

BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE

Annual Report 2024-25

Making women's equity a reality
in Bristol through campaigning,
connecting, and celebrating.



Contents



Chair's statement	3
Achievements & performance	6

We campaign

Value the Caring Economy campaign	8
Further workshops & pilot projects	15
Political hustings	16
Younger Women's Forum	17
Strategic advocacy	20

We connect

Membership	22
Online resources & support	28
Inspiring Women Talk Series	29
Migrant Women Talk Series	30
Social beauty workshops	31

We celebrate

International Women's Day 2025	33
Volunteers	38
Training & consultancy	45
Looking forward	46
Financial review	47
Our income	48
Our board & staff	50

Chair's statement

I am honoured to present my first annual report as Chair of Bristol Women's Voice, having joined as a trustee in October 2023. As a passionate advocate for women and activist for equality, I am proud to say it's been another positive year for Bristol Women's Voice.



Driving change in the caring economy

This year's focus has been driving for change in the Caring Economy. Women continue to be pushed into poverty by lack of investment by policy change makers. Every year, women in the UK provide 23.2 billion hours of unpaid childcare care worth an estimated £382 billion, while men provide 9.7 billion hours, worth £160 billion. Food insecurity disproportionately affects single parents and carers, with 27% of households across Bristol using food banks. Women continue to bear the brunt of economic inequality.

We are proud to be the drivers for change by forming the 'Value the Caring Economy Alliance' with nine strong and influential organisations

across Bristol, with craftivism events, petitions and presence at round tables, calling for action at the highest level in policy reform. We are delighted that elected Helen Godwin, West of England Combined Authority Mayor hear the call that childcare should be part of future infrastructure plans.

We have continued to foster and connect communities of women through inspirational talks and events including women only hustings for the Police Crime Commissioner and the national elections. We are continually inspired by our diverse membership, which has led to both the Over 55s and younger women's projects.

Annually, we have led on the City's celebration of International Women's Day. This year, we staggeringly had more than 1,500 attendees.



Chair's statement

A heartfelt thank you to all involved for marking this all important event in our City, with such colour, inspiration, love and solidarity, at a time when it's felt we need it most.

Recognising the need to diversify our income streams for our future will continue to dominate the coming year. Our training offer will soon be launched online and we will look to grow our income with fundraising opportunities with a wider reach of organisations and relationships with individual donors who understand the importance of our work and its impact.

Our ability to deliver on our mission and work would not be possible without the unwavering support of our volunteers, interns and funders, with special thanks to Big Lottery Foundation, Awards for All, Bristol City Council, Grocer's



Charity, People's Postcode Lottery, and Quartet, among many others.

I extend my thanks to all our dedicated staff and board members for their unwavering commitment to Bristol Women's Voice. A small yet growing organisation, their tireless efforts ensure that women have a platform for their voices on what's most important, sharing stories, challenges and celebrations.

I extend my gratitude to the support of organisations across Bristol and nationally, including legal support in the challenges we have faced in light of the Supreme Court ruling on the definition of a woman of a woman in the Equality Act. Globally, women are still fighting for space to be heard and respected. Women and children are subjected to increasing violence, harm and death through wars, ill administration and rise of

misogyny and male violence. Bristol Women's Voice are proud to include the voices of those marginalised and believe in inclusivity for all, whilst navigating that changes are inevitable and the landscape of women's organisations undoubtedly will now change, I am confident that we will enter the new year with refreshed energy and strategic direction in our commitment to addressing the patriarchy, sexism and liberation from misogyny for our communities.

Shoba Ram
Chair



Achievements & performance

It's been another successful year for **Bristol Women's Voice**, once in which we have continued to campaign, connect and celebrate with women in Bristol, calling for change to **support greater equity**. It's been a year of creative, confident and steady delivery across all projects.



We have continued and expanded our training offer, and we have continued to raise marginalised women's voices in strategic forums and to connect decisions makers to women in the community through women-only hustings ahead of the Police and Crime Commissioner and national elections.

In August 2024, we were joined by Madie Lewis, our Communities and Connections Coordinator. She hit the ground sprinting and led on the delivery of our biggest and most diverse International Women's Day event yet, bringing 1,557 participants to Bristol City Hall.

We followed this with a sell-out night at local nightclub, Lost Horizon, in partnership with three brilliant music collectives: Booty Bass, Mothers in Music and Femmes on Decks.



We worked with an incredibly talented young artist, Imogen Donegan, to paint a stand-out mural of women's resistance at the People's Republic of Stokescroft Outdoor Gallery through March 2025.



We also worked with the Lamplighter Arts CIC and Invisible Army to run a beautiful lamplit procession with lanterns made by parents and carers from across the city, raising the voices of unseen and undervalued women as part of our campaign to Value the Caring Economy.

1,557

participants attended the **International Women's Day** event at Bristol City Hall

Achievements & performance

Alongside these big events we continued to engage women in the communities through our Inspiring Women Talk and our new Migrant Women Talk series, and to share information about opportunities for women across our Broadcast WhatsApp and Women's Services Directory.

We have been very grateful for the volume and quality of support we have had from volunteers and interns this year, without whom much of our work wouldn't have been possible, and to whom we are always very grateful.



We have been very grateful for the volume and **quality of support** we have had from volunteers and interns this year.



Amongst all the positivity, 2024/2025 has also been a year of significant challenge at times. We have had to review and improve the way we run events in order to ensure women feel safe to attend and staff are protected from bullying and harassment. Bristol Women's Voice is still a relatively young organisation – one that continues to grow, innovate and develop. We don't always get things right first time, and we don't always respond the way women would like us to, but in line with our values, we continue to learn from mistakes, review feedback and remain transparent about our processes.

We remain deeply grateful for all the support we receive from members, colleague organisations and others in the community and we look forward to deepening our connections and partnerships with you in 2025/2026.



BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE



We campaign

We campaign



Value the Caring Economy Campaign: Amplifying voices, celebrating carers

Between April 2024 and March 2025, Bristol Women's Voice continued to campaign for unpaid care work to be valued and recognised through our Caring Economy Campaign. We hosted 16 workshops in partnership with the Caring Economy Alliance. These workshops were designed to reach women with caring responsibilities including unpaid carers and mothers across Bristol, bringing them together through Community Connection Meetings and public-facing events in the heart of local communities.

From Summer 2024, we launched a powerful new collaboration with LampLighter Arts CIC, a mothers-led artists' collective, to deliver 10 citywide lantern-making

workshops. These creative spaces enabled over 200 women to express their thoughts, experiences, and demands as carers through art. Each lantern became a visual message aimed at decision-makers, carrying calls for recognition, investment, and change.

We reached into Bristol's diverse communities, working with respected women-led groups and organisations such as Sadaga, the Chinese Community Wellbeing Society, Bring Your Own Baby (BYOB) Choir, Mothers for Mothers, Dhek Bhal, and others. This community-rooted approach helped us engage voices that are often marginalised or unheard.

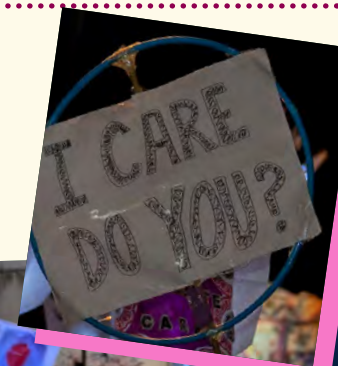
We campaign



In partnership with Invisible Army and their impactful Carers Strike Project, protest placards created by carers joined our Lantern Procession, which culminated on 22 March 2025 in a vibrant, moving display around St Nicholas Market. The BYOB Choir composed and performed an original song during the procession, transforming the streets into a celebration of care.

This event brought care into the public eye, showcasing the creativity, skills, and achievements of carers while calling for meaningful change. The procession called on employers, the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, Bristol City Council, and the UK government to adopt the caring economy as a core framework for investment in public services, training, transport, environmental sustainability, and anti-poverty strategies.

BRISTOL WOMEN'S VOICE



This year's campaign celebrated the unseen, unvalued work of carers and **turned their voices into action**. We are proud of opportunities we had to engage with the women in the community — and the change we are committed to continue pushing for.

Impact and outcomes

Data from across our workshops:



Case study

On a Tuesday morning in July, Estelle* walked through the doors of Broadmead Baptist Church where we held one of our Community Connection Meetings led by Dahlia, our Community Organiser.

After a gentle connecting exercise and brief explanation about the Value the Caring Economy Campaign, Estelle started to tell us a little more about her story. Now in her early 50s, Estelle is the primary carer for her disabled son.

She is doubtful that we can change much as she has experienced first-hand poor care for her son, from both the local authority and care agencies. She wants to see change, but has remained unheard and unseen much of her life.

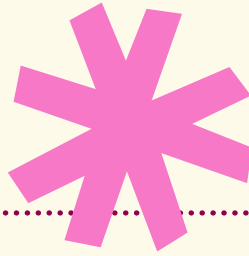
The people who helped her the most, she said, included the man behind the window at the petrol station handing her over a bag of groceries while she did her best to manage her Disabled son, whose behaviour was particularly disruptive at the time, not the local authority or the care agency who were meant to look after her and her family.

BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE



She wants to see change, but has remained unheard and unseen much of her life.

Case study



At that event, there was also a young woman, Nura*, who became a campaigner by necessity when she suddenly found herself having to leave her home after the council had deemed it unsafe.

Estelle and Nura connected, with Nura promising to give Estelle support and contact details to raise her concerns about the state of care. As the event went on, Estelle's body language and tone of voice changed from disillusioned and angry, to hopeful and bolstered.

Estelle has had a very difficult experience of social services and care for her disabled and autistic son, which has left her highly wary of local services after traumatic experiences throughout her son's childhood and adulthood.

As the event finished, both women left together. Estelle has continued to attend all our events linked to the Caring Economy, and most recently walked through the streets of Bristol with us to Shine a Light on Care.

*names have been changed

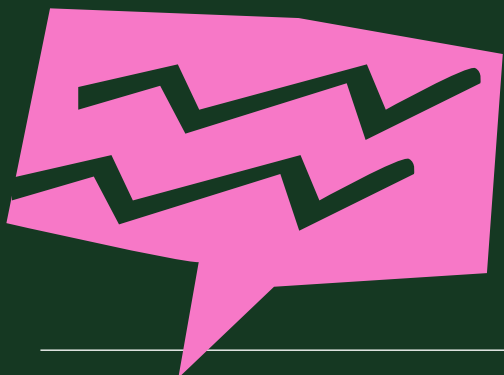
BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE



Listening Project & future plans

The campaign also led to the Carers' Listening Project, which connected attendees with a local researcher, Siobhan Canavan, who was well-supported by intern, Jess Brake.

Insights from their interviews, survey and focus group with carers will shape our 2025/2026 campaign goals and we are looking to an official report launch in 2025, working with those who shared their experience to reach decision makers in the region.



Food inequality

BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE



We worked with the Carers Support to secure some funding from Feeding Bristol with which we hosted a series of joint Food Equality sessions.

In total, we estimated the work supported 201 people: 134 women carers with an average of 1.5 dependents they care for across a period of 9 weeks (Feb-March 2025)

Our partnership engaged a very diverse group of women carers in terms of ethnicity, locality and age. All the participants experienced food inequality, and some food insecurity. Because they must always put the needs of those they care for first – their dietary requirements, personal care, emotional needs, and practical care – this leaves them with no time, energy, motivation, or money to cook and eat the good food they want to eat.

Further workshops & pilot projects

We also ran:

'If Mothers Told the Stories' a creative workshop series in Hartcliffe and Barton Hill, where mothers explored and shared their lived experiences around care and motherhood through the lens of storytelling and autonomy.

'Feminist Leadership in Practice for Over-55s', a thought-provoking pilot that was delivered with great impact to women over 55, many of whom have been involved in co-designing the project plan for an over 55's health project.



Over 55s Women's Health Project

We are delighted to be one of only five organisations nationally to receive two-year funding from the People's Health Trust to deliver a social action project that examines health discrimination and how the charitable sector can work to dismantle this. Our project has been co-designed with women who want to address the intersections of ageism and sexism and address the barriers to health create by medical misogyny.



The funding starts in April 2025, and the project will begin soon after that. All updates will be available in our newsletter and online.

Political hustings

One of our core purposes is to connect people to power through facilitating women's access to decision-makers to have their voices heard.

To this end, we ran two political hustings this year, one for Police and Crime Commissioner candidates in May 2024, and another which we ran in partnership with the Women in Business Charter for the four main political parties (although Labour did not provide a candidate) ahead of the general election in July 2024. This latter event was focused on women's economic inequality.

Both events were lively affairs that provided the opportunity for opinions to be heard and provided an important opportunity for women to access those standing for elections. Unfortunately, both were disrupted by

threatening behaviour from members of the public which impacted people – including staff's feelings of safety at the events. We have learnt a lot from these and other events over the last year and overall, we emerge grateful for the opportunity to have grown from them.

We have subsequently upskilled our staff for dealing with microaggressions, strengthened our membership, events and complaints management policies and extended our induction processes. In line with our values, we learn from mistakes and experiences and always strive to improve so we can offer safer spaces in which marginalised women, especially, can feel supported to have their voices heard. You can find these policies on our website.



Younger Women's Forum

The Younger Women's Forum continued to grow as a creative, reflective and action-focused space for women aged 18–30. Over 12 months, the project delivered 23 workshops, meetings, and sessions focused on combining creativity, expression, and activism to challenge misogyny and inequality.



A total of 52 young women took part across the year, with a core group attending regularly. The project brings together young women from across Bristol to explore the issues that matter to them — through art, activism, conversation and community.

Workshops included craftivism sessions, where participants created banners, posters, postcards and fabric pouches containing personal messages — many of them expressing defiance, care, and hope.



These were then displayed in Queen Square as part of a public, picnic-style exhibition. The event invited passers-by to view the work, celebrate the voices of younger women, and join the conversation. For many participants, it was the first time they'd seen their creativity and perspectives shared so visibly and proudly in a public space. In Our Image, a collaborative creative

project, emerged from this momentum.

It explored young women's safety in Bristol through recorded and transcribed conversations about how unsafe they feel in the city, particularly when navigating public spaces. Each account was paired with a photograph of the speaker's hands — offering presence without pressure to be visibly identified.

The project was exhibited at City Hall during International Women's Day and received a strong and thoughtful response, particularly from younger women. It made clear how deeply the experience of feeling unsafe affects everyday freedom and confidence — and highlighted the changes young women want to see.



Younger Women's Forum

Feedback throughout the year has been overwhelmingly positive. Participants consistently used words like “empowered”, “connected”, “positive”, “heard”, “stronger”, “energised” and “inspired” to describe how they felt after attending.

They also rated the sessions incredibly highly, with an average score of 5 out of 5 for the session leader and 4.77 for the session content.

Many reflected on the power of in person meetings with other women, having meaningful conversations, and building a sense of trust and solidarity — especially after feeling that the only spaces where they could be open about these topics were online, and often lacked safety or depth.

What young women have said about working with us:

“Coming here has made me feel like I’m not alone — I’ve felt stronger and more energised after every session.”

“I’ve never had the courage to stand up for myself, but hearing from other women has given me strength.”

“It made me think differently about how we can use creativity to challenge the systems we live in.”

“I felt validated. The feeling of being heard, without having to explain everything, is so rare and so powerful.”

The Younger Women’s Forum has also supported women to take action in their personal lives and communities.

One woman spoke about finding the strength to stop contraception she had been using for years, after gaining confidence through the group.

Others have gone on to volunteer with mental health organisations or youth groups, inspired to give back. One participant shared that the group helped her mental health at a time when fear about her safety had become overwhelming — connecting with other women gave her a sense of hope and reminded her that change is possible.

Younger Women's Forum

Participants have also reported feeling more equipped and empowered to support themselves, their friends, and their communities when it comes to challenging misogyny. Many described greater confidence in having difficult conversations, standing up for their rights, and helping others feel less alone.



The project has been supported by six key volunteers who gave their time to support workshops, edit photos and transcriptions.

Outcomes

100% said they were more aware of their rights after engagement with the project, 75% of which said there were a lot more aware.

100% said the workshops had helped them understand how you can have your voice heard with the people that make decisions in the city.

The Younger Women's Forum engages women who often face barriers to participation.

Of those who completed evaluation forms, 17% identified as being



from Black, Asian, Mixed or other minority ethnic backgrounds, 11% identified as disabled, and 57% said that money regularly or sometimes holds them back from taking part in social activities. 31% shared that they struggle to afford basic essentials such as food, gas or electricity.

Many women spoke about how important it was to have a free, in-person space where they could connect with others, challenge inequality, and feel seen and supported — something they hadn't found easily elsewhere.



100% said they were more aware of their rights after engagement with the project.

Strategic advocacy

We continue to advocate for a gendered lens on strategy and solutions through participation in strategic forums and groups.

These include:

- Community Exchange
- Cost of Living Coordination Group
- Counter Terrorism Independent Advisory Group (police)
- Equity Hubs Forum
- Public Transport Safety and Equalities Group
- Women's Independent Advisory Group (police)



BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE

We connect

Summer members event

In June 2024, we gathered in Queen Square for a relaxed Picnic in the Park that brought together members of all ages for a fun afternoon reflecting on feminist resistance in everyday life.

To start the conversations, attendees were invited to bring a photo of their favourite feminist icon. Images ranged from beloved family members to global figures like Frida Kahlo—sparking heartfelt conversations amongst our members.

The event also saw the debut “Feminist Line of Resistance”, where participants wrote small, everyday acts of resistance to the patriarchy on fabric pouches and hung them on a washing line between two trees, creating a striking community installation that remained in place for a week.

91%

of participants said the experience increased their awareness of their rights

83%

rated the content good or excellent

33%

identified as disabled

40%

of attendees were from Black and minoritised communities

Following the session attendees described feeling: Connected, Inspired, Empowered, Fulfilled, Proud, Part of a community.



Summer members event

BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE

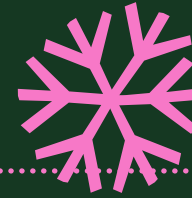
The success of this installation inspired its repetition at multiple events across the summer, including Freshers Week, Bristol Pride, and community festivals, evolving into what became known as the “Feminist Tree of Resistance”.

By the end of 2024, we had collected hundreds of contributions and we considered how to honour and collectively acknowledge these small acts of everyday resistance that people had shared. We put a call out for artists and then chose Bristol-based artist Imogen Donegan to work with. Drawing on previous mural-painting experience, she designed and we came together to paint an inspired and uplifting mural at People’s Republic of Stokes Croft (PRSC) for the month of March in honour of International Women’s Day. The PRSC liked it so much they have made a print of it which is available to buy on our website.

Finally, we are working with University of West England students to create a digital version of the Tree of Resistance which we hope to unveil in late 2025.



Winter members event



In December 2024, our Winter Members' Event brought together women from different generations to share experiences, build connections, and engage in meaningful dialogue about gender equity in Bristol.

The event began with informal mingling and a delicious buffet generously provided by our supporters at Simmons & Simmons. To open the evening's activities, we invited members to pair up with someone from a different generation. We encouraged members to reflect on their personal experiences of gender inequality, establish how age shapes perceptions of patriarchy, and how their views on equality have evolved over time.

We later moved into a World Café-style group discussion, where we explored the most pressing issues currently facing women in Bristol, celebrated progress made towards gender equity and identified opportunities for future action, established ways to foster stronger intergenerational solidarity and build inclusive movements.

To close, we asked members to share ideas on how Bristol Women's Voice can continue to amplify women's voices and better support individuals and communities to take collective action across the city to ensure that our work reflects the needs and aspirations of our members.



Winter members event

What did you enjoy about the event?

Swapping ideas and sharing experiences with others.

Relaxed pace; nice food & drinks. Thought provoking topics.

Meeting other women and getting to know them. The food was nice and the venue was lush.

Meeting and listening to other women directly feeding into Bristol Women's Voice strategies.

Meeting and talking with other women. All having an interest in women and women's issues.

What do you like about being a member of Bristol Women's Voice?

Part of an active and dynamic group who are working hard to improve things for women.

Chance to meet women from all walks of life. Hearing about different events and projects across the city.

Sharing information, getting notifications of news & events.

Membership engagement

Our membership is free and open to all women who live, work, volunteer or study in Bristol and who agree with our mission, vision and values. Membership is also open to non-binary people who feel our work is relevant to their experience.

Benefits of being a member include:



A monthly newsletter updating you on our work and upcoming opportunities.



Participation in our annual membership survey which informs our strategic planning.



Opportunities to connect with like-minded women at our members' events and AGM from all backgrounds, ages and communities.



A vote in deciding who is on our Board of Trustees at our Annual General Meeting (AGM).



A say in deciding our work priorities and opportunities to co-design our projects.



Opportunities to volunteer and get involved with organising our International Women's Day celebration (around 8 March) or joining our board of trustees



Growth, engagement & diversity

At the end of March 2025, Bristol Women's Voice had 4,075 members and subscribers.

In 2024/2025 we increased the open rate of our monthly newsletter to an average of 40% (from 35% in 2023-24).

As we go into 2025/2026, we will be developing a community engagement strategy in collaboration with our members through which we hope to grow and further diversify our membership.



Diversity

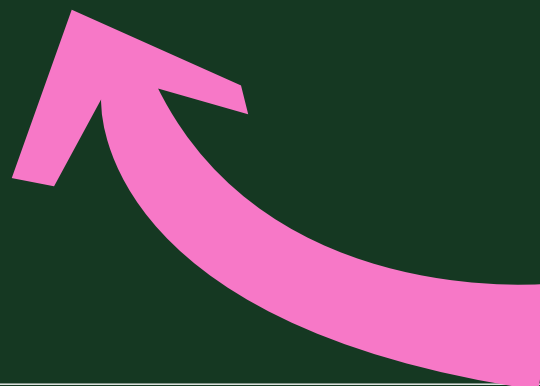
We are pleased to note an increase in diversity of our membership and that efforts to reach out to younger and Black and minoritised women (e.g. through a younger women's forum, our Migrant Women Talk series and through partnerships) are having some success.

New member sign-ups (180) in the last year are from women who identify in the following ways:

- 28% from Black or minoritised backgrounds
- 22% aged 16-24
- 16% aged 25-29
- 22% aged 30-39

Overall data on our members is as follows:

- 28% identify as Disabled
- 19% identify as lesbian or bisexual
- 60% struggle financially some/all of the time to take part in everyday activities
- 39% struggle some/all of the time to pay bills
- 38% have caring responsibilities
- We have members aged 18-70+
- We have members in all but two Bristol wards.



Online resources & support

Online Directory for Services for Women

We have established strong partnerships in the community including with local government, charitable organisations, and allied corporate businesses, expanding our network of support for women in Bristol.

Our online directory of services, consisting of 150 support organisations and groups for women has seen a consistent usage across the year, with an average of 500 clicks per month. This highlights the growing demand for resources tailored to women's needs.



VIEW OUR
DIRECTORY

Broadcast Only WhatsApp Group

Our outreach efforts extend to digital platforms including our WhatsApp Broadcast Group which shares weekly messages containing news, resources and events relevant to women in Bristol.

The group has increased in size over the past year, now consisting of 180 members. The group allows us to share up to six messages a week, confidentially connecting women to local events, job opportunities, information and support services.

Join the group

You can join our WhatsApp broadcast-only group by sending a message to 07796 433 663 (and please add this number to your

contacts, too). Your number but not your name will be visible to other members.

We share a few messages with this group each week that have relevant time-specific news, events, and info.



Inspiring Women Talk Series



In 2024/2025 we continued our **Inspiring Women Talk Series**, originally launched in February 2023. This is a citywide storytelling initiative bringing women from all walks of life into community settings to share their journeys, passions, and wisdom. This year, the series delivered six talks and engaged 88 women. The talks have focused on diverse themes, including choosing to be childfree, navigating a career change at 50, living with ADHD as a woman and the layered realities of Black motherhood.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with attendees consistently using words such as 'inspired', 'connected', 'empowered' to describe their feeling after the session. Attendees consistently rate the sessions highly for content and facilitation, with

most rating session leaders and content Very Good or Excellent. Participants highlight the quality of the storytelling, the warmth and openness of the spaces, and the opportunity to feel connected and inspired. One participant shared how a session "opened my mind to different ways of living and being," while others valued the honesty and vulnerability of the speakers.

The data also shows that the series is successfully engaging women who often face barriers to participation. Participants include disabled (31%), carers (26%), and those experiencing financial hardship (47%). A number of attendees identified that cost limits their access to cultural or social activities, and yet through this free series, were able to attend and feel part of something meaningful.



Migrant Women Talk Series

Launched in October 2024, the Migrant Women Talk series launched as a special edition of the Inspiring Women Talk Series, designed to celebrate and centre the voices of migrant women in Bristol. To date, there have been five talks covering a range of themes including art for wellbeing, intergenerational racial trauma, language and identity, transformative allyship, and community engagement, centring lived experience.

The series has welcomed 40 participants, with an average of 8 attendees per session. Feedback shows the series is reaching underrepresented groups in Bristol, including women from ethnic minority backgrounds, including African (14%), Arab (7%), and Asian (10%). Many participants also experience financial hardship (41%) or hold caring responsibilities (35%), underlining the series' ability to engage those who are often excluded.



The sessions have prioritised accessibility, warmth, and trust, and have been consistently praised for being inclusive and welcoming spaces where attendees feel heard and valued. One participant described the environment as “really confident

and welcoming,” while another appreciated how the “session leader made clear it was a protected space.”

Crucially, the impact of the series is felt not only during the events but beyond them. Attendees have spoken about developing a deeper understanding of refugee women's experiences and expressed their commitment to become better allies. In a recent talk that focused on transformative allyship, participants made personal pledges, such as “learn more about Kurdish culture and history,” “bring Kurdish culture to my school and family environment,” and “shed light on the Kurdish community.” These reflections highlight how the series inspires ongoing individual and social transformation.



Social beauty workshops

To enhance our community development efforts, we have partnered with Natacha Sullivan, founder of the Beauty of Caring CIC to deliver socio-aesthetic workshops around Bristol.

In addition, we collaborated with Refugee Women of Bristol and Mothers for Mothers CIC to make our outreach more targeted and focused on women from ethnic minorities or women with caring responsibilities.



“Difference is power and beauty is universal” has been the guiding principle for these workshops, using beauty to create connections between different communities.

Over 100 women have attended and had the opportunity to meet other women, learn about affordable self-care and find out about support services and events in Bristol for women. Women have also had the opportunity to increase their English proficiency skills as the workshops have been designed and delivered to remove language barriers.



“Difference is power and beauty is universal” has been the guiding principle for these workshops.



BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE

A photograph of a DJ performing at a nightclub. The DJ, a woman with long dark hair, is seen from the back, wearing a black strapless top. She is positioned behind a DJ booth with two turntables and a laptop. The booth is decorated with various stickers, including one that says "WAXERDS" and another with "0000 0000 0000". A large crowd of people is gathered around the DJ, many with their arms raised in the air. The scene is lit with warm, ambient lights, creating a lively and energetic atmosphere.

Celebrate

International Women's Day 2025

This year, we hosted our largest and most powerful International Women's Day event to date; 1,557 people walked through the doors of City Hall on Saturday 8 March. The ramps up to City Hall were adorned with a powerful display of red dresses created by the Red Dress Crafters reminding us of the impact of male violence against women and girls in creative and interactive way.

It was an unforgettable day, one that empowered and united women, fostering connection and raising the call for greater equity in our city and across the world. We are incredibly grateful for everyone who contributed to making this event a success.



The programme was jam-packed, full of diverse panels, workshops, activities, performances, stalls and exhibitions.

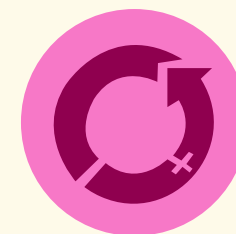
The programme was jam-packed, full of diverse panels, workshops, activities, performances, stalls and exhibitions. Talks covered a range of topics, from practical and informative to inspiring and fun. Highlights included discussions on the cultural significance of Henna, an insight into the lives of Kurdish women, the history of Rastafarian women in Bristol, performances by Misfits Theatre Company, a body-positive dance class, and an exploration of the history of lesbian activism in Bristol.



International Women's Day 2025



Our panels provided a platform for women to have their voices heard by key decision-makers in the city. During these sessions, women were able to share their concerns about safety with Police and Crime Commissioner Claire Moody, highlight issues concerning women and economic justice with Stephen Williams, Chair of the Public Health and Community Policy Committee, and discuss women's health with Karin Smyth MP and Minister of State at the Department of Health and Social Care.



This year, we also hosted a raffle featuring fantastic prizes generously donated to us, including Wake the Tiger tickets, a signed Bristol City Women's team t-shirt, Bristol Old Vic tickets, Watershed tickets, and many more.

IWD volunteers



Our volunteers played a crucial role in the success of this event, with 74 volunteers in total giving their time and energy to support the day's activities.

From registering attendance, setting up rooms and assisting with workshops their contributions were invaluable.

59% of volunteers were from mixed and/or Black and minoritised backgrounds, (including 14% from Chinese and Indian backgrounds) and 41% identified as White British. 5% identified as Disabled.

Experience

What volunteers said about being part of the day:

"I loved being part of something so powerful. The sense of coming together was amazing – there were a lot of emotions throughout the day but I came away feeling hopeful."

"It gave me a sense of purpose to be part of such an important event, meeting other women, energy!"

"Chatting to people and connection with women I wouldn't normally meet. Amazing."

100% said they would be interested in volunteering again.

100% rated their experience as good or very good.



IWD contributors

We collaborated with 115 contributors to make the day happen, including women's sector organisations and businesses, who provided valuable insights into local services and initiatives. Their participation not only enriched the event but also offered them opportunities for engagement, networking, and further strengthening their impact within the community.

92%

(24 out of 26) of organisational contributors were equalities-led organisations.

48%

contributors were from Black and minoritised communities.

16%

of our contributors identified as Disabled.

Ages ranged from 16-70+.

100%

of contributors said they felt well supported and communicated with in the lead up to and throughout the event and rated their experience as good or excellent.

96%

said the event helped them to feel connected to communities of like-minded women.



Impact on attendees

What did you learn by being part of the event?

I've learned that there are lots of organisations supporting women in Bristol – we are not alone! I felt supported and came out with energy and positivity.

The event was a reminder many are trying to fight and achieve equality and justice. Feeling the strong power and energy from women of various backgrounds and ages.

How did you feel?

Motivated

Brighter

Seen, connected and heard

Safe and inspired

Beautiful

Grateful to have carers recognised for what they do

Inspired

Proud



97%
people filled in evaluation forms.

96%
rated the range and quality of workshops, activities and panel discussions and good or excellent.

96%
of attendees said the event increased their awareness of services, activities and opportunities for women in Bristol by some or a lot.

94%
said the event raised their awareness of their rights.

93%
of people rated the accessibility and inclusivity of the day as good or excellent.

96%
of attendees rated the organisation of the day as excellent or good.



Volunteers

It's not just International Women's Day that relies on volunteers — all our work across the year is enriched by the hours donated by volunteers.



We have been grateful for support across:

- **Communications:** photos, social media programming, blogs and reviews. Young women's project: event organising and support
- **Campaigns and community organising:** lantern processions, mural painting, community workshops and meetings.
- **Inspiring Women Talk:** event support
- **Directory:** updating the directory
- **General administrative support:** venue research and booking background research for activities, data input.

In total we have benefitted from approximately 439 hours total spread across 89 volunteers.

Equating to 14.5 full-time weeks of work, and £5,531 work at national minimum wage.

We have also benefited from the work of some amazing interns, without whom we would not have managed to pull off our events. Lily Harvey supported us with developing our Caring Economy Campaign through volunteer coordination, research and administration. She also provided tireless event support, and lead on the programme design and delivery at our Summer Picnic.



Volunteers

Tessa Smith took on the mammoth task of recruiting, inducting and coordinating the 74 volunteers that made International Women's Day possible, and Jess Brake provided invaluable support for our Carers Listening Project.



You can read about her experience with us below. We are delighted that all interns remain in contact and continue to volunteer at our events.

Case study: Jess Brake, intern University of Bristol

As a woman who is deeply concerned and passionate about gendered issues, I wanted to intern for a feminist charity because it aligned closely with my personal values and passions. I've long been interested in how gender inequality manifests in everyday life and wanted to be part of an organisation actively working to challenge those structures.

Through interning, I aimed to learn how grassroots activism translates into real-world impact, especially through campaigns, community outreach, and policy changes. I found the experience truly life-

changing. It was incredibly formative. I felt a strong sense of purpose being part of such a hard-working and dedicated team, driven to bring about social change in Bristol.

Being involved at a grassroots level also allowed me to witness the tangible impact of our efforts... Knowing that my contributions were making a real difference in people's lives made the experience deeply rewarding and a genuine privilege to be part of. ... it gave me hope that there are passionate, committed people out there working every day to make a positive difference. That sense of hope and empowerment will stay with me always."



I found the experience truly life-changing.

Online & press engagement

Facebook

5,405 total followers

257 new followers

61K reach (+173.3% compared to last year)

7K profile visits (-25% compared to last year)

Instagram

4,644 total followers

976 new followers

33.7K reach (+302.1% compared to last year)

4.8K profile visits (+43.8% compared to last year)

LinkedIn

1,706 followers (+518 followers in the last 12 months)

35K impressions (in the last 12 months)

We left X, and have switched to BlueSky. BlueSky is still a new platform. There is a preference to focus efforts and energy on platforms which we know are currently reaching the largest number of people.

Website

There's been an increase in the number of active users from last year with expected spikes in February & March ahead of International Women's Day.

Our Directory is fairly consistently in the top five pages visited and always in the top 10 pages. We aim to keep the content fresh, by posting regular content to the website.

We have a small team of volunteers who write the blog content, particularly to report back from events (eg: theatre plays, Inspiring Women Talks, Migrant Women Talks etc).

Press coverage

We've had over 19 instances of press or media coverage in 2024/2025 across radio, TV, print and digital and were delighted to have ITV South West come and cover our International Women's Day celebration on Saturday 8 March.

Accessibility & inclusion measures

At Bristol Women's Voice, inclusion is one of our core values, and we are proud of the measures we implemented to ensure that all attendees felt welcome, supported, and empowered to fully engage in the event.



Prebooking system through Eventbrite

In response to feedback from previous years, addressing concerns from attendees with limited mobility who often found rooms full upon arrival. We introduced a pre-booking system, this allowed guaranteed access to workshops and panels in advance. This trial was broadly positive although we have noted some feedback and will improve the system again for next year.

Prayer room

This was available for attendees observing Ramadan and any others requiring space for worship.

Quiet room

We had a designated quiet room, provided a calm space away from the main events. One attendee reflected on the importance of this space for them:

“The quiet room (essential for me as an autistic woman - I couldn't attend without it),”

Accessibility support

Bristol Disability Equality Forum (BDEF) ran an Accessibility Support desk, where they informed guests of the building's accessibility features, provided hearing loops and offered mobility support.

Interpretation services

To further ensure everyone's participation, we provided British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters and language interpretation services.

Accessibility & inclusion measures

Intergenerational focus

In response to feedback about older women often feeling invisible and excluded, we made a concerted effort to make the event intergenerational. We included elements throughout the programme that encouraged connections between different age groups, as well as workshops specifically aimed at older women.

This is exemplified in one attendee feedback regarding their experience in one of the workshops they attended:

“It was super informative, funny, and inspiring to hear about the history of local LGBT+ women’s activism and to see queer women across generations share and bond.”



Free Creche

To remove childcare as a barrier to attendance



Free bus travel

To remove finances and transport as a barrier to attendance



Creative focus

This year, we placed a particular focus on the arts and culture exploring the power of craftivism as a form of activism. This focus including raising awareness of the need the need to challenge gendered inequality in the arts and highlight how creativity can inspire change.

Lantern making

One way we did this was by hosting all-day lantern making workshops with Lamplighter Arts CIC to be used in the shine a light on care procession, calling for parents and carers to be visible, valued and supported.

Exhibitions

The exhibitions were also a central feature of this year's event, attracting 500 visitors to the vestibules addressing themes such as: violence against women and girls, women's feelings around beauty standards and ageing, as well as women's safety in Bristol.

Evening event

Our sold-out evening event at Lost Horizons featured a "Women in Music" panel followed by an after party that featured women-led collectives: Booty Bass, Femmes on Decks and Mothers in Music.





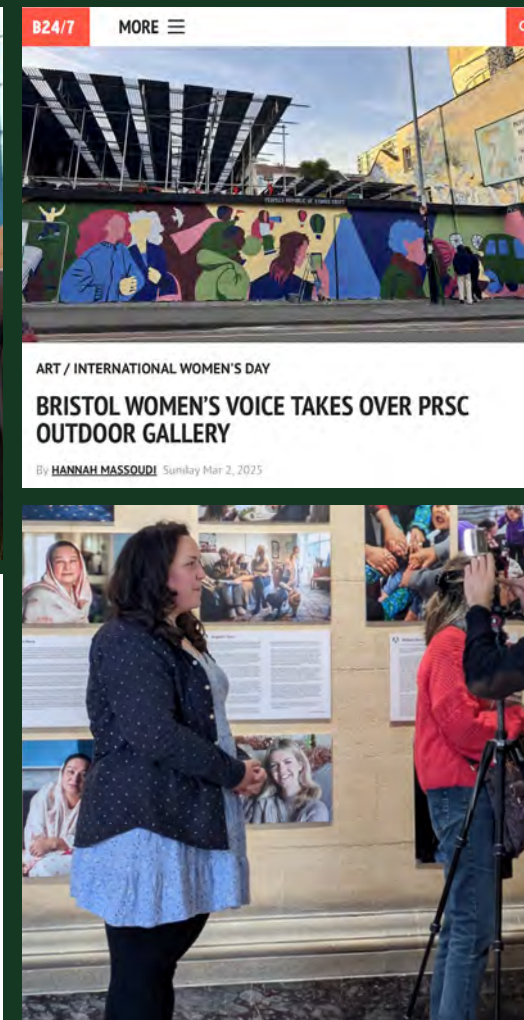
Press coverage

We got good press coverage with three radio interviews (including one two-hour takeover on Ujima Radio with Miranda Rae) and one TV feature.

The event was mentioned in several local and community newsletters. BBC Radio Bristol mentioned the event several times over the course of the day.

We also featured in several local newsletters including Community Eastside Trust, PRSC newsletter, Bristol City Council Communities newsletter, Bristol Mum and The Tab.

We were grateful for support from Agency UK and regular photography volunteer, Tina Gue, taking photos throughout the day, who were also supported by other volunteers.



Training & consultancy

This year we continued to work with Avon Fire and Rescue Service, supporting them to address inequality and sexism in their service; we have one more year of this contract.



We were also pleased to deliver training to First Bus Revenue Inspection Officers, something we had been advocating for a while as part of our work to support the bus company to take some action against sexual harassment on public transport.

We also delivered training to the NHS and Mulberry Bush, a charity that exists to support those troubled and traumatised as children.

We were awarded Quartet Resilience funding and with this we are in the process of developing our training offer to include online training which we will pilot and roll out in 2025/2026. With this funding we also developed a deck of gender allyship cards which are proving very popular and are available to buy from our website.



We also delivered training to the NHS and Mulberry Bush, a charity that exists to support those troubled and traumatised as children.

Looking forward

Going into 2025/2026, we want to deepen our relationship with women in diverse communities and will co-create a community engagement strategy with our members to explore how we can go about this.

Following this activity as part of our summer membership event, we will draw in funds to deliver. As part of this, we hope to run more regular face-to-face members meetings to develop greater understanding of and support women to take action on the more localised challenges they want to tackle.

Much of our current funding ends in 2025/2026 and so we have the opportunity to take stock, examine what's working and where we want to grow as we develop our next three-to-five-year strategy working for great equity in Bristol.

We will continue to use creative and craftivist methodologies to amplify women's voices, and to focus on intergenerational storytelling and connections to share wisdom and support the growth of united movements for change.

BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE



Financial review

2024/2025 marks the seventh full financial year that Bristol Women's Voice has operated as a CIO and it has been another year of small growth.

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 2. This was awarded in October 2021.



We were grateful to receive unrestricted funding from the People's Postcode Lottery.

We have a two-year grant from Quartet Community Hub Fund which supports our Community Development Coordinator and contributes towards the Director post.

The BIF Small Grant pays for our Young Women's Worker one day a week.

Funding from Awards for All has enabled us to pilot a Communities and Connections Coordinator which has been invaluable, and we will continue to seek funding for this post with a revised job description.

We were grateful to receive unrestricted funding from the People's Postcode Lottery which covered shortfall across many of our projects, International Women's Day and core funding, and it enabled us to undertake additional activity such as the Lantern Procession.

We would like to thank our regular donors and those who made one-off donations or raffle purchase at International Women's Day or other points throughout the year. Your support is vital and very much appreciated.

We thank Bristol City Council for their donation in kind of Bristol City Hall for International Women's Day event.



Our income

Donations	2024-25	2023-24
General donations	£3,226	£6,556
Corporate donations	£1,100	£2,730
Trusts and foundations	£4,700	—
Gifts in kind	£10,740	—

Charitable activities	2024-25	2023-24
Bristol City Council Impact Fund	£51,330	£61,596
Bristol City Council Small Grant	£9,834	£2,459
Community Resilience Fund	—	£10,174
Grocers' charity	£2,500	—
National Lottery Fund Awards for All	£20,000	—
Quartet	£35,000	£25,000
People's Health Trust	—	£8,000
People's Postcode Lottery	—	£22,000
Internships	£4,641	£1,459
Rosa Foundation	—	£6,879
Other grants	—	—

Sales

Training sales	£10,307	£1,500
Merchandise sales	£1,104	—
Activities income	£473	—
Rental income (shared office sublet)	£5,834	—
Total income	£159,799	£124,697



Our expenditure

Charitable activities	2024-25	2023-24
Salaries including Pension and NI	£72,885	£69,469
User engagement and access costs	£1,269	£1,051
Activity costs	£36,411	£11,527
Printing and publicity	£6,631	£2,061
Volunteer expenses	£176	£1,004
Costs of merchandise	£568	£810
Support costs including support salaries, rent, access to work, website, travel, insurance, telephone and depreciation	£46,615	£43,840
Total expenditure	£164,555	£129,763

We will carry forward £70,549 into 2025-26, of which £40,901 is restricted and £29,649 is unrestricted.



Our board & staff

Current board

- **Shoba Ram**
Co-Chair
- **Debra Newrick**
Co-Chair (joined 15 Oct 2024)
- **Bonny Chung**
Vice Chair
- **Rosanna Vu**
Treasurer (joined 15 Oct 2024)
- **Alice Hulme**
(joined 15 Oct 2024)
- **Elahe Karimnia**
- **Emily Johnstone**
- **Katherine Hobbs**
(joined 15 Oct 2024)
- **Lakhsraj Minhas**
(joined 15 Oct 2024)
- **Liz Potter**
- **Sophia James**
(joined 15 Oct 2024)
- **Sophie Peart**
- **Shruthi Venkatachalam**

Trustees who stood down this year

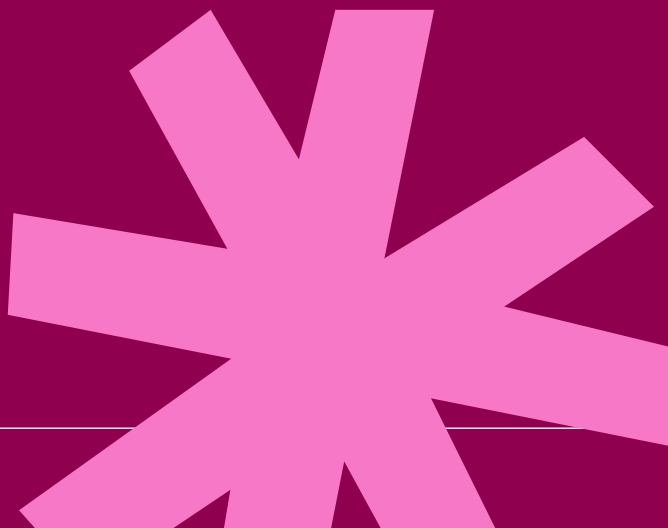
- **Alice Clermont**
(stood down 15 Oct 2024)
- **Carole Johnson**
(stood down 6 May 2025)
- **Clare Meraz**
(stood down 15 Oct 2024)
- **Hannah Stapley-Parker**
(stood down 15 Oct 2024)
- **Libby Watson**
(stood down 14 Jan 2025)

Current staff

- **Claire Charras**
Communications Coordinator
- **Dahlia von Carolath**
Community Organiser
- **Faith Barorot**
Community Development Worker
- **Katy Taylor**
Director
- **Madie Lewis**
Communities and Connection Coordinator
- **Willow Vidal-Hall**
Young Women's Worker (freelance)

Interns

- **Jess Brake**
- **Lily Harvey**
- **Tessa Smith**



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

BRISTOL
WOMEN'S
VOICE

Thank you



BRISTOL WOMEN'S VOICE

With thanks to:



Follow us for the latest

 @bristolwomensvoice

 @bristolwomensvoice

 bristol-women's-voice

bristolwomensvoice.org.uk

→ We'd love your feedback

→ Become a member

→ Donate to Bristol Women's Voice

bristolwomensvoice.org.uk/donate

