



# Stepping Stones Luton

## Impact Report

### 2018 – 2019

Helping women to transform the stumbling blocks of their lives into Stepping Stones

[www.steppingstonesluton.org.uk](http://www.steppingstonesluton.org.uk)

Charity number 1162349

Company number 6588338



Our vision is of a society where the unique strengths of women are valued as being essential in helping to build healthier and stronger communities.

Our mission is to empower and inspire women to make positive choices creating a better future for themselves, their children and their families.

Since 2008 Stepping Stones has been dedicated to helping women and their children create happier, healthier lives. We support women to overcome the difficulties associated with one or a combination of the following circumstances: being victims of domestic abuse, involvement with the Criminal Justice System, involvement with Children's Services, suffering from substance misuse/addiction and/or mental health issues. We work with women from Luton and Central Bedfordshire.

## A message from our Head of Service



*We have seen an increasing number of women being referred to our services and larger numbers of women are requesting our services. With the ever increasing demand for our services we are keen to strengthen our support offer. We pride ourselves in being responsive to client need and we are working hard to improve our service user engagement and feedback opportunities. I am incredibly proud of the passionate and committed team of staff and volunteers we have and of the ladies who come to our service, share what are often incredibly traumatic experiences, work through complex issues and support each other through their journeys to recovery.*

*Nicky Panton*



Did you know...

In the year ending March 2018, an estimated 2 million adults aged 16 to 59 years reported experiencing domestic abuse - 1.3 million women and 695,000 men.

The Police recorded 599,549 domestic abuse-related crimes. This was an increase of 23% on the previous year.

(Office for National Statistics)

The estimated annual cost of domestic abuse to Luton is £21.6 million a year.

(Luton.gov.uk)

What we provide

group support programmes  
1-2-1 support  
counselling, solicitor drop-in  
art therapy, free internet access  
donated food and clothes  
free childcare provision

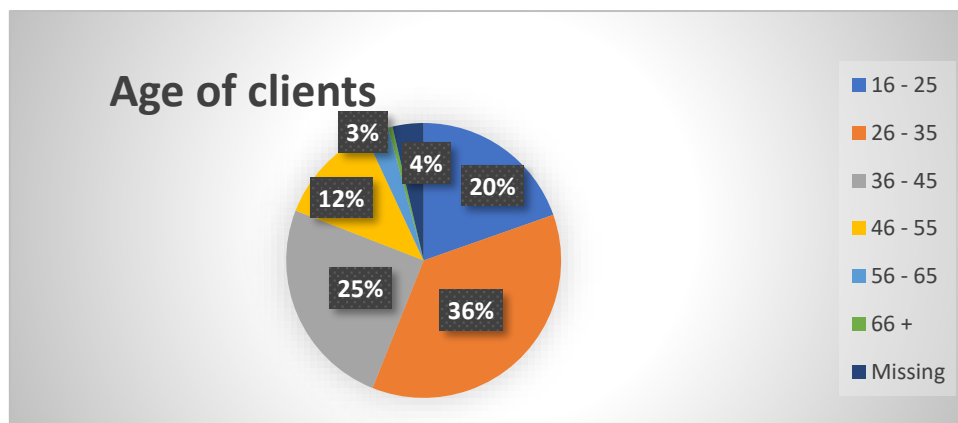


## Who we work with

Year on year we are seeing increasing numbers of women being referred to us.

**714** women were referred in 2018/2019

Self referrals have almost doubled since last year, currently making up 23% of all referrals.



**57%** were White British

**24%** identified themselves as having a disability

**38%** were single

**52%** were unemployed

**77%** were in receipt of benefits

**576** women received support from Stepping Stones

Women presented with various needs – substance misuse, physical and mental health, offending, but by far the greatest need relates domestic abuse.

**80%** of women reported being the victim of domestic abuse either currently or previously.

We delivered **1721** childcare sessions to **165** children

Over **60%** of women with children under 5 years have used the childcare facility



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*'I really could not ask for better ladies to look after my little girl...you ladies are fantastic. [They will] always try and give you advice which is useful'*

*Service user, May 2019*

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## Our services

We have delivered **8182** hours of support including face to face, accompanying women to appointments, phone support, support at court, advocacy and liaising with other professionals.

**143** women  
attended a  
domestic  
abuse  
programme

**55** women  
attended a  
parenting  
programme

**27** women  
attended  
counselling  
sessions

**37** women  
attended the  
trauma  
programme

**19** women  
attended our  
anger  
programme

**8** women  
attended art  
therapy

*Our group programmes create  
opportunity for women to  
experience peer support and  
challenge in a safe  
environment*

## Our impact

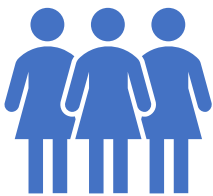
<b>70</b> women reported improvements in parenting skills and knowledge		<b>101</b> women reported visiting A&E less often
<b>73</b> women reported positive health outcomes	<b>130</b> women reported calling Police less often	
<b>40</b> women said they were better able to manage their finances		
<b>56</b> women reported visiting their GP less often		
<b>53</b> women were supported to meet their accommodation goals	<b>25</b> women reported improvements in education, training and employment	





49% of women said they felt safer

54% of women said they felt more confident



47% of women said they felt closer to other people

61% said they felt better about themselves



48% said they felt better able to deal with problems

55% said they were better able to make up their mind



57% said they felt more optimistic about the future



## Service user feedback

We pride ourselves in being responsive to the needs of our clients. We want to know what our service users say about us.

We have re-vamped our **comments, complaints, compliments** feedback box and introduced a quarterly service user survey.

**57** clients have given feedback in 2 surveys

**86%** said the service was very good

**55** women said they felt supported by their key worker

**100%** said they felt safe and comfortable at Stepping Stones

**100%** said they would recommend our services



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*'My life has changed. I  
am grateful for all the  
support and guidance.  
Thank you'*

*Service user, February  
2019*

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## Our highlights

We held an open day in November 2018 to coincide with 16 days of action (against gender-based violence).

Over **60** local professionals visited our office in Luton.

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*‘We are in awe of your passion and all the amazing work you do in supporting women to change their lives.’ - Family Worker, Local School*

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## What’s happening next year

-  Building links and raising our **profile** with our local community including local business networks
-  Exploring alternative **funding opportunities** including sponsored events
-  Developing **education, training and employment** specialist provision
-  Re-vamping our **drop in sessions**
-  Introducing new **parenting programmes**
-  Reviewing our focus through refreshing our **branding**
-  Undertaking **Trusted Charity Mark** self assessment

## Hannah's story

Hannah was a young woman referred to Stepping Stones in 2018 by her mental health worker. She was diagnosed with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Emotional Personality Disorder. She has one son, who at the time was 6 months old. Her son was being managed under a Child in Need plan. Hannah was living in a relationship with her son's father, and they were all living together.

After an initial assessment, Hannah was referred to one of our parenting programmes. After attending the group and working 1-2-1 with her keyworker for several weeks Hannah disclosed that she was in an emotionally abusive relationship.

Upon exploring her options with her keyworker and building her confidence and self-esteem, Hannah decided to end the relationship with her partner. Hannah was supported to report the abuse to the Police and helped to implement safety precautions. Hannah was also supported through the Child in Need process and how contact with her son and his father could be managed safely.

Hannah says that the support from Stepping Stones has helped her understand the effects of her parenting on her son and the impact of her emotions. This has helped her improve the bond with her son. Hannah is also able to identify when she feels overwhelmed and is able to seek the appropriate support.

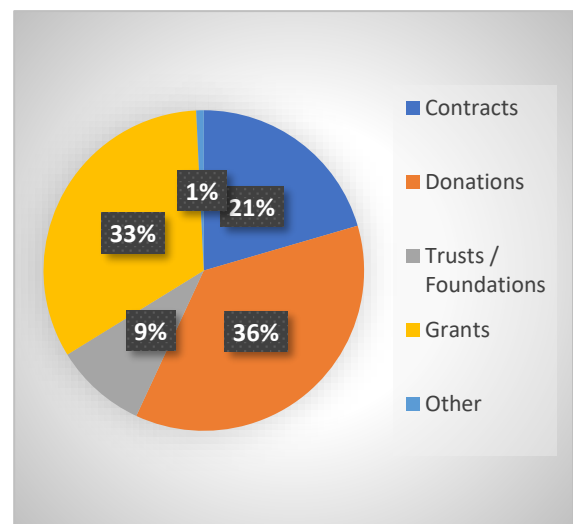
Details have been anonymised.

We want to make sure that no woman has to suffer alone, but we can't do it on our own.

**Thank you** to our funders and supporters including

- 👣 London Luton Airport Limited
- 👣 Flying Start
- 👣 Bedfordshire Northamptonshire Cambridgeshire Hertfordshire (BeNCH) CRC
- 👣 Comic Relief
- 👣 Change Grow Live (Resolutions)
- 👣 Tudor Trust
- 👣 Tampon Tax
- 👣 Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner
- 👣 Vauxhall
- 👣 9 Group

Like other charities, we continue to face funding cuts and are challenged to be ever more creative in seeking new funding streams. We are exploring corporate fundraising opportunities in the coming year and are looking forward to working with local businesses.







For more information please visit our website  
[www.steppingstonesluton.co.uk](http://www.steppingstonesluton.co.uk) or  
email us at [hello@steppingstonesluton.org.uk](mailto:hello@steppingstonesluton.org.uk)

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