



2025 - 26

 CWRC

IMPACT REPORT

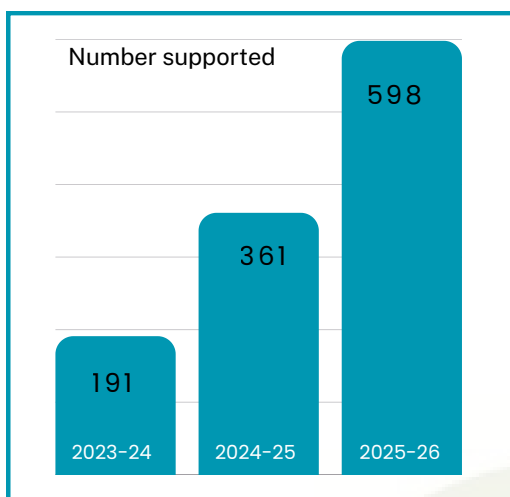
# CWRC Impact Report 2025-26

## INTRODUCTION

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This year brought both growth and change for CWRC. We supported more women than ever before, with referrals coming from mental health services, social care and other statutory agencies. The issues women faced were rarely simple: domestic abuse, poor mental health, poverty, housing insecurity, isolation, often in combination.

We also continued to work alongside women in contact with the criminal justice system, and refugees and asylum-seeking women rebuilding their lives in the local community.



**598**

women supported

**57%**

supported with multiple, interconnected needs

**238**

referrals made to CWRC

**313**

attended groups at CWRC

Funding pressures meant we had to close our Peterborough centre at the end of 2025-26, after 13 years as part of CWRC. Following a period of necessary renovation work, we reopened with NHS support and continued delivering counselling, group therapy and the Freedom Programme until the end. We ensured every woman was supported through the transition, and we remain proud of what the centre achieved. It was a significant loss and we are grateful to the staff, volunteers and women who were part of it.

**None of this would be possible without our staff, volunteers, funders and partners, and above all, the women who are part of the CWRC community.**

**Thank you.**

## HOW WE WORK

Women often come to CWRC with one pressing issue, but many are dealing with several things at once. Our support is flexible by design, and women can move between practical help, recovery programmes and wellbeing activities depending on what they need.

Group activities play a central role by reducing isolation, building confidence and creating connections with other women.

Our support encompasses three interconnected areas: Safety & Recovery, Advice & Advocacy and Wellbeing & Connection.

*“Through the Freedom Programme, individual guidance, group support and unwavering encouragement, CWRC creates a safe and nurturing space where women can rediscover their strength”*

Feedback from a participant

### Routes into CWRC

- domestic abuse groups
- self-referral
- crisis support
- wellbeing activities
- creative activities
- external referrals

### Holistic support

- advice and advocacy
- group programmes
- counselling
- practical support
- peer connection
- health & wellbeing

### Outcomes

- increased safety
- greater stability
- reduced isolation
- improved wellbeing
- confidence
- social connection



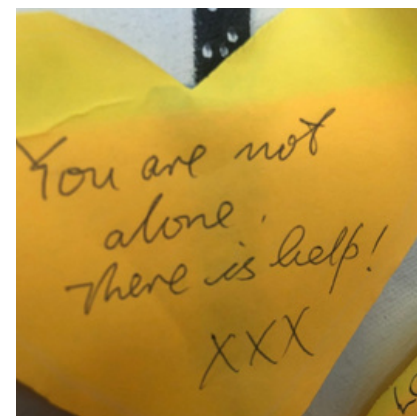
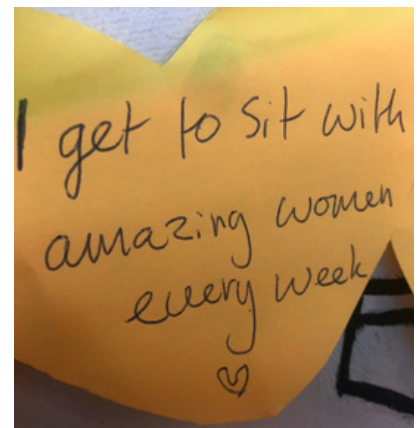
## SAFETY & RECOVERY

Many women who come to CWRC have experienced domestic abuse, making recovery from abuse an important part of our work, although we are not a specialist domestic abuse casework service.

We deliver the Freedom Programme, a 12-week course for survivors. We continued to provide this service during a period when the work was unfunded, reflecting both the level of need and our commitment to maintaining this service. In September, we secured 12 months of funding to continue this vital work.

We also introduced the Domestic Abuse Recovery Toolkit, a follow-on programme. Through these two services, women could access up to six months of group support focused on safety, confidence and understanding the impact of abuse.

Where women need specialist domestic abuse casework or crisis intervention, we work alongside specialist and IDVA services, while providing recovery support through our group programmes and wider wellbeing offer.



*"I feel less alone by being with others who have been through similar and understand me"*

**Wellbeing scores increased by 76% following completion of the Freedom Programme**

Measured using CWRC's adapted wellbeing tool, based on SWEMWBS

# CWRC Impact Report 2025-26

## ADVICE & ADVOCACY

CWRC provides practical advice and advocacy to help women understand their rights, navigate complex systems and access the support they need. We work alongside women to achieve safer, more stable lives.

This year we supported women with housing, benefits, financial hardship, education and employment, as well as helping refugees and women seeking asylum access services and settle into their communities.

Our Free Shop provided free clothing, toiletries and period products for women experiencing financial hardship, while also reducing textile waste through reuse.

We also distributed 40 food bank vouchers and supported women to access hardship grants, furniture, school uniforms and other essential items through partners including Cambridge Aid.

*“Thank you so much for the clothes for me and my girls. Being a single parent and unemployed has been very difficult. Coming to the centre and getting back into employment has given me back my confidence”*

# 84%

of women agreed that ‘CWRC helped me feel I had more control over my life’

# 31

women supported to prevent or relieve homelessness

# 395kg

of clothing distributed through our Free Shop

# £8,224

in hardship grants and emergency funds distributed to women and families in need



## WELLBEING & CONNECTION

CWRC provides safe, welcoming spaces where women can connect, build confidence and improve their wellbeing.

This year women accessed counselling, somatic yoga, art, sewing, crochet, ESOL and English language conversation groups.

We also launched our own library with titles covering mental health, wellbeing, women's rights, parenting and maternity.

Women from CWRC were invited by Murray Edwards College to collaborate with a textile artist. Over a series of workshops they created a quilt exploring the theme of rest, which was displayed in the 'Sleepers' exhibition alongside works by Tracey Emin and Helen Cammouk.

Women consistently told us that groups helped them feel less isolated, more confident and more connected. Many described CWRC simply as a place where they felt safe and understood.

# 313

women attended  
a group session

# 53

received  
therapeutic  
support



# 118

took part in creative  
health activities



## WOMEN'S STORIES

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*These stories are drawn from the real experiences of women supported by CWRC.  
Names and details have been changed.*

### **Anna's story**

Anna was referred to CWRC by the police after fleeing domestic abuse. She had been placed in a B&B with her children and was facing housing instability, financial hardship and the ongoing impact of trauma. She had little support around her and was struggling to know where to turn.

CWRC advocated to help secure safer temporary housing and supported her with benefits, practical essentials and later furnishing her permanent home.

She attended the Freedom Programme and a course of counselling, and later joined creative health groups where she built friendships and began to feel less alone.

Over time, Anna became more settled and confident. She eventually became a volunteer at CWRC, supporting other women going through similar experiences.

### **Amina's story**

Amina was a single mother of two young children. She found herself struggling with financial hardship, childcare barriers and delays to her benefits. She needed both immediate help and longer-term support to increase her income.

CWRC provided one-to-one support to help her claim child benefit, access funded childcare and manage essential costs. During the most acute periods, she also received food bank vouchers and employment support including job searching and employer engagement.

Her child benefit was successfully processed with backdated payments, easing pressure on the family's finances. She secured funded childcare and found an after-school job. Through a combination of crisis support and practical advocacy, Amina was able to stabilise the family and reduce their experience of poverty.

*"The course helped me to feel so much more in control of my life and I've met some incredible and inspiring women"*  
*Domestic Abuse Recovery Toolkit participant*

## VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers are central to what we do at CWRC. Over the year, they helped create welcoming spaces for women and provided practical support across the centre, from facilitating groups to tending plants and sorting stock for the Free Shop.

Some volunteers have previously received support from CWRC themselves and bring valuable lived experience, empathy and a strong sense of connection to their roles. Others come from the wider local community, including individuals, businesses and local groups, who recognise the importance of our work and generously give their time and support.

“Volunteering with CWRC has been a really positive and comforting experience. It gives me the chance to give back to a centre that has supported me, while learning new skills and staying connected to things I enjoy, like fashion, styling the free shop, and using my finance experience to help where I can”

“I met so many amazing women while supporting their English language learning”

“Volunteering at CWRC has increased my confidence and really helped my mental wellbeing. It is a wonderful place for women, especially women who have experienced trauma. The staff are safe and welcoming to all.”

# 21

Volunteers

# 446

volunteering  
hours



## LOOKING AHEAD

Demand for our services continues to grow, and the coming year will bring exciting opportunities as well as challenges.

We are excited to be moving to new premises in Cambridge, a larger, more accessible space that will allow us to run more groups simultaneously and offer more rooms for individual support.

We are also expanding our volunteering programme and are on track for Advice Quality Standard (AQS) accreditation, a nationally recognised standard reflecting the quality and consistency of our advice services.

We know there are women in our community we are not yet reaching. Our counselling service and domestic abuse recovery groups both have waiting lists, and securing the long-term future of these services remains a priority.

After 44 years, CWRC is busier and more needed than ever.

What strikes me every time I visit is how much is happening, and the warmth and professionalism that women are met with. Despite the challenges of this year, the staff and volunteers have been extraordinary.

As we move into a new chapter, we are seeking new trustees to join our board. If you share our commitment to women facing multiple disadvantage, please get in touch.

*Sarah Johnson, Chair*

This has been a challenging year. We sadly said goodbye to our Peterborough centre, worked hard to keep the Freedom Programme running through an unfunded period, and needed to search for a new Cambridge home.

Through all of it, the team were remarkable, their warmth, compassion and professionalism never fail to amaze me. In the three years since I came into post, the number of women we support has grown from 191 to 598, and we can't wait to get into a new building with the space to do even more of the work that matters.

*Harriet Morgan, CEO*



## SUPPORT OUR WORK

CWRC relies on the generosity of individuals, funders and businesses to provide services to hundreds of women across Cambridge and surrounding areas. Every contribution helps keep our services running.

### Our counselling service needs your support

Last year we received over 100 referrals from mental health services alone. Many of these women could not access support due to long waiting lists, and the costs of private therapy. For many, CWRC is the first place they have been able to access counselling. Right now, this service is unfunded. We are working to raise £15,000 to fund an expanded counselling service for one year. Every donation goes directly to funding sessions for women who need them most.



## Ways to support CWRC

### Donate

Regular donations of any size make a real difference — they help us plan ahead, sustain our services and reach more women. To make a one-off donation or set up a regular gift, visit [www.cwrc.org.uk/donate-to-cwrc](http://www.cwrc.org.uk/donate-to-cwrc) or scan the QR code.



### Leave a legacy

A gift left in your will is one of the most meaningful ways to ensure women can access the help they need long into the future. If you would like to discuss a legacy donation, please contact [ceo@cwrc.org.uk](mailto:ceo@cwrc.org.uk).

### Workplace giving

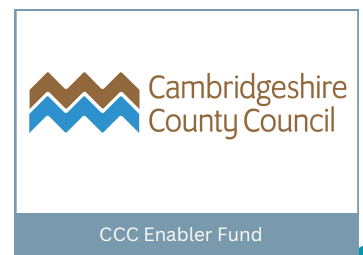
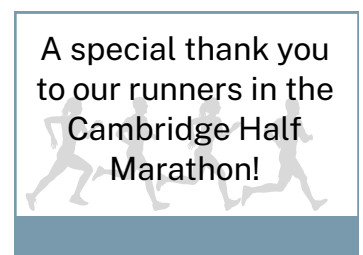
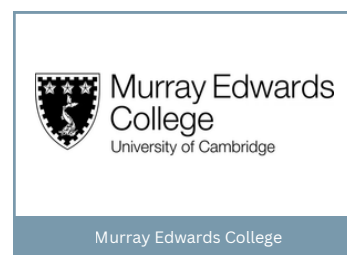
CWRC is registered on the Benevity platform, we welcome partnerships and support from Cambridge's thriving business community.

**Fundraise for us** Whether it's a bake sale, a sponsored run or something altogether more creative, fundraising for CWRC is a brilliant way to support women.

# THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS & PARTNERS

A huge thank you to all who donated to CWRC over the last year. Your generosity and support make a direct impact on women's lives. Every contribution helps keep our services running.

**Thank you for being part of the CWRC community.**





**The Search for Peace and Quiet**  
 Made by women at CWRC

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