

HELLO, WE ARE MASH

manchester action on street health

IMPACT REPORT 2020/21





For over two decades I, for the most part, flew under the radar of support services. However, on the rare occasions I did reach out for support, I never seemed to get my needs met. I felt like the metal ball bearing in a pinball machine, being pinged from one service to the next.

So, what changed? The short answer is a collaboration between myself and MASH. It took an extraordinary amount of trust and a few short years to turn my life around. Today, I'm happier, healthier and in control of my life. I'm also in the privileged position to be able to give back to the service that literally raised me to be the strong empowered woman I am today. I've gone from walking the beat to sitting in a boardroom!

Here's a line you've probably heard a few times recently "we're going to build back better in the wake of the pandemic." One way you can do that is by listening and responding to what women say, what they want and how they feel. Incorporate lived experience into service design and delivery and I give you my word, you'll be racking up the positive outcomes before you know it. Just like some of the stories you'll read about in our impact report!

COLETTE

**TRUSTEE AND MASH SERVICE USER
ADVISORY PANEL MEMBER**

As we started the year that this report covers, we were in the middle of a global lockdown. City centres became desolate, office workers bought desks for bedrooms, and many key services moved online. Yet, the women we support continued to work, with ever increasing risk. Access to basic essentials many take for granted like food and safe housing became even harder.

At MASH, we knew we had to continue delivering our face to face services and we have been at the forefront of the response to the pandemic in Greater Manchester. We supported women during the government's 'Everyone In' Scheme and provided vaccinations on our van and in our centre. We have moved mountains to be open, safe and visible for women. Despite the pandemic, and losing our long serving and much loved Chair, Sue Murphy, we have pulled together as MASH team to weather the storm.

Whilst this year has laid bare the deep inequalities in society, we have continued to support some of the most marginalised women in the city region, women who fall through the gaps in mainstream services, who face stigma and discrimination. We have also looked internally, focusing on becoming an actively anti-racist and trans* inclusive organisation. Equity, social justice and access is embedded in our history, and it is the focus of our future.

ANNIE & TABZ

MASH CEO
& CHAIR

Our organisational values have guided us through and steadied the ship. We have built new partnerships, mobilised new projects, strengthened our voice and advocacy, grown our team, capabilities and reach, and transformed our governance. We are building even stronger foundations which will provide stability and grounding as we prepare for an increase in demand for our services. We have been blown away, humbled and incredibly proud of what we've achieved, as one of only a handful of organisations who kept our services open and accessible in the most challenging and ever-changing circumstances of this pandemic.

From the reach and impact we have had, to the ways our staff and volunteers have adapted, supported each other and not only gone 'the extra mile', but walked alongside women through the journey. Always amplifying their voices, experiences and ideas for change. We are very grateful too for the flexible ongoing support of our funders, commissioners and partners.

We are, as ever, in awe of the women we support, their strength, their resilience, their adaptability. We hope this Impact Report gives an insight into why women tell us that MASH is 'a lifeline', MASH is 'fantastic' and 'MASH saved my life'. As we mark our 30th year in 2021, MASH is needed now more than ever. Our thanks to everyone who continues to champion our mission.



OUR WHY



OUR WHY

We stand with sex workers and support them to experience better health, wellbeing and choices.

Through MASH women who sex work are:

- Healthier
- Safer
- Have improved wellbeing
- Have choices available to make positive life changes

Through MASH, in Greater Manchester:

- Other agencies are better equipped to effectively support and meet women's needs
- Women who sex work are heard, understood and experience less stigma

OUR YEAR

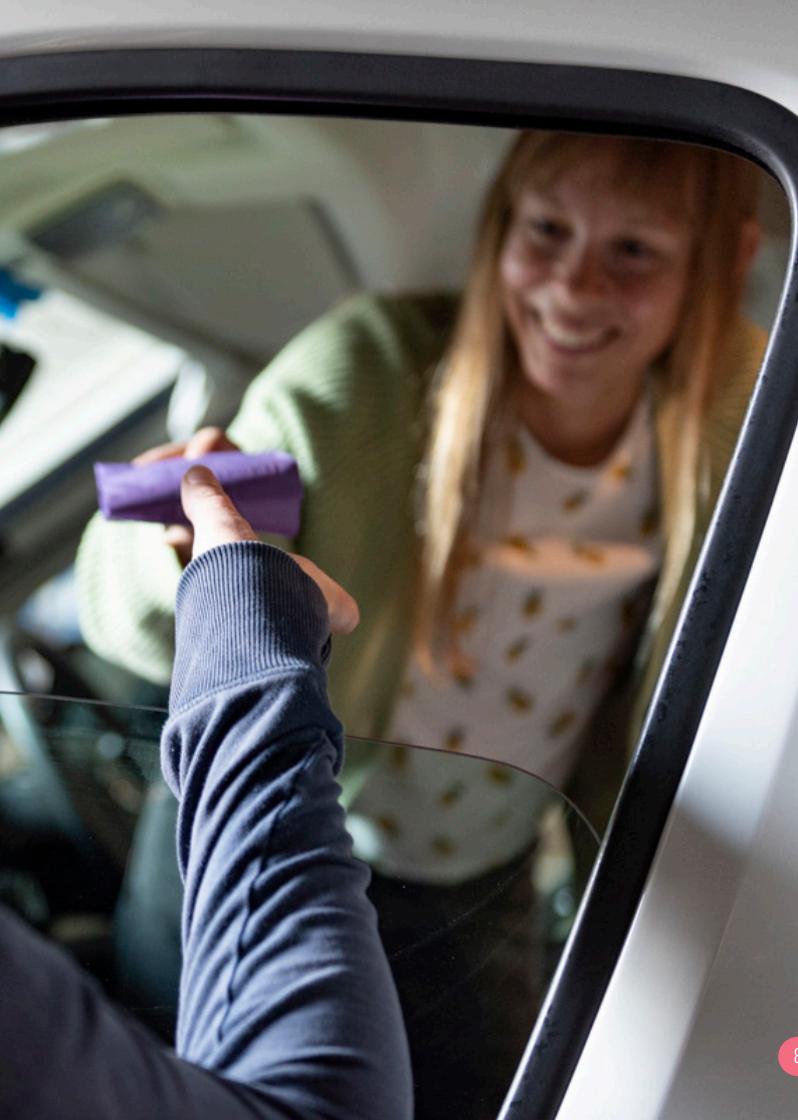
“Love knowing that you have my back, it means everything to me knowing someone cares.”



“I can’t believe you’re still coming out, everywhere else I normally go is closed.”

WE KEPT OUR DOORS OPEN FOR FACE TO FACE SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC

“With face-to-face services closing all over the city, it’s so admirable that not only are you still out there, but you’re doing more outreach than ever before. I dread to think what would happen to the women you support if you weren’t there.”



WE REACHED

474

women

including...

395

street sex
workers

270

women with
no stable
accommodation

89

survivors of
violence

WE ALSO

- Set up a Service User Advisory Panel at MASH to ensure that our services and plans are scrutinised by women with lived experience of sex work and of using our services.
-

“The panel is a small, diverse group of women who have benefited from services past and present. Before any strategies are drafted, or decisions made, the panel feed in on the topic.”

Colette Cronshaw, Service User Advisory Panel Member

- Launched our partnership with Greater Manchester Housing First offering specialist support to women.
- Strengthened our internal functions, overhauled our governance, recruited new trustees, and co-produced a wellbeing programme for staff and volunteers.

“It’s great you are still maintaining such a front line service especially the van being on the beat. When a trip to the local shops holds so much worry for us all it’s humbling to see what MASH continues to provide and achieve.”

OUR IMPACT ON WOMEN'S HEALTH



20,000 condoms
were distributed



114 STI tests
were taken



71 women have
had Covid-19
vaccinations



19 women accessed
treatment for drugs
or alcohol



Our needle exchange
service was
accessed **710** times



4,000 items of food
and drink were
distributed



GEORGINA'S STORY

Georgina told us that if it wasn't for MASH she definitely wouldn't have got her Covid-19 jab. She was really grateful that our nurse took the time to talk her through the side effects as she'd heard some terrifying stories. She also encouraged her friends to access their two doses at MASH too. She said;

“Getting my COVID jab was really easy! I got a phone call and 30 minutes later, I'd had it. MASH's nurse answered all my questions so I wasn't nervous. In fact I was relieved that I was on my way to getting immunity. While I was at the centre I had something to eat and a chat which was nice cos I'm in a homeless hostel and didn't have food. I even got a food parcel and a colouring book to take home with me.”

OUR IMPACT ON WOMEN'S SAFETY

SOFIA'S STORY

The first time Sofia came to the MASH van she told us that she had been sleeping in a tent for several nights after leaving her violent partner. She didn't take anything with her and only had the clothes she was standing in. She was using drugs as a way to cope and was sex working to make money.

The MASH team secured some temporary accommodation for her and the next day supported her with speaking to the council and completing her housing assessment. We also provided her with emergency food parcels and vouchers and a new phone and number. Several months down the line Sofia is now settling into her new supported accommodation away from her former partner.

Her finances are in a much better place now that she's getting the right benefits and she is on a prescription to help her manage her drug use. She told us; **"I feel much safer now. I don't know what I would have done if it wasn't for MASH."**

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a red jacket, is seen from the back, looking towards a white van. The van has the word "MASH" written on it in purple. The background is blurred, showing an indoor setting with warm lighting.

335

women accessed the
MASH Outreach Van
while working at night

89

women received
support following
violence or assault

91

personal attack
alarms were
distributed

OUR IMPACT ON WELLBEING AND CHOICES

180

women visited the safe, inclusive Drop-in Centre to access support, socialise, build relationships, be creative and learn new skills

80

women were supported by MASH to access and settle into accommodation

182

women were supported one to one by a MASH caseworker with anything from housing, to mental health, finance and debt, or criminal justice

26

women accessed long-term counselling at MASH



BELLA'S STORY

"I have made so many changes to my life since my first contact with MASH and I'm now loving being at university. Thanks to their continued support I built up a trusted relationship with my case worker and my counsellor - with their help I have been able to break down the cycle of addiction and sex working. They have been there with me through all the ups and downs, supporting me at times when I was resistant to accept help and being there when I was more ready to engage."

"They have been there with me through all the ups and downs."

OUR IMPACT ON THE WIDER COMMUNITY

OVER 2020/21 AT MASH WE:

- **Co-delivered a course on trauma-informed practice** to over 70 front-line staff and service managers in Greater Manchester.
- Were at the forefront of Manchester's response to the pandemic to **house rough sleepers** through the **Everyone In initiative** and instrumental in enabling the setting up of women specific accommodation.
- Co-hosted the Greater Manchester Women's Voices group which brings together women with experience of multiple disadvantage and strategic leaders to **ensure that women's voices are heard** in the development of services.
- Became a proactive member of the newly formed Greater Manchester Women and Girls Panel and the **chair** of the **GM Violence against Women and Girls Working Group**.



MASH

“Being an independent woman is the most amazing feeling, giving something back to society is even better. MASH has enabled me to do both!”

LOOKING AHEAD



OVER 2021-22 WE WILL BE:

- Improving our accessibility and influencing system change through the development and implementation of a Justice, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion action plan.
- Launching some new research into the lives of people who are sex working.
- Continuing our pilot scheme with Greater Manchester Housing First.
- Supporting our service users, staff and volunteers to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Celebrating our 30th Anniversary.
- Working with our Service User Advisory Panel to continue to shape MASH.
- Exploring new partnerships and programmes to enable us to offer our specialist support to more women.

**“MASH is a lifeline
and helps you get
your life sorted
and put things in
perspective.”**

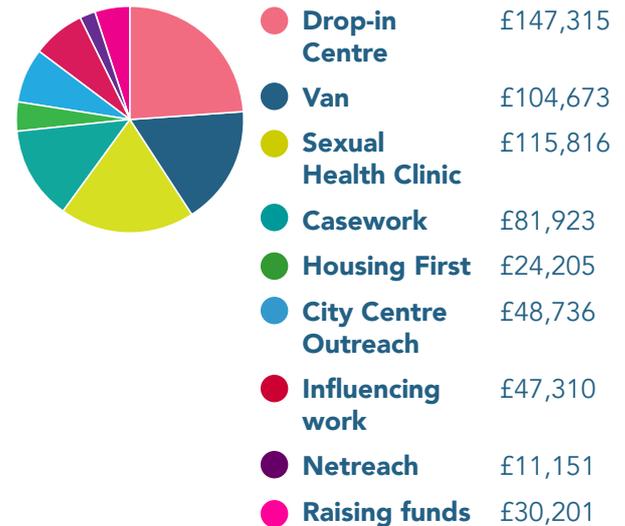
FINANCIALS

MASH is hugely grateful for the support from our amazing funders and donors who enabled us to weather the storm of a challenging year.

INCOME



EXPENDITURE





**“Hand on heart
I was in such a
bad way I don’t
think that I could
have carried on. I
genuinely believe
you’ve actually
saved my life.”**

THANK YOU

“Thank you for all your support you have given me. I came to MASH a broken woman and I feel since me getting support from you guys I have grown so much.”

VOLUNTEERS

A huge thank you to our amazing volunteer team who donated hundreds of hours of their time to help out in our drop-in centre and on city centre outreach. During this most challenging of years you have all been such an amazing source of emotional and practical support.

If you would like to volunteer for MASH please visit our website www.mash.org.uk

FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

Another huge and heartfelt thanks to our amazing funders and individual supporters. Your kind financial support truly changes lives. Thank you to:

- Greater Manchester Housing First Partnership
- Manchester City Council
- Salford City Council
- Trafford Council
- Asda Foundation
- Charities Aid Foundation

- Comic Relief
- Homeless Link
- Crisis
- Greater Manchester Mayor's Office
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Ministry of Justice
- GSK
- I Love Mcr
- Lloyds Bank Foundation
- Manchester Wellbeing Fund
- Mental Health VCSE Leaders
- Morrisons Foundation
- Nationwide Community Grants
- Oldham Council
- One Manchester
- Our Manchester VCS
- Peter Kershaw Trust
- PHE Innovation Fund
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- RSA - Neighbourly
- Shelter
- Tampon Tax Community Fund
- Trafford Housing Trust
- UKH Foundation
- Vicar's Relief Fund
- Weston Charity Awards

If you would like to donate to MASH's vital work supporting women in need please visit www.mash.org.uk

**MASH is where the soul takes a rest
It deals with your demons when your not feeling your best
Your tears are dried, your life is a mess
And every day seems to be increasing your stress
But once you reveal all that makes you sad
MASH makes you realise that things really aint that bad
I've arrived at the van and took the food and drink
And let them all know that your at your brink
So don't be sad, just take a rest
Cause MASH will support you till your back at your best**

Poem by a MASH Service User



@MASHManchester



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