

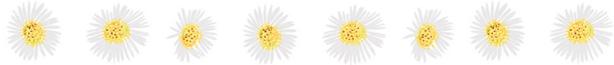


**WEST HAMPSTEAD
WOMEN'S CENTRE
ANNUAL REPORT**

2020 - 2021



ABOUT US



WHWC has been active in the London Borough of Camden for over 36 years. We encourage women accessing our services to fulfil their potential and improve their lives. Women can access services for their health, personal development, safety, and skills classes, as well as immediate advocacy and support for a range of issues. The centre brings communities together and actively encourages social cohesion and integration especially during International Women's Day celebrations and end of year celebration. The centre also offers a range of volunteering opportunities. We are open to women from all communities.

VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES



VISION

A lively community hub supporting a diverse range of women to access social, well-being and support services that they might otherwise struggle to access.

MISSION STATEMENT

WHWC welcomes women from diverse communities and supports all women regardless of cultural and economic backgrounds, beliefs, ability, sexual orientation, or age. We aim to improve the quality of the lives of the women who use our services and provide a supportive space for women, which gives them the opportunity to develop their potential and participate in the community. We do this by offering activities and services that support women at a practical as well as an emotional level. Many of the centre's activities also promote communication, exchange of ideas, self-help and understanding across communities and generational boundaries.

OBJECTIVES

The key objectives of the centre's work are:

- To provide a welcoming, safe, and supportive space for all women from all cultures, backgrounds, beliefs, abilities, sexual orientation and ages to come together to discover similarities, learn from differences, and to help them fulfil their potential.
- To build women's resilience through education, support and advocacy.
- To provide volunteering opportunities for women to build their skills, knowledge, confidence, and self-esteem.
- To increase health awareness and prevent illness by providing activities that promote preventative health, and offering holistic therapies and exercise sessions.
- To reduce isolation by offering recreational, social and cultural activities and volunteering opportunities.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



JENNIFER BROWN
Chair



CLAUDIA BLACKETT
Secretary



FERIONA MCLOUGHLIN
Treasurer



SHAHEDA MULTANI
Trustee



BARBARA D'GAMA
Trustee



NICKY LAMBERT
Trustee



ELLIE LOCK
Trustee



SOPHIE LYDDON
Trustee

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS



366 SESSIONS

HELD ONLINE IN TOTAL



224 WOMEN

WERE HELPED BY OUR ADVOCACY TEAM

£266,584

RECOVERED IN BENEFITS FOR
OUR CLIENTS



146 HOURS

OF ONLINE EXERCISE CLASSES DELIVERED

1471 PHONE CALLS

TO ELDERLY, VULNERABLE OR SHIELDING WOMEN



57 ONLINE SESSIONS

SUPPORTING MENTAL WELLBEING

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR



JENNIFER BROWN

The West Hampstead Women's Centre has been actively serving the London Borough of Camden for over 36 years and I can say that 2020 has been the toughest and most challenging year in our history. However, I am proud to say that we have been able to rise to the challenges due to our most brilliant manager, members of staff, outstanding volunteers and trustees who continued to run the centre over the last year. We have remained in contact and available to women and families most in need.

The WHWC has had to adapt our services and we have started to run many groups online during the lockdown. This has been a wonderful achievement as it has helped women to break down isolation and loneliness.

Although the WHWC has been able to adapt our services, we long for the day when we can open our doors again and continue to run all our groups/services and have all women under one roof.

However, we need your support more than ever as the WHWC continues to face challenges in fundraising and meeting the rising costs of running an outstanding centre.

As the WHWC goes into 2021 the staff and trustees know we are going to face unknown challenges. Regardless of the challenges that the WHWC is facing, we are committed to supporting and providing services to marginalised women in the local community.

In helping the WHWC to continue I want to thank our supporters and funders for their commitment to our work. Some funders have been funding us for many years, and that on-going support is very important to us. As Chair of the WHWC I would like to thank our amazing staff team, our volunteers, and Trustees for all the hard work they have undertaken on behalf of the women who come through our doors for assistance.

Finally, I want to thank you for making the West Hampstead Women's Centre the charity of your choice, as you will be helping to improve the lives of so many deprived women, children, and families. Your support is vital to enable us to continue providing services that benefit some of the most disadvantaged women and their families in Camden.

MANAGER'S REPORT



SNEZANA BULATOVIC

Just before the end of March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic spread throughout the world affecting all aspects of daily life. We adapted to the change quickly and spontaneously started to support the centre users remotely by providing online classes. The advocacy service took place over the phone and by email.

It was a huge learning curve for all of us and I owe my gratitude to WHWC's staff, trustees, and volunteers for working tirelessly during the last year. A big thank you to all the funders that continued to support us. We all look forward to the year ahead with a hope that we will be soon able to embrace the more familiar everyday life.



FUNDRAISING REPORT

Although it has been a highly challenging year for fundraising in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are pleased to report that we successfully raised funds from a wide range of sources.

WHWC is grateful for funding from the London Borough of Camden for their Strategic Partners Fund and Camden Advice Partnership for their support of the centre's activities, The National Lottery Community Fund, Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust and the Fitzdale Trust for their support of our advocacy service. We would also like to thank the Irish Government Emigrant Support Programme for their support of our vital Irish Women's Group. In addition, we would like to thank the following funders for supporting WHWC's services: Ageing Better in Camden, Camden Giving COVID Response, The Hospital Saturday Fund London Borough of Camden CIL COVID Response and BAME Communities, London Community Response, The Marsh Christian Trust, The Morgan Charitable Foundation, Tesco Groundwork UK COVID Response.

We are also grateful to receive help from the Government Support Grant and London Borough of Camden Business Rates Grant and Rent Relief in response to COVID.

Our thanks also go to individual donors for their kind support of the centre, which is much appreciated.



*" A lot of thanks for your keep going, dancing,
singing and eating attitude."*

BUILDING WOMEN'S RESILIENCE

ADVOCACY, INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT CENTRE

The advocacy, intervention and support service lies at the heart of the centre's services and is funded by the National Lottery Communities Fund, LB Camden, Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust and the Fitzdale Trust. The service helps women to resolve urgent problems regarding issues such as welfare benefits, housing, mental and physical health matters, and employment. We also help women to manage their finances and prioritise bill payments. Our advocacy workers refer women to food banks, and we make applications for individual charitable grants on our clients' behalf to alleviate hardship.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of women approaching us for assistance has remained at a high level. WHWC has also experienced a marked increase in women approaching us for help with domestic violence issues. Statistics show that domestic violence has increased by around 40% since the onset of the pandemic. We have supported domestic violence clients with applying for universal credit, child benefit and housing benefit and helping them to secure temporary accommodation. During 2020-2021 we successfully recovered £266,584 on seventeen women's behalf in benefits and helped 224 women in total.

SOMALI WOMEN'S SUPPORT

Our specialist Somali advice and advocacy service helped women this year with issues including welfare benefits, housing, debt, education, and employment, and made referrals to relevant mainstream services. We successfully overcame challenges we faced running support remotely during lockdowns, as many service users are digitally excluded. We held support sessions on Zoom covering many topics including Coronavirus, bereavement, mental health issues, and a housing session with a solicitor. We also provided information on how to access Mental Health support services. We were sadly not able to run our certified Level 3 'Home-based' childcare training for BME women this year, but we hope to restart soon.

ASIAN WOMEN'S GROUP

The Asian Women's Group is one of WHWC's core services and meets weekly. This year due to Covid-19, we continued the AWG group meetings over Zoom, facilitated by three volunteers from the group. The group members have enthusiastically learnt new I.T skills to join the online meetings and are very grateful that they can still see each other and socialise despite shielding. The meeting starts with seated exercise led by a trained volunteer, and includes a singing group where women sing together. Women who attend the Group value the friendship and support that it provides, and friendships continue to flourish. In October, the group started an additional meeting at the weekend to exercise together on Zoom to maintain their health. Thirty-one women attended the Asian Women's Group during 2020, and many of them have also keenly joined in other online centre activities.



ASIAN WOMEN'S HEALTH CALENDAR

These sessions led by health professionals, continued to run online on the last Wednesday of each month during 2020. Topics covered include heart disease, digestion, headaches and migraines, sleep, leg cramps, and falls. In 2021 we also had a talk on bowel cancer. The sessions provide a safe and friendly space where women can discuss personal and health issues and get helpful information to improve their wellbeing.

IRISH WOMEN'S GROUP

Our IT workshops in early 2020 meant some were very glad to have learned to click a link in a text message or attach a document to an email when lockdown started. Several were shielding, so linking people to volunteer shoppers, explaining about electronic prescriptions, sharing practical information, brainstorming problems faced (sometimes with support of other staff at WHWC) and watching out for scams, were what we concentrated on. Members provided mutual support to one another in lots of practical ways. Throughout, we texted a daily link to a song on YouTube. Members gave over 300 titles from "Don't stand so close to me" and "I will Survive" to "Whispering Hope" and "What a Wonderful World", sharing fear, joy, sadness, laughter, and the feeling of sometimes not knowing what day

of the week it was. Song words and other things went by post to people without mobile phones.

For the first weeks of the Covid 19 'Lockdown', we kept in touch by phone, but as time passed and we still had restrictions, we began to meet on Zoom. To celebrate Halloween, Ann Caffrey gave a great presentation and information on Eastern medicine. We moved our weekly Thursday morning slot to Wednesday teatime as the daylight was used for getting out and about and dark evenings were the lonely time when we cheered ourselves up with quizzes, discussions, information sharing and sometimes singing, as well as discussions on pros and cons of vaccines and happenings in the wider world.

Sadly, two members died during the year, Margaret Ford in October, and Kathleen Kiley in January 2021. Kathleen was also in the writing group and some of her work will be in the eBook 2021.



BLOOMING SURVIVORS

Blooming Survivors supports survivors of childhood institutional abuse in Ireland by providing a safe space to explore their personal narratives using the medium of art-based workshops. Survivors can connect with joy and desire in their lives through art, and collectively improve their mental health and well-being through social interaction and mutual support. The amazing team at WHWC helped us adopt a virtual platform in 2020, so the Blooming Survivors community could continue their creative journey during the Covid-19 lockdown. Blooming Survivors supported 8 Survivors directly during 2020, sadly Covid-19 did disrupt our hope to reach out to more people.

*" A brilliant service and grateful that I
can have access to the service."*



SEWING CLASSES

Two sewing classes run on Mondays and Fridays in partnership with Camden Adult Community Learning. This year brought many changes due to Covid-19. Sewing classes moved to remote learning as the centre closed. All students were emailed work weekly with sewing demonstration videos made by the tutor on how to complete their project on sewing trousers and pyjamas at home. Students sent photos of their work to the tutor and regularly kept in touch via email or telephone. October classes each had only 5 students to be Covid-19 safe. Students were very eager to return to lessons and see each other again.



"Coming to this class is a lifeline"

Many learners were struggling at home due to feeling isolated and sewing class brought normality and routine, improving their social well-being. Some learners with no facilities at home could not complete projects during lockdown, so continued work in the centre. Other students worked on individual projects e.g., alterations, sewing kimonos and aprons out of reused material. After the second lockdown, four sessions were run weekly to make up for those missed. From January 2021 there are no sewing classes until further notice due to a new lockdown.



"I really like having our WhatsApp group during lockdown"

CREATIVE CRAFT CLASSES

The creative crafts class is open to women of all ages and abilities with a particular emphasis on women with physical and mental health difficulties, caring responsibilities and those aged 60 plus. The Wednesday class runs in partnership with Camden Adult Community Learning. This year due to Covid-19 the classes were disrupted, with students either working on practical projects at home with email or phone support, or in the centre with reduced numbers and safety measures in place. The wide mix of topics we explored were: Knitting & Crochet, Seasonal Crafts such as fabric wreaths, hand embroidery and small sewing projects.

WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

OSTEOPATHY

This year one qualified volunteer osteopath provided Covid-19 risk assessed osteopathy, helping women with their musculoskeletal problems such as repetitive strain injury or postural imbalances and other aches and pains. Patients are encouraged to look at all aspects of their lifestyle in order to aid the body's natural self-healing processes. This service offers a holistic approach; balancing the mind and body to promote wellness. Patients are offered advice on how to manage their condition in between visits. Women experience improved health and wellbeing, with appointments booked weeks in advance.

" Thank you for all you do. It is so appreciated!"



REFLEXOLOGY

Our trained volunteer reflexologist provided these popular sessions to our members. The sessions bring about a state of deep relaxation to the patient and stimulate their body's own healing process. This natural therapy facilitates more vital energy, helps boost the immune system, and creates a stronger healthy body. Reflexology is based on the principle that there are reflex points on the feet corresponding to organs, glands, nerves, and other parts of the body. By stimulating these areas, the reflexologist can help patients to reduce symptoms and improve the health and quality of their life by identifying imbalances within the body and facilitating their body's ability to heal itself. Our reflexologist also offers exercise and health advice to patients who have found it very beneficial.

GARDENING

This year the gardening group looked very different, due to the pandemic and restrictions. We used regular zoom meetings and WhatsApp to keep in contact during lockdowns and times we were unable to meet. This kept the women in touch, supporting their mental health and wellbeing as many were shielding.

During the first lockdown we used seeds available from home kitchens to grow herb plants and learned about growing vegetables and herbs in small spaces, from windowsill and balcony to garden space.

During our few face-to-face sessions we took cuttings of herbs, redesigned the front garden, and made chutney using garden produce to sell at the centre.

We sent seeds from our garden to the women to plant together at home over zoom, shared Houseplant tips and knowledge about propagating and plant care.

This group is Funded by Ageing Better in Camden.

HERBALIST CALENDAR

We started the new herbalist calendar in January 2020 with funding from the CMS Futures Foundation. Led by a qualified herbalist, the monthly workshop sessions teach women about how to use herbs and plants for health and nutritional purposes.



" Thank you for running services this year, you are stars!"



MEDITATION MINDFULNESS

This new online course in Meditation Mindfulness has been successful and very helpful to our members from June 2020 to March 2021. This course had thirty-seven participants. It has been proved that the regular practice of meditation is very beneficial. It can bring about deep fundamental change in a very positive way. Our meditators relieve their stress by being calm and peaceful. The practice improves their concentration by being focused and developing their awareness and mindfulness. Using some specific methods our meditators can change negative ways of thinking into positive. With regular practice, Meditation Mindfulness provides a deep feeling of relaxation and meditators get a better understanding of their mind and emotions. They can work with their actions and reactions in a way that leads to well-being and happiness, not only their own but also that of those around them.



"I feel calm and relaxed and less overwhelmed."

"I can now sleep much better and feel more positive and active in life."

"It helped to reduce anxiety and stress."

"I used the meditation exercises to help cope with a bereavement."

LEARNING TO BEFRIEND YOUR MIND

We ran this six-week online course exploring how our thinking and attitudes can be a source of well-being or inner stress. It was funded by Camden Giving to support women's mental health and improve their resilience during the Covid-19 period. This very popular course gave women an opportunity to learn about developing the art of being more in control of their mind and therefore their life as a whole. The twenty-eight participants were shown simple methods to sustain confidence, increase self-awareness and create a more positive attitude.

"I really love these classes. Can see things much more deeper than before."



CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

From September to March 2021, Bryony Littlefair led a weekly writing class on zoom funded by Camden Council. She showed reading material to stimulate and display different approaches. Everyone wrote short pieces and read at least one of them aloud to the pleasure, amusement, and appreciation of the rest of the group. This creative outlet was highly valued during the recent restrictions. At the end of the course, an e-book of some of the writing was produced which will be available online and in print. Contact WHWC for further information.



YOGA

We are entering our sixth year of Iyengar yoga classes. Iyengar yoga focuses on alignment, precision, and directionality, leading to a calm and deep embodiment. Yoga improves strength, flexibility, and posture which in turn aids more efficient breathing, leading to improved health and reduced stress. Many women with health problems have reported a great reduction in symptoms. We continued to hold weekly Iyengar classes for both beginners and more experienced students throughout the pandemic. When the lockdown eased, we held a couple of combined live/online classes, with appropriate social distancing measures. We also strived to deliver yoga classes within the confines of the lockdown. Sadly, some women have not been able to access Zoom classes for several reasons and we look forward to teaching them back in the Centre as soon as it is possible.



"I feel stretched and rejuvenated at the end of the class."

Our classes provide a welcoming, relaxed, and friendly atmosphere with twenty-four women benefitting.



PILATES

WHWC introduced Pilates classes, run by a qualified volunteer teacher who holds specialist qualifications in Pilates to support women's health. The classes aim to improve the participants' general fitness and wellbeing, with a focus on core strength, body control and balance. The exercises target specific muscle groups and movements to alleviate common issues such as back pain, frozen shoulder, and neck stiffness. Twenty women have participated attended the weekly classes since they started. The participants' feedback has been positive, with the majority reporting a reduction in pain level and symptoms.

"I am grateful for the affordable class with a knowledgeable teacher."



"I was really surprised the next day how much movement I had in my forever stiff neck."

"Superb class I really felt the benefits of strengthening my core and feeling far more flexible."



LEGS, BUMS AND TUMS



"The Zoom class is much easier than travelling to get to a class."

This class currently runs once a week for women aged over 60. We have been running online "Legs, Bums and Tums" sessions since September 2020 and these have been popular with women. The women participating have adapted well to the online format and enjoy the classes very much. The exercises, which are set to lively music, help participants to improve mobility and help with balance and movement of the body, as well as to relieve stress and anxiety. The classes were attended by twenty-three women during this period.



VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Our volunteers are highly valued by West Hampstead Women's Centre and are integral to achieving our aims and objectives. We have volunteer trustees, receptionists, administrators, yoga and Pilates teachers, osteopaths, reflexologists, cooks, craftswomen, event organisers, graphic designers, photographers, website designers and more, whose enthusiasm and dedication enable us to provide our services.

Our volunteers responded positively to this year's coronavirus disruption. As restrictions disrupted services, the centre was made Covid safe and new online services started. Volunteers' patience, flexibility, and effort helped us implement frequent changes and keep service users updated. They delivered groups, classes, and workshops online using Zoom, supported service users remotely, learned new I.T skills and used equipment we had fundraised for. Five volunteers trained as walking group leaders, two volunteers gave free CV advice sessions to WHWC users and we welcomed seven new volunteers. We supported volunteers' physical and mental health with online classes.

Our volunteers value the opportunity to give something back to other local women, share and develop skills, and support our activities, finding volunteering enjoyable and confidence boosting. We have great support from organisations including Volunteer Centre Camden, Camden Giving, Volunteer Action Camden to successfully run our volunteering project.



EVENTS

The Centre's International Women's Day celebration took place on 11 March 2020 and 62 women attended. As was the case in previous years, women enjoyed food cooked by our Asian and Somali Women's Groups as well as a lively raffle, Somali drumming and dancing, readings, and displays of work. We held our AGM at the end of the celebration.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

West Hampstead Women's Centre

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities

(including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 March 2020

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2020 Total funds	2019 Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	15,102	-	15,102	14,305
Charitable activities	6	68,737	149,043	217,780	199,258
Investment income	7	117	-	117	110
Total income		<u>83,956</u>	<u>149,043</u>	<u>232,999</u>	<u>213,673</u>
Expenditure					
Expenditure of raising funds:					
Costs of raising donations and legacies	8	(6,367)	-	(6,367)	(5,869)
Expenditure on charitable activities	9, 10	(93,644)	(154,629)	(248,273)	(238,792)
Total expenditure		<u>(100,011)</u>	<u>(154,629)</u>	<u>(254,640)</u>	<u>(244,661)</u>
Net expenditure and net movement in funds		<u>(16,055)</u>	<u>(5,586)</u>	<u>(21,641)</u>	<u>(30,988)</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>134,657</u>	<u>117,772</u>	<u>252,429</u>	<u>283,417</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>118,602</u>	<u>112,186</u>	<u>230,788</u>	<u>252,429</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

West Hampstead Women's Centre

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2020

	Note	£	2020 £	2019 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets	17	91,125		<u>99,525</u>
Current assets				
Debtors	18	4,432		3,324
Cash at bank and in hand		239,428		237,262
		<u>243,860</u>		<u>240,586</u>
Current liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	<u>(104,197)</u>		<u>(87,682)</u>
Net current assets			<u>139,663</u>	<u>152,904</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>230,788</u>	<u>252,429</u>
Net assets			<u>230,788</u>	<u>252,429</u>
Funds of the charity				
Restricted funds			112,186	117,772
Unrestricted funds			<u>118,602</u>	<u>134,657</u>
Total charity funds	21		230,788	252,429

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 22 March 2021 and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Jennifer Brown
Trustee

Shaheda Multani
Trustee

THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS



STAFF TEAM

Snezana Bulatovic / Centre Manager
Zeena Nahi / Somali Project Worker
Julia Tint / Centre Development Worker
Begona Blanco-Carbia / Advocacy, Intervention and Support Worker
Susan Nettleton / Volunteer Development Worker
Judy Cunnington / Advocacy, Intervention and Support Worker
Saphia Ghelle / Cleaner

SESSIONAL STAFF

Marian Larragy / Irish Women's Group Facilitator / Caretaker
Cath Baynton / Gardening Tutor
Sandrine Fanjek / Meditation Class Facilitator
Ola Irukwo / Legs, Bums and Tums Trainer
Bryony Littlefair / Creative Writing Group Facilitator
Rasheeqa Ahmed/ Herbalist
Margaret Barron / Befriend your Mind Class Facilitator

VOLUNTEERS

Kristyan / Ingrid / Sarojini / Jennifer / Rukhsana / Claudia / Jordanna /
Feriona / Sandrine / Nikki / Sue / Sophie / Elly / Christine / Barbara /
Shaheda / Kirsten / Nasra / Liora/ Sedi / Ayan / Saskia / Nazia / Anna /
Anne / Catherine / Sandra / Jan / Anila / Rayan / Santosh / Sarah / Maria /
Laura / Aisha / Pharos Career Consultants / Bowel Cancer UK

AUDITOR

Jackson and Jackson Accountants



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS



FUNDERS

Ageing Better in Camden (AgeUK)
Beatrice Laing Trust
Camden Giving
The Fitzdale Trust
Government of Ireland - Emigrant Support Programme
The Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust
The Hospital Saturday Fund
The London Borough of Camden
The Marsh Christian Trust
The Morgan Charitable Foundation
The National Lottery Community Fund
London Community Response
Tesco Groundwork

PARTNERSHIPS

Ageing Better in Camden Partnership
Camden Adult Community Learning
Camden Advice Network
Camden Strategic Partnership
Maida Vale Iyengar Yoga Institute
Middlesex University

Many thanks also go to individual donors, for their kind and generous support and donations to West Hampstead Women's Centre. We also want to thank all the community groups and networks we work with regularly.



VISIT US

26-30 Cotleigh Road
London NW6 2NP
Tel: 020 7328 7389
Email: info@whwc.org.uk

 @WHWomensCentre

 @WestHampsteadWomensCentre

 @westhampsteadwomenscentre

Buses: 16, 98, 139, 189, 328, C11
Tube: West Hampstead Tube Station
(Jubilee Line)
Train: West Hampstead (London
Overground)
Train: West Hampstead (Thameslink)



SUPPORT US

If you would like to support our work by donating to us, please see the Donate page on our website.

www.whwc.org.uk

West Hampstead Women's Centre is a registered charity.

Charity No. 1085824 and a company limited by guarantee, no. 0391951

