



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

## Staff members



Helen



Kath



Candice



Beth



Rachel



Lucy



Natalie

## Trustees



James  
(resigned 9th Sept 2024)



Elizabeth



Helen



Anna  
(resigned 11th March 2024)



Beth  
(appointed 11th March 2024)



Hannah  
(appointed 11th March 2024)



Christine  
(appointed 9th September 2024)

## Foreword

2024 has been a year of significant organisational expansion as we created a new Operations Manager role and recruited a third Outreach member of staff to help meet the increasing demand for the services we provide through The Esther Project. We have, at the same time, seen significant project development, particularly through:

- the establishment of our specialist work providing support for survivors of sex trafficking through growing partnerships with both Sanctuary and Migrant Help
- our work supporting local police operations
- the development of our preventative measures work

Raising awareness of the complex issues faced by women in the sex industry remains a strategic priority for the charity and we have been delighted to have the opportunity to educate and equip frontline professionals, helping to ensure better informed responses to women coping with multiple disadvantages, stigma and judgement.

We trained 239 professionals over 21 sessions, as well as 20 BA Social Work students, in partnership with the University of Chichester. We have seen a steady increase in the number of women we have supported on a 1:1 face to face basis, and directly supported 390 women in total throughout the year, representing an 80% increase from 2023.

Special thanks go to our staff and volunteers who walk alongside the women we support to ensure that they are heard, valued, believed and supported to make positive changes in their lives. We would also like to thank all our funders for partnering with us and supporting us in our vision to see a world with no place for sexual exploitation, where women can live life free from abuse, stigma and violence.



the establishment  
of our specialist  
work providing  
support for  
survivors of sex  
trafficking



80%

increase in women  
supported from  
2023

# Our partnership work

This is a key aspect of our service delivery, enabling us to support more women who are often hidden and marginalised. For the first year in our history, we received more referrals from external professionals than through our online outreach.

## In 2024, of our new referrals

- **28%** of women supported self-referred to TEP as a result of our online outreach
- **44%** of women supported were referred to TEP by other services/professionals
- **4%** of women supported were referred to TEP by existing service users
- **16%** of women supported self-referred to TEP following attendance at our workshops
- **8%** of women supported self-referred to TEP following attendance at a partner drop-in

We are thankful to Migrant Help, Sanctuary, Worthing and Littlehampton Probation Services, My Sister's House, Emerging Futures, Stonepillow and Safe in Sussex for their confidence in Yada.

“ Thank you so much {TEP Outreach Worker} I appreciate you a lot...without you I couldn't make it. Thank you for your encouragement ”  
*TEP Service User*

# The Esther Project

## Netreach (online outreach)

Netreach is targeted across coastal West Sussex and remains a significant source of referrals with 28% of new service users in 2024 entering our service through our online outreach. Overall, 40% of the women supported through 1-1 contact this year, were independent escorts who self-referred through Netreach.

We contacted **231** women for the first time, and **176** women known to us, who were advertising online as independent escorts, by phone, to introduce The Esther Project (TEP) to them.

We sent links to safety information and our TEP website via a follow up text to **294** women.

We delivered phone support to **41** women.

“ I was so anxious and after talking with you I just feel peace. I didn't know what to do and now I feel I do. ”

*TEP Service User (March 2024)*

## 1:1, Tailored Practical and Emotional Support

We supported  
**50**  
women across the year

We continued to  
provide support to  
**25**  
existing service users

**6 women**  
were survivors of  
Modern Slavery

**21 women**  
were independent  
escorts who made  
self-referrals as a  
result of our online  
outreach (Netreach)

We began  
support  
with **25** new  
service users

**3 women**  
were referred  
by existing  
service users

**20 women**  
were referred through  
partner organisations  
(drug & alcohol,  
domestic abuse,  
probation, healthcare,  
homelessness services,  
local Council and  
community hubs)

## Our support includes but is not limited to:

safety advice, listening, advocacy, housing, benefits, mental health, employment, education, counselling, safety planning, debt relief, immigration, volunteering, reporting crime, work experience, as well as signposting to specialist substance misuse and domestic abuse services.

Our outreach supports women to achieve their goals and make sustainable changes. We support women to overcome the barriers they face to exit the sex industry, to improve women's physical and emotional wellbeing, to decrease isolation and to increase safety.



You're the person that has been there from the start and I would feel so much worse without you, thank you, it means a lot

*TEP Service User (June 2024)*



## IMPACT

Of the 50 women that we supported on a 1:1 basis we supported:

- 4 to successfully exit the sex industry
- 31 with listening support/reducing isolation
- 2 to stay abstinent from drugs/alcohol/access rehabilitation
- 7 with accessing safe affordable accommodation
- 5 with property maintenance/furniture provision
- 3 with successful referrals to Social Care
- 5 into employment
- 1 with successful appeal to be removed from the DBS Barred List
- 1 with a business start-up
- 2 with accessing education
- 1 with pregnancy/post natal support
- 7 with attendance at professional appointments/police reporting/court cases
- 4 with immigration issues/asylum claims/obtaining passport
- 3 with accessing debt relief/completing DRO
- 7 with managing/accessing/successfully claiming benefits
- 3 with basic admin/IT skills
- 12 with professional in-house counselling
- 6 with accessing mental health services
- 1 with securing a volunteer placement

### Befriending

In addition to support from outreach workers, two women received additional befriending support over 8 sessions with a total support time of 13 hours.

Befriending helps to reduce isolation and provides additional opportunity for listening support from trained volunteers.

Thank you so much for helping me get my passport, now I can apply for more roles and I feel like a real human

TEP Service User (July 2024)

Because of the Esther Projects support helping me sort out my benefits, I can now pay my bills and dont need to worry each month thank you

TEP Service User (August 2024)



“ Thank You so much (for the luxury wellbeing pack) it was amazing, I can’t believe the lovely things in it ”

*TEP Service User (December 2023)*

## Practical Support

### We distributed

- 42 standard free well-being packs containing tailored safety information, safety alarms, personal items, sexual health items, toiletries and signposting information
- 52 free luxury wellbeing packs (including luxury toiletries and cosmetics donated by the Whitman Group)
- 62 mini-wellbeing packs
- 24 student sexual health packs
- 44 vouchers to refer to local Food Banks
- 40 emergency food parcels
- 13 Christmas food hampers
- 22 emergency toiletry packs
- 16 £25 supermarket vouchers
- furniture/household items and repairs to 5 women

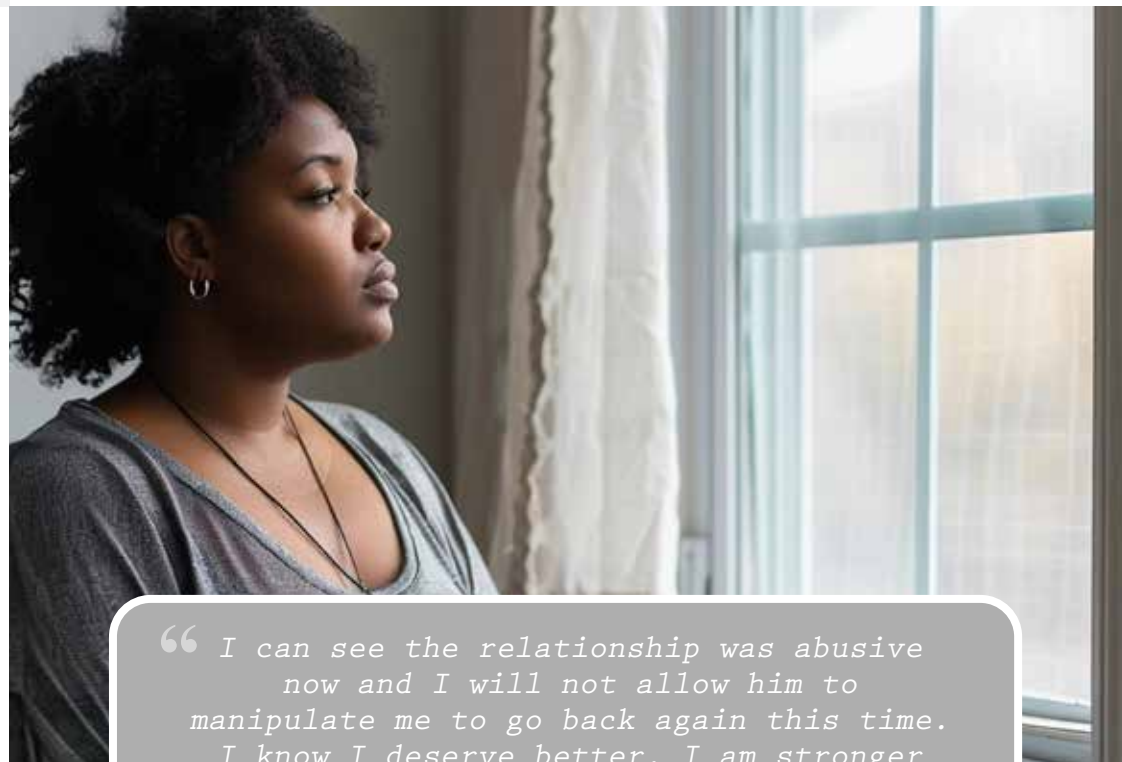
## In-House counselling

In 2024 we continued to expand our in-house counselling service in response to demand from service users who were looking for non-judgemental mental health support and access to talking therapies from counsellors who have an understanding of sexual exploitation within the sex industry.

We partnered with a second counsellor specialising in EMDR and who had significant experience of supporting women with trauma.

We provided each woman accessing the service with a minimum of 12 free sessions.

We provided 160 counselling sessions to 12 different women helping them to recover from the impact of abuse, stigma and violence.



“ I can see the relationship was abusive now and I will not allow him to manipulate me to go back again this time. I know I deserve better, I am stronger now I have had counselling ”

## Partner Drop-Ins and Well-being Workshops

We reached **73** women through partner drop-in's, particularly Worthing Women's Probation Breakfast, Littlehampton Probation Hub, Brighton Women's Centre at Turning Tides, Safe in Sussex Freedom Programme, Broadwater Community Hub and UK Harvest.



We delivered our series of 6 well-being workshops on 5 occasions to **31** women at Worthing Probation, Broadwater Community Hub, Stonepillow Homelessness charity, and both Littlehampton and Worthing Safe in Sussex venues.



**Topics include:** Boundaries, Change, Healthy Relationships, Kindness, Self Care and Self-Esteem



Feedback from **21** attendees demonstrated:

- a **53%** increase in self-esteem
- a **54%** increase in confidence to set boundaries
- a **33%** increase in awareness of healthy relationships
- a **39%** increase in confidence to cope with change as a result of our workshops.

**100%** of attendees would recommend our workshops to others.

“ I now have more awareness of what a healthy relationship should look like and that is now my aim. ”

*Workshop Attendee - Worthing Probation  
February 2024*

## Preventative Measures

In line with our strategic objectives for the year, we conducted extensive research into the harms of pornography and also instructed the completion of a research paper into the links between pornography and sex trafficking.

We used the research to write and pilot a workshop addressing the harms of pornography to a group of young adults in August. We used their feedback to further develop the workshop to be appropriate to its target audience of 16-18 year olds, within the church youth group setting. The workshop will be launched in 2025 and aims to raise awareness of the harms of pornography, looking at:

- How it affects teens
- How it fuels sex trafficking
- How it promotes sexual violence
- The reality of porn addiction
- How to find help/support







## Education Partnership Chichester University

- We have maintained strong links with the University of Chichester, delivering our external training raising awareness about the sex industry and about supporting survivors of sexual exploitation to University staff as part of their Professional Development Program in January.
- We also delivered a training seminar, for the fourth year running, to 20 students on the BA Social Work Course in October.

“Really great presentation and the trainer was incredibly approachable and knowledgeable”

*Professional Development Program attendee  
(January 2024)*

“Very interesting topic, something I have not ever explored”

“It was a very interactive and informative session.”

*Social Work BA Degree Students  
(October 2024)*



## Police Partnership and Supporting Survivors of Modern Slavery



We have a developing proactive partnership with the police at both local and county wide levels, supporting them in their work to stop the sexual exploitation of women. For example:

- In September, we supported Worthing Police in operations targeting potential victims of sexual exploitation at 3 massage parlours, during which we **supported 5 women, introduced 4 to The Esther Project** and **delivered 2 wellbeing packs**.
- When we are unable to attend police operations we have provided local police in Littlehampton, Chichester and Bognor Regis with **18 wellbeing packs** and literature which they give to potentially trafficked women to signpost to us.
- We also filed a report to Sussex Police having discovered online indicators of a minor selling sex, which led to a **joint operation with Norfolk Police**.

In December we joined with both the Police and My Sister's House at the 16 days of Activism roadshow in Chichester High Street, promoting the work of Yada/TEP and making new contacts. A new referral was received as a result of our attendance.

We have a seat on both the Sussex Police Sex Working Forum, providing input from our experience and helping to shape policy, and the Building Trust & Confidence sub-group, at which we support service users to share their experiences.

We delivered training to **14 Police Officers**, over two sessions:

**7** Police Officers from Worthing Police in October, and

**7** Police Officers including **5** from Littlehampton and **2** from Bognor in November.

*“ I could discuss this topic for hours, (as it is so important). This wasn't long enough! ”*

*“ It is really important for us to have this training to reduce stigma ”*

*Police Training Attendees - October 2024*

## Yada Training Delivery

We deliver bespoke training to frontline professionals aiming to raise awareness of the complex issue faced by women in the sex industry, to better equip staff to support women at risk and help combat issues with stigma.

Throughout 2024 we delivered **10 face to face** and **11 online training sessions**, training **259 delegates** in total including: 50 staff from the NHS integrated Care Board, WSCC Social Work and Assistant Care, West Sussex MIND, Emerging Futures, University of Sussex wellbeing team, Safehaven St Peters, Survivors Network, Young Persons Shop, Worthing, Bognor & Littlehampton Police Officers.

We also delivered interviews/awareness raising sessions via a video interview to both St Mary's Church, Broadwater in February and Redeemer Church, Worthing in July.

- Feedback from 68 trainees rated the quality of our training at 9 out of 10
- Feedback from 68 trainees demonstrated a 62.9% increase in confidence to support women engaging in the sex industry as a result of our training

*“ The training was educational for me and I loved to find out about your services. I will definitely encourage my clients to reach out to you ”*

*Migrant Help (March 2024)*

*“ Very thoughtful and sensitive delivery of such an important yet not often spoken about subject ”*

*West Sussex MIND (April 2024)*

*“ Wonderful training, really interesting and informative ”*

*Survivors Network (November 2024)*

# OUR FUNDERS

Much of our work is done in partnership and we would like to take this opportunity to thank our local network who have supported us to provide a holistic service to the women we support.

Together with our partners we work hard to reduce the risk of sexual exploitation and support those experiencing exploitation, in their recovery.

We are incredibly grateful to our funders for their support and partnership with us, particularly those shown below, as well as many individual donors and partners.

The  
Henry Smith  
Charity



THE FOUR WINDS TRUST



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