

Organisation Name		Reference code
The Nelson Trust		2025-10-YWG33
Organisation Address		
Port Lane, Brimscombe Stroud GL5 2QP UK		
Website Address		
www.nelsontrust.com		
How did you hear about the Triangle Trust?		
Grant newsletter		
Please describe your organisation's purpose in one or two sentences.		
Providing holistic, gender and trauma responsive holistic support to divert approximately 100 young women aged 16-25 in Somerset away from the criminal justice system, helping them move away from crime and thrive in their local community		
Type of organisation? (tick all that apply and complete relevant details)		
Charity	Registered Charity Number	Date Registered
Yes	1056672	1985
Community Interest Company	Registered Companies House Number	Date Registered
No		
Social Enterprise	Has your organisation been awarded the Social Enterprise Mark?	Year Awarded
No		
Grant Summary		
Providing holistic, gender and trauma responsive holistic support to divert approximately 100 young women aged 16-25 in Somerset away from the criminal justice system, helping them move away from crime and thrive in their local community.		
Please describe the specific needs of the young women and girls you work with that this project will address		
<p>This project will work with young women aged 16-24 who are at risk of or involved in the criminal justice system.</p> <p>We have a thorough understanding of the profile and presenting needs of young women (aged 16-24) in Somerset who are at risk or involved in the justice system who will be the beneficiaries of this project.</p> <p>The young women are typically very marginalised, disadvantaged and present with numerous intersecting social, emotional, environmental and health related challenges. Overwhelmingly the lives of young women are characterised by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergenerational abuse, trauma and substance-misuse • Repeated Domestic-abuse and unhealthy-relationships • Childhood experiences of sexual violence, neglect and instability • Care-leavers • Homelessness, unstable-housing • Poverty • Poor mentally and physical-health • Poor social-support, isolation • Low level criminality 		

- Exploitation and selling sex
- Mistrust of professionals and services
- Learning challenges, low-level educational attainment
- Unemployment
- Hopelessness and shame

Many young women have had adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) often being placed in the care of the local authority for their own safety. However, these experiences of care often place young women at a greater risk of a range of other forms of disadvantage which can cause significant trauma, including sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and violence, substance and alcohol use as a way to cope, poor mental health, early pregnancy and then removal of children. These factors often lead to further vulnerabilities that drive their involvement in the criminal justice system.

It is estimated that a third of women in prison were in care as children, and nearly two thirds of young adult women (compared to just under half of young men) in custody aged between 16 and 21 have recently been in statutory care (agenda, 2023).

Additionally, many of these young women because of the adversities they have faced have limited education and employment histories, often no safe place to call home and face financial insecurity, as well as unhealthy relationships that further exacerbate their vulnerabilities.

These young women are often victims of much more serious crimes than they commit, yet without specialist projects such as this which aim to divert young women at the earlier opportunity many are swept further into the justice system repeating the intergenerational cycles of trauma, abuse, substance misuse and offending.

The specific needs we will address through this project include:

- Substance and alcohol misuse
- Domestic Abuse, and sexual violence
- Finance needs including debt management, access to benefits
- Accommodation
- Education, training and employment
- Mental & Physical Health
- Sexual exploitation
- Offending
- Relationships including with children, families, peers and wider social networks

What are the key outcomes you will be seeking to achieve for young women and girls either at risk of offending or who are already caught up in the criminal justice system? How will you track the impact you are making?

We will employ a 0.8 FTE Young Women's Keyworker who will provide support to young women (16-24) helping them get the support they need, when they need it. The keyworker will take a relational approach and will invest time in developing a trusting relationships. Each young woman will take a comprehensive assessment of needs across 9 pathways identified as:

- Accommodation
- Drugs and alcohol
- Health
- Violence and abuse
- Offending
- Children, family and relationships
- Education, training and employment
- Sexual exploitation
- Finances

This will inform the development of a support plan to reduce re/offending and address underlying multiple unmet needs. All young women will be provided with:

- Intensive holistic one-to-one support
- Assertive in-reach and outreach

- Targeted specialist interventions
- Targeted interventions that address health and well-being needs, increasing confidence self-esteem, and self-efficacy
- Prevention, safety and harm reduction
- Crisis-case working
- Supported-access to mainstream services
- Multi-agency co-ordination
- Access to our safe, women-only centre and range of innovative in-house services

Our model is not a definitive program but rather an overarching model that affords keyworkers the flexibility to deliver holistic support based on each young woman's individual need. Support is woman-centred with no two packages the same.

The young women's keyworker will hold a caseload of approximately 15 at any one time, taking a blended approach to each woman's needs and specialising in intensive support.

The women supported under this project will have access to our centre, with dedicated sessions available for those under 18. The women's centre is located in Bridgwater where it is close to public transport & they will be able to benefit from the facilities and support available including:

- Daily breakfast club & twice weekly lunch clubs
- On-site creche free of charge for all service users
- A sheltered, safe space to take part in meaningful social mixing
- A dedicated time for under 18s to access the Centre
- Access to washing machines, hot showers and clean clothes.
- Access to Wi-Fi and computers making it easier for them to arrange appointments with professionals or fill out important documents
- Mobile phones with sims cards (pre-loaded with minutes & data)
- Access to our donations room where we provide a range of clothing items, food items, toiletries, sanitary products, nappies & baby wipes etc
- Engagement with local foodbanks

Support will be step-up, step-down wrapping around the young woman, sequencing interventions at the right time. Whilst there is not a definitive timeframe on support we are careful and take steps to ensure that young women do not form a dependency on our services.

The young women's Keyworker will plan for exit/transitions from the start and work with each young woman to address her goals including supported access to mainstream and wider services for ongoing intervention.

What are the key activities you will undertake with this funding to achieve these outcomes?

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Does your proposed project already exist or is this a new piece of work? If this project is already operating, please describe to us how you will use this as an opportunity to build on what you have achieved to date. If this is a new piece of work, please explain what this funding will enable you to do differently.

Whilst this project is new to our Bridgwater Women's Centre, it builds on and replicates the successful existing work with young women and girls within our Swindon and Gloucester Women's Centres.

Our Swindon Women's centre has a Young woman's Worker who supported over 400 young women between 2021-2024. These services have demonstrated consistently positive outcomes, particularly in improving overall well-being, emotional resilience, and life skills among the young women we engage.

Additionally, we have seen significant reductions in reoffending rates, as well as marked improvements in educational engagement, employment prospects, and the ability to establish healthier relationships.

At our Gloucester Women's Centre, the Young woman's keyworker provides holistic support including a range of interventions to young women who have, or are at risk of having involvement in the criminal justice system. The keyworker addresses the underlying drivers of young women's offending; substance misuse, trauma and abuse,

and which builds emotional resilience, confidence and emotional health. These services have been co-produced and co-designed with young women at our other centres and is a tried and tested model, which we can further build upon and develop in Somerset.

In Somerset there is a need for a Young Women's Justice Keyworker in our Women's Centre due to the areas continually rising population as well as increased violent issues, including increasing rates of serious youth violence in the area (Somerset Council, 2025). With this increase, often times young women are overlooked due to the overwhelming amount of male offenders. Preventative programs are often focused on preventing young men and boys from reoffending, leaving women with less options and even fewer that are gender specific.

This funding will enable us to work with young women and girls from the age of 16 and address their specific needs and help close gaps in local services.

Whilst all women and girls we will support via this funding will have access to our Bridgwater Women's Centre, we will also offer evening sessions dedicated for those aged 16-18, acknowledging that some may be in full time education.

What expertise and track record do you have to be able to deliver this work successfully? Please specifically mention your expertise linked to gender and trauma informed approaches.

The grant will be spent on employing a 0.8 FTE Young Woman's Justice Worker at our Bridgwater Women's Centre for two years.

Payroll and supervision - £29,296

Recruitment - £500 (year 1 only)

Analysis and reporting - £1,500

Computing & Communications – Capital £1,023 (year 1 only)

Computing & Communications – Service - £275

Travel - £1,200

Training & Development - £750

Central Overheads - £4,091.28

Total Year 1 - £38,569.28

Total Year 2 - £37,046.28

In total we are seeking £75,615.56 to cover 2 years service delivery.

Please explain how the grant will be spent

The Nelson Trust is a multi-award-winning organisation, recognised for our gender-responsive-&-trauma-responsive services with 40 years of experience and expertise in working with women and girls who are at risk of or justice involved.

We have been at the forefront in pioneering gender and trauma responsive services since 2002; thought our innovative women only residential services a first in the county then in 2010 through the development of our women's community services.

Our service model is underpinned by: Trauma-informed and Gender Responsive principals. We understand and take into account the differences in characteristics and life experiences of women and girls in the criminal justice system. in particularly recognising the history and context of gendered experiences of trauma and abuse and how these experiences plays an influential role in how women respond and interact to services. A trauma-informed approach takes account of the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma, and makes service adjustments to reduce the possibility of re-traumatisation.

We make a number of environmental and service design adaptations creating physical-social and-emotional safety, as to reduce the possibility of re-traumatisation women and girls. Examples of this includes:

- In our safe women only centres we fit slow release-door-mechanisms to reduce triggering door-slamming
- We use Trauma-and-gender-responsive communication "what has happened to you?" rather than "what is wrong with you?" removing any perceived shame-or-blame whilst validating women and girls difficult experiences.
- We create emotionally safe environments 'body language, eye contact and

active listening', recognising that good non-verbal communication encourages women and girls to trust which increases engagement.

- We promoting choice and collaboration 'doing with, rather than 'doing to', producing collaborative support-plans and involving women and girls in decision making.
- We relentlessly follow through consistently 'if we say we will do something – we will do it

Our service is specifically designed to meet women's and girls' gendered needs adopting the five core trauma responsive principles; safety, trust, collaboration, choice, and empowerment.

Our Women's Centres and satellite hubs provide a safe place from which to deliver interventions and support that takes trauma into account. All staff are trained in trauma responsive approaches, trauma-informed practice and interventions with becoming trauma informed champions embedded within each delivery location with a focus on the continuous development of the approach.

We deliver interventions that acknowledges the gender specific needs of women and take account of age when working with young women and girls. For example; interventions designed by trauma specialist Dr Stephanie Covington such as healing from trauma, helping women recover and beyond anger and violence are delivered as part of the women centred work.

Who will be responsible for overseeing and delivering this work?

The work will be delivered by a female young women's justice keyworker, who will be responsible for the delivery of the project including:

- Managing a caseload of young women
- Establishing trusting relationships using a Trauma-informed, Gender-responsive approach
- Undertake comprehensive assessments of need, risks and strengths
- Planning and providing women-centred holistic packages of wrap-around support which are creative and empower young women to make sustainable long-term change
- Coordinating and delivering appropriate interventions as detailed in each young woman's support plan including one-to-one and group sessions
- Monitoring, recording and reporting on individual outcomes
- Produce detailed risk assessments and risk management plans
- Developing wider relationships & reciprocal referral pathways and support networks across the city, promoting multi-agency support

The keyworker will be embedded within our wider Bridgwater Women's Centre and multi-disciplinary staff teams in Somerset, adding value and wider resource to this project.

Bridgwater Women's Centre Service Managers oversee daily operations within the women's centre including the allocation of work, review of quality and performance, reporting and supervision of direct which will include the support, mentoring and supervision of this keyworker.

The Bridgwater Women's Centre sits within the wider women's community services infrastructure and will benefit from support from the wider team including multi-disciplinary keyworkers, senior project workers, management, administration, HR, IT and data analyst.

Head of Women's Community Services reporting to the Chief Executive Officer will have overall responsibility for this project. The Trust is led by a knowledgeable and skilled governing body of trustees and senior leaders with relevant qualifications, experience & lived experience (for example care experienced, addiction, trauma, sex work, violence or being justice involved) which is represented at every level of the organisation from the trustees to the frontline workers.

We are caring, motivated and genuinely passionate about supporting women & girls to make and sustain positive change. Our dedicated multi-disciplinary staff teams bring a wide range of skills, experience and expertise including:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and social care qualifications • Specialist knowledge of substance misuse, mental health • Specialist knowledge of trauma • Specialist knowledge of gendered issues • Women's offending • Specialisms in working with young girls and family services • Domestic abuse • Sexual violence • Leadership qualities • Safeguarding • Housing knowledge and specialisms <p>We have clear organisational structure with lines of accountability. We hold a quarterly Governance Board which oversees the delivery and reporting arrangements for the management of all aspects of governance and risk across all projects and services which will include the young women's justice project.</p>
<p>How do you plan to continue this work once the grant ends?</p> <p>We intend to use this funding over 24 months as seed funding to enable the development of the young women's justice work in Somerset, whilst further enabling the collection of data and outcomes forming an evidence base of effective practice. This funding will enable delivery of the service for the next few years whilst we develop relationships with local commissioners using the evidence base from our work. We have been successful in this approach in other counties where grant funding has enabled us to pilot and evidence the service and gain long-term buy in and service sustainability. The role of women's centres and projects like Young women's Justice work are often crucial in plugging the gap between a patchwork of services and can deliver approximately £14 of benefit for every £1 spent on their services, though this is likely to be much higher given the multiple un-met needs of young women we aim to support often face.</p> <p>Our recommendation is that Women's Centres should receive central funding for services such as specialist young women's work which recognises the contribution they make to other statutory or statutory funded organisations helping achieve outcomes they otherwise would not have achieved. In order to achieve long-term sustainability of the young women's project in Bristol we will advocate for commissioners to include provision to meet the needs of this specific cohort within specifications and statutory commissioning.</p> <p>This data will provide evidence of the program's success, and will feed into local systems and forums and strategies including health and wellbeing boards, children and family as well as local women's justice boards, making a compelling case for sustainability.</p>
<p>Is your organisation led by women and are at least 80% of your organisation's total beneficiaries' women and girls? Please provide a breakdown of your beneficiary numbers for the past 2 years.</p> <p>97% of the beneficiaries we support at the Trust are women and girls. We work with around 5,000 women annually from our women's centres across South West England and Wales.</p> <p>We do however support a very small proportion of men (8 at any one time) through our residential addictions services in Gloucestershire.</p> <p>The Nelson Trust was set-up in 1985 initially to provide residential rehabilitation to support people affected by addiction to achieve long-term recovery and lasting change. Women who misuse substances have different needs than their male counterparts. They are more likely to experience abuse and trauma and are more likely to have caring responsibilities. All of this taken together means that they may struggle to access help in a treatment system which is not responsive to their gendered needs and where they are outnumbered by men two to one.</p> <p>In 2002 we developed and opened our first women's only residential rehabilitation unit, recognising that women have different needs than their male counterparts, and often</p>

face multiple unmet needs and disadvantage and in mixed gender environments outcomes are poorer.

As a result of our leading trauma and gender informed work with women in residential treatment, our first Women's Centre in Gloucestershire was developed in 2010 following the recommendations of the Corston Report. The Corston Report stated that women who have committed low-level non-violent offences should be rehabilitated in the community, keeping them out of prison which disrupts accommodation, family ties and where health outcomes for women are poorer. We now run 10 Women Centres across the South West of England and Wales supporting over 5,000 women last year. Our safe Women's Centre's include access to onsite crèche provision and in house services such as weekly lunch clubs; shower and washing machine access; use of IT suite; pamper days; therapeutic groups and additional therapies as well as dedicated key-working addressing a wide range of practical and emotional support needs, from a safe women only environment.

Our centres are safe women only spaces which are fully staffed and led by women for women.

Does your organisation have existing knowledge and expertise working across the criminal justice system?

The Nelson Trust has a proven history of successfully working with women & girls at risk of or involved in the criminal Justice system. We have been commended (Howard League of Penal reform, Centre of Social Justice, civil society charity of the year Winners) for our innovative work with women in the justice system. We run 10 Women's Centres across South-West England & Wales working with 5000 women & girls annually. Our approach is deeply anchored in our experience of development & delivery of gender responsive justice services guided by frameworks & recommendations including the Corston Report, the Female Offender Strategy, Covington's trauma -informed frameworks & Gelstorpes models of desistance. These frameworks have shaped our understanding of the unique challenges women & girls face & opportunities inherent in engagement, and forming appropriate relationships to affect positive lasting change. Our approach is not only informed by national guidance but also by practical, on-the-ground experience. This combination ensures our service delivery model is evidence-based & grounded in real-world applicability. We believe our extensive experience of working with women & girls in and at risk of justice involvement equips us uniquely to address the specific gendered needs ensuring our approach is not just effective but also empathetic with women & girls at the heart of all we do.

We deliver a wide range of services at all points of the criminal justice system & beyond which contribute towards the development of a Whole-System-Approach responding to women & girls at risk/involved in the CJS.

Our proven track record of successful delivery includes:

- Women's trauma informed residential rehabilitation programme
- HMPPS Women's probation services
- NHS England–Women's Liaison & Division pathway
- Project SHE Support Help Engage –custody diversionary scheme
- Child sexual exploitation services
- Young women's specialist services
- Family child sexual exploitation service
- Sex worker outreach Project
- Sex worker in-reach Project SWIP
- Change Team women's multiple disadvantages
- Young women's mentoring project
- Deferred prosecution–chance to change 18-25 women's
- One Women's centre HMP Eastwood park
- Through the gate support & reconnect

The success of our work is evidenced by the engagement & positive progress of women & girls. Figures below represent a snapshot of activity and outcomes from

2024 include:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5000 women engaged in support • 34,041 interventions, groups, 121, outreach sessions delivered • 89% attendance rate • 1112 multi-agency meetings • 92% of women improved their physical and/or mental health • 84% began addressing domestic/sexual abuse situation • 89% improved financial situation • 71% are now in safe accommodation • 84% worked on their attitudes, thinking & behaviour • 78% improved drug & alcohol misuse • 97% of women selling sex made progress towards exit 82% improved parenting and/or relationships with significant others	
Will you be receiving funding from any other sources for this project?	
We do not currently have any other funding for this project in Somerset.	
Do all staff have enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks? If no please state why.	
Yes	
Reason why not all staff have DBS checks.	
Total funding requested in this application (£10,000 to £80,000 with a maximum of £40,000 in one year)	
£75615.559999999998	
Proposed grant start date	Proposed grant duration in months
1/1/2026	24
How much funding is required each year?	
Year 1	Year 2
£38569	£37046
What was your organisation's expenditure in the most recent financial year?	What was your organisation's annual income in the most recent financial year?
£8628372	£8441328
What value of unrestricted reserves did your organisation have at the end of the most recent financial year?	
£756893	