

Background Information on Kingston Women's Centre

Our Governing Purpose

To relieve sickness and financial hardship and to promote and preserve good health by the provision of goods or services of any kind, including through the provision of counselling and support to women in such parts of Kingston, the United Kingdom or the World as the trustees from time to time may think fit.

Our Mission

Our aim is to provide counselling and therapy for women of all backgrounds in and around Kingston Upon Thames within a warm, safe and caring environment.

Our Values

- We will listen and we will honour your individuality
- We will respect your views and beliefs
- We will stand beside you and support you while you explore the person you are now;
- We will help you make the changes you might need to make in order for life to be more peaceful and fulfilling
- We will empower you.

Background of KWC

The Women's Centre was founded in 1982 courtesy of the Greater London Council Women's Committee. Many other Women's Centres were founded in London at about the same time. Originally we had offices in Surbiton and then we moved to 66 London Road. Eventually we were able to buy and convert our current home 169 Canbury Park Gardens. The GLC was then abolished by the then Conservative Government, and we had transitional funding from our local council.

In those days there were many activities and groups, including one to produce a monthly newsletter for the members, social groups and outreach to isolated women in the community. We even had a community van that was used to take women and their children on day trips.

Towards the end of the 1980s priorities changed and support from local Women was less. We could no longer afford to employ workers and became entirely voluntary. At the same time it was realised that there was a high demand for counselling.

The first service had only two counsellors and used one room. Gradually the counsellors (many on work placements) increased in number, to the current number of 40. We now have five therapy rooms and a sixth room which is accessible to all.

KWC has been built and established by the hard work and effort of many women over the years. Some have moved on to other things, priorities have changed, but we are still here run by women for women and plan to continue for a long time yet.