



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



What a tumultuous year this has been! Strictly speaking this report covers the year April 2019-April 2020 in line with the financial year but as the whole country went into lockdown due to the covid-19 pandemic at the end of March we have inevitably included an update on the work of BWV and our response to the pandemic. It's October and cases are rising again. We know how much women have been affected by lack of childcare, job losses, more exposure to domestic violence and abuse and family responsibilities. We are making sure decision makers are aware of this too.

It was all going so well; a whole new cohort of enthusiastic volunteers joined us and immediately got to work, we ran an extraordinary International Women's Day event which this year included a Women's Question Time event for the mayoral candidates, our workshops were well attended and lively, we built more partnerships with our sister organisations, we completed an in depth piece of research with women whose voices are not always heard on behalf of the Government Equalities Office, and then the world as we know it was suddenly paused and we had to hastily reorganise all the different ways we work.

As you can see from this report our staff (who have all been working from home) quickly developed on line methods to listen to women, to work with women and women's organisations, to put on workshops which had capacity for greater numbers of women and developed ways to signpost women to much needed services. I am full of admiration for our staff who turned this situation around without a second thought and produced a well thought out delivery plan from scratch.

I am also greatly heartened by the determination of our Board of Trustees who have all volunteered to stay on the Board through the pandemic to provide continuity and to take some difficult decisions. Clearly we are unable to meet for our AGM this year so, in line with many other charities, we will post this annual report and our accounts on the BWV website. Sadly we will not be able to run our International Women's Day event at City Hall in 2021 but we will be planning some on line events soon. We have already run our Women's Question Time event for Mayoral candidates- a whole year early as it turns out! And we have had to leave our office in Brunswick Court as it is lying empty and we cannot justify the cost of keeping it on.

We have had a lot of staff changes since our last report and this year has seen a whole project team join us, complete a project and leave. As staff changes continue we will keep you updated on our-hopefully soon to be revamped-website. Our warmest wishes go to all those who have left or are leaving. Our grateful thanks to those who have stepped in to cover maternity leave and finance, welcome back to those returning and our heartfelt thanks and best wishes to our Director, Barbara, who has led us through such an incredibly difficult year and will be leaving us at the end of this month.

Stay safe everyone

Penny Gane,

Chair Bristol Women's Voice

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Penny Gane". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light blue rectangular background.

## Staff and Trustees

Dr Barbara Brown (Director)

Sandra Gordon (Volunteer Director)

Charlotte Gage (Project Coordinator)

Carolyn Magson (Project Coordinator – Maternity Cover)

Tara Miran (Finance & Admin Officer)

Debra Newrick (City Listening Project Manager)

Dr Emma Griffin (City Listening Project Research Analyst)

Amelia Burr (City Listening Project Assistant)

## Trustees 2019 – 2020

Diane Bunyan

Ifeoma Fox

Laura Gallagher (Vice Chair)

Penny Gane (Chair)

Clare Meraz

Vicki Morris

Nicki Norman

Alison Pallett (Company Secretary)

Stephanie Poyntz (Treasurer)

Sophie Shirt

**Our work this year...and what a year it has been!**

## **AMPLIFYING VOICES: International Women's Day**



More than two thousand people attended our International Women's Day celebration. We developed the programme specifically around women's physical and mental health and wellbeing, focussing the work of the team specifically to deliver outcomes in this way. The programme consisted of workshops, seminars, activities and static stalls so that women could access information most important to them and in ways that they preferred. The day's programme held at City Hall, was developed around amplifying women's voices and strengthening health and wellbeing which included seminars on: Herbs for women's health, Menopause and pelvic floor, Issues related to menopause, Menopause Question Time, Domestic Abuse awareness training, Kimunity Choir, Mother and Baby Choir, Black Women in Leadership.

Our stalls were diverse and encompassed a wide range of issues for women and included Bristol Disability Equality Forum, Bristol Older People's Forum, BRACE Dementia Research, Chinese Community Wellbeing Society, Opoka (DV for polish women)/Safelink, WASPI, Womankind, Bristol Law Centre, Bristol Radical History Group, Mothers for Mothers, Soroptimists, Avon Women's Institute, BWV and First Bus.

The inclusion of stands for organisations such as SAFELINK (supporting women who have experienced DAV) appeared to create a safe space for women to disclose. Safelink reported 25

disclosures at the IWD against an event average of up to a maximum of 6. Although we have had to cancel the planned workshops which specifically focussed on delivery in Children's centres in deprived areas of the city we have, in integrating the maternity rights planning into International Women's Day, been able to engage with women through a workshops and a legal advice stall. Our event planning also included a mother and baby choir, as well as marketing and specifically outlining the maternity rights activity.





## Mayoral hustings (Question time)

This year ,for the first time we included our Women’s Question Time event for the Mayoral candidates in the IWD celebration. More than 200 women attended with at least 40 from BAME backgrounds. It turned out to be a lively debate on issues of importance to women.



## The City Listening Project

Our City Listening Project funded by the Government Equalities Office is now complete. We asked more than 500 women whose voices are often not heard the fundamental question “What is in the way of you achieving your aspirations?” The project which lasted 12 months developed space to listen to women who face multiple barriers, so that we can

- Understand what stands in the way of them reaching their aspirations
- Understand what they believe would enable them to take steps towards reaching their aspirations
- Understand what is working, or has previously worked well for them
- Ensure decision makers are kept informed

Using a participatory approach we engaged 530 women, using one to one interviews, focus groups, surveys and pop-up sessions, through community organisations and community researchers who we trained to conduct one to one interviews and focus groups. Many participant women were living in poverty, which together with other factors limited their aspirations. In particular:

- Security and enjoyment of employment
- Opportunities for education and professional development
- Quality of housing provision
- Health and well-being
- Access to childcare and social care
- Freedom to move around the city
- Ability to retire and enjoy retirement
- Scope to re-build lives after domestic abuse
- Opportunities to find fulfilling pathways away from substance use
- Freedom from racism and discrimination

It is our aim in the coming year to work directly with policy and decision makers to create impact for change in the areas the women have highlighted.



## VOLUNTEERS

We held a volunteer recruitment event in January from which 25 women signed up to work with BWV on a regular basis and 44 women signed to support the IWD event. The event which included an interactive workshop supported women to meet other women, supported individual skill audit and reflection concerning personal development and community engagement. The event was a mixture of information giving and breakout sessions sharing ideas for working together, and finding their role in BWV. Some of the anecdotal conversations with staff revealed that many of the women were interested in how they could develop their skills by working with us in a voluntary capacity. Some of the women also talked about how the event itself connected them with others in a strengthening way. They also discussed the learning from the day in terms of how gender inequality manifested itself across the city in ways they had not considered.

**“That session was great! I have so many ideas whirling around in my brain now that I want to get started on! Really excited to meet with you and chat more about how everything works and specifics!”**

**“Thank you for bringing together such a passionate, informed, proactive room of women. It is only my fourth day living in Bristol but I left feeling energised and excited about the connections made and opportunities ahead.”**



## COVID19

On 10th March due to the decision that COVID19 was a world pandemic BWV made the early decision to cancel/postpone all community related activities and request that staff work from home. We spent time and effort repurposing and refocusing the work of the charity to support women within Bristol to access the information and services they need the most, creating capacity within the city where it counts.

Engaging Volunteers: reducing isolation, supporting the development of skills, supporting women into the workplace. We could not have made it through the pandemic without our army of volunteers! Women from different backgrounds with a myriad of skills joined BWV and worked to specific roles supporting and development of the social media campaigns, website management, community organisation engagement, administrative support and project support. We have engaged 96 new volunteers since the volunteer recruitment event in January. Between January and March (including IWD) they have gifted us 292 hours of volunteering. Since March we have engaged with 25 volunteers regularly, 7 of whom have worked closely with us throughout the pandemic lockdown, gifting 297 hours. Most volunteers talk of the increased sense of belonging and connectedness through their work with BWV. Since March two volunteers and one Intern have become paid BWV Associates.

**Bringing work online. We worked dynamically and passionately to bring women information that we knew they would need during the pandemic.**

**In organising ourselves to do this we:**

- Changed our website to support the dynamic and changing information on COVID-19 from central government, local organisations, and sister-organisations who deliver services specifically to women.
- Integrated volunteer support in updating operational status of local organisations during the dynamic change period during lockdown, integrating them within the changing work of BWV.
- Developed a social media campaign to highlight local support services for women. The campaign was one of three sets of information to bring a daily online social media presence directly for women: COVID-19 national updates; local organisations and their operational offer (broken down into service areas, such as mental health, domestic violence etc); and finally hope and inspiration to women through quotations, relevant articles and information sharing. Keeping women informed and able to access relevant services.

- Worked with partner organisations to provide video casts, where real-time service offerings were shared with women in areas such as mental health services, legal advice etc.
- Supported specific organisations to sharing key service delivery messages to women in Bristol.
- Offered a “You Talk We Listen” offer. This was an online/telephone befriending/listening and signposting service for women for 2 hours a day, four days per week.
- Opened an online engagement campaign with women to understand their experiences of COVID19 and their changing needs. As part of the engagement programme with women we conducted an open survey with women to with over 70 respondents. We are currently working to analyse the findings. Further, the daily thematic social media broadcasts created stronger social media following across all platforms listed from which women submitted video reflections of their COVID19 lockdown experiences to BWV to share on its platforms.
- Sent out a city wide survey to partner organisations to assess the gender impact of COVID19 for women (employees and recipients of services, funding)
- Delivered 2 online menopause workshops facilitated by a menopause nurse practitioner and BWV staff.

**BWV**  
BRISTOL WOMEN'S VOICE

**We want to hear from YOU**

Share your experience of how COVID-19 has affected your life.

[info@bristolwomensvoice.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolwomensvoice.org.uk)

**#YouTalkWeListenBWV**

**BWV**  
BRISTOL WOMEN'S VOICE

**#YouTalkWeListen**

**Monday-Tuesday-Thursday**  
11am-1pm  
**Wednesday**  
7pm-9pm

**We are here to listen.**  
Calls booked by email  
[info@bristolwomensvoice.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolwomensvoice.org.uk)  
or by leaving a message on  
**0117 9166555**

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## We also conducted a range of online workshops!

### BAME Women's Mental Health and Wellbeing

Working in partnership with Community Access Support Service and ReThink we hosted a BAME mental health women's workshop with over BAME 75 women sign up. The programme covered the impact of the stigma of racism, health inequalities and the political climate. Women were supported to understand mind and body wellbeing and recognise the barriers to seeking support.

Participants said:

***"I am feeling very different from when I arrived. Thank you to the organisers, and all of you for being so open and present."***

***"Thank you for putting this workshop together and everyone for sharing. It's easy to feel isolated and this has been a very supportive community"***

***"I think there is a real need for future sessions. I look forward to seeing what comes out of it."***

### Bangladeshi Women's Menopause Workshop.

Twelve Bangladeshi women attended the Let's Talk Menopause Workshop delivered by a Specialist Nurse Practitioner and BWV facilitator. All 12 said the workshop made them feel 'more aware of the menopause, symptoms and causes'.

9 said the event made them feel more supported, 10 said it had made them more aware of places they could seek help, 10 said they would value a menopause café or support group in their area.

### Menopause online workshops

In response to cancelling face to face community Menopause workshops we have begun a series of Menopause workshops, two of which were conducted in May and June. We developed the workshop to include a Nurse Practitioner with Menopause qualifications. She was able to offer practical advice and answer specific health issues, plus also address inequalities which had been identified from previous feedback (i.e. lack of HRT availability/doctors not recognising symptoms and misdiagnosing).

In response to data/info from Women's Health Task Group of the Women's Commission we also trialled a pelvic floor workshop (2/3 women experience incontinence). One attendee said:

**“The facilitator was brilliant: informative, accessible presentation and then dealt with questions with such care, grounded knowledge and non-judgement. One impact seemed to that a number of ‘attendees’ felt confident to ask questions which we all benefited from hearing the answers to. My question was answered so thoughtfully. I felt quite emotional afterwards to be ‘heard’. Called my surgery first thing this morning and now just off a long tel call with GP- prompted by yesterday’s event. Feeling positive that some steps ahead to look after my health right now specifically regarding menopause and for future”.**

## Predicting the Threat of Violence – A Women’s Conversation: online workshop

In line with the priorities concerning women’s wellbeing and Domestic Violence BWV hosted and delivered an online workshop called “Predicting the threat of violence – a women’s conversation”. Hosted by Imogen Thomas and Dr Jelena Nolan-Roll of Sister Courage, the workshop concentrated on body language and verbal behaviours that can be used to predict the potential for harm to women. The programme advocated the importance of the early recognition of embedded misogynistic attitudes. The women engaged well with the facilitators and each other, sharing their experiences in the zoom chat and within the smaller breakout sessions. They reported a greater sense of knowing who to contact and how to respond in particular circumstances. Participants said:

***“This has been amazing and so inspiring to see people with direct experience, survivors speaking from a good place.”***

***“Thank you so much. This has been really informative and really put things into perspective.”***



**MENOPAUSE**  
BRISTOL

**MENOPAUSE WORKSHOP**  
ONLINE WITH BWV  
HOSTED BY HAZEL HAYDN

**SATURDAY 6TH JUNE**  
3PM

Join our free Menopause Workshop online with Bristol Women's Voice hosted by Hazel Haydn, registered nurse and menopause expert.

Wednesday 27th May - 7pm:  
Link: [\[Link\]](#)

Saturday 6th June - 3pm:  
Link: [\[Link\]](#)

Past attendees have said our workshops are 'brilliantly helpful' and women felt 'they were no longer alone'

Whether you're pre, peri, or post menopause, this is a chance for you to find out more, meet other women and ask our expert for advice.

Workshop breakdown:

- \* What is the Peri-menopause and Menopause and the differences between them?
- \* Oestrogen and its role in Women's bodies.
- \* Cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and mental health.
- \* HRT - Risks and Benefits.
- \* The difference between different HRTs and alternative therapies.
- \* Natural supplements and diet and lifestyle

\*This workshop is a free event as part of our remit to support Bristol women and their health. We may ask for basic monitoring information within data protection regulations so we can feed back on the success of this workshop and help improve and fund further workshops to continue to support and help women's health\*





**community  
access  
support  
service**



Rethink  
Mental  
Illness.



**BWV**  
BRISTOL WOMEN'S VOICE

**FREE Emotional Wellbeing Workshop for BAME Women:**  
**“Looking After Ourselves/ Our Minds”**  
Hosted by BWV, CASS & Rethink Mental Illness

**Tuesday 30th June at 12 - 2 pm**



**Bristol  
Law  
Centre**  
Helping people access justice



**BWV**  
BRISTOL WOMEN'S VOICE

**17th August - 12pm**

This free workshop will equip women with a basic knowledge of their rights at work in these Covid-19 times - with a focus on whether they could be experiencing discrimination and as such whether they can challenge treatment under the Equality Act.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW 2019-2020

**2019/2020 marks the third full financial year that Bristol Women’s Voice has operated as a CIO and it has been another successful, yet challenging year for the organisation.**

### Where our money comes from:

Our main source of income to support our core work is the grant funding received from Bristol City Council’s Impact Fund. A large grant from the Government Equalities Office was received to deliver the City Listening Project for Bristol. We would like to thank Quartet, Bristol Water, Bristol Soroptimists, Unison and all the other organisations and individuals who have generously supported us throughout the year.

Our International Women’s Day celebrations were a highlight to our year just before the country was plunged into lockdown by the Coronavirus COVID19 global pandemic.

Although our funding for the Bristol Zero Tolerance work has ended, the passionate persistence of our then partnerships manager enabled some training and workshops to continue as a result of her fundraising efforts.

### Our income:

	2018-19	2019-20
<b>Income from donations</b>	£17,530	£9,063
<b>Income from charitable activities:</b>		
Bristol City Council Impact Fund	£42,920	£39,701
Government Equalities Office City Listening Project	£0	£59,119
Government Equalities Office (Centenary Project)	£104,086	£0
Quartet	£1,500	£16,205
Other	£31,350	£0
<b>Income from events</b>	£8,109	£1,252
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£205,495</b>	<b>£125,340</b>

**Our expenditure:**



There was a deficit against income in year of £8,760. This was offset against the funds brought forward from the previous financial year of £55,795 and £47,035 was therefore forward into 2020/21.

# THANK YOU!

Many thanks to all of our volunteers, members, supporters, donors and funders. Our work would not be possible without your incredible contributions!

## MANY THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS THIS YEAR



Bristol Women's Commission  
Committed to achieving real equality for women in Bristol



Government  
Equalities Office



Quartet  
Community  
Foundation

## Contact us:

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Instagram: @bristolwomensvoice