

Just for Women Centre  
37 Front Street  
Stanley  
Co Durham DH9 0JE  
Tel: 01207 281145



Dear Cllr Nair,

Further to your discussion with myself and fellow director Lestryne Tweedy we had already identified the property [REDACTED]

We have recently viewed the property and with some creative development this would make an ideal women's centre. It has scope to develop a small tea room and gift shop in the commercial shop adjoining the property. The garage could be re developed to accommodate the manufacturing side of our organisation. The property is owned by:



[REDACTED] asked if Stanley Town Council could phone him direct when dealing with this property or if they need any more information on [REDACTED]

As we are now working with young girls from surrounding schools in our area, we need space to accommodate them for their group work. We are also working with 16 to 24 year olds in group work. We then have our project with probation. We have found the space we needed on Station Road this is only temporary until the new year (Jan/Feb).

We would like to ask for a grant of £6000 to cover our expenditure for rents/ costings and utility bills for this period. We would be very grateful for this as part of our centre has now been divided to accommodate these projects. This is only until we can get everything back under one roof.

The Just for Women's Centre would appreciate the Council supporting us by:

- Acquiring [REDACTED]
- Leasing the property on a full repairing and insuring lease to our organisation on a 15 year peppercorn, full repair and insuring lease
- Should the Council consider disposing of the building, allow the organisation first refusal on the premises

We have had a meeting with our investor Julie Wake from Key Fund and they are prepared to still invest in the women's centre although it will be an alternative building. They have kept the original amount of £16000 to pay for internal costings to get refurbishment up to standard for women's centre and shop fittings to accommodate the retail area.

Demand for service 2016-2017

C.I.C Company number 7496892

Email: [justforwomenscentre@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:justforwomenscentre@yahoo.co.uk)

[www.becreative.org](http://www.becreative.org)

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We undertake a review of our service and demand every year in April – current figures are taken from April 2016 review.

- 369 women accessed the service within 12 months from April 2016 – April 2017.
- Around 25 women visit the centre every day and the demand for service has risen by 20% compared to previous year.
- There were 40 referrals from the drug/alcohol service
- There were 40 referrals from Tees Esk Valley Probation Service where women and including 22 men accessed the service to work their community hours as well as gaining support and 4 receiving counselling.
- Be-Creative project engaged 207 women who learned new skills became team members socialized, gained confidence and built on self-worth and esteem. 10 of these women went onto gaining teaching qualifications. 7 are ready to start their own small business and 9 found employment with help of the Just for Women Centre
- 48 women received counselling sessions from our counselling service which is free to clients
- 80 women engaged with The Thread Project, these women were self-referred, referred by the police or referred by local women's refuge. The welfare rights officer who works with those involved with The Thread Project helped over 34 women with benefit issues and those sanctioned.
- The numbers of enquiries by phone, Facebook, email was 572 for advice, queries, support and sign posting to other services i.e. citizens advice, mental health, homeless services and food banks.

Just for Women Centre is unique in the North Durham area being the only provider of services that promote the overall health and wellbeing in an area with a high level of need. We work with probation, mental health crisis team, we also support many other support bodies. We have looked at other similar providers in the North East, have learned their models of good practice and have put these into action to the benefit of women suffering the effects of poverty from the high levels of multiple disadvantage in the area.

Our services will aid other local regeneration initiatives in that we will build the health and capacity of disadvantaged women so that they may become more active, involved and engaged with enterprise culture which is lacking in this part of the County. Our rolling programme of supportive services will give women, facing many barriers, a sense of purpose and give a first step into education and employment.

The new premises [REDACTED] will allow us to become the most inclusive and culturally competent centre for women and young girls in County Durham.

We have been championed by Durham Tees Probation trust as a ground-breaking scheme for vulnerable women in County Durham helping to turn women's lives around. We have a good working C.I.C Company number 7496892 Email: [justforwomencentre@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:justforwomencentre@yahoo.co.uk) [www.becreative.org](http://www.becreative.org)

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relationship with the probation services since our first-time offenders through our doors. We are also part of a strategy in the North East (VAWG) tackling violence against women and girls in the North East and working in partnership with the police and crime commissioner of County Durham, Mr. Ron Hogg.

This is to pilot and educational program to help women in the local community and will raise awareness. Also we have done our own research into identifying the major issues with other organisations, eg Mental Health North East, Derwent Clinic Shotley Bridge hospital and also the job centre plus. We put our own research together to find out that long term unemployment can cause severe mental health issues. This we address through our workshops and one to one support and consult with the various organisations on a regular basis to give feedback on their clients.

The fact that we have had many referrals through the women who have used our service is a proven point that the project is a constant help to the women in the local community.

We have given notice on our present building which has gone onto the open market and was going to be split into two retail premises and new that this property was no longer suitable for what we need. We have given notice which is up on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, we have known this last 12 months that we needed bigger premises and although disappointed in the effort and work that was put in to take over the council offices we are hoping that this new proposal for [REDACTED] could be something that the Stanley Town Council could support us. We can't emphasize how much the Women's Centre is needed as becoming a life line for the women and the men's project we run since opening our doors in January 2011 we have had 3000 people needing our service. We have identified the need for the centre to raise awareness especially around mental health as well as other complex needs of women/men in our communities. We rightly know that we are helping to sustain other services i.e. police, public health, probation, NHS, job centre plus and many other organisations who do not have the resources to work with those with the highest of needs and we know as well as ourselves and other organisations i.e. Pact House are providers of a range of services to the people in our local communities.

We will have everything set out in our new amended business plan which will be ready to send out to Stanley Town Council by the end of next week.

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Please don't hesitate to contact us if you require any other information and we look forward meeting with yourself and Alan Shaw (town clerk).

Yours sincerely

Linda Kirk  
Director