



Roshni Sheffield Asian Women's Resource Centre Sheffield City Council Core Service Grant: 2018-19 Annual Impact Report

Roshni is a resource centre for South Asian women living and working in the city of Sheffield. The centre aims to empower women from disadvantaged backgrounds, by providing a wide range of culturally specific services and activities, to enable them to improve their wellbeing and achieve economic stability.

2018-19 marks the 2nd year of a 3-year Core Service Grant Agreement with Sheffield City Council (SCC). The grant of £39,240 provides much needed core funding for Roshni and is awarded as a contribution to the delivery of 3 key beneficiary outcomes that we strive to deliver for our clients. This report provides a service overview for 2018-19 and reports on the achievement of these outcomes and the positive impact we continue to have on the lives of our clients and volunteers.

2018-19 Service highlights

The centre delivered services to **520 women** in the city of whom **493 received intensive support** through the following services and activities:

- **One to one Advocacy support** was provided to **341** marginalised Asian women in the city, through our Empowerment service, of whom 185 (54%) were new referrals. New clients came to the service via word of mouth referrals, GP referrals, the Police, IDVAS, women's refuges, social services, health visitors and other local community services.
- One to one **bilingual counselling** was provided to **15 women** in crisis.
- **Education and training** was delivered to **188 women**. The majority of these were first time learners and had previously had access to little or no education.

Education & Training courses delivered 2018/19	No. of women attending
ESOL entry 1	26
ESOL entry 2/3	16
Creative Conversation English	24
Employability/Employment skills preparation	28
Health & Social Care level 1	11
Introduction to Catering	6
Art Therapy	11
Mental Wellbeing	21
Sewing skills	11
Parenting skills	18
Hairdressing & Beauty	16

- **59** Bangladeshi women accessed support via 2 weekly **outreach sessions** that were delivered in the **Darnall** and **Tinsley** areas.
- **Elder Café** group sessions and activities were accessed by **118 clients** to alleviate loneliness and/or isolation, of which 63 (53%) had a disability or limiting long term illness.
- We took 15 women through a programme of activities in the Peak District National Park to introduce the Longshaw Estate and all that the countryside has to offer.
- A weekly **Befriending service** was provided to **6 women** suffering from significant physical and/or mental health issues via our Self Directed Support Service.
- **71 volunteers** supported the delivery of services within the organisation over the year, providing **5,872 volunteer hours** (the equivalent of 3 full time staff members). **20 volunteers** went on to secure **paid employment**.

Outcome 1 - Women accessing Roshni's services take control over their own life and take responsibility for their own wellbeing by making good life choices.

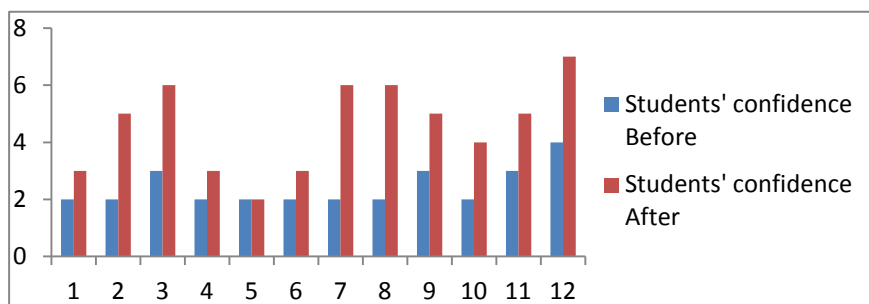
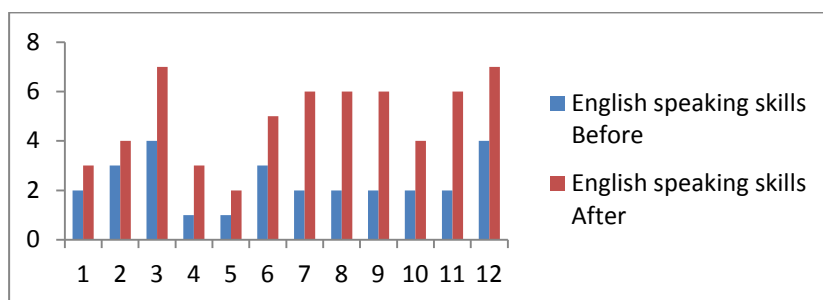
The **Empowerment project** is aimed at disadvantaged South Asian women; to engage them and remove barriers to integration. After helping the women to deal with their immediate crisis, we engage them in action planning to help them develop and achieve personal goals. Action plans were completed with 80 such women this year that faced multiple barriers to finding work, locking them into a cycle of poverty and reliance on state benefits. Twenty five of these women went on to attend our Employment preparation course where they were given specific work related guidance and coaching to move into or closer to paid employment. Outcomes for the group were as follows:



Case study - Client B has been known to Roshni since 2014 and initially accessed our advocacy service in a crisis situation for practical help and support. We then worked with her providing one to one support and group activities to help develop her confidence and self-esteem following a history of domestic abuse from her in-laws. Since 2016, we have helped her to access activities and training to help her build up her CV. She has accessed training in Food Hygiene, IT, Childcare level 2 and attended our ESOL classes. She was also supported to take up volunteering opportunities outside Roshni and became a volunteer at Food Cycle as an assistant cook. We then provided guidance and support to

help her look for jobs, helped her complete job applications and even ran mock interview sessions to help her prepare for job interviews. After a few knock backs, in July 2018, client B was successful in securing her first paid job as a Lunchtime Supervisor at a local school. This was a huge personal achievement for her and has boosted her confidence to achieve other personal goals such as learning to drive, and further training so that she can achieve her dream of becoming a fully qualified nursery teacher.

24 women attended our drama-based **English classes** through the year which were run by volunteers. All of them reported an improvement in their use of English in everyday life situations – shopping, school, health settings, office settings, social chats, on the phone etc. The class teacher observed and rated (0 to 10) her students' confidence, the level of their participation and interaction in the class and how good they were at speaking English. The graph below shows women's scores before and after one or more term(s) of classes.



Case study - Client C is of Pakistani origin and only had access to a basic elementary education in Pakistan. She had no prior experience of learning English at school. She struggled with all of the four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Client C is also a single mother. She admits that learning English is crucial for her as she struggles with simple daily tasks such as going to the doctors and to the shops etc. She realises that she has to become more independent and has to communicate with the wider public in order to function in society. She joined our Pre-entry ESOL class and has never looked back:

“Client C..... started at the bottom of the class by learning the alphabet by heart. She persisted with her work even if she found it difficult. She never gave up. She can now construct simple sentences. She enjoys the speaking tasks and relishes all of the role plays in class. She can now also read simple sentences and her writing has improved. She has made good progress and has exceeded her own expectations”. (Shazia Khan, Roshni ESOL tutor October 2018).

Two **Parenting Classes**, each of six weeks were run during the year. These were attended by 18 women in total.

Attendee feedback:

- “I’ve enjoyed this course very much. I’ve learnt a lot, I found the information useful. I keep remembering tips and I apply them to my children and to my life. I have even de-cluttered my home.”
- “I’ve started to praise my daughter more.”
- “I’ve applied the tip about fussy eaters to my son, and I am amazed that he has started to eat the family meals.”
- “I learned how to train my children. Whenever they returned from school they would get their tablets and screen, and wouldn’t sit down easily for a meal. Now I have made a rule that kids have to wait until they have eaten and they can use screens only after that.”
- ‘I enjoyed learning these things: Hugging kids often; spending special time with each child; communicating with children.”

Outcome 2 – Women accessing Roshni services have improved wellbeing and mental health.

In order to record and measure the impact of our **Empowerment Service** on the mental wellbeing of our clients, we complete the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWS) with a sample of 51 clients. This is a nationally recognised measurement tool that is used to measure the impact of projects and services on mental wellbeing. The average score for women in England is 49.6 (2016 Health England Survey). Our clients, when they first come to us, have a much lower average starting score, with the client sample averaging a score of 42.6. However, after six months of support we saw this average score for the sample increase significantly to 48.2. The WEMWS demonstrated an average 5.6 positive change in mental wellbeing for the client sample. These positive changes were not only noticeable by clients themselves (note a change of score of 3 or more is noticeable by the client themselves), who started off much more lower down the wellbeing scale, but we saw a positive shift in culture as they moved into the national average percentile for women.



We also went on to use part of the WEMWS scores together with the HACT Social Value Calculator* to calculate an **overall social value benefit** for our client sample, which was an impressive **£183,277**

**Title: Mental Health and Life Satisfaction: The Relationship between the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale and Life Satisfaction. Authors: HACT and Daniel Fujiwara (www.hact.org.uk / www.simetrica.co.uk) Source: www.hact.org.uk License: Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.en_GB)*

Case study - Tinsley Meadows Primary School regularly refers mums at the school to our weekly outreach service in the Tinsley area of Sheffield. More often than not, these are mothers who are/have experienced domestic abuse, speak little English and are very isolated. With our ongoing support, many of these mums have now become more confident. Their wellbeing and mental health has improved, enabling them to manage their own affairs independently, and which has in turn lead to a more secure and peaceful home environment for them and their children. Outlined below is some feedback from the school:

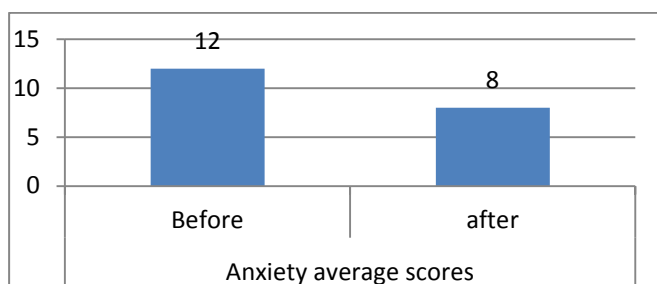
“The difference in our service users that access ROSHNI is incredible. We see this in their relationship with their children and how relaxed and confident they are with themselves and other aspects of their lives....Shireen, Nasim and I are committed to providing the best service and support possible to enable our service users to improve their outcomes. We communicate regularly and work together regarding safeguarding matters”.

A total of **15 women** received **counselling** from Roshni this year through our paid counsellor and two volunteer counsellors. We carried out evaluations with the 13 women who completed their counselling. The women were asked to rate from 0 to 5 if they felt that that the service had had a positive impact on the following areas of their lives: Sense of wellbeing, Reduction in anxiety, Self-confidence, Level of independence and the level of support in their lives. The average rating for all of the above areas was 4 as recorded by the women themselves.

Feedback from counselling clients:

- *“It helped me stand back up my feet again. My counselling sessions helped me to see that there was a light at the end of the tunnel and that all was not lost. I have since moved to my own home, found a new job and have been making connections with others. I feel much happier now.”*
- *“It helped me to evaluate my life and build my confidence. It developed my self-belief. I felt listened to and not judged for the choices I was making. It helped me to come to terms with some of the traumatic experiences in my life.”*

We have provided **advocacy support** to 341 women through the year, through our busy drop-ins and outreach sessions. We completed a widely used scale called GAD-7 to measure anxiety for 63 women. Most of the women suffered from moderately severe or severe anxiety. The average scores are given in the chart below. The improvement in anxiety ranged from 1 to 17 points. After our support anxiety levels had reduced to a moderate or low rate.



The **BME Elders project** at Roshni aims to support older people by improving their wellbeing, reducing social isolation and loneliness and in reducing inequalities in their access to services. This year, we set up a new information and exercise based group for elderly Bangladeshi women living in the Darnall area. These sessions and activities proved to be very popular, and continue to provide a great means of reducing isolation and loneliness amongst elders in the city.

Case study - Client A joined the BME project earlier this year. She was house bound and felt really depressed. She started to attend our swimming and exercise sessions. She then went on to attend the outdoor activities we organised in partnership with The Sheffield Environment Network which included horse riding, fishing, pottery and walks in the countryside in order to encourage older people to learn new skills improve their wellbeing and become more active.

We have seen a great shift in her mood, and have observed that her physical and mental health have both improved since joining the project. We will continue to invite her to our sessions and even encourage her to become a volunteer in the future and play more of an active role.

Outcome 3 – Women accessing Roshni services become more active citizens.

Many of the women we work with want to become more active citizens. However, their lack of belief in themselves is often a big as barrier as their poor educational backgrounds

Case study - Client D, aged 44 came to Roshni with a friend to one of our drop in sessions to get some advice on how to find a job. She said that she was struggling to get by with the money her husband gave to her and that she needed help to look into ways of bringing in an income. Client D originally came from Pakistan to get married and then moved in with her husband and his family. She had very little education as her family did not see it as important for girls to get more than a basic education. After talking to Client D, we realised that although she could not speak English very well, after all the years of cooking for the extended family she had developed excellent cooking skills. She was told about the 'Inspiring Womens' project at Roshni, which was set up to help women explore the idea of running a business from home, and signed up for our Catering course where she obtained a Food and Hygiene qualification.

Initially, Client D was very shy and quiet and did not speak very much, however, over time she started contributing to the sessions, made new friends and began to share her knowledge of food with the rest of the group. She had 100% attendance on the course and at the end of it stated, "I feel much more confident, and feel that I can use my

cooking skills to earn money.”

Client D was then introduced to volunteering and helped us to make and sell food at our food stall at the Sharrow Festival. We then introduced her to further volunteering opportunities, and she moved on to join her local food cycle group. The support Client D has received had helped her to not only recognise her skills which she could use to earn money to support herself and her family, but also to become more active and take up mainstream opportunities around her.

Roshni Volunteer - “I got the confidence to engage people, how to reach them at their level. I learnt to communicate with a variety of people. I have a better understanding of people on benefits. Volunteering at Roshni has been an eye opener.”

Once engaged with Roshni, women are supported to access a range of mainstream services relevant to their needs. We often hear from them that what keeps them engaged with our organisation is our values of respect, kindness, warmth and commitment to our service users. A phrase that we hear over and over again from our service users is that Roshni feels like home to them. Considering that we are serving women who are often displaced and socially isolated, it means a huge deal to them that they can come to our project where they are totally accepted and offered all the support they need.

Case Study Sheffield Mind - *“From Sheffield Mind’s perspective, partnership working with Roshni has been a wonderful opportunity to break down perceived barriers and reduce stigma around talking about mental health within our wider community....Having a Roshni counsellor to work alongside in the group therapy sessions, was about so much more than just the interpretation of language. Clients felt at ease and more able to connect within a therapy space that might otherwise have felt strange to them..... They could share their stories with one another and with Mind’s art therapist; through Urdu, Punjabi, English and of course, expressive art making!If it were a painting, I would see the support of Roshni staff as a sort of spiritual drawbridge;... helping to build connection, provide safe passage, and on looking back, shedding light and hope not only within the lives of the women who participated, but also within us, as we strive to share a more caring and healthy city”.*

Every year we run two mental wellbeing courses at Roshni. The first was a ten-week Art Therapy course, in partnership with MIND, from April to June 2018, which was attended by 11 women. The second, which ran from January to March 2019, was a six-week long wellbeing course in partnership with Sheffield Women’s Counselling and Therapy Service and was attended by 10 women. Outlined below is a case study of one of our attendees from a wellbeing courses from two years ago – we have chosen a previous attendee for this report as it shows how women can progress over time:

“I was referred to Roshni by the Domestic Abuse Helpline for culturally appropriate services. In the past I have worked as a bi-lingual teacher assistant. However, in the last ten years, I had lost all my confidence due to being in a controlling relationship. My mood was very low and I had no motivation when I started accessing support at Roshni. However, my Roshni advocacy worker asked me to join the Roshni Wellbeing course as well as to attend individual counselling sessions at Roshni. Though the wellbeing course I met a lot of new people and made a small circle of friends who I am still in touch with. The course was

tailored around our specific situations and helped a lot. Coming to Roshni for the course kept me away from my negative thinking; it was something to look forward to. I also accessed one to one counselling support at Roshni. Without Roshni's support it would have been a much longer process of recovery for me. There were a lot of reminders from Roshni staff to attend and to just make sure that I was okay. I felt that the workers genuinely cared.

I am now in a totally different place with my life. Last year I volunteered in the English conversation class at Roshni for 8 weeks. I also attended a beauty course and a hair course

at Roshni. I enjoyed the hair course so much that I have now joined a professional hair course at Level 2 at Sheffield College as from September 2019. I have also started volunteering at a local voluntary organisation in large scale food preparation. I have regained my confidence and independence. There are difficulties in my life but I feel I can cope better".

This Summer, Roshni also did some partnership work with the National Trust and the Moorland Discovery Centre to help Asian women access the countryside surrounding Sheffield and benefit from all that it offers. It was also an opportunity for the Discovery Centre to inform future projects and how they could work more effectively with people from BME communities. Evaluations and surveys were undertaken with the 19 women involved and although the samples were small (8 fully completed) they did show, at the point of completing the project, a significant improvement in how much the women valued accessing the outdoors and how likely they were to go outdoors. The survey also showed a significant improvement in how confident the women felt in accessing the outdoors. The women also showed a significant shift in how connected they felt to nature. The project was a great success and the women involved seemed to really value the experience.

Case Study Feedback from Longshaw Education Officer:

"The project succeeded in connecting the women to Longshaw and helping them develop a connection to the place. We also gained some useful insights into how to support future visits from BME communities in Sheffield"

Half the women completing the survey had reported feeling in poor or fair health. During the project talking to the women many had health concerns or felt isolated/depressed. Anecdotally many women talked about how the project had helped them feel less isolated & that they enjoyed the health benefits of being out and walking in the countryside. Most recognised the benefits of being more active and of being active in the countryside. More said they didn't feel confident coming alone (issues with transport, language, where to go). All the women had benefited from coming together as a group and building confidence together. At the end of the project one expressed interest in becoming a walks leader, two were keen on volunteering in the kitchen garden, others were keen on learning to grow vegetables and all of them were keen to come back for more walks.

Looking forward to 2019-20

In the coming year we are planning more focused work with women around income generation. We are also exploring the idea of a social enterprise that will train and employ women in the areas of their natural interests, such as cooking and hospitality, child care, beauty, hair and massage.