

HELLO, WE ARE MASH

manchester action on street health

IMPACT REPORT 2021/22



Having seen first-hand the impact this report lays out, I grasp the enormity of what MASH actually means for the women we support.

I see women getting a chance to live safer, happier lives, when normally they wouldn't get a look in! For some women, this may be the first time ever, that they are in control of their own lives. That's massive!

When most services were understandably having to reduce their offers because of Covid-19, MASH had a growth spurt, seeing the staff team almost treble.

Our Service User Advisory Panel has gone from strength to strength since it started in October 2019. We have re-named this Sue's Space in tribute to the wonderfully empowering Sue Murphy. Sue was MASH's chair and a vocal advocate for many years until she died suddenly in 2020. Sue's Space has been an integral part of growing MASH to reach more women experiencing multiple disadvantage across Greater Manchester.



Sue's Space members have contributed in a host of ways including,

- Sitting on staff and trustee recruitment panels
- Feeding in on new funding bids
- Sharing our experiences and insights with prospective funders
- Shaping research projects that included hundreds of women and provided a snapshot of what women in Greater Manchester want and need from services
- Creating easily accessible companion documents to some very "wordy" policies

Sue's Space has fast become the trustee board's wing-woman! The glue that brings us all together is a drive to continue reaching the women other services struggle to engage. The women just like us, that deserve a fair shake at getting what most people take for granted.

COLETTE

TRUSTEE AND MASH SERVICE USER
ADVISORY PANEL MEMBER

2021 marked MASH's 30th birthday. 30 years of providing our specialist support to women in Manchester who are sex working and experiencing multiple disadvantages. Our support has always been gender-informed, trauma-informed and led by the individual.

Reflecting on the vast changes in society over the last three decades, the past year has been one of significant global unrest. War in Europe, the cost of living crisis, the climate emergency, the impact of Brexit, and the socio-economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has deepened inequality and significantly disproportionately affected women.

This year has been challenging for everyone. We have seen how women who sex work continue to face stigma, trauma and barriers to support.

What hasn't wavered is the commitment of our colleagues, volunteers and trustees to show up for women who are so often unable to access the basic things we need to thrive in life like shelter, food and healthcare.

Reading on, you will see how we are experiencing an even greater and sustained increase in demand for our services. Many women told us they have returned to or started sex working to make ends meet, pay spiralling bills for themselves or others or to avoid homelessness.

We were proud to be among only a handful of local organisations able to continue our vital in-person services for women who really needed our support this year, despite the ever changing Covid-19 restrictions.

Our dedicated team continued to give so much each day. Their support is life-changing and often lifesaving. We are grateful to our partners, funders, commissioners and donors who support us.

We continue to witness deepening inequalities and the poverty, oppression and deprivation that comes with them. We have been reflecting on how we, as MASH, contribute to systems which uphold inequalities and have been continuing our journey to becoming an anti-racist, trans* inclusive and equitable organisation and we are working with external partners to support this.

We are developing an intersectional approach in our support, advocacy and influencing, recognising the complex ways that oppressions and disadvantages harm sex workers in Greater Manchester.

As always, we have been blown away by the strength of the women we work with. Many have taken courageous steps towards meeting their needs and achieving their goals. We have seen women having fun getting creative and sharing social spaces at our drop-in. We have seen women finally get their own front door keys and support to put down roots after years of homelessness. And some have begun treatment for health issues, accessed counselling and started to heal from trauma. All of these women are working at their own pace and setting their own goals towards a brighter future.

In 2022/23, we are looking forward to launching our new five-year strategy. There is much work to do as we continue to navigate these challenging times but we remain optimistic and energised. Our thanks to everyone working with us who continues to champion our mission.

ANNIE & TABZ

**MASH CEO
& CHAIR**



OUR WHY



OUR WHY

A world where all women have choice, freedom and power.

Through MASH women who sex work:

- are healthier
- have improved wellbeing
- are safer
- are able to identify and achieve their goals

Through MASH, in Greater Manchester:

- Women who sex work are heard, understood and experience less stigma
- Other agencies and policymakers understand the needs of women who sex work and are more effective at supporting them

OUR YEAR

“I don’t need any other support because MASH help with everything... I would rather just work with one person instead of lots of different agencies...I don’t know where I’d be without them.”

MASH service user



WE REACHED

532 women
including...

303 street sex workers

90 indoor sex workers

148 women with addictions

COST OF LIVING CRISIS

The cost of living crisis has harshly impacted the women we support. There has been a big increase in women coming to us in financial hardship. Women who were just about managing fell into crisis.

Some women returned to sex work years after exiting as a last resort to pay their bills and put food on the table.

In the final quarter of the year, we saw 111 new women we hadn't supported before – the highest number for more than four years.

MASH IS PROVIDING

- Food parcels
- Phone credit
- Packs of hygiene and clothing essentials
- A hardship fund for one-off emergency items
- One to one support with finances and debt

“This is the first time I’ve been back to the MASH van in three years. It’s harder to make ends meet. If I work two nights a week on the beat I can just about pay my bills and have enough money for food. I know exactly what I’ve got to live on for the next seven days down to the final penny.”

MASH service user

WE ALSO

- Celebrated our 30th birthday
- Won the Charity Governance Awards for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- Launched a Tenancy Support Project to help women settle into their homes and feel confident living there for the long-term
- Launched a Respite Rooms partnership, bringing MASH's expertise into one of Manchester's temporary accommodation schemes for women
- Consulted with a range of stakeholders to develop a 5-year strategy for MASH
- Introduced a timetable of self-esteem boosting activities in the MASH drop-in including arts and crafts, music, hair and beauty, and complementary therapies



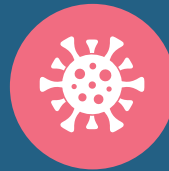
OUR IMPACT ON WOMEN'S HEALTH



18,000 condoms
distributed



179 STI tests
taken



78 STIs
treated



Our needle exchange
service accessed
537 times



3,000 items of
food and drink
distributed



372 women
supported with
sexual health

OUR IMPACT ON WOMEN'S SAFETY

244

women accessed the
Outreach Van while
working at night

94

women accessed
support following
violence or assault

117

women were provided
advice around
personal safety

12

women were provided
advice around
modern slavery

OUR IMPACT ON WELLBEING, AND GOALS



201 women accessed creative and social sessions at the MASH Drop-in Centre



24 women accessed counselling



22 women accessed treatment for addiction



50 women supported into accommodation



229 women accessed intensive one to one support with housing, mental health, criminal justice, addictions and finances



“Their support saved me in many ways over the years. I will be forever grateful. Let’s put it this way, without them I’d be dead by now or have a disease or something... MASH is like my second family and one day I hope to give back for all they have done for me.”

MASH service user

PAULA'S STORY

Paula has been supported by Sam Jones a specialist engagement worker from MASH as part of the Housing First scheme, so that she can be in charge of her own recovery journey. Housing First is all about securing someone a home first and then addressing other support needs around that stable base.

My name is Paula and I'm 50 years old.

Before I met Sam I used to sit in my room all the time. I didn't communicate with people. I was living in temporary accommodation and using heroin and crack cocaine. I'd been living on the streets and I now know that I had mental health issues including bipolar disorder and PTSD.

When I met Sam, she really brought me out of myself. She took me out for lunch and to different places so I wasn't sat in my room mulling stuff over. I got to know her for a couple of months. I didn't have any confidence to use public transport so this made a lot of difference. She's so supportive. Because of my drug use I'd lost touch with my family.

I had been put on a methadone script and Sam helped me get back in touch with my family. This is one of the most important things ever. This led to one of my sons coming to visit me. When my son saw me with my weight back on looking like his Mum again, he was overwhelmed. He looked so happy when he seen me and proud of how well I looked. A few weeks later he was killed on 26th May. This was when Sam and I started to really bond. On 17th August, I then lost my partner. I

know part of this is through me but part of it is through Sam. My family think she's amazing as well because of how far I've come. For instance; she got me a tablet and helped me learn how to use the internet. I email all sorts now. Like, if I've got a housing problem instead of picking up the phone to Sam I'll send an email. I even do online shopping and stuff like that, that I couldn't do before. She's helped to get all my proper support for my mental health.

“I love putting that key in the door and it's mine.”

When I looked at the back and the front of the building I got this warm feeling. When we did get to view it I walked inside and thought oh my God. It just felt right.

I've always sofa surfed or lived on the street. So, it was all quite overwhelming. But I love that more than anything. I love putting that key in that door and it's mine. I can do what I want, when I want, come and go. When I got the key to the door it was amazing. Absolutely. Because I've not had my own property for over eight years.

“Sam has helped me with money like getting PIP [Personal Independence Payment] back pay. I've bought a brand new sofa, I've had carpets fitted. It felt amazing to go out, buy furniture and pay for it. I can't even explain it. I was so proud. Walking out with the receipt. I was so excited. I absolutely love it.



“I'd say to Sam, thank you for all the support and everything that she's helped me with. Before, with the flat, bringing me out of myself. Always being there for me.”

When I lost my son, my partner. She really was a big support. She still is.

On my windowsill I've got a picture of me and my partner in a slate heart. On the other side I've got my son in a picture and his ashes in a necklace. I light candles every night. That's my thing. That makes me happy.

OUR IMPACT ON THE WIDER COMMUNITY

OVER 2021/22 AT MASH WE:

- Launched a research project on Women & Sex Work in Greater Manchester: the prevalence, intersectional needs and gaps in service provision.
- Convened a focus group of MASH service users to respond to the Ministry of Justice's "Delivering Justice for Victims" consultation, ensuring that the voice of women who sex work and are at significantly higher risk of being victims of violence, sexual assault and domestic abuse were able to share their experiences and views on what can be done to improve victims' experiences.
- Input into the 10 year Greater Manchester Gender Based Violence Strategy where we shared learning, case studies and the voices of women with lived experience. This has resulted in sex workers being included in the strategy and the recognition that sex workers need bespoke programmes to enable better outcomes.
- Continued to share the voices and experiences of women who sex work at key strategic meetings and platforms across Greater Manchester in order to address stigma and influence and advocate for change including homelessness, mental health, criminal justice, victim support, poverty and health and social care.



“It’s also beautiful to see the respect that MASH staff have for the women they support and that is shown also by how you all put so much time and effort into the Panel.”

**Service User Advisory Panel
(Sue’s Space) Member**

LOOKING AHEAD

**“MASH workers listen,
work with me to
discover my own goals
and don’t impose their
ideals on my recovery
journey.”**

MASH service user

OVER 2022-23 WE WILL BE:

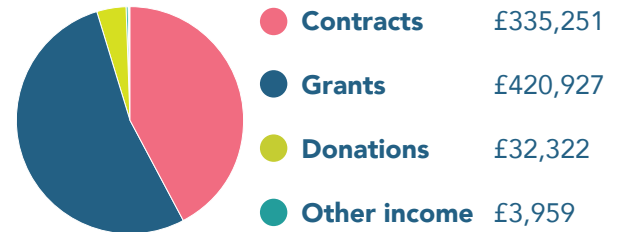
- Launching our new 5-year strategy 'Going above & Beyond'
- Working with the local authority and key partners to develop a specialised women's housing pathway
- Supporting women as they continue to face hardship following the rising cost of living
- Developing our services for younger women aged 18-25
- Working with our Service User Advisory Panel, Sue's Space, to continue to shape MASH and start to develop a Lived Experience Leaders programme
- Working on how MASH can hold ourselves accountable to being a diverse, equitable, safe and inclusive organisation; and being proactive in ensuring Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is embedded in everything we do at MASH



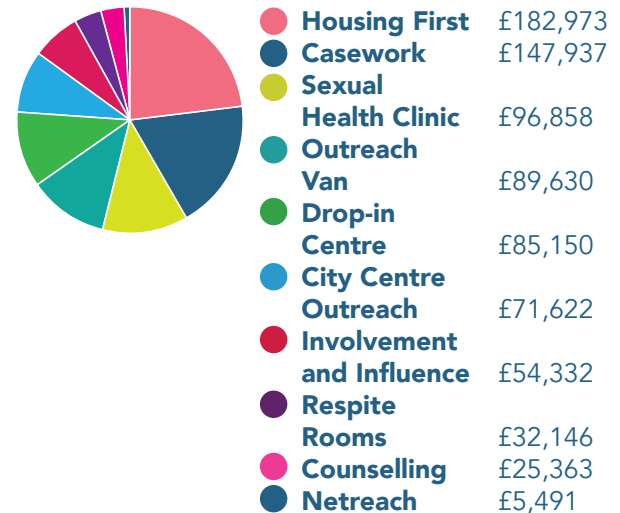
FINANCIALS

MASH is hugely grateful for the support from our amazing funders and donors who have supported us through the last year.

INCOME



EXPENDITURE





“Just wanted to thank you for last night. It was absolutely the best night I’ve had in years, the way we all got on and having genuine laughs was great thank you.”

Service user who attended MASH’s Christmas Dinner



THANK YOU

VOLUNTEERS

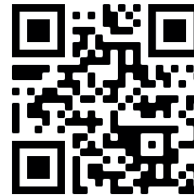
We couldn't have got through this year without our dedicated team of volunteers. They have donated hundreds of hours of their own time and energy to show up for women in our drop-in and on outreach. They are integral to our team. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped us out this year. **Thank you so much.**

FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

A huge thank you again to our funder and individual supporters. You change lives through by choosing to support MASH. Thank you to:

- Greater Manchester Housing First Partnership
- Manchester City Council
- Salford City Council
- Trafford Council
- Big Change MCR
- The Big Give
- Charity Services Grant
- CMS Social Impact Fund

- Comic Relief
- Homeless Link
- Garfield Weston
- GMCVO
- Greater Manchester High Sheriffs Trust
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Ministry of Justice
- Grand Trust
- HACK Foundation
- The Henry Smith Charity
- Macc
- Leeds Building Society Foundation
- Lloyds Bank Foundation
- Margaret's Fund
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Nationwide Community Grants
- One Manchester
- Our Manchester VCS
- Shelter
- St Phillips Church
- Trafford Housing Trust



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

