

# Women Experts by Experience



# Welcome

## Baroness Jean Corston



# Women Experts by Experience

**Jackie Russell**  
**Director, Women's Breakout**



# Experts by Experience

## Five phases

100 women speak

Deep diving

Open Space event

Lay Assessors

Showcase and celebrate success

Summer 2013

Summer 2013

12 December 2013

Nov/Jan

5 February 2014



# Who failed who?

**Consistent messages from research literature, from experienced service providers and service users:**

- **Unmet needs in relation to physical and mental health**
- **Unmet needs in relation to housing and income**
- **Unmet needs in relation to training and employment**
- **Unmet needs in relation to substance abuse**
- **Unmet needs in relation to sexual and violent victimisation**



**Although much research suggests that few children disclose sexual abuse, in this study over 80% had tried to tell someone about the abuse.**



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**





**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**

# **Semi structured questions**

- **What are the biggest problems you face at the moment?**
- **How long have you been experiencing these problems?**
- **Do you think if something had happened differently in the past your life would be better now?**
- **What help do you think you need in order to bring about positive changes in your life?**
- **Who can help you to make your life better?**
- **Is there anything you want to say to anyone about your life so far?**
- **What three things do you want decision makers to change – what would have made your experience of the system less harmful/better/more effective?**
- **Is there anything else you would like to say to decision makers?**
- **Would you like to be part of the decision making process?**



WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT

# 100 Women Speak Problems and timelines

**'It would be easier to say what problems don't you face'**

money – debt - school – somewhere to live – family relationships – weight – mood swings – drugs and alcohol – a job – help with anger – confidence – self esteem – keeping away from the wrong people – depression – children's social care involvement – driving ban – court – health – domestic abuse – sanctioned benefits – cancer – temptation – out of control – benefits – not wanting to go back – ongoing issues from early imprisonment – probation – having a criminal record – job centre - reoffending – isolation – no self worth – not caring about myself – avoiding high risk situations – getting family trust back – no family support – nobody listens or they prejudge – getting in trouble with police – transsexuality – reduction in prescribed medication – leaving probation support not feeling safe – attending appointments – bullying – loneliness

**How long?**

3 weeks - couple of months – a very, very long time – 30 years - all my life



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**

# 100 Women Speak

## What could have made a difference?

- **Support: before offending, on first release, mental health**
- **Listened to: doctors; telling someone; being believed (abuse)**
- **Family: not being abused as a child, being brought up better, a better childhood, relationship with mother, father's involvement, relationship with child's father**
- **Dealing with problems better, less problems to deal with**
- **Relationship break up, leaving an abusive relationship, standing up to ex husband, not being bullied, the people I associated with, not being influenced by friends**
- **Never starting on drugs/alcohol**
- **Not having a record**
- **Staying in education**



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**

# 100 Women Speak What do you want to say?

- Support comes too late
- Give us options not prison
- Look at the person now – see the change
- I want a second chance
- Listen to children and support young people
- There is nowhere to go
- The media should protect the children
- Try to understand how the person came to commit a crime
- Sorry: to my children, for my actions, for my mistakes
- Thank you to service providers for helping me to think differently
- I have been failed



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**

# 100 Women Speak Help

## What help do you need?

- Carry on the support
- Mentors, non judgmental, positive thinking, not putting me down, credit me when I try, women only spaces, places like this, an understanding worker that doesn't give up
- None now – its too late for me

## Who can help?

- Me
  - ‘Only I can help my life get better but having support and guidance really helps’
- Friends and family
- Support services – key workers – Women Centres
- A new Government



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**

# 100 Women Speak Three things

## Well six .....

- Support needs to be there quicker and earlier
- Communication between agencies
- Educate about prison
- Understanding (by police, courts, probation) how past experiences impact on the here and now
- Everything needs to be more clear
- An experienced advocate in court

## Do you want to be part of the decision making?

- The majority say YES
- But many need to focus on themselves just now
- 'I think its important for women to be heard – real people who have been through real things'

# Deep diving

## Ten projects - focussed activity

**Together Women Project**

**Changing Lives (Two projects)**

**Key Changes**

**Anawim**

**Startup Now**

**Inspire Brighton**

**Brighton Oasis**

**Minerva Advance Advocacy**

**New Dawn New Day**

**Yorkshire and Humberside**

**Newcastle**

**Sheffield**

**Birmingham**

**Oxford/London**

**Brighton**

**Brighton**

**London**

**Leicester**





WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT



# Startupnow for Women Project National

DISK

New Directions for Criminal Justice



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**

**anawim**  
women working together.



# Anawim Birmingham

POWERPOINT

New Directions for Criminal Justice



## **The Client Journey - A User Led Project**

# Project Brief

- ❖ **To explore the individual experiences of women who use Anawim it was proposed that their lives in and out of the Centre be documented by a combination of photography and spoken word.**
- ❖ **Each woman was given a digital camera to document the story of her service use and the effect on her life as a whole.**
- ❖ **In addition women were interviewed and encouraged to suggest a soundtrack to accompany their photographs putting each picture into context.**
- ❖ **For the purposes of today's presentation we will be following H's story. The captions are her own.**





My Safe Haven



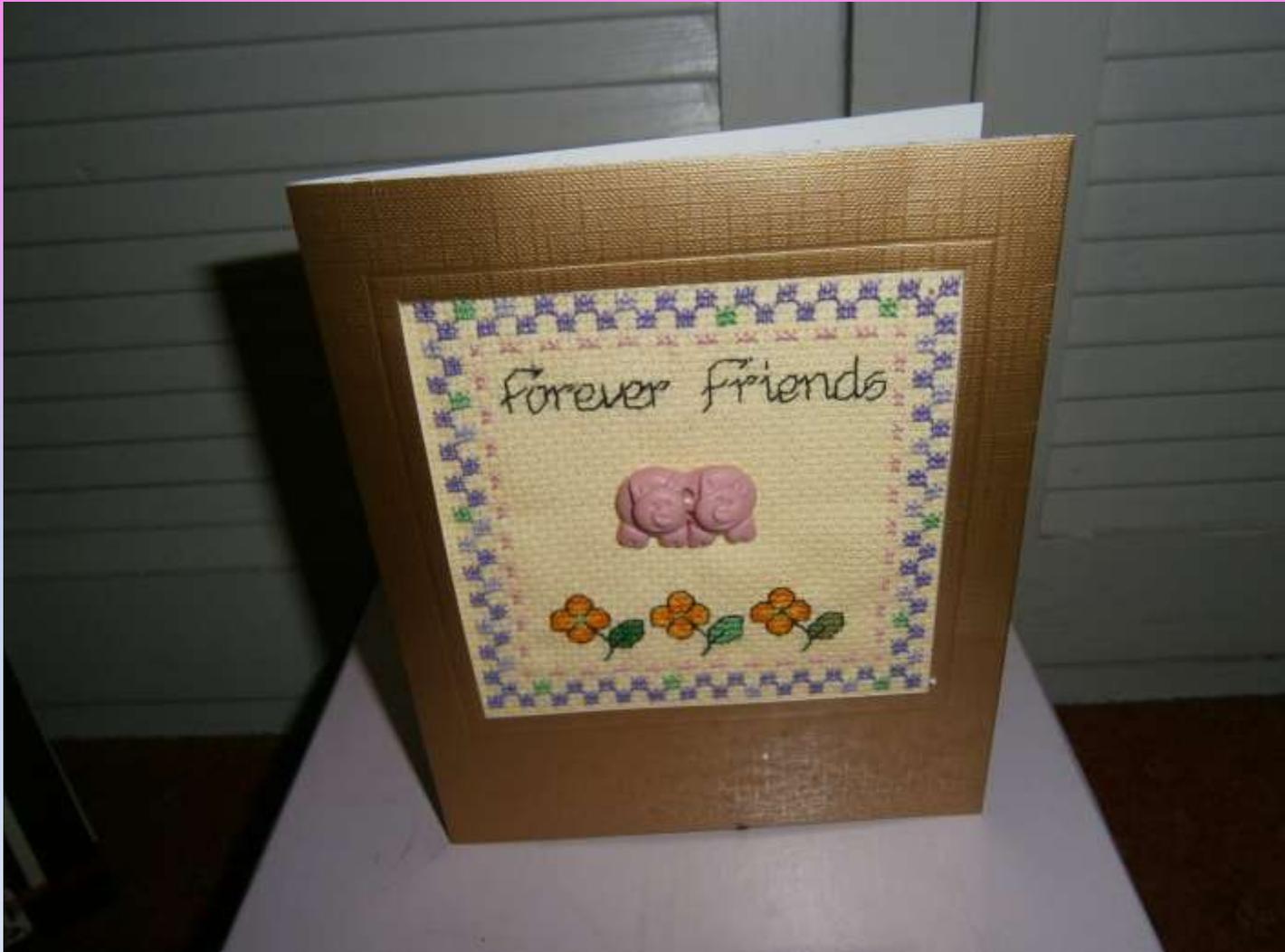


Enter for a fab service





Learning new skills and  
gaining confidence



Friends are like flowers



Maybe I will look forward to  
Christmas this year !



New Year, new me, new designs



Freedom !



My hourly escape



Walkway to freedom



My secret lost in thought  
hideaway



This year it will be happy for me



Where there is love there is  
hope





**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**



**Inspire**  
Positive Alternatives  
for Women

# Brighton Women's Centre – Inspire Project Brighton

FILM

New Directions for Criminal Justice



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**



# **Together Women Project Yorkshire and Humberside**

POWERPOINT



together women  
Yorkshire and Humberside





## WEST YORKSHIRE

### BRADFORD

**01274 301 470**

1st Floor  
Broadacre House  
George Street  
Bradford  
BD1 5AA

### LEEDS

**0113 380 8900**

13 Park Square East  
Leeds  
LS1 2LF

### NEW HALL

**01924 803298**

Dial Wood  
Flockton  
Wakefield  
West Yorkshire  
WF4 4XX

## SOUTH YORKSHIRE

### SHEFFIELD

**0114 275 8282**

106 Arundel Lane  
Sheffield  
S1 4RF

## EAST YORKSHIRE

### HULL

**01482 218 125**

120-122 George Street  
Hull  
HU1 3AA

# Yorkshire and Humberside

A REGIONAL ORGANISATION FULFILLING LOCAL NEEDS.



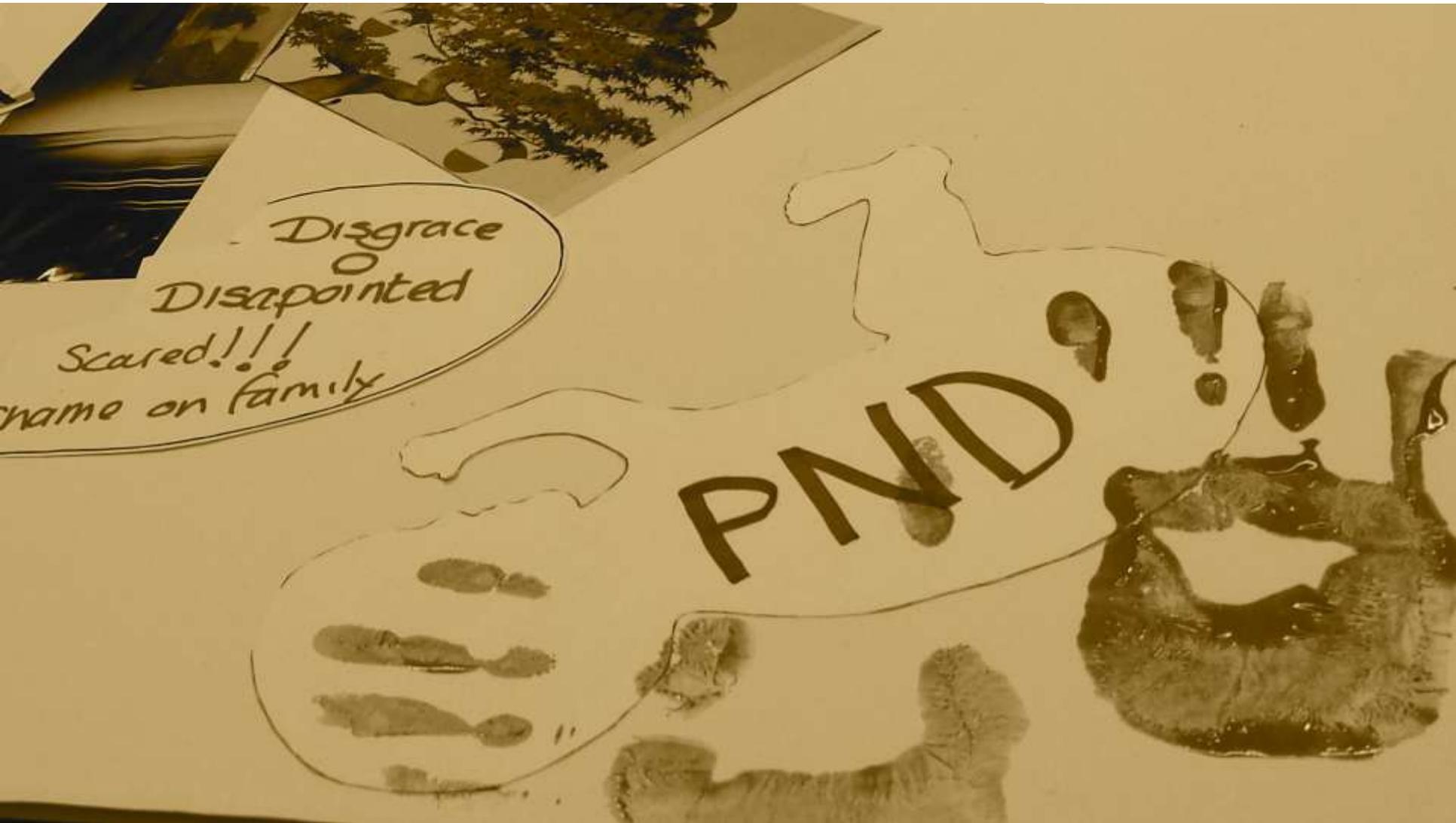






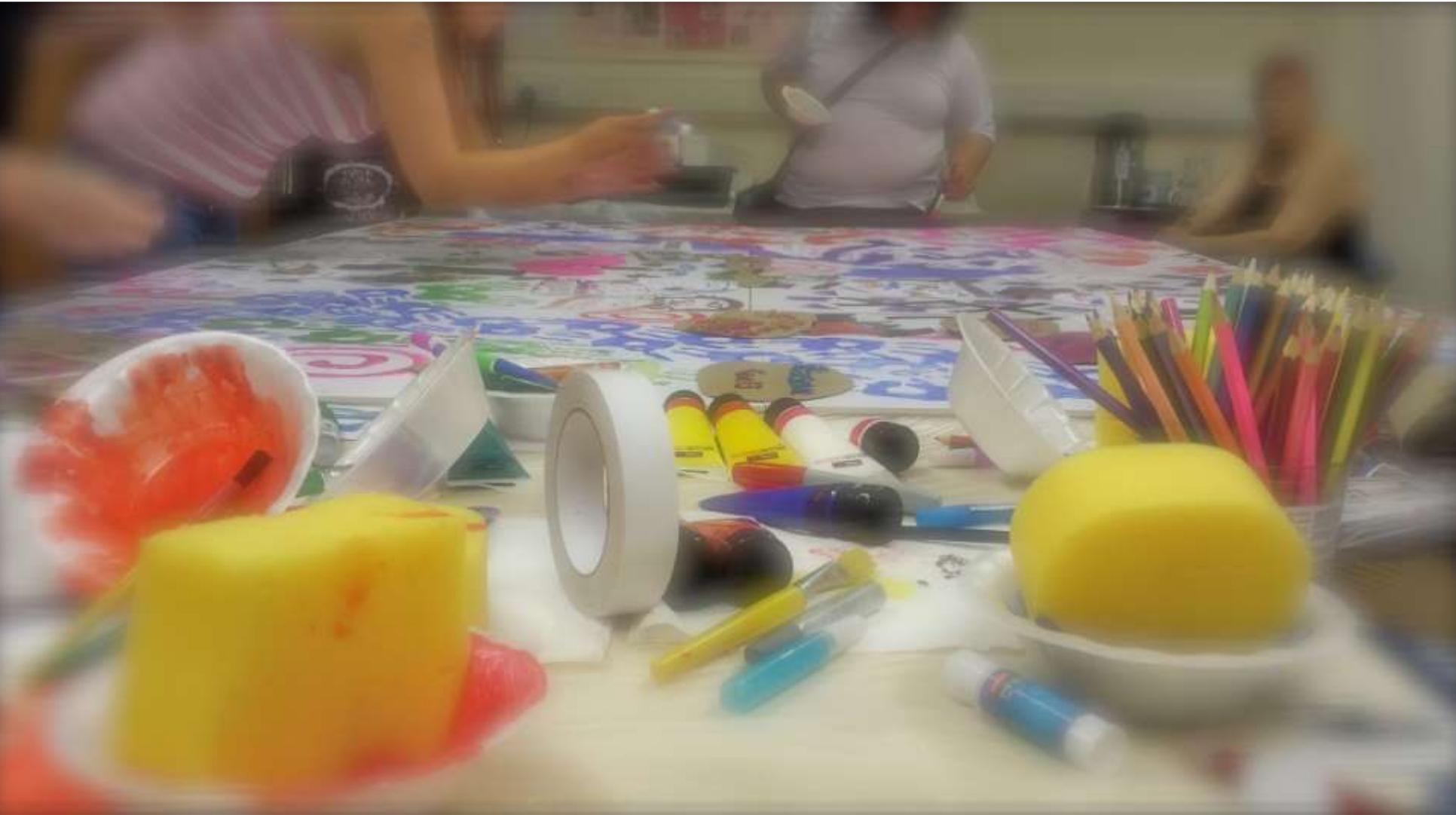












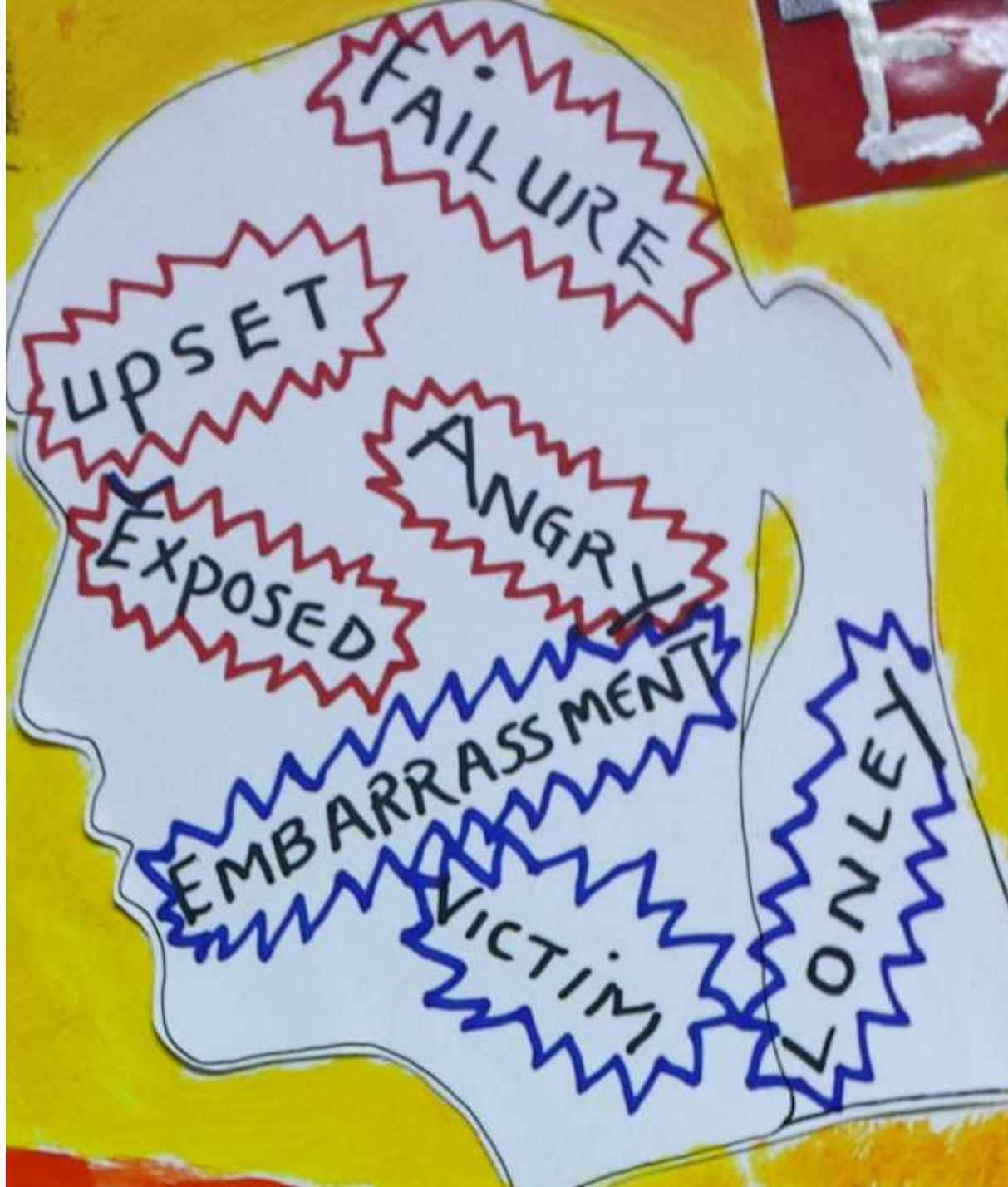
















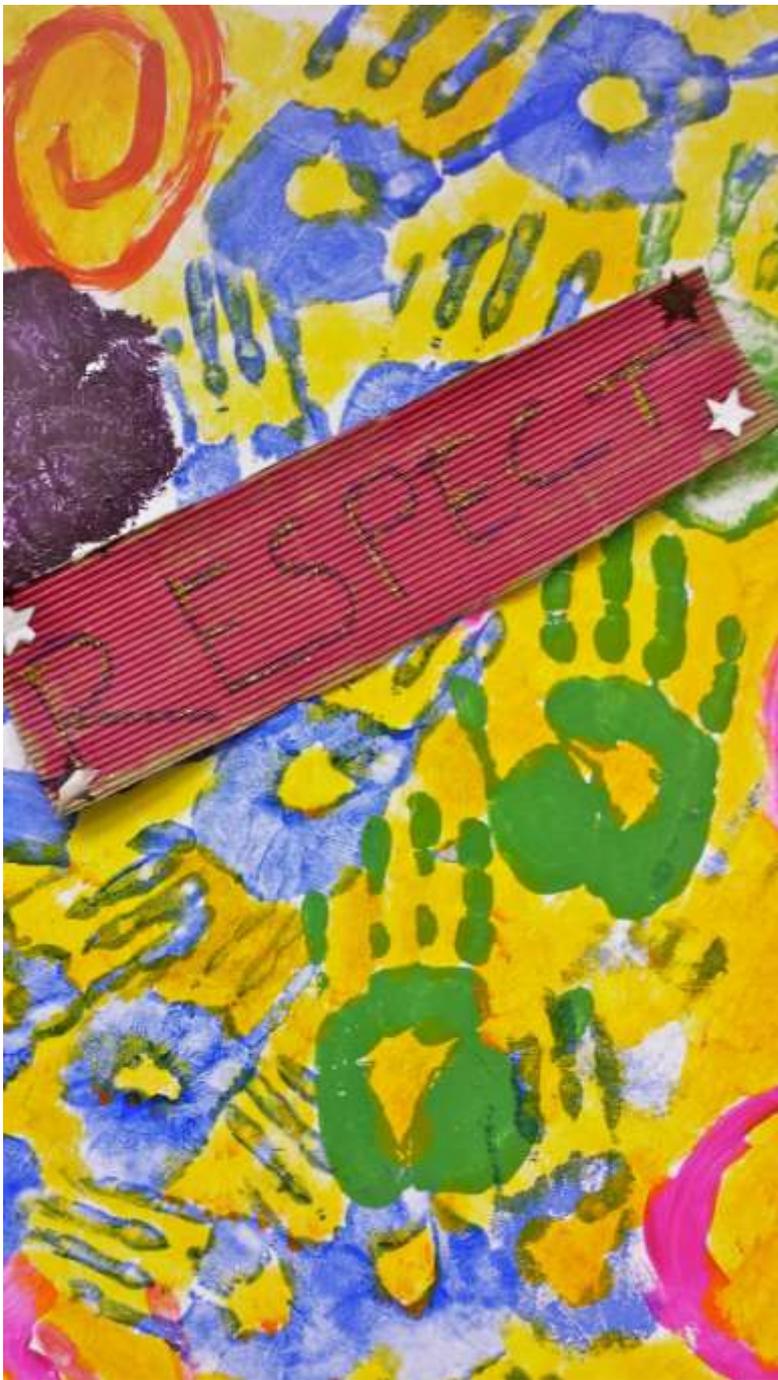






















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# Lay Assessors Course

## Helen Thompson – Fircroft College

## Steph Isaacs – Lay Assessor



Women experts by experience

# Lay Assessor Course

at Fircroft College

Fircroft graded  
**OUTSTANDING**  
BY OFSTED [www.fircroft.ac.uk](http://www.fircroft.ac.uk)

**Helen Thompson**



**Fircroft College**  
Of Adult Education



# Project Aims

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1. Give **women skills and confidence** to take part in peer review projects for Women's Breakout
2. To **develop a team of volunteers** able to contribute their views and energy to improving services – “co-production”



# Project Values

1. Build on women's existing knowledge as **“experts by experience”**
2. Develop positive learning environment and team approach
3. Use active learning approach and practise skills which lay assessors will use
4. Benefit from a welcoming and inclusive residential environment at

**Fircroft Adult Education College**



**Fircroft College**  
Of Adult Education



# What's a Lay Assessor?

- A service user – a woman who's been through the criminal justice system
- Interested in getting great services for women
- Volunteer as part of a team
- Help to assess or evaluate services



# What can lay assessors do?

- Talk informally with women using a project
- Interview staff or service users
- Run a group interview, as facilitator, note-taker or observer
- Develop feedback to projects alongside staff
- Be part of peer review or assessment



# Why work with lay assessors?

- To really hear women's views
- **“I`ll talk to someone who's been through it”**
- To gain a better understanding of what women really think
- Involve women who understand the service
  - benefits of co-production



# What did the course cover?

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Women's experience of "A Good Service" – and when things aren't good.

Role of a lay assessor

Meeting women's diverse needs

Interview and group interview skills

Through; activities, debate, roleplay

All based at Fircroft Adult Education College....



# Fircroft environment in Summer....



**Fircroft College**  
Of Adult Education



# At Fircroft.... Socialise and meet different people



**Fircroft College**  
Of Adult Education



Relax and learn in a welcoming, safe environment...



**Fircroft College**  
Of Adult Education



# Benefits.....

## Experience of

- Sharing and valuing the experiences of other women with who've been through the criminal justice system
- Working with staff and managers
- Running interviews and group interviews.
- Success in an adult learning environment
- Meeting and forging links



# Outcomes

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- Women making links and a network across regions
- A team committed to supporting development of Women's Community Projects
- Women with increased confidence to engage with and influence providers
- Women inspiring each other!



# Women Experts by Experience

Lunch break





**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**



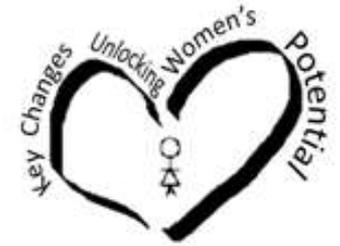
# Deep

# Divining

New Directions for Criminal Justice



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**



# Key Changes Sheffield

DISK

New Directions for Criminal Justice



**WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT**

**CHANGING  
LIVES**



# Changing Lives

**National**



FILM

New Directions for Criminal Justice



WOMEN'S  
BREAKOUT



# Brighton Oasis Project Brighton

New Directions for Criminal Justice

# Collective Voices and Open Space Event

Paula Harriott



# Closing remarks

## Jackie Russell

