost every aspect of our service has been extraordinary. Seeing how our staff and clients pulled together to face the challenges of remote working will continue to have a lasting impact on me and our service. This passion, focus and commitment ensure we will continue to succeed and go from strength to strength.

I hope the impact of our work that you read about in this report is as encouraging and inspiring to you as it is to me.

Yours



Sarah Smart
CEO

Our Impact

Our Mission

By providing free, long-term specialist trauma counselling and psychotherapy in a safe and dedicated environment, Saffron Sheffield exists to help women recover from the impact of abuse and trauma on their mental health and wellbeing.

Saffron Sheffield, formally known as Sheffield Women’s Counselling and Therapy Service (SWCTS), was established in 1989 by a small group of volunteers concerned about the lack of accessible therapy services for women in Sheffield.

Over the past 3 decades, we’ve supported thousands of women dealing with issues both in childhood and as an adult, such as:

- Sexual abuse, violence or exploitation
- Domestic abuse and violence, including coercive control
- Honour-based violence and female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Torture and trafficking
- Being a victim or witness of a crime or an accident
- “County lines” or the exploitation of children and vulnerable people to aid illegal drugs distribution
- Emotional abuse
- Childhood neglect

Outputs and Outcomes 2021–22

We have increased the number of women we work with and provided almost 700 more therapy sessions from the previous year with strong results. Here’s the detail:

Registrations

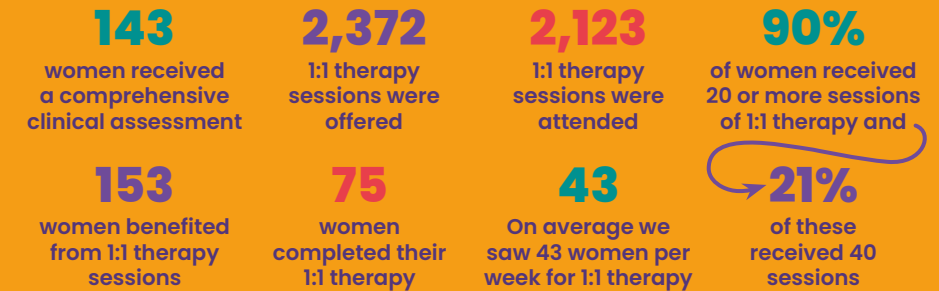
Over the past two years demand for our service has increased significantly;



Wellbeing



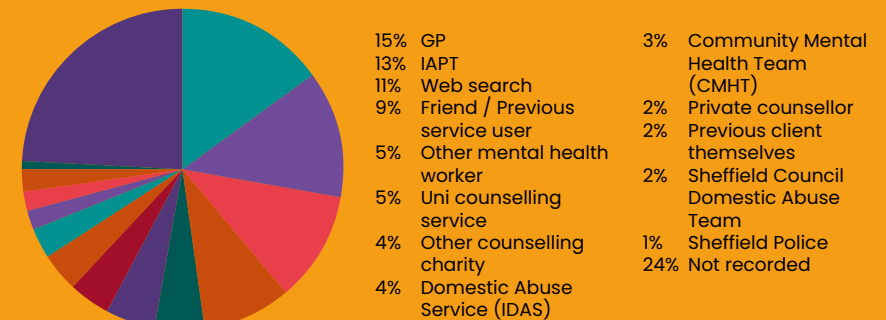
1:1 Therapy



Social Outcomes



How did our clients hear about us?



Our Approach

We are...

Client Centred

We tailor our talking therapy to meet each woman's needs by offering between 6 and 40 sessions, depending on their need at the time of their first assessment. No two women are the same. Most of our clients have multiple adverse experiences which can lead to feelings of worthlessness, shame and isolation and result in depression, anxiety, flashbacks, self-harming or thoughts of suicide.

Some women will need more initial sessions for stabilisation or psycho-education before they begin to work on their specific trauma. We always work at a client's own pace. Working through, articulating and exploring powerful and conflicting emotions and feeling valued, heard and believed is crucial to the healing process.

We use clinical diagnostic tools, self-reported outcomes, focus groups, external evaluations, and personal testimonies during the assessment process. An initial 'starting point' assessment to confirm whether a client is suitable for our service is undertaken, followed by a more comprehensive clinical assessment to obtain a detailed picture of symptoms and risks - including psychiatric history - and a timeline of past traumas and adverse life events. Two further assessments are undertaken, one during and one at the end of their therapy.

Long Term

We are currently the only third-sector service provider in Sheffield offering up to 40 weeks of free 1:1 therapy for women who have experienced complex and multiple traumas.

Our service is designed to meet the needs of traumatised women for whom other pathways or services are unsuitable or have been ineffective for them.

Working intensively and in-depth positively impacts all aspects of our client's lives. By offering longer-term therapy at a pace suited to the client, our therapists can work holistically to support women not only to manage their symptoms but to process their traumas and rebuild their lives. Our clients tell us that our work is life-changing and, in some cases, life saving. In recent years due to the pandemic and other external circumstances we

have seen an interesting change regarding our long term therapy offer. 98% of women needed 20 or more sessions in 21/22 (90% in 19/20) and 21% of these were offered 40 sessions (8% in 19-20). This could mean that in the future rather than seeing a higher output of women undertaking therapy, we will see a significantly higher number of therapy sessions each woman is offered.

Safe

We recognise and understand our responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of our clients whilst they are under our care.

We have robust safeguarding policies and processes for at-risk adults and children that all staff are expected to follow. Setting boundaries is crucial for the delivery of our service and we carry out client risk assessments at several stages throughout the therapy journey.

Our therapists have regular clinical supervision to ensure they stay emotionally healthy by reflecting on their thoughts and feelings about a client and maintaining professional and ethical boundaries.

In exceptional circumstances, our need to safeguard clients from serious harm, or to comply with the law, may require us to breach their confidentiality. We will always do our best to manage these situations with respect and sensitivity.

As an organisation, we are keen to embed lived experience voices within the leadership and development of Saffron for the long term. However, we are acutely aware that our clients are not often immediately ready to be a part of such activity when they reach the end of their therapy. We will always ensure that our ongoing approach regarding this is considered, appropriate, responsible, and not influenced by any external pressures.

For Women

Our service was established to recognise the unique social and economic disadvantages facing women and the specific ways they are impacted by abuse and trauma. We have always had a high demand for our service, and we don't expect this to change anytime soon.

Being a specialised single-sex service allows us to provide a safe environment for vulnerable victims of abuse and trauma that avoids triggering memories. Research tells us that women prefer to use women-only services within different contexts, especially when they have been victims of sexual abuse.

Without single-sex services such as Saffron in Sheffield, many women would not get the support they need.

Of course, we recognise that it is not only women who are impacted by abuse and trauma, and we have compassion for anyone who needs therapeutic help to recover. We are always ready to offer signposting support to other, more appropriate organisations or services.

Free

We believe that our high-quality, specialised service should be accessible to all women who have experienced trauma or abuse, regardless of their personal circumstances. Because of this, our therapy and wellbeing activity is entirely free for all our clients.

Our service is fully funded through the generosity of others - individuals, businesses, trusts and statutory bodies.

Collaborative

Working in partnership with other professionals and organisations is something that we value. Sharing expertise and learning has helped us develop more efficient processes, improve service delivery and bolster therapeutic relationships.

If appropriate and helpful, and with consent from the client, a therapist will co-work with GPs and other health professionals. We work in partnership with the NHS, complementing their therapy offer rather than replicating it.

We are also active members of the below boards, groups and networks. This enables us to more fully understand current needs and demands, support each other and shape the strategic direction of services.

Sheffield Psychologies Board

End Violence Against Women and Girls (WAVES) Network

Mental Health Partnership Network (MHPN)

The Survivor's Trust

Sheffield Mental Health Alliance

Sheffield City Council's Domestic and Sexual Abuse Provider Consultation Group

Voluntary Action Sheffield

Clinical Lead Network

Sheffield VAWG Forum

“Therapy has been a great help to me to put things into perspective, not over think things and become more assertive.”

“My therapist listened attentively and made me feel valued.”

Our Challenges

As with many other organisations, the Covid-19 pandemic had and continues to have an unprecedented impact on our clients and service delivery.

The pandemic has been destabilising for women’s mental health, worsening depression, anxiety, panic attacks, flashbacks, self-harm and suicidality. Our clients struggled to cope with:

- ongoing economic pressures of job loss or job insecurity;
- children not being in school;
- bereavement and restrictions on attendance at funerals;
- continuing restrictions on attendance at hospitals and care homes;
- delayed hospital appointments and treatments;
- re-engaging with life post-lockdowns.

We have also felt the impact with staff needing to quarantine or take sick leave due to infection.

Other external impacts on our clients have included:

- traumatic events reported on media – such as the murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021 – and the resulting lack of trust in the police force regarding support for prosecutions and general safety;
- the sudden war in Ukraine creating fear and concern for self and others.

We are also very aware that the cost of living crisis will have a negative impact on the therapeutic recovery of some of our clients. Whilst we are not a crisis service, we are looking at ways we can offer further support through connecting with other services, and providing free, hygiene and toiletry items in our bathrooms for clients to take discretely if they are in need.

In the first year of the pandemic, our premises in Upperthorpe became unfit for use. The Trustees agreed that the hiring out of rooms at our premises on Abbeydale Road would cease from 31 October 2021. This became our registered address in October 2021, and we moved our service across Sheffield in November 2021.

Our People

Our trustees and staff are committed to delivering an effective, professional service. They have genuine care and empathy for the women we work with. Their hard work and dedication is Saffron's strength. Currently, our people are;

Our Board of Trustees

Pamela Marshall - Chair
Ahmina Akhtar - Deputy Chair
Teresa Allewell - Treasurer
Judith Dodds
Stephanie Allen
Olivia Sinclair
Emma Draper
Gill Godden
Sade Ladejobi

Our Staff

Sarah Smart - Chief Executive
Ingrid Harris - Head of Clinical Services
Danielle Hogan - Office Manager
Keren Bramman - Finance Manager
Hannah Poulson - Admin Assistant
Alison Buchanan - Fundraiser
Clare Sherratt - Associate Fundraiser

Due to the sensitive nature of our work, we do not make public all the names of our therapists. In addition to those listed above, on our staff team, we have

2 part-time senior therapists
3 part-time staff therapists
6 associate therapists
3 volunteer therapists

“I’m very grateful for all the care and support I’ve been given. It’s a very strange but good feeling to not be judged or blamed on thoughts, feelings and the life experiences I’ve lived through.”

Our Future

The past three years have been a time of considerable growth and change for Saffron as we navigated and thrived through a global pandemic.

The below table shows our significant increase of income and expenditure since 2019.

Year	Income	Expenditure
2019 - 2020	£153,184	£205,763
2020 - 2021	£303,068	£210,051
2021 - 2022	£249,272	£274,996

The number of 1:1 therapy sessions we deliver has also increased year on year.

Year	Sessions
2019 - 2020	1453
2020 - 2021	1697
2021 - 2022	2123

Key personnel changes occurred before and during the lockdown, including recruiting a new CEO, Chair of Trustees and 3 new Trustees.

During 2021-22, we recruited two new staff therapists and two volunteer therapists. The need to increase our support capacity became apparent, so we also recruited two new roles; Finance Manager and Administration Assistant and our Office Coordinator has been promoted to Office Manager. We recruited our first part-time fundraiser at the end of 2022 to ensure sustained income levels in response to increased demand for our service.

Perhaps the most unexpected change was the shift to remote working - unimaginable before the pandemic - and a speedy move to implement digital into our service delivery. In September 2021, we decided to make our blended offer of face-to-face, online or telephone therapy a permanent change in our service delivery.

There is now a need to focus on sustainability of our income and service levels, which will allow us to think more clearly about the longer-term future. This year we began to implement a three-year strategic plan, developed by our CEO, across all aspects of the charity. The plan aims to ensure we become an even more robust, resilient and sustainable organisation able to plan for further growth to support the increasing numbers of women in Sheffield suffering from the effects of trauma and/or abuse.

The plan includes:

- risk audits of our policies and processes starting with data control and IT security;
- an ongoing review of our service rationale and objectives including our long term offer of therapy;
- improvement of our HR practices;
- continued diversification of our funding streams and;
- a review of our external messaging.

As an organisational member of the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP), we remain committed to keeping up to date with guidance and regulations relating to our service delivery and providing appropriate staff training.

Our Structure & Governance

Sheffield Women's Counselling and Therapy Service Limited is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 15 November 1989 and registered as a charity on 26 March 1992. Sheffield Women's Counselling and Therapy Service Limited adopted the trading name Saffron Sheffield in 2019.

Our Board of Trustees ensure we are governed effectively and responsibly according to our Memorandum and Articles of Association. They meet monthly with the CEO, and receive quarterly reporting from the CEO, Head of Clinical Service and Finance Manager. They delegate responsibility for day-to-day management of Saffron Sheffield to the CEO.

Risk Management

We believe it to be good practice to carry out risk management activities appropriate to our service. Our trustees and CEO regularly review our risk register in order to be confident that we are managing our organisational risks and opportunities appropriately. In early 2022, the trustees developed the following overarching risk appetite statement;

“We accept degrees of risk in delivering our strategy to provide specialist counselling and psychotherapy to help women in Sheffield recover from the impact of abuse and trauma on their mental health and wellbeing. We recognise that our risk appetite will vary. We will base all of our decisions on the opportunity, completion of appropriate due diligence, and review of the identified risks. To be successful, Saffron must remain a robust and financially sustainable organisation with sufficient capacity to support our core stakeholders, and therefore we must manage our core risks. We will address situations and take actions where our reputation is at risk from unacceptable behaviours or values by our staff or volunteers.”

“My therapy with Saffron has left me in a better place with my mental health than I have been in a very long time.”

Our Finances

(Our full accounts are available on our website)

In 2021-22 we raised £249,272

Donations - £11,945

Trusts & Foundations - £130,345

Government Grants - £105,461

Trading - £1,521

In 2021-22 we invested £274,996 into our service*

Service Delivery - £225,810

Premises & Overheads - £21,840

Governance & Professional Services - £7,910

Fundraising - £19,436

Our net current assets at the end of March 2022 are £174,610, including £103,000 as free reserves.

Previous Years	Income	Expenditure	Net Current Assets
2020-21	£303,068	£210,051	£196,589
2019-20	£153,184	£205,763	£99,827

We own our premises at 289 Abbeydale Road outright - a fixed, tangible asset of £142,305.

* We were able to invest more than we raised in 2021-22 due to a surplus from the previous year which we carried forward.

Reserves & Service Continuity

We hold reserves each year as part of our resource and risk management to ensure our resilience to:

- meet expenditure commitments in the event of cash flow difficulties which could otherwise bring about an interruption to service for our clients;
- pay for unforeseen expenditures or;
- enable the winding up of the charitable company in the event of ceasing to operate.

The amount we hold as free reserves is calculated as four months of fixed and essential running costs and a provision for any staff redundancies.

Because we provide up to 40 sessions for women with multiple and complex trauma, we must ensure continuity of service for our clients. We always aim to raise a significant amount of income in the previous financial year, and we do not classify these secured funds as part of our free reserves.

Our Thanks

A huge thank you to all individuals and businesses whose generosity and efforts in fundraising have contributed to helping us provide our service to so many women.

Thank you also to the following trusts, foundations and statutory bodies for their support during 2021 & 2022. We are totally dependent on this generosity from our donors. Without it, our work would be impossible.

NHS Sheffield CCG

Sheffield Town Trust

The JG Graves Charitable Trust

The Cutlers Company Charitable Trust

The Henry Smith Charity

Lloyds Bank Foundation

South Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner

Rosa

South Yorkshire Community Foundation

The Brelms Trust

The James Neill Trust Fund

The Talbot Trusts

Wesleyan Foundation

The Zachary Merton & George Woofindin Convalescent Trust

The Big Give Women & Girl's Fund

Hyman Winstone Foundation

The Evan Cornish Foundation

The Charles & Elsie Sykes Trust

Sheffield City Council

The Arnold Clark Community Fund

The Co-Operative Bank Community

The Gripple Foundation

“The service is extremely helpful and I’m not too sure where I’d be without it.”

Saffron Voices

“Therapy with Saffron has been amazing! I have finally worked through some things I’ve needed to for a long time and I feel less stuck in the past. I finally feel present for the first time in a long time.”

“I feel lighter and I can be at peace with my experiences.”

“I feel very safe and comfortable with Saffron and I am very thankful for the help I have received.”

“My therapist has enabled me to understand my behaviours, particularly how I respond to situations linked to my trauma. They are helping me to be kind to myself.”

“My therapist supported and inspired me to get better.”

“I’m learning to have boundaries and give myself space when I need it. Using ‘no’ has become easier for me.”

“The counselling I have had has enabled me to understand my feelings better. I’ve been able to explore what happened to me and “repack” it in a better way.”

“I have felt really supported and reassured by my therapist and other staff. This has made me feel safe and comfortable to delve into big subjects. That in turn has helped me progress more quickly in my therapy.”

“I’ve found this service so helpful, I’ve learned a lot about myself and my wellbeing has improved massively.”

“The therapy I have had with Saffron has been a unique opportunity for me to have time to process and understand what happened to me in an abusive marriage and its aftermath. I don’t know where else I would have found this help at a really important turning point in my life.”

“My therapist was amazing at reflecting my thoughts back to me in such a way that I could explore the guilt and shame I had been carrying for over 20 years and start to let it go.”

“I’ve been holding on to trauma, and disassociation was my norm. I am now more aware of myself and my environment. I recognise I have a long way to go, but it’s exciting!”

saffron

Sheffield Women's Counselling
and Therapy Service

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Sheffield Women's Counselling and Therapy Service Ltd trading as Saffron Sheffield is a registered charity in England (1010129) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England (02443288) at 289 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield S7 1FJ