

One25

For women to heal and thrive

2020—2021





**One25 works with some of
Bristol's most marginalised
women.**

**We support them to move
from crisis and trauma
towards independence in the
community.**

**Wherever they are in
their journeys, we give
love and practical support,
without judgement or
expectation.**

**We believe in a world where
all women will be safe, feel
loved and thrive.**

One25



Women's needs

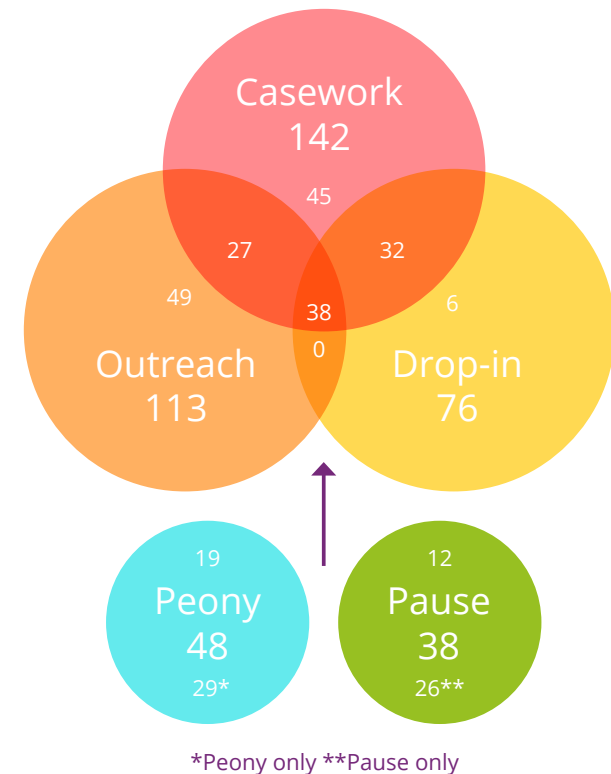
All of the women One25 work with have experienced abuse and trauma and face multiple disadvantages.

97% of the women we work with have experienced domestic or sexual violence; **95%** have significant mental health needs as well as **63%** with chronic physical health needs; **74%** are homeless; **78%** are addicted to drugs or alcohol; and **56%** have disclosed childhood abuse.

Our services

Here's how One25 worked with 237 women last year.

- **Night outreach**
van service for women trapped in street sex work
- **Drop-in**
a homely, unique, women-only safe space
- **Casework**
specialist support tackling multiple disadvantages
- **Peony**
growing self-esteem, skills and community
- **Pause**
intensive programme for mothers, preventing repeat child-removal



Now more than ever

Anna Smith, CEO

Despite the hardship of 2020-21, our frontline services achieved amazing things. Across night outreach, drop-in, casework, Peony and Pause we supported 237 incredibly brave and resilient women. More women exited street sex work, were safer, were linked into specialist support services and developed skills and independence.

We have swung through a range of emotions this year, losing a high number of women who passed away. There are no words for the sadness this brings to the team when they have worked many years with women - when everything we do is about supporting them away from danger.

But at the same time we hear women say "You have kept me going" and "Thank you for being there for me when my mother died... you were all I had at the time."

Pandemic

Staying true to our values, we did all we safely could through lockdowns to reach the women. Established relationships with partners came into play as we advocated by phone for women in real hardship and danger. Women were so grateful for our supply bags full of food, activities and sometimes messages of support from other women.

But for every last person, the pandemic has been a challenge to mental health. So for marginalised women - often in addiction and violent relationships, with dangerous drugs going round at inflated prices - this has reached critical levels. The pandemic saw what one partner agency called 'bored anarchy' with 82% more women reporting violence to us. And we saw some women come back onto the streets, forced there by the pandemic. Even on Christmas Eve, women had to go out and street sex work. But we were there too with our van, decorated for Christmas, giving out gifts.

Gratitude and vision


We have been so heartened to receive the Centre for Social Justice Award which recognised the impact we make locally in our community. I believe it's this relentless hope for justice that motivates us all. Even at a time that has tested us all, the commitment of staff, volunteers and supporters is inspiring and is testament to this.

We know that the end of the pandemic will not be the end for women in their journeys to safety, healing and thriving. Now, more than ever, we need to keep on working with others to provide what they need. We love these women and we'll never give up.

Plans

Since hearing from women how hard the weekend can be without One25's night outreach van, I've had my heart set on getting it out seven nights a week. This pilot will start in the autumn! At the other end of the spectrum, we're also planning a new service for women progressing from Peony who are ready to get into volunteering, training and work.





43 women exited street sex work

For women in Bristol who are street sex-working, it's a last resort. They are in crisis: using hard drugs to cope with trauma, sex-working to fund addiction and further traumatised by violence. It's dangerous, lonely and difficult to leave.

“

Liz's Story

1999 was my year down in Bristol, when I was on the streets. I'd started using heroin aged 21 in London. Age 23 I went into a rehab in Wiltshire then another in Bristol and I loved it. Loved being in Bristol, loved being in the 'clean and sober' movement. But I had this self-sabotage thing just before I was about to complete rehab that made me drink and get chucked out. They found me supported accommodation so I moved into that. But within a week I was using again straight away.

Pretty soon I got into sex work. I can't remember how, I'd never done that before. Maybe through someone I knew? But I'd regularly use the van and get the Ugly Mugs information and things like that. That was basically my life for the next year.

“Getting a cup of tea was just huge, knowing it came from someone who cared. It meant a lot more than just a hot drink”

Working the streets is very dangerous and I had a couple of incidents that were really horrible. And as well as assaults there was always the thing of being robbed or not being paid. At times there was camaraderie but mostly I remember the loneliness of it – literally standing on a street corner. You were always having to watch out, not knowing what encounters you'd have. You get to the point where you just want the money to score so much that you don't even consider the danger – it just goes with the territory.

On the streets there's a heightened sense of being on your guard. But I always remember the van feeling safe. You could let your defences down, you didn't have to prove yourself or pretend to be something, you could just be whatever. You could just sit there, have random chats. Getting a cup of tea was just huge, knowing it came from someone who cared. It meant a lot more than just a hot drink.



134 women were safer from violence

During the pandemic, 82% more of the women we work with reported violence. Exploitation and abuse isn't unusual for women who are stigmatised and fighting their own battles. Thanks to One25's highly trained volunteers and staff, 134 women were safer last year.

“

I don't know if this is one reason I've managed to get clean or not – I did not have a childhood full of trauma. It wasn't amazing but there was no abuse or neglect, nothing I went through as a child would count as trauma. I did start to get mental health problems at the age of 19 and was diagnosed with depression.

The reason I started taking heroin was cause it worked better than Prozac. I'd been on anti-depressants for a couple of years, I got introduced to heroin and I was like “Wow. This is what anti-depressants should do – make me feel good.” So my route into drugs was through depression and low self-esteem. But I know that most women do come from a background of really shit life experiences and then to escape that is quite hard. My story may not be that representative of many women that One25 works with. But in a sense it could happen to anyone - it could happen to your daughter.

“It could happen to anyone - it could happen to your daughter”

I remember one time my mum came down to Bristol for my birthday – she came down with a cake and a present and everything. Literally the first thing I asked her for was money to score. And then when she was driving back to London I asked her to drop me off at... you know, she knew what I was going to do. I think it was then that I thought: it's just pretty shit isn't it? The thought of causing pain to other people I guess was in a way a bit bigger than the pain caused to myself. When you're using that's it, that's all you think about and that's just what you're doing. I was lucky enough to have family and friends that cared about me and for whom that world was completely strange.

I went into detox again on the day of the eclipse, did two weeks and started using again straight away. I'd been arrested a few times for sex work but I always managed to get away with a caution. So I got to the November and I'd just had enough. I thought “I can't do this anymore”. So I rang my mum up, came back to London and accessed the drugs service I'd used previously and they got me into rehab again the next year.



123 women were connected to specialist services

One25 has strong partnerships with over 70 services in Bristol and beyond to make sure the women we meet get as much as they can of the very best support.

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Small, local charities are just so brilliant cause they know their people so well. Some people can get frustrated about not seeing a change in a person. But it took me over 20 years to get to the point I'm at now. Don't think each step isn't part of a journey. Every interaction, everything that happens for an individual goes in somewhere. And yes, they might not be ready to put down drugs right now or stop self-harming now or whatever – but it all goes in at some point. I'm grateful for every single intervention I've had as a part of that journey.

For me it's been a long, slow road to get to the point where I can say that I'm happy in myself, that I'm happy in my own skin and I accept myself and love myself and care about myself and want to do what's best for me... but it's taken shit loads of years to get there. And this is very much the One25 thing about care and compassion – it's about having people or agencies with care and compassion and you get to a point of thinking 'well, maybe I am worth caring about'.

One25 just have to keep being there and if it feels like someone isn't moving out of that place, just keep being there. Even if you think someone is completely lost. In recovery you meet people who have been through the most awful childhood experiences, adult experiences, and you think 'How on Earth are you still alive? And you're now sober!'

“It's about having people or agencies with care and compassion... you get to a point of thinking: Well, maybe I am worth caring about”

I remember when I first went to Bristol before I relapsed, we used to go to 'clean and sober' raves, dancing without any drink or drugs, and it was brilliant, it was such good fun. You'd get so into it and it's all about the music and friends and people around you who are feeling that – there's no better feeling.



77 women developed life skills and independence

From courses to volunteering and even to getting jobs... building self-esteem and working towards financial independence are huge helps for a woman to create a place of her own in the community.

“

When you first start trying to get your life together you think ‘Well, what can I do?’ There’s a lack of confidence and there’s fear of being judged for accessing help. But when you’re surrounded by people you feel connected to and in that space where you’re held and feeling you can let yourself go, that feeling is amazing.

After leaving Bristol I did 6 weeks at my initial rehab placement and then another 6 months at a secondary placement. Then I came out of that and worked for three months in Chile as part of a youth development programme.

When I came back, I applied for university, did an access course cause I didn’t have A-levels or anything and got my degree. I decided I wanted to stay in academia so I did a Masters and even started a PhD. As part of that I spent three months in Vancouver doing research on reproductive decision making amongst injecting drug-users. It was just such an eye-opening experience.

After that I got a job with an alcohol charity and worked in that field for the next few years. Then I worked in research and policy in the charity sector until last year when I trained to be an education mental health practitioner.

“When you’re surrounded by people you feel connected to and feeling you can let yourself go, that feeling is amazing”

We’re a team that goes into schools and works with young people with early signs of depression and anxiety. I’ve always felt a certain understanding and connection with people that have struggled with whatever issue, with people who don’t like themselves. That’s what I do now but when I first got clean I wanted to work in counselling. I’m still hoping to do a counselling qualification. I want to work with women with multiple traumas and substance misuse, exactly like those One25 works with.

A photograph of two women walking away from the camera on a paved path lined with large trees. The woman on the left is wearing a black vest over a grey long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. The woman on the right is wearing a red hooded raincoat and dark leggings. The background shows more trees and a building with graffiti in the distance.

**"Acceptance,
not being
judged,
compassion...
is the way to
healing"**

Another huge part of my story is the fact that I'm only 6 months sober. Certainly, over the past 20 years my mental health has never been as bad as it was before rehab. But, you know, I've struggled and had issues and stuff like that. Gradually over time I've come to like myself and accept myself a lot, lot more... mostly though learning self-compassion.

My alcohol use was all outwardly very respectable but I was drinking to self-medicate. Realising that was what got me looking up One25 again on social media. It really made me remember how I felt then: the importance of being accepted, of not being judged.

For everybody, whoever you are, I believe that that kind of validation – that acceptance, that not being judged, that compassion - is the way to healing.

That's the most important thing: helping someone develop a sense of self where they care about themselves, where they know people care about them, where they're heard. If you've never cared for yourself, you do need to be shown it. And it can be difficult to receive that and can take some time to get the point of valuing yourself. But it's the key.

This could happen to anybody. Every woman out there should be seen as a person. These are not just people who are different to you or different to your family. Trauma or difficult experiences are at the root of so much in society and we need more caring, compassionate services than there are. And just cause someone doesn't show a change in 6 months or however long, that doesn't mean it's not working.

Even if you're so far into it that you can't see that that could ever happen. Just hang on in there and accept all that's offered to you. It doesn't always have to be like this.

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How can you help?

Despite lockdowns and limited services, 107 volunteers played an absolutely vital role in keeping One25 going, giving over 2,800 hours of support. Many more are raring to go having been on hold.

Fundraise

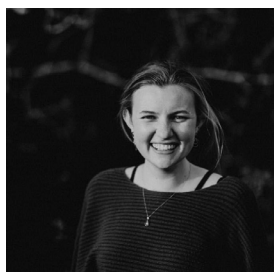
"One25 is an especially worthy cause given the extent to which the pandemic has disproportionately affected women. As a dad, I'm conscious that every woman you help is someone's daughter." — Keith Burge after a sponsored run from London to Bristol



One25.org.uk/fundraise

Donate

"One25 lead the way in supporting and advocating for vulnerable women, loving them and giving them a voice in a way that no one else does." — Ellie Howard, regular donor



One25.org.uk/donate

Volunteer

"I feel part of the One25 family: working, learning, laughing and crying alongside the women we serve." — Sandy Rowden, drop-in volunteer



One25.org.uk/volunteer

Learn more

...about brave women and how society needs to change.
Get our newsletter via our website or follow us on social media

One25.org.uk/news

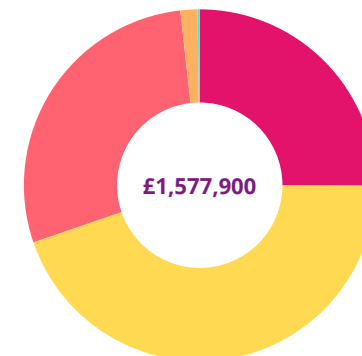
Our finances

Every pound counts as we carefully manage what we have: to always be there for women in crisis, to stay with them, to respond however they need and to support them to take brave steps beyond trauma to freedom.

Thank you so much from us all at One25 to everyone who makes this possible.

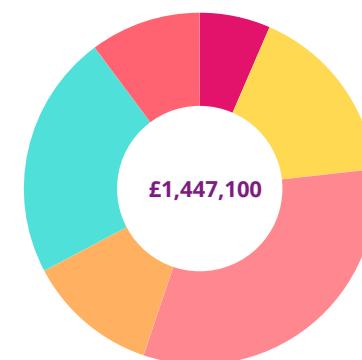
Income (£)

Donations	395,300
Grants	705,000
Commissioned income	450,000
One25 events	24,700
Other	2,900
	£1,577,900






Expenditure (£)

Outreach	94,100
Drop-in	242,200
Casework	462,300
Peony	174,900
Pause	326,000
Raising funds	147,600
	£1,447,100



Numbers have been rounded to the nearest hundred pounds. For One25's 2020/21 statutory accounts please visit One25.org.uk

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One25
For women to **heal and thrive**

