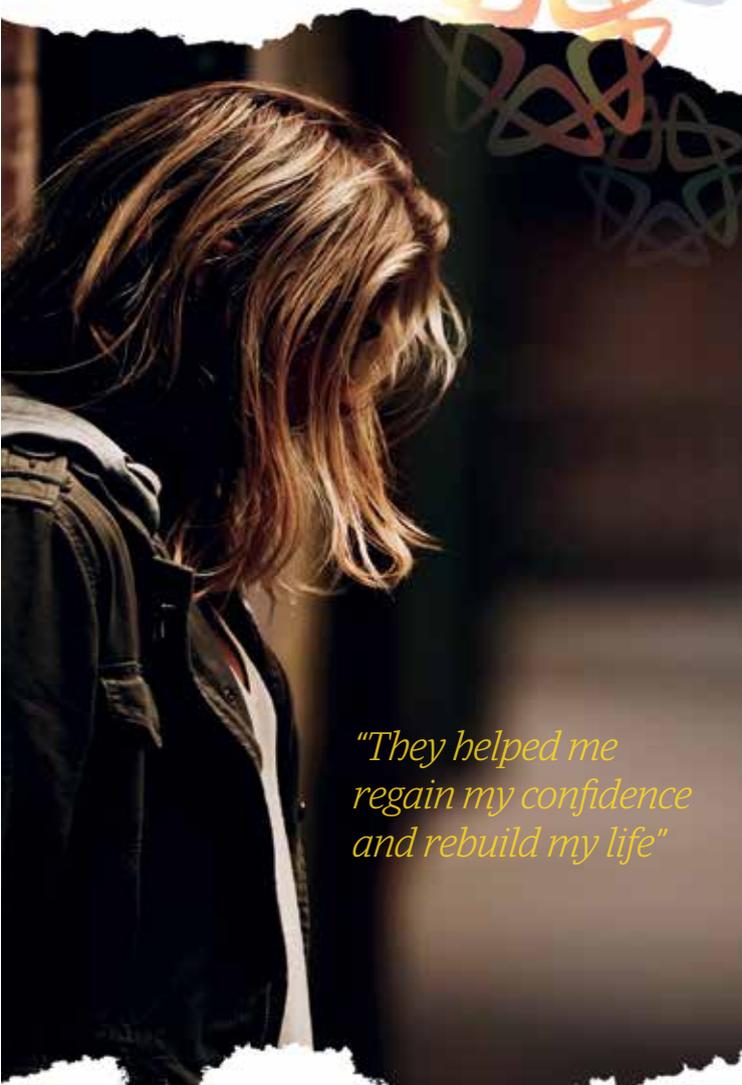


The Willow Project: Homelessness Outreach



*"They helped me
regain my confidence
and rebuild my life"*

Homelessness

The Willow Project supports women who are homeless or at risk of being homeless in the Black Country.

Homelessness is complex and can mean:

- Sleeping rough
- Hidden homeless, eg sofa surfing, staying with friends
- In supported housing
- In refuge or homeless accommodation
- Vulnerably housed
- At risk of homelessness

Anyone can become homeless, regardless of their social background, age, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity.

Being homeless doesn't mean you're helpless

You may feel like your situation is too complex, but The Willow Project is here to help you. The Willow Project offers trauma-informed support, which means we are trained and knowledgeable about:

- Domestic abuse and stalking
- Sexual violence
- Sexual exploitation and modern slavery
- Complex needs, such as offending.

You may feel **stuck** and like things can't change, or that nobody can help you, or like you don't know what help is available to you.

It might feel difficult to **accept help**, especially if you have felt judged or let down in the past.

We want you to know that we will **believe** you, that we will support you to find a safe home and rebuild your life.

You may eventually need support in managing your tenancy and managing your money, and we will ensure you have support around this. You may become ready for work or return to education, you may be ready to **learn** new skills to help you thrive, and we will ensure you have access to this too.

You may want your independence and become **self-reliant**, and The Willow Project will work with you to make this happen.

We will believe you. We will listen to you, support you and give you time and space to decide what you want to do. We won't judge you because of what you say or force you to make a decision you do not want to make. We provide you with a package of support that is unique to you, and give you the information you need so that you can take your next steps.

**Black Country Women's Aid:
0121 553 0090**

You can also email us at
willowproject@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk
for more information

The Willow Project

Homelessness Outreach Workers support women who are sleeping rough, who are hidden homeless, in supported housing, refuge or homeless accommodation, women at risk of homelessness and women who are vulnerably housed.

The Willow Project team works with partner agencies to locate and maintain safe accommodation for homeless women in the Black Country.

The Willow Project is funded by Homeless Link.

How can The Willow Project support you?

A Homelessness Outreach Worker will support you in finding somewhere safe to live. This support isn't time-limited and can include:

- Listening to you and being there for you
- Outreach support
- Advice and support planning tailored to your needs, discussing a range of options with you and enabling you to make choices
- Assessing your risk level and developing safety plans with you including practical plans for protection to keep you and your children safe
- Signposting and assisting access to other agencies who can help, eg sexual health, drug/alcohol misuse, immigration, counselling and housing
- Access to interpreting services if you need them

Getting help

If you are a woman in the Black Country, either homeless or at risk of homelessness, you may be referred to The Willow Project by a professional (such as police, health or refuge workers), or you can self-refer by calling 0121 553 0090. The Willow Project supports women over the age of 18 in Sandwell, Dudley and Walsall.

You can also email us at
willowproject@blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk.

Homelessness Outcomes Star

We support homeless women in the Black Country, using the ten areas of the Homelessness Star. These are:

- motivation and taking responsibility;
- self-care and living skills;
- managing money and personal administration;
- social networks and relationships;
- drug and alcohol misuse;
- physical health;
- emotional and mental health;
- meaningful use of time;
- managing tenancy and accommodation;
- offending.

Our Homelessness Outreach Team offers women every opportunity to identify and achieve their goals and aspirations, recognising and emphasising their strengths and capacity for positive change.

Group programmes

Black Country Women's Aid provides a package of support for women, which includes in-house group work programmes.

Our range of group programmes offer emotional support, help with life skills, coping strategies, relationships and parenting.

Black Country Women's Aid also offers the Freedom Programme as a free 12-week programme open to any woman, whether she is in or has left an abusive relationship, including women who do not plan to leave their partner.

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A MESSAGE FROM BLACK COUNTRY WOMEN'S AID'S CLIENT FORUM

“Black Country Women's Aid has given us our lives back and the belief that we are in control of our own futures. We are three women of different ages and backgrounds who have met through accessing various services with BCWA. We have always felt listened to, believed, supported, guided, not judged and been allowed to make decisions about our own lives in our own time. We have been inspired to believe in and respect who we are as individuals”

WHAT ELSE DO PEOPLE SAY ABOUT OUR SUPPORT SERVICES?

“Black Country Women's Aid changed my life. I can't ever thank them enough. I have so much gratitude. No judgement ever, they just listened and helped. They have no idea how much they've made my life better. I'm eternally grateful. Thank you thank you thank you!”

“Talking helps. Always talk. Don't feel like you have to keep anything to yourself. They listened to me and I appreciate all the help that I have received.”

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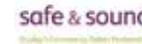
Black Country Women's Aid (formerly known as Sandwell Women's Aid) is an independent charity which has supported survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence in the West Midlands for 30 years.

We offer sensitive and holistic support services which help victims of abuse to escape from violence, cope with trauma and rebuild their lives.

We support over 9,000 people a year through our services, which include: domestic abuse refuge and community support; rape, sexual violence and historic sexual abuse support; children and young people's services; modern slavery services; and female offenders' services.

We believe that no-one should have to live in fear of violence and abuse. We listen, we support, we care.
blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk

The Cedar Centres are our centres in Sandwell, Dudley and Walsall which bring together a range of support services for survivors. They are based on values of protection and healing: a safe space to enable survivors to rebuild their lives.



Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England No. 2791788 Registered Charity No. 1032298
Registered Address: 370-372 High Street,
Smethwick, West Midlands, B66 3PJ

Contact numbers

Black Country Women's Aid
0121 553 0090

Access to a range of support services including Domestic Abuse, Rape and Sexual Violence, Young People's Services and Asian Women's Services.

Shelter
0808 800 4444

A Freephone housing advice helpline offering information about your rights and the support you can expect, depending on your personal circumstances.

Citizens Advice Bureau
0121 500 2703

Advice on a range of issues including benefits, work, debt, housing and the law.

West Midlands Police
0345 113 5000

IN AN EMERGENCY CONTACT THE POLICE - DIAL 999

We produce a range of leaflets about our services for people who have experienced domestic abuse and sexual violence. Please contact us, ask a member of staff or visit our website for more information

www.blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk