



## IMPACTS OF STIGMA

A comic about mental health created by women who have experienced sexual abuse and homelessness



## Self-Stigma

My experience of self-stigma occurred as a child when I was hospitalised for psychiatric illness



I learnt as a kid from the doctors and nurses:

- 'You are not well'
- 'You're mentally ill, not abused or neglected'
- 'You're delusional'
- 'You are sick'
- 'You're psychotic, therefore your thinking is flawed'


You're over emotional. You have a diagnosis of 'Emotional Unstable Personality Disorder'

04

## E.U.P.D.

I was taken to hospital after an overdose.

The nurse was so kind Till she read my files



Her behaviour changed...

When she saw my diagnosis of Emotional Unstable Personality Disorder

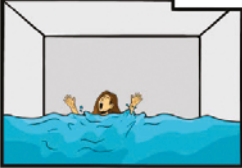
UNTREATABLE!

I was viewed as an attention seeker, rather than my using self-harm as a coping strategy

Now I know that

THE E.U.P.D LABEL IS MY STIGMA

It is like a basement I can't get out of...

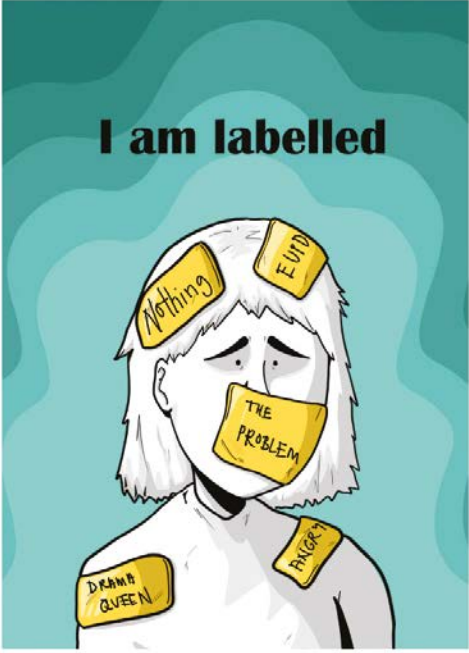


... and it's flooding

06

I am alone, isolated, barred from help and scared to ask for fear of being judged. The noise is deafening.

## I am labelled



07

Women face judgement and stigma due to societal prejudice **AND YET THEY SURVIVE AND FLOURISH.**



**Our charity has a young dynamic team dedicated to its work and the young women tell us that we are unique in the service we provide. We will continue to listen to what they need and adapt to changing circumstances to secure the brilliance that is SAY Women.**

With our services running as normal this year, we were glad to have a full compliment of staff and to expand some of our services. However, anxiety from Covid lockdowns and the cost of living crisis continue to impact our young women. More new referrals were from young women in crisis and we continued to help out with food vouchers when we could.

The housing crisis is also causing us problems – three of our young women are ready to leave our Accommodation Project but have not been able to due to lack of housing. This has a major impact on their wellbeing at an anxious time, and prevents us from giving more young women the support they desperately need. However, we have finally been able to start the work to split the shared flat into two, so our capacity will soon be back up to 8 for the first time since Covid.

“

I feel so lucky to be here but also guilty that my friend doesn't have somewhere like this. I wish there was a bigger service. All other services I've known give no support, where here we get so much. I look at my friend and the situation she finds herself in and it almost feels like this is me watching how my life would be if I hadn't come to SAY Women.

”

## Accommodation

Funded through Glasgow City Council

“

Giving me a place in SAY Women has taught me love and self-worth, you guys have done so much for me.

”

Supported **9** young women

**4** new young women joined the service

**3** young women exited:

**2** to their own tenancy;

**1** to student accommodation;

**0** returned to homelessness

Accommodation Flat



We provide short-term semi-supported accommodation to 16-25 year old young women who are survivors of sexual violence and are homeless as a result. Support is practical – teaching life skills like cooking and budgeting – and emotional as the young women start to deal with their experience of sexual abuse.

Work has started to convert the shared flat into two singles, which will be ready mid-2024. This flat has been vacant since Covid so we are glad we will soon be back to full capacity. The Morrisons Fund has enabled us to furnish the new flats comfortably for our young women and SHA has invested heavily to make the change in flat structure happen. Three young women have come to the end of their tenancies, but can't move out due to lack of housing.

This prolongs an anxious time for them and prevents more young women from starting their support.

The Scottish Government have recognised that we are in a Housing Crisis. We are waiting for the impact this announcement will have, but are not hopeful of immediate change.

“

All the staff understand me when no one else does, so thanks.

”

# Sessional Activities

Funded by the Scottish Government's Delivering Equally Safe Fund, these are fun activities that the young women usually haven't done before. They boost confidence and improve mental and physical health. This contributes to:

## Outcomes:

- >> Reduction in incidences of self-harm, substance use, etc
- >> Reduction in homelessness
- >> Increased attendance at 1:1 sessions and SunScale evaluations
- >> Increased reconnection with the wider community

### Some examples of the Sessional Activities

Baking & Cooking  
Eating Out  
Swimming Lessons

Cinema  
Pottery  
Flip Out

Horse Riding  
Roller Discos

“

It is great to have a laugh and not have to think about serious things for a wee while.

”

“

It feels great to have the power to choose what I want to eat as in the past I had no money to do this.

”

# Tenancy Sustainment for Survivors (TS4S)

**22** referrals this year

## In their tenancy:

- >> Fleeing violence, exploitation, abuse
- >> Personal and home hygiene
- >> Debt, rent arrears
- >> Maximising income
- >> Antisocial behaviour

## Support needs:

- >> Emotional & physical safety
- >> PTSD, flashbacks, nightmares
- >> Suicidal thoughts
- >> Self-harm
- >> Fear and anxiety
- >> Court preparation and support
- >> CP reviews support and advocacy
- >> Relationships and boundaries
- >> Understanding abuse and its impact

Our partnerships with Renfrewshire and North Lanarkshire Councils via their Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan continued, alongside a new partnership with South Lanarkshire Council funded by the Scottish Government's Homeless Prevention Fund. We increased referrals significantly, helping more young women to gain an understanding of abuse, how lived experience impacts on their tenancy and build helpful resources. Some continued their support by accessing our other emotional support services and groups.

However, Council funding was cut late in the period, so North and South Lanarkshire Councils will close TS4S on 1/4/24. As the Scottish Government has identified the need for a more gendered analysis to the *Ending Homelessness Together* action plan, more funding for this service is crucial, and we continue to push for our TS4S service in all council areas. Renfrewshire Council continue to see the benefit of this great work.

“

I've just never felt worthy of anything never mind my own flat, and the thought of having something secure, as weird as it sounds, it terrifies me, but I'm a human being, It's ok to struggle, I know I have so much support around me and I'm getting more comfortable asking for help and knowing that I can have my own wee haven.

”

Open Day



# Emotional Support 1:1

Funded by Glasgow City Council, Scottish Government Survivors Fund SOCAS, The Big Give and The Robertson Trust

**59 young women accessed the service**

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**27 young women received Crisis Support**

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**751 hours of support provided**

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**38 new referrals**

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**21 exits: 3 planned; 17 the young woman's decision; 1 suicide**

The number of young women accessing this service remained steady in the last year. Referrals have also remained steady, although more are from young women who are in a state of high anxiety. The cost of living crisis prevents them from establishing safety in order to deal with what has happened to them. Several of our young women still require help with food vouchers, which we provided thanks to generous donations and a grant from Scottish Power.

We have been able to provide a more consistent service to our young women this year thanks to the recruitment of two part-time Resource Workers, along with funding from The Big Give for a dedicated part-time Crisis Resource Worker to support young women as soon as they refer, so they are not left for months on a waiting list with no support.

SunScale evaluations show an overall improvement of **35%** for the SAY Women Outcomes and **53%** across the Outcomes chosen by the young women. In particular, the young women who chose Coping Strategies, Prioritising Myself and Health and Wellbeing showed an average improvement of **90%** in each category.

The areas chosen include:

- >> Anger
- >> Anxiety
- >> Prioritising myself
- >> Health and wellbeing
- >> Coping Strategies
- >> Flashbacks
- >> Confidence and self-esteem

Additional support by staff includes:

- >> Accompanying young women to court and accessing compensation
- >> Accessing benefits and PIP
- >> Liaison with Social Work and other services
- >> Support when suicidal
- >> Accessing health care services
- >> Independent living skills, budgeting and finance

“ I really wouldn't have gotten out of that situation if I hadn't come here (SAY). I've learned a lot, its mental to look back at the past few months and see how much I've changed. ”

“ I'm so glad I've took this step, everyone seems so lovely and the space is really cosy. I had this image in my head of a dark and dingy office but its not like that at all, it feels really homey. I can't wait to start. ”



Sculpture Group



Wellbeing Pack

# Substance Use Support Service (SUSS)

**17 young women supported**

Just some of the areas the young women have shown an improvement in:

- >> Reduction in alcohol/drug consumption
- >> Harm reduction
- >> Reduced offending
- >> Improved coping mechanisms

Examples of support subjects covered:

- >> Establishing safety
- >> Triggers around substance use
- >> Building self-confidence without substances
- >> Cravings and coping
- >> Self-compassion

Our partnership with Glasgow Council on Alcohol is funded through The Corra Foundation for a full time Addictions Resource Worker. We have named this the Substance Use Support Service (SUSS). It offers direct support to young women who are survivors of sexual abuse and other forms of MVAWG and who have addiction issues through 1:1 sessions and group support.



Ardroy 2024

“

I have been to several detox centres, hospitals, detox wards, I work with Community Addiction Nurses and have spent a few months in an inpatient Rehab Centre. They were all helpful to an extent, but none worked on increasing my understanding of my own illness. So, I never really quite understood what I was up against, so I could never fight it to the best of my ability.

But working with SUSS and my worker gave me that ability and put me in the best position to truly tackle my addiction issues. This is an invaluable support service and I can't help but wonder how many lives could be saved and how many people spared unnecessary suffering if more were to have access to such a crucially wonderful, life-saving service.

”

# Group Work Funded through the Scottish Government Survivors Fund SOCAS and The National Lottery

**68 sessions**

**112 engagements in group work**

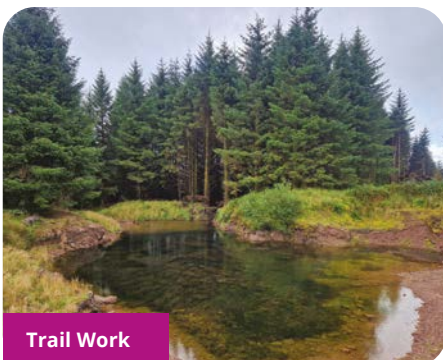
The Outcomes from Group Work are:

- >> Drop In sessions
- >> Mindful Movement
- >> Sculpting Group
- >> Sexual Health and Relationships
- >> Speak Out
- >> Stigma Comic Art Group

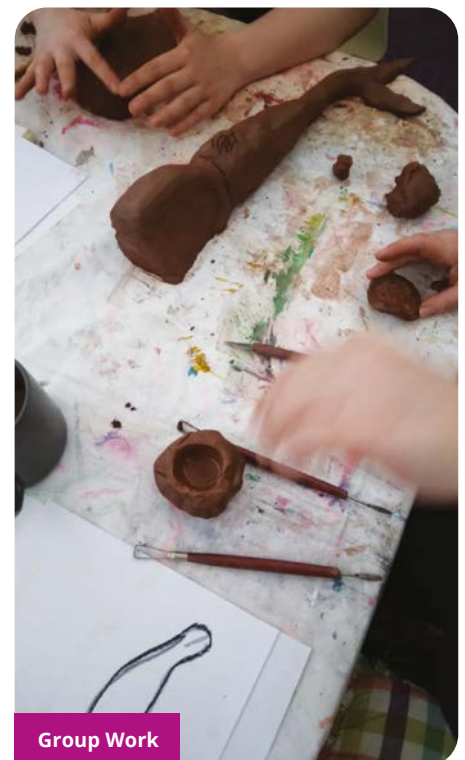
Group Work allows the young women to share their views in a safe space. They show each other a great sense of empathic understanding on a level that can be impossible with a worker. This shows them that they have so much to offer, that they are not defined by their trauma, and that they have strengths and skills that open up new opportunities.

This year has been a challenging one for our Group Work delivery. We continued to struggle with engagement, so we have restructured the programmes, amalgamated similar groups, reduced the number and shortened programmes.

We are also creating partnerships with outside agencies to deliver external Group Work to their service users alongside our young women, and delivered the first of these with Aspire in late March. More are in the pipeline for next year.



Trail Work



Group Work

# Stigma Comic

We had an amazing opportunity with funding from See Me Scotland to work on a project exploring the understanding of mental health stigma and discrimination from a survivor's perspective. With support from artist/researcher, Nic, the young women created images and narratives that captured their experiences of social, professional and self-stigma.

Themes included being labelled with diagnoses, victim blaming, power & control, lack of understanding of coping strategies, and loneliness & isolation. A particular theme was the feeling of having something wrong with them rather than others acknowledging their traumatic experiences as something that has happened to them. The images were brought together into a comic book that showed how stigma and discrimination impacted their daily lives. This was a great way for our young women to work together and connect over their shared experiences in order to raise awareness of the sometimes hidden struggles that they face on a daily basis.

“ I've learned there are more people out there that have been through similar and feel I am more accepted and understand it doesn't matter what you look like. ”

“ I feel more confident in myself and feel more able to say no and get about places myself now without as much worry. I trust myself more and now I have SAY Women to call. ”

- Outcomes from Group Work are:**
- >> Improved confidence
  - >> Improved well-being
  - >> Improved view of self
  - >> Reduced social isolation
  - >> Reduced the social stigma of sexual violence
  - >> Provided the group with a platform for their voices to be heard

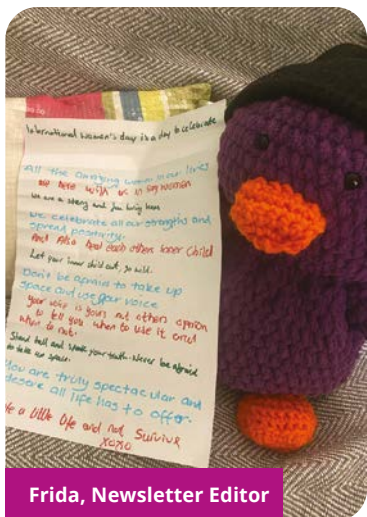


# Community Connector

Funded through The Volant Trust

**Worked with 9 young women this year**

The Community Connector (ComCon) supports young women coming to the end of their recovery journey, linking them to other communities in which they are independent and engaged. This year ComCon was relaunched with a new staff member, who is making connections with internal and external organisations, launching new projects and making plans for the next year.



Frida, Newsletter Editor

# Newsletter – 'SAY What?'

In January 2024 we started running workshops for our service-user created newsletter, entitled SAY What?. The young women have topical discussions, create and collect content, and collate it into a newsletter. We expect to launch our first newsletter with a party early in the next financial year.

**Organisations and services that we have established links with include:**

- >> Princes Trust
- >> Common Wheel
- >> Glasgow Kelvin College
- >> The Big Issue
- >> Early Years Scotland
- >> Morgan Stanley
- >> Women on Wheels

“ It has been inspirational to be able to think about what I want to do with my life. I might not know for sure but there are so many opportunities that I hadn't even thought about. It is exciting to think what my future could be. ”

## Advisory Board

The Advisory Board consists of six ex-service users who have completed their support with SAY Women and have been out of support for a minimum of 2 years. It plays a crucial part of SAY Women being a service user-led organisation.

“ Being a part of the advisory board not only enables me to give back but also offers a unique platform to make a tangible difference in the lives of others, ensuring that SAY Women continues to thrive and provides a unique person-centred approach to every single woman using the service. ”

## Training

Funded through the Scottish Government Homeless Prevention in Communities Fund

Our training helps us to raise awareness and influence the practice of a wide range of professionals whose work involves contact with young women who may have experienced abuse.

Courses were delivered to a mix of housing associations, third sector service providers and statutory services, trainee social workers, including:

- >> Future Pathways
- >> Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
- >> Maryhill Housing Association
- >> Govan Law Centre
- >> Glasgow Caledonian University Social Work Department

Our training includes:

- >> CSA & the Links to Housing and Homelessness
- >> Supporting Disclosure of CSA
- >> Working with Self-Harm
- >> Understanding Gender-Based Violence
- >> Staff Induction Training and Skills Development Training

## SAY Women Celebration – AGM 2023

This year we turned our AGM into a celebration of SAY Women and the achievements of our young women. We held a party with mocktails, a buffet, a fabulous cake and very special guest, comedian Ria Lina. It was a great opportunity to get together and hear about what has been happening at SAY Women over the year. We heard from:

- >> Lynsey Campbell, our new Patron alongside Madeline Black.
- >> One of our young women living in the Accommodation Project shared her experiences of our service.
- >> An Advisory Board member highlighted its progress over the year.
- >> Ria Lina told us of her personal and professional experiences of toxic attitudes of men towards women, particularly as a female in a predominantly male comedy circuit and following the allegations that had emerged about Russell Brand.
- >> Music from Vicky Paxton, who donated proceeds of sales of her single ‘White-noise’ to SAY Women, which raised £250 in the first week of its release.

**547** Total participants

**30** Full day + **30** Half day specialist training sessions

**4** Skill-based workshops

**28%** Public Sector participants

**41%** Voluntary/Community Sector participants

**30%** Other participants



Celebration 2023

# The Board and HR

## Trustees

**Chair:** Samantha Barnett  
**Joint Vice-Chair:** Sandra Bonilla  
 Fi Grimmond Mailley  
**Treasurer:** Donna Marie Liddle

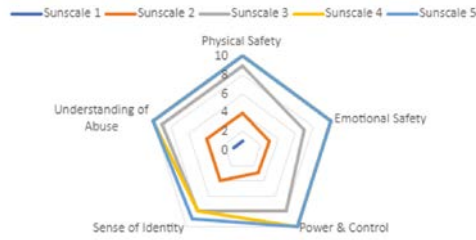
Margaret Ann O'Connell  
 Donna Henderson  
 Lorna Ann Kettles  
 Lynne Mckenzie-Juetten  
 Laura Kelly Dunlop

## Senior Staff

**CEO:** Pam Hunter  
**Services Manager:** Zoe Taylor  
**Accommodation Manager:** Michele Selby  
**National Training Manager:** Erin Crombie

**Total Staff Team:**  
**11 Full Time 7 Part Time**

## SAY Women Outcomes

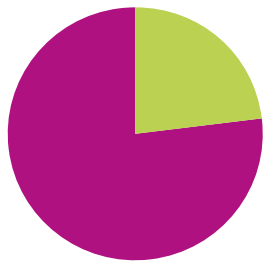


**Sunscale Charts:**  
 Young women rate their progress from 1 (worst) to 10 (best) in the SAY Women outcomes and their own chosen topics. The charts show the progress made over time with work done during 1:1 Emotional Support.

## Young Woman's Outcomes



# 2023-2024 Finance and Funding



<b>Trusts &amp; Foundations</b>	£238,867	<b>Donations &amp; Legacies</b>	£18,847
<b>Government</b>	£502,086	<b>Grants</b>	£740,953
		<b>Earned/Other</b>	£5,373
		<b>Total Income</b>	£765,173
		<b>Total Expenditure</b>	£784,574

# Our Funders 2023/24



Front Cover - pages from the Stigma Comic created by the young women in the Art Group, assisted by Artist & Researcher Nic Dickson



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