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## Neighbourhood Portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Bath

### GRANT APPLICATION FORM

Project title:	<b>Voices Safe Space Centre</b>
Amount of funding sought from the Neighbourhood portion of CIL for Bath fund	<b>£28,000</b>

#### Section 1: Applicant details

Name:	Kirsten Melbourne
Organisation:	Voices
Applicant's role within organisation:	Interim CEO
Address:	PO BOX 5184 BATH BA1 0RZ
Phone number:	01225 984189
E-mail address:	kirsten@voicescharity.org
Locality or ward which will benefit from this project:	Bath and North East Somerset

#### Section 2: Project Details

2.1 Please provide a clear description of your project proposal – including your outcomes and objectives (maximum three hundred words)
We would like to ask for support towards the costs of <b>'The Villa - A Trauma Recovery Centre.'</b>
VOICES opened a Recovery centre in Bath, The Villa in 2022. A safe and confidential space where survivors of abuse can access the support they need, including:

Group work: 3 Freedom programmes, 3 Recovery Programmes, approx. ten follow on workshops to promote self-care and increased wellbeing plus a peer supported Lived Experience Group. Currently for women survivors.

Individual Support: emotional support, casework, advocacy, and access to a legal clinic

Gateway support: Advice to help victims/ professionals to navigate pathways to support and recovery.

Therapy: specialist therapy, either from our own therapist or by securing funding for survivors to access therapy for themselves/children.

All our services are offered face to face in our safe space, The Villa.

We aim to continue to offer the above to circa 150 clients per year, and to continue to secure funding in order to:

- 1) Expand our services.
- 2) Provide a recognised local platform for lived experience insight to inform policies and service provision.

VOICES Outcomes:

Improved awareness and ability to identify abusive behaviours.

Recognition of the impacts on themselves and children

Obtaining knowledge, skills, and sources of support to address impact

Increased confidence in parenting after abuse.

Improved mental and emotional wellbeing

Reduced isolation.

Income maximisation through debt reduction, access to eligible benefits, retaining or obtaining work and career.

Increased safety and confidence in future relationships

Wider objectives:

Meaningful and sustained recovery for all victims to prevent the likelihood of repeat abuse (by the original or a new perpetrator)

Reducing the harm and cost to future generations and the community of domestic abuse.

Sharing Lived Experience insight to ensure the response to domestic abuse is effective

2.2 Please tell us briefly about your organisation, for example is it a charity, residents' association, etc.

VOICES was founded as an independent charity in 2014 by local women with lived experience to support others and to provide a platform for the voices of people with lived experience to be heard by services and policymakers, improving responses to their needs. The charity is unique in offering local people in Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) impacted by domestic abuse longer-term holistic recovery support centering on group work and peer support. The charity also provides individual advocacy and support, counselling, access to a free legal clinic, and lived experience work.

VOICES is a centre of excellence for domestic abuse recovery, providing training and consultation that is informed by lived experience and long-term support work.

VOICES' model of integrated, accessible, and tailored support plays a key role in building stronger relationships in the community; enabling people to fulfil their potential by working to

safely address issues at the earliest possible stage, with peer-led and group programmes to combat social isolation and aid reintegration in working and social life. VOICES' multi-disciplinary support and focus on recovery has proven effective in transforming self-confidence and addressing the root causes of disadvantage and mental health challenges associated with domestic and sexual abuse.

2.3 Have you or your organisation previously applied for funding from the Neighbourhood Portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Bath?

Yes - 2022 - £23,607

2.4 Is this a new project or does this project link into an existing project? (Include a breakdown of how you plan to allocate the funding)

Existing project - our core work

Funding would be split across the costs of running The Villa and its services as set out in the budget below.

Operating costs below approx. £52,280 p.a.

Rent: £34,000

Utilities: £4,800

Maintenance and cleaning: £5,640

Insurances: £2,640

Phones/Mobiles/Internet: £2,400

Website costs: £4,800

2.5 Target Start Date:

August 2024

2.6 Target Completion Date:

July 2025

2.7 Please provide more detail on the proposed timeline for the delivery of key components of your project including any targets and how these will be evaluated. (You may wish to include a table with dates and outcomes for example).

- VOICES individual support and therapy services operate throughout the year.
- Freedom Programme and Recovery Toolkit run three times a year, starting Sept, Jan, and April.

All referrals, assessment data and attendance are recorded on a CRM and is reported on a quarterly basis. This provides us with output figures, numbers of survivors using our services and allows us to report back on the impact of support we receive.

Outcomes Data is gathered through exit forms, wellbeing, and feedback forms at the end of group programmes (Dec, March, July) and bi annually to gain insight into the impact of our work and any changes we need to consider.

Outcomes Data includes:

- Increasing Safety and knowledge of domestic abuse
- Parenting Outcomes
- Access to education, work, training or retaining career/ job.
- Financial and Housing support
- Knowledge and awareness of domestic abuse
- Improved access to other services
- Emotional and Mental wellbeing
- Reduced isolation

VOICES model is not based on a set period of time as we know that recovery from domestic abuse is not achieved in a vacuum, recovery can be impacted by the response of the CJS, Family Court, Care proceedings, Mental Health, and Welfare systems. In addition to this the ongoing impact on children and post separation abuse can mean clients are experiencing current abuse or re traumatisation. Our model responds to the current situation and recovery challenges and our client's ability to respond and manage this. The majority of clients stay in active service for over a year, many over two. Outcomes are monitored at key stages and at end of service.

2.8 If planning permission is required for this project - has it been granted?  
If Yes - please include the dates and reference numbers for these permissions.

N/A

2.9 Are there any planned changes which will have an effect on the premises or location where your project is to be located?

NO

Although VOICES keep the location confidential, we are close to the substantial number of new buildings being erected which will house the growing student population in Bath. We are also easily accessible by public transport as well as on foot. Our premises lease is due to run another 3 years and we believe the location is well placed to serve BANES communities.

2.10 Are there any planned changes in the circumstances of your organisation's operation or **financial position** that you are aware of which may prevent this project being completed?

There are no concerns about our ability to deliver the services foreseen within the context of this grant at our Safe Space Centre. However, a priority concern is to secure the funds necessary for ongoing operation of the Safe Space Centre, The Villa, given the vital role it plays in the delivery of trauma prevention & recovery services, and given that this service is now embedded within the referral pathways provided by the Council and the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board. This is an inextricable part of local community safety and public health and the reason for this application.

### Section 3: Funding Criteria

*The project must address the specific impacts of new developments within the city or locality from which the funding has been generated.*

*This application must show that the project either:*

- *Supports the development of the relevant area by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation, or maintenance of infrastructure.*  
*Or*
- *Addresses other demands that development places on the area.*

3.1 How does the project address the specific impacts of new development(s)? (Maximum three hundred words)

- Does it fund the provision, improvement, replacement, operation, and maintenance of infrastructure?  
OR
- Does it address another demand that development places on the area?

(You may consider this on a ward basis, a locality basis, or a city-wide basis.)

BANES is seeing a city-wide population increase (predicted to be over 200,000 this year) Based on national statistics 4.4% of the population over 16 years of age experience domestic abuse \* which will equate to 8,800 BANES residents.

There are ongoing developments across the area especially around where we are based. The proximity of new and existing student halls will continue the trend of an increasing number of clients in our groups from two local universities and one higher education college in addition to the rise in referrals from local residents.

More student referrals have resulted from our work with the SU, Student Welfare Services, and research partners. VOICES have partnered with The SU to raise awareness of Domestic Abuse. VOICES provide workshops and placements for social work students.

Bath Spa University utilise our centre for creative recovery courses, measuring the benefits of this approach reaching more survivors.

Links with both Bath universities result in women sharing resources, experiences, and recovery. This challenges the perception of local residents who may see the universities and student population as a nuisance and forges new shared community purpose.

Sharing Lived Experience insight through our work enhances the quality and effectiveness of services received by victims across BANES.

Population increase must also be considered within the wider context of reduction in funding of mental health services, charities and support organisations, cost of living rises, lack of housing and welfare resources. These challenges disproportionately impact on survivors of domestic abuse and increase the need for recovery support in BANES. VOICES are now the only organisation in BANES providing groupwork to enable women to identify and address abuse in their lives, despite the fact this is widely recognised as an essential early help and recovery approach.

**\*<https://safelives.org.uk/policy-evidence/about-domestic-abuse#facts%20and%20stats>**

- 3.2 How does the project benefit the area where development has taken place? (If your project has city-wide impact you will need to demonstrate how the broader community in the city will benefit.)

The outcomes listed in 2.1 (also see last year's results below) for individuals and families have a ripple effect in the communities' people live in. The increased awareness, and ability to identify abuse leads to more early help approaches by those at risk, often encouraged by friends, family or professionals who have been helped by VOICES. As we are able to offer support without the need for a threshold to be met, we can inform and empower victims, who in turn share their learning. VOICES work is contributing to overall Community Safety.

Crisis Services (IDVA and Refuge) cannot support victims' long term, we know victims are at risk when a crisis service ends. VOICES is the established Recovery provider in BANES, this onward referral option frees space meaning other services can offer initial risk management, criminal justice, and safety measures to more victims.

#### OUTCOMES (2022-23)

- Seventy percent reported feeling more confident in their parenting.
- Eighty percent said they better understand the effect of the abuse on their children.
- Seventy-four percent experienced an overall improvement in their wellbeing.
- 100% felt better able to identify abuse.
- Seventy-five percent felt more confident to ask for help.
- Eighty-five percent felt their support networks had improved.
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The VOICES multi-disciplinary approach produces sustained recovery and independence. Eighty-six percent of clients said it has been extremely useful to have multiple sources of support from VOICES. A considerable proportion of VOICES clients complete group programmes and accept post-programme support. Very few clients repeat a programme and overall levels of engagement among people referred to VOICES are high. We have had success with supporting clients to obtain safe and secure housing solutions, and also to manage complex mental health challenges, through access to specialist trauma counselling alongside other VOICES services.

- 3.3 Please provide evidence which shows how the community has been listened to and what support exists for your project?

VOICES uses multiple methods to monitor and evaluate our work to ensure accountability, measure impact, and make informed decisions for our continued development and improvement. As a survivor-led charity we collect data in a trauma-informed way that will not cause harm to our clients but will build up a full picture of the difference we are making.

We use a case management system developed for Women's Aid members called OASIS On Track which includes a set of outcomes measurement tools developed specifically for the domestic abuse sector. This enables our Services Team to input each client's details including their needs and progress safely and securely. We then produce reports which show the outputs and outcomes of our work.

The mental health and wellbeing of our clients is a key area of focus for us. At the start and end of services, we invite clients to complete a 'POWER' or 'CORE' form. This allows clients to track their own progress in their recovery journey and allows us to monitor whether our input is making a positive difference.

We invite clients to give us feedback on whether they feel VOICES' multi-disciplinary support has helped them and to offer any suggestions for improvement of our services.

We produce quarterly summary reports of key data points so that we can compare our outcomes each quarter and annually. We summarise our outputs and outcomes for our Impact Report and complete a larger review which includes all our stakeholders. We discuss what difference we have made over the past year, which helps inform our strategy for the way ahead.

VOICES also contributes current insights reporting to the quarterly Domestic Abuse Partnership Board for BANES and to the bi-monthly DA Strategy Board for Avon & Somerset. We report trends, achievements and challenges to the quarterly Women's Aid Research Policy and Campaigns Group, Local Family Justice Board for Avon & Somerset, and report regularly to funders e.g. The National Lottery, Lloyds Bank Foundation, and the Tudor Trust.

- 3.4 Have you consulted your ward councillor(s) about this project?

No

## Section 4: Funding Information

4.1 Total Cost of Project:	<b>£52,280k</b>
4.2 Amount of funding sought from the Neighbourhood Portion of CIL fund:	<b>£28k</b>

4.3 Please provide a detailed breakdown of the costs for the delivery of this project, specifying how the funds will be allocated to various aspects of the project (including personnel, supplies, equipment, outreach etc.).

Operating costs for The Villa below approx. £52,280 p.a.

Rent: £34,000

Utilities: £4,800

Maintenance and cleaning: £5,640

Insurances: £2,640

Phones/Mobiles/Internet: £2,400

Website costs: £4,800

4.4 Can you provide evidence that your proposals will provide value for money (for example – have you obtained more than one quote for a service or item)?

N/A - application is for costs of the building we are based in and need to provide our services.

4.5 Does this project benefit from any source of matched funding? (Include sources, dates, funds agreed/expected and amounts):

We have recently secured a grant from Garfield Weston Foundation - £10k would be used towards this budget.

We are in the process of making applications to other trust and foundations to secure further funding towards these costs.

4.6 Provide a breakdown of the efforts of volunteers in supporting this project. Please include number of hours, types of volunteers, geographical reach, if known.

One volunteer, 2 hours per week who assists with groupwork. She is a retired Health professional and trained to deliver Freedom Programme.  
The rest of our services are provided by paid staff.

4.7 Please specify any other additional funds which have already been agreed:

Please see 4.5.

4.8 Please specify any funds which have been applied for but are awaiting a decision:

Awards for All - £20k  
Smaller Trusts - £75k  
Draft applications to be sent in next 2 weeks - £50k.



