



Findings and Recommendations from Interim Case Study

The impact of austerity measures upon women in the North East of England

October 2012



The **co-operative** membership

Acknowledgements

This interim report was written by Sue Robson and June Robinson with the support of the CEDAW Working Group for the North East. Ruth Lewis (University of Northumbria) edited the report and did most of the proof reading. Northern TUC provided support with the statistical data.

Thank you to the members of the North East CEDAW Working Group, members of NEWomen's Network and others who have contributed evidence for this case study. The structure of the case study is based upon the TUC Women and the Cuts Toolkit.ⁱ This is a toolkit for trade unions, voluntary organisations, community groups and others who want to assess the human rights and equality impact of the spending cuts on women in their communities.

The report would not have been possible without funding from; The Co-operative Membership, Oxfam UK Poverty Programme and TUC Northern. Awards for All (Big Lottery) have provided funding to continue this work and to build the capacity of women's organisations to use the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) along with human rights legislation to address women's (in)equality in the North East of England.

The Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Working Group for the North East was established in 2011 to build the capacity of women's organisations to use CEDAW along with human rights legislation to address women's (in) equality. It works in partnership with the National CEDAW Working Group to monitor and hold the Government to account, locally and nationally on its obligations to women's rights under CEDAW.

NEWomen's Network was established in 2006 to strengthen the women's sector and ensure its survival by encouraging and supporting collaboration between women's voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) and building partnerships and alliances across other sectors.

The Women's Resource Centre (WRC) is a charity which supports women's voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) to be more effective and sustainable. WRC members work delivering services to and campaign on behalf of some of the most marginalised communities of women.

NEWomen's Network

Co/ The Angelou Centre
17 Brighton Grove
Fenham
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 5NR
Email: info@newwomens.net
www.newwomens.net

Women's Resource Centre

Ground Floor East
33-41 Dallington Street
London EC1V 0BB
0207 324 3030
Email: info@wrc.org.uk
www.wrc.org.uk

Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
1. Introduction	2
2. About CEDAW.....	2
3. Methodology.....	3
4. Interim findings.....	4
4.1 Education	6
4.2 Public Sector Employment	6
4.3 Unemployment.....	7
4.4 Childcare.....	8
4.5 Health.....	9
4.6 Housing.....	9
4.7 Impacts upon children and families	10
4.8 Domestic Violence	10
4.9 Legal Aid	12
4.10 Transport.....	13
4.11 Welfare reform	13
4.12 Voluntary and community organisation (VCOs)	14
4.13 Women’s voluntary organisations	14
5. Conclusions.....	16
6. Recommendations	17
Appendix 1: Participation in local events (women)	19
Appendix 2: Participation in local events (organisations).....	23
Notes.....	25

Executive Summary

In July 2008, the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women's (CEDAW)² examined the UK Government's efforts to improve the equality and status of women. It found that although there were some advances, women's rights are far from being fully realised in the UK. Four years on, this interim case study begins to evidence the impact of the current UK Government's austerity measures and welfare reforms upon already unacceptable levels of gender inequality in the North East (NE) of England.

A mixed methodology has been used to compile this interim case study. This included fifteen participatory local events in localities across the NE involving many women and many different organisations. A call for evidence was put out to over 700 contacts from women's organisations about the impact of the austerity measures. The links in the *The TUC Women and the Cuts Toolkit* were also researched for any data pertinent to the North East.

This interim case study is very much work in progress and NEWomen's Network in collaboration with Women's Resource Centre will publish another report in 2013.

Key findings

- A dearth of North East data that is disaggregated by gender suggests that public bodies are not effectively monitoring progress against discrimination within the terms of the Equality Act 2010.
- Rising levels of female unemployment in the UK are even worse for women in the North East.
- Elements of welfare reform are expected to impact disproportionately on women and risk increasing women's financial dependence on men. This is likely to have detrimental impact upon children and lead to increases in family breakdown.
- Women's organisations prevent problems from happening or from escalating, thus saving the government money and relieving the burden on public services. Yet these organisations are dealing with increased demand and diminishing resources and many in the North East are facing closure.
- The need for women-only space is even greater during challenging times yet not enough is being done by public bodies to protect women-only services from the impact of austerity measures.
- The changes to legal aid that will come in to force in April 2013 mean that women will be disproportionately disadvantaged by being denied access to justice. If they cannot access equality before the Law, then CEDAW convention rights will be unenforceable by women in the UK.

Key recommendations

- Public bodies in the North East should value and encourage women's active citizenship, as well as ensuring women receive the services they need.
- Elected members and MP's in the North East should work to prevent the devastating impacts of austerity measures upon women in the North East.
- The UK Government needs to recognise and take action around the effects of austerity measures upon women in the NE because the measures reinforce gender inequalities in areas that have already been resistant to change. The Government needs to mitigate these measures.
- Charitable funding bodies and grant making trusts should provide core grants to sustain women's voluntary organisations in the North East during the economic crisis and support. NEWomen's Network to lobby around the above recommendations.

1. Introduction

In July 2008, the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women's (CEDAW) examined the UK Government's efforts to improve the equality and status of women. Following the oral examination, the Committee issued Concluding Observations that stated that, despite some advances such as the introduction of gender equality legislation and the establishment of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, women's rights are far from being fully realised in the UK.

Four years on, this interim case study begins to evidence the impact of the current UK Government's austerity measures and welfare reforms upon already unacceptable levels of gender inequality in the North East (NE) of England. It will inform the CEDAW shadow report being submitted by Women's Resource Centre³ to the next examination in New York in July 2013.

It needs to be recognised that at this interim stage, the case study is very much work in progress. Women's Resource Centre in collaboration with NEWomen's Network have recently acquired funding from *Awards for All* to build the capacity of women's organisations to use the CEDAW along with human rights legislation to address women's (in)equality in the North East of England. This will include producing and publishing a full report in 2013, and lobbying Government locally and nationally in the lead up to the CEDAW examination and beyond.

2. About CEDAW

(CEDAW) was established in 1979 and is often referred to as the Women's International Bill of Rights. Unlike domestic UK and European legislation on sex discrimination and equal treatment, the Convention is solely concerned with the

position of women rather than discrimination faced by both sexes (which would include discrimination against men). The Convention places obligations on State parties (countries that have agreed to the Convention), to eliminate discrimination against women.

The Convention provides a framework for States to take responsibility for tackling (often embedded and historical) discrimination against women and achieving substantive equality for women in both the private and public spheres. The substantive model of equality is based upon the principle that discrimination is socially constructed and is not a natural principle of human interaction and recognises the need for concerted action against inequality and the institutional mechanisms that perpetuate it. Substantive equality promotes:

- Equality of opportunity through law, policy programme and institutional arrangements
- Equality of access by eliminating all obstacles that prevent access to the opportunities and taking positive steps to ensure the goal of equality is achieved
- Equality of results

The Convention outlines a comprehensive set of rights for women in all fields (civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other fields) and is the only human rights treaty which affirms the reproductive rights of women and targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations. As a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the UK Government must fully implement the Convention, to ensure the practical realisation of equality between women and men in this country.

The Convention binds the Government and its agencies to take action to achieve substantive equality for women. This means that government policies, services, strategies and initiatives must recognise and respond effectively to the different needs of women and men, as also set out in the Gender Equality Duty. CEDAW requires that all areas of government (at all levels and including local public bodies) comply with its articles and general recommendations.

3. Methodology

A mixed methodology combining both quantitative and qualitative methods has been used to compile this interim case study. This included fifteen participatory local events during May 2011 to March 2012 involving 304 women and 154 different organisations (see appendix). Also, a call for evidence was put out to over 700 contacts from women's organisations for data, information, case studies, research or any other forms of evidence about the impact of the austerity measures upon women

in the North East. The TUC Women and the Cuts Toolkit⁴ contains links to statistical data and all of these were researched for any data pertinent to the North East.

A dearth of North East data that is disaggregated by gender severely hampered the research and the ability to monitor progress against discrimination. In the TUC Women and the Cuts Toolkit⁵ the links to statistical data were all of these were researched for data pertinent to the North East but much of the data, where it was disaggregated by geography was often not disaggregated by gender and vice versa. For example, although national figures are disaggregated by gender; the Office of National Statistics (ONS) does not break down regional figures by gender.

4. Interim findings

The NE has the highest levels of unemployment, long term sickness, and disability and benefit claimants and has some of the poorest most deprived areas in the country.⁶ According to the Fawcett Society, with the Government's austerity measures, introduced to reduce the national deficit, women are facing a "triple jeopardy" arising from job losses, reductions in welfare spending and a 'looming care gap that women will be expected to plug'.⁷ In the NE, the situation may be compounded due to the lack of women in positions of influence. For example, although the proportion of female councillors in the NE is in line with the national average at around 31%⁸ in 2009 there was not a single women leader of local authorities in the NE.⁹ The impacts of the national austerity measures, together with long-term, ingrained inequality in the region mean that the prospects for women in the NE are likely to be bleak and urgently need addressing.

Qualitative data gathered from across the NE for this report reveal that women feel undervalued in many spheres of their lives. This quote is from a woman who took part in an online survey about the impact of the recession and the cuts in 2011.¹⁰

"I also feel that some of the behaviour of both my current employer and recruiters to whom I am currently applying has been outrageous and shambolic but in a buyers' market employers appear to believe they can behave how they like to employees and candidates. This makes me feel at best under-valued and at worst worthless"

Participatory events with women in local communities reveal they are extremely concerned about limited employment opportunities, the lack and cost of childcare, reduced services for young people and older people, domestic violence, sexual exploitation and gender stereotyping. This quote, from a report on the participatory events demonstrates the impact of gender stereotyping upon the lives of particular women in the North East.

"Gender stereotyping was a major issue in the rural areas, former mining villages for example, as well as in Asian households where the woman's place is very much perceived as being in the home. This raised other issues again"

*at every event around women's role as carers. The expectation that daughters will care for parents or other family members but there is no such similar expectation for sons or male family members. Women's roles in general were an issue, as in women are expected to do it all."*¹¹

Women expressed concern about the impact of reducing services in these areas. For example, reduced services for children, young people and older people place additional burdens of care on women, while domestic violence and sexual exploitation services are typically located in the third sector which is experiencing swingeing cuts and particularly vulnerable to budget reductions. In addition, women expressed their concerns about diminishing gender-specific services, asserting that the need for women-only space is even greater during challenging times.¹²

The Equality Act 2010 makes it clear that women-only (and girl-only) services are legal and appropriate in certain contexts; it is still legal and appropriate for public authorities to fund (and provide) female-only services.¹³ Yet there are concerns that women-only services are being threatened by misinterpretation of Equalities legislation as expressed in the following quotes from two participants in the research for this case study, both work in women's VCOs.¹⁴

*"One organisation was excluded from tendering for a Domestic Abuse Service on the grounds of the requirement for a gender neutral service. This is common issue around the misinterpretation of the Equality Act resulting in women-only services being excluded from tendering on the basis of gender neutrality and supposed equality needs highlighting. By the time we are able to challenge this, the timescales for tendering have been exhausted and the argument has been forwarded that given the cuts and limited funds available a gender-neutral tender meets the minimum requirements!"*¹⁵

*"Gender specific work is proving to be increasingly difficult, with the limitations on funding they are fighting for single sex services. Funders tend not to be responsive to need and think of this type of work as discriminatory. Gender equality legislation seems to be used by more men than women."*¹⁶

In relation to the interpretation and application of the Gender Equality Duty CEDAW/C/UK/CO/6 (273, pp7) recommends that:

"The State party ensure that the interpretation and application of the Gender Equality Duty does not have a negative impact on the provision of "women-only" services or restrict the activities of women's organizations."

Other findings from the quantitative and qualitative research conducted at this interim stage are as follows, they are organised into specific themes.

4.1 Education

Substantial cuts in education, especially in university budgets mean that poorer women are less likely to access further education because of financial constraints (annual tuition fees alone have increased from £3,375 to a maximum of £9,000). This will seriously affect both their future employment prospects and their earning potential. Women who want to return to education after raising children will struggle because there is little or no funding for first steps courses or for those returning to learning and no financial support for childcare or other caring responsibilities.

Aspire 2 B (Northumberland) – a regional project of the Angelou Centre run in partnership with Northumberland Community Development Network is delivering training confidence and skills development to BME women in rural areas. There is a real need for ESOL (English Speakers of Second Languages) classes but there are issues around eligibility and the cuts mean that ESOL participants must now be actively seeking work. Transport and childcare are major issues and act as a barrier to both learning and development. Some migrants have gained professional qualifications in their home countries but are unable to use their skills here because they haven't gained sufficient knowledge of English. The result is they are working in low paid jobs and the economy is not benefiting from their skills and experience.

Bridge Women's Education Project, a charity that provided specialist training and support to women in the NE went into administration in August 2012 with the loss of more than 100 women's jobs, around 1,800 learning places and support services that helped 600 women in 2011/12. Bridge received financial support from Sunderland City Council and Durham County Council in addition to charitable funding. The chief executive of Bridge is quoted as saying:

*"Like many other voluntary organisations, Bridge has continuously struggled with funding difficulties and cash-flow problems and has always managed to 'ride the storm'. However, in this current economic climate we have been faced with many changes and restrictions to central funding within education: this and other factors led to reduced income and the dwindling of reserves."*¹⁷

4.2 Public Sector Employment

Women in the NE have a higher than average dependency on public sector employment. Nationally 40% of working women are employed in the sector compared to only 11% of men¹⁸. In the NE nearly half of women who are working are employed in the public sector (46%)¹⁹ and two in three of public sector jobs are done by women.²⁰ Women in the North East are therefore going to be even harder hit than men by the cuts in the public sector in terms of jobs, pay freezes and pensions.

Figures obtained by the GMB union show that nationally 68.7% of the 14,603 people made redundant by local authorities since the 2010 General Election are female,

with Northumberland County Council recording the highest figures at 85.9%. Other councils which have seen high proportions of female redundancies include Redcar and Cleveland (81.5%), Darlington (68.9%) and Durham (68%).²¹ In Gateshead for example the public sector lost more than half its workforce: from 5,900 to 2,500 in 2011²².

The latest public sector employment figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) show that two years into the Coalition government (Quarter 2 2010 and Quarter 1 2012) and the North East has already lost 27,000 public sector workers according to ONS figures (the ONS do not break down regional figures by gender).

4.3 Unemployment

According to Nomis Labour Market analysis the percentage of North East unemployed women claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in June 2012 (5.2% or 29,410) is the highest it has been since it peaked amid the recession in January 1990.²³ The labour market statistics for September 2011 revealed that the number of women made redundant in the North East had increased 72.3% on the previous quarter and unemployment amongst NE women is at its highest since records began.²⁴ The increase from 16 to 24 hours as the benchmark for claiming Tax Credits is seriously threatening women on three fronts; employers do not have the extra hours to give them, their family circumstances do not allow them to increase their hours and the additional cost of childcare makes it impossible to continue to work if they lose their tax credit, thereby leaving them no option but to give up work.²⁵

National figures show, massive disproportions in rising rates of unemployment for women over 50. According to ONS figures since May 2010, unemployment among women aged 50-64 has increased by 31% (142,000), compared with an overall increase in all unemployed people of working age of 4.2% (2.6m). According to research carried out by the Labour party *'women over fifty are bearing the brunt of the government's economic policies while often trying to cope with the increasing burden of caring for relatives.'*²⁶

The following case study²⁷ demonstrates the impact of funding cuts to the VCS upon unemployment of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women in the North East.

The Angelou Centre was set up in the 1990s. It came about through campaigning and awareness-raising by women's organisations and groups activists and community workers working with BME women in Newcastle. This was in response to demands from local women for support in developing skills and engaging in economic activity to supplement low family incomes and lift themselves and their children out of poverty and deprivation. They had identified the need for provision and support for BME women from diverse backgrounds who faced the common experience

During the 2011 the Angelou Centre lost its Working Neighbourhoods Fund money and in the same year the income raised through crèche provision fell by more than half since the previous year. The Centre faced further reductions in income at the end of March 2012 and the outcome of bids for new funding is uncertain. Meanwhile the Angelou Centre has experienced a rise in demand for its services which it attributes partly to cuts in services or closure of other organisations providing training support and advice. The level of need is also increasing as a result of changes in benefits, less availability of accommodation and increased pressure on women to find work. The resources available for children locally have also diminished. The Angelou Centre considers that current policy changes impact disproportionately on Black and minority ethnic women.

This quote, from one of the local participatory events illustrates the disproportionate impact of rising women's unemployment and diminishing support services upon women in rural Northumberland.

*"In Northumberland 80% of public sector employees are women but all the emphasis concerning unemployment is about men and male employability. Single parents are being forced into work but there are fewer services available to support them, for example, transport and childcare. There is a tendency towards gender stereotyping for men as well as women and careers advice service has now been reduced."*²⁸

4.4 Childcare

The childcare tax credit has been cut to cover 70% of childcare costs from 80%. There have been cuts to day nurseries and childcare offered through children's centres in many parts of the country. After-school and breakfast clubs have been hit by an increase in fees charged by schools and local authorities to use premises. In the NE the latest data shows closures of an unspecified number of Gateshead nurseries, two in Hartlepool and uncertainty for centres in North Tyneside and Newcastle.²⁹ Women as the main carers will bear the brunt of these cuts.

Cuts to childcare provision with centres closing or threatened with closure plus rising costs of childcare is a major concern: one that was raised at every one of the

participatory local events at many levels; in terms of limiting job roles, the expectations of mothers being the responsible parent, cost and lack of childcare provision but also for people working in childcare and it being low paid employment.

“Childcare is becoming both difficult to find and more expensive which is prohibiting women from going to work or means after childcare costs they have insufficient money to live on. If they are on benefits they may not get help with childcare costs and again they can’t afford to pay. Thus either way women’s choices are seriously limited in terms of education, training and employment. Colleges used to help with childcare costs but this is no longer the case so women are unable to access courses. There is a lack of consistency in provision even within one City there can be a postcode lottery for family centres and childcare. There is a massive demand for ever diminishing services.”³⁰

4.5 Health

It is already recognised that poverty and living in a deprived area has a direct impact on health and as such women in the NE fare very poorly on a number of health indicators, including rates of cervical cancer, breast cancer, cardiovascular disease, longevity of life etc. as well as life limiting conditions such as rheumatism and arthritis.³¹ Cuts being made by the NHS mean services are being reduced, including services that directly impact on women such as birth centres, midwives, health visitors, neo-natal services, printed guides on child health and development and services for older people.³² In June 2012, children's in-patient services in Gateshead and South Tyneside were reduced to short-stay assessment units (23 hours) and the only inpatient care at a single dedicated paediatric unit for SoTW at Sunderland Royal Hospital.³³ Among key issues raised at one of the participatory local events were cultural and language barriers, transport issues and distance barriers for women accessing North Tees Hospital now that Hartlepool has closed. This was reported as particularly affecting Black and minority ethnic (BME) women, many of whom do not drive and women with children having to co-ordinate bus timetables around school times and hospital visiting/ appointment times.³⁴

4.6 Housing

Homeless figures for the NE have increased by a staggering 40% compared to 19% nationally.³⁵ Changes to housing benefits will affect women disproportionately particularly lone parents, women with disabilities, and BME women (especially those fleeing domestic abuse who have no recourse to public funds). Women’s Aid have launched a campaign to exempt women from the benefit cap as changes to Housing Benefit from weekly to monthly assessments will make rent collection in refuges sporadic causing cash flows and potential loss of services. Furthermore the benefit cap, particularly for women suffering from domestic violence with large families may mean they will be unable to afford to stay in a refuge. Fewer service charges are

covered by benefits also meaning that communal areas, nursery provision etc may no longer be sustainable.³⁶ In 2010 of the 40,020 homeless households deemed to be in priority need by Local Authorities, a total of 30,260 were women. In 2011 women accounted for 92% of lone parent households. There were 2.0m lone parents with dependent children in the UK in 2011, a number which has grown steadily but significantly from 1.7m in 2001.³⁷ The Department for Communities will not be imposing any further regulations on private landlords allowing rent levels to be determined by market conditions. There are currently more private (80%) than social providers of housing with thousands of individual landlords. Rents are increasing in the private sector because of a growing demand for rented housing, enabling landlords being able to set rents at what the market determines; when the rent has been paid this will leave little or no money for food and essentials.

4.7 Impacts upon children and families

Action for Children among others have reported an increase in family breakdown since the recession, with an increase in mental health problems due to decreased household income and rises in debt.³⁸ The number of food banks opening in the NE is increasing. There were five food banks operating in the North East as reported by the BBC by April 2012 where previously there were none, with seven more expected to open in the near future³⁹ At the beginning of this research the TUC reported that there was a new food bank opening every four days in the region but recent BBC Look North news reports state this has increased to two per day to cope with a rapid increase in demand, not as was previously from homeless people but from families on low incomes.⁴⁰ A loss of voluntary and community sector provision of services for children, families and young people (closures of children's centres, community and neighbourhood centres) may exacerbate family breakdown. A lack of preventative work is placing families at risk, putting them on to social workers' caseloads who are struggling to cope with demand. The number of children referred into care in England has hit a record high. In January 2012, local authorities made 903 court applications to take children into care, the highest since courts service Cafcass was set up in 2001.⁴¹ At 31 March 2009 there were 3,250 Looked After Children in the NE. By 31 March 2011, this had risen to 3,820, reflecting an increase of 17% (570 children).⁴² In Hartlepool the increase is 33%. The increase has resulted in a funding crisis for North East councils as soaring numbers of children are placed in care homes. The rise is partly attributed to the pressure placed on families as a result of the economic downturn, with reports of domestic violence leading to more council interventions and the situation likely to worsen with rising unemployment.⁴³

4.8 Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence (DV) was raised as a key area of concern by women at the participatory local events. It was suggested that in many areas of the NE, particularly rural areas, gender inequality is still very pervasive with women's role seen as being in the home and the man being head of the household.⁴⁴ Yet as this testimony

provided by one of the participants in this research demonstrates, DV is one area where women's specific services are being eroded in favour of the needs of men.

"We are alarmed at the current undermining of gender specific services that is subtly taking place. A domestic violence project (run by a housing agency) has male workers working with women. We had one of these workers bringing a woman to access our support. From a discussion with one of the managers of the domestic violence services I questioned her about recruitment in the future. She informed me that she would not use the existing legislation to appoint on a gender specific basis in the future, however she followed this up by saying that it would not be an issue as that particular funding stream would be ending before anyone needed to be appointed."⁴⁵

The charity Women's Aid believes draft universal credit regulations, due to come before parliament in autumn 2013, will make the provision of refuges for domestic violence victims more difficult and lead to them being closed. The changes could result in the closure of its 297 refuges nationally.⁴⁶ The Supporting People programme (SPP)⁴⁷ has supported much of the work for women and girls experiencing domestic violence and also supported housing schemes for teenage mothers since its introduction in 2003. SPP has been cut by 11.5% with further cuts in 2013/14.⁴⁸ When the ring fence was removed in 2009 there were concerns that local authorities were using their SP grant to fund other expenditure; according to media reports funding has been withdrawn entirely from 305 services, and reduced for a further 685 services.⁴⁹ Disabled women are twice as likely to suffer from domestic violence as non-disabled women, these changes are likely to make them even more vulnerable.

A BBC news report stated that, stated that hundreds of women who have come to the NE after arranged marriages to British citizens are being held prisoner in their own homes. The women from Africa and countries such as Bangladesh voluntarily enter into what seem to be promising marriages. It is only when they arrive in the UK that their husbands become violent and controlling. The Angelou Centre, a Newcastle based charity has helped some of these women escape and to make new lives, yet it is now facing a financial crisis after losing some of its funding.⁵⁰

There is already insufficient and erratic provision across the NE for women who are victims of domestic violence⁵¹ and recent national research shows that specialised providers of domestic violence services are being hit particularly hard.⁵² There is only one specialist refuge for BME women between Leeds and Glasgow, this is in Newcastle and has only five bed spaces and as limited specialist provision in the NE is under serious threat from cuts in funding Despite their essential benefits both for service users and for the economy and the state, women's organisations in the North East specialising in domestic violence services have a tenuous future, with the majority reporting that they are only partly sustainable (1–3 years).⁵³

With specific reference to funding of VAWG services CEDAW/C/UK/CO/6 (281, pp8-9) recommends:

“The establishment of additional counselling and other support services for victims of violence, including shelters, and requests the State party to enhance its cooperation with and support, in particular adequate and sustained funding support, for NGOs working in the area of violence against women”

There is likely to be a rise in sexual exploitation of young women in NE through the growth of lap dancing clubs, with only one NE Council having refused to licence clubs entirely (North Tyneside) and one having capped the number of clubs (Durham). Hartlepool, Stockton and Middlesbrough are continuing to grant licences on a case by cases basis.⁵⁴ Research from the University of Kingston published in 2010⁵⁵ found that the number of university students who knew someone who had worked in the sex industry to fund their studies had gone up from 3% to 25% in 10 years. In December 2011, the National Union of Students (NUS) reported to the BBC it estimated about 20% of women working in lap dancing clubs were students.⁵⁶ This is likely to increase with rising tuition fees, increases in poverty and a reduction in alternative employment opportunities.

4.9 Legal Aid

Changes to Legal Aid contained in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012⁵⁷ will limit women's access to legal advice and services in areas of civil law and for criminal cases and will significantly reduce the ability of women suffering violence to get the legal help and support they need. Under the terms of the Act, access to justice is effectively removed from vulnerable women and girls in the private family law sphere. Calls to the Community Legal Advice Helpline⁵⁸ show that in the area of family law, approximately twice as many women as men seek advice. As the majority of those accessing family law remedies via legal aid are women, especially in relation to domestic violence, the Act will disproportionately impact upon them. In the NE, a Newcastle Law Centre faces closure due to the “devastating impact” the cuts are having on their services. This follows the closure of an immigration advisory service in Middlesbrough. Both agencies work or worked on cases that other practices refused to take on. Mia Sevonium, Manager of Newcastle Law Centre said:

*“The new Bill will exclude even more people from legal aid, leaving them unable to enforce their rights relating to fair treatment at work, immigration and human rights, safe shelter, decent education and health care and to manage their debts and bring or keep their families together”.*⁵⁹

The changes to legal aid that will come in to force in April 2013 mean that women will be disproportionately disadvantaged by being denied access to justice: If they cannot access equality before the Law, then CEDAW convention rights, specifically,

rights under Articles 1, 3, 5, 6, 10,11, 15 and 16, and all of the recommendations under General Recommendation No. 19 (11th session, 1992)⁶⁰ will be unenforceable by women in the UK.

4.10 Transport

Evidence from the participatory women's event suggest that cuts in transport are affecting women particularly in rural areas, impacting both on social isolation and on access to training and employment opportunities. Also cuts in supported transport schemes mean that children, older people and people with disabilities cannot access external provision (day centres etc.) and women will be left to care for them at home. Seventy per cent of Local Authorities are reducing funding for supported bus services. In Durham for example there was a cut of £1.3m to bus services in 2011 meaning 70 bus services were withdrawn. Tyne and Wear had a 50% cut in the transport budget. Stockton on Tees had a cut of over £200,000 in 2011 with a further £60,000 to come.⁶¹ These cuts will disproportionately affect women because they are more likely to be public transport users. According to a NE study, almost two-thirds of public transport users are female (62.1%) where as just over a third are male (37.9%).⁶²

4.11 Welfare reform

Elements of welfare reform are expected to impact disproportionately on women. From 2013 the government will replace current benefits (income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Child Tax Credits (CTC), Working Tax Credits and Housing Benefit) with one single payment – Universal Credit (UC). Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) report that *“new parents, who already face losing the health in pregnancy grant, the sure start maternity grant and the baby element of CTC, are likely to experience a huge drop in support available from UC, compared with the present system.”* Although it is claimed that the benefit will help people become more independent, it will be paid to one person in the household and, where the male partner is the recipient, this risks increasing women's financial dependence on men. The 2012 Budget announced that child benefit will be frozen for three years from April 2011; in effect this amounts to a cut in value because the cost of living has risen.

The state pension age for women was set to rise gradually from 60 to 65 by 2020 but for women, the rises will happen far more rapidly than expected. From 2016, the women's state pension age will be increased so that it reaches 65 (equal to the male age) by November 2018. And the pension age for both men and women will rise to 66 by 2020. Agencies like Age UK are concerned that women have not been enough warning to plan financially for their retirement.

Lone parents and divorced women will be less likely to seek child maintenance payments once the Child Support Agency has been dissolved as the replacement agency, the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission, will charge a fee for

any monies recovered. This coupled with changes to Legal Aid, will mean seeking child maintenance will not be a viable option for women on low incomes. This quote is from a woman who took part in an online survey about the impact of the recession and the cuts in 2011.⁶³

“I lost my husband to cancer just over a year ago when our little boy was eleven months old. I don’t feel the Government adequately thinks about the needs of widows and widowers. Many of their policies with regard to cutting child benefit or tax credits will disproportionately affect us because we are the sole parent and sole earner.”

4.12 Voluntary and community organisation (VCOs)

Two reports from Newcastle in 2012 show that that three out of five VCOs have lost funding and in some cases staffing had been cut by 50% when demand for services was increasing.⁶⁴ In Newcastle alone, there are 6,500 employed in the VCS and two thirds of these are female (with the exception of managers who are predominately men). The final participatory event for this study in March 2012, involved 60 women from the VCS across the region, although the event was to mark International Women’s Day, many found it difficult to celebrate anything positive as so many VCS services were closing down as a result of the cuts and several women at the event were facing redundancy or had already been made redundant.⁶⁵

4.13 Women’s voluntary organisations

Recent research found that on average over five years for every £1 invested in women’s services between £5 and £11 worth of social value is generated for women, their families and the State.⁶⁶ A recent NE survey⁶⁷ suggests that 60% women’s organisation have a turn over of between £100 and £500K per year and for every £1,000 of public money invested a further £400 is generated from other sources such as charitable grants, donations and self generated income.

Women’s organisations prevent problems from happening or from escalating. This saves the government money and relieves the burden on public services through preventing situations and problems becoming chronic. The NE has the lowest number of women’s VCOs among all English regions and by 2009 they were already the most likely to be facing closure in the country.⁶⁸ In December 2011 more women’s VCOs reported a decrease in income than in the previous two years (from 40% to 60%). Whereas in the previous two years reports of actual closures of women’s VCOs and women’s services were minimal, in 2011 many closures were reported in the survey and almost half of respondents were unsure they would survive the next 12 months⁶⁹

In relation to the impact of commissioning upon Women’s VCOs CEDAW/C/UK/CO/6 (273, pp7) recommends that:

“The State party conduct an impact assessment of its “commissioning” frameworks on the funding of women’s organizations. The Committee requests the State party to include information on the funding of NGOs and women’s organizations in its next periodic report.”

Local authority cuts have been passed on to VCOs and they are struggling to meet the increase in demand for their services. Participants in the local events for this study highlighted the growing demand for counselling and support for women with mental health needs arising from stress and family problems occurring since the recession. The dilemma of responding to increasing demand arising from the pressures that austerity measures are placing upon women amid dealing with funding cuts and diminished staff resources is expressed in the following short case study from a women’s health organisation that aims to improve women’s mental health and emotional wellbeing through its centres in Newcastle and Gateshead.

Tyneside Women’s Health (TWH) - Economic challenges on communities and on women in particular appear to have contributed to an increase both in numbers of women requiring services and in complexity of need. 453 service users engaged with TWH during 2010 / 2011 - a huge 25% increase on the previous year and although the 2011/2012 year had not concluded at the time of writing, it appears that the increase will continue.

Service users are reporting that their mental health issues are exacerbated by debt, financial pressures and worries about changes in the welfare system. 17% of first time service users in 2010 / 2011 reported debt and financial pressure as a concern. Although figures are not available, service users with long term mental health conditions, anecdotally they are more frequently describing how the stress of changes in the welfare system is having an adverse impact on their mental health.

The impact of national economic problems on the organisation has been mixed. As mentioned, levels of need have drastically increased which staff link to the economic downturn. However, TWH was fortunate in 2010 to secure grants from two new funders which took effect in 2011. The result is that the financial situation of the organisation improved especially compared to the preceding years which were extremely difficult. Staff at TWH are only too aware that their position was not typical of the many other organisations which are experiencing a huge drop in funds.

The same dilemma is expressed in this quote is from research carried out with women’s organisations in Newcastle in 2012.⁷⁰

“We’re overwhelmed by case work – supporting women in crisis, we can’t lift our heads to do more strategic work. The numbers [of women] and needs presenting are greater than ever. How you provide more with less? How can you ensure your voice is heard in networks? Do the networks ever focus on women?”

The following are some quotes from women's organisations who participated in the research demonstrating increasing uncertainty about the future.

"We have survived another year but it has been extremely difficult trying to maintain services that are crucial for local women."

"There are real worries about the future in relation to education and training as this year we have been faced with significant barriers in relation to the types of courses that are now funded (reducing choices for women) as well as massive reductions in funding to support women on courses and to provide the crucial childcare support."

"Times are really hard and it's worrying for everyone and women are most vulnerable."

5. Conclusions

In terms of gender inequality it seems ground previously gained will most certainly be lost. In the NE where in many areas gender inequality is very much alive and kicking the austerity measures will exacerbate the situation considerably through a loss of women's financial independence, lack of choice in key areas of their lives such as where to live, training and employment opportunities as well as placing even more burdens of care upon them.

This interim case study demonstrates that women are not only in danger of sinking further into poverty but the austerity measures are also perpetuating and indeed, encouraging gender inequalities through reforms to welfare, education, services for families and young people, legal aid, housing etc. Many of the achievements of redressing gender inequality are likely to be reversed and inequality is likely to worsen since we have only experienced a proportion of the cuts so far: according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies only 12% of the proposed cuts have been implemented.⁷¹ The worst is yet to come.

There are deepening concerns over the diminishing gender-specific services and the misinterpretation of Equalities legislation. All of the participatory events carried out in the NE demonstrated the need for women-only space especially during challenging times. Women need to campaign using their collective voice.

The austerity measures are unravelling progress towards gender equality. In the NE where gender inequality still persists the austerity measures will exacerbate the situation for women. In terms of daily living women are finding it hard to make ends meet and in terms of improving their situation through education and employment, for example, the picture is bleak. The longer term indications paint a picture of a very bleak future.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Public bodies in the North East should value and encourage women's active citizenship, as well as ensuring women receive the services they need. This should include:

- a. Collecting and disaggregating data by gender at all levels and addressing intersectionality by ensuring equalities strands are not looked at in isolation from each other.
- b. Consulting existing networks such as NEWomen's Network when seeking feedback about the issues that women in the NE both at organisational and grass roots level are facing.
- c. Within their legal requirement to show due regard to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality of opportunity, monitor the impact of cuts and austerity measures upon women.
- d. Ensure appropriate action is taken where there is a failure to implement the legal requirements.
- e. Promoting and where necessary, defending women-only space and gender-specific services, which are protected in law.
- f. Providing training for all sectors in the understanding and implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and its provision for women-only space.

6.2 Elected members and MP's in the North East should work to prevent the devastating impacts upon women in the North East outlined above by taking the following measures:

- a. Protect women's equality and challenge local authorities wherever decisions are made which could negatively impact on women.
- b. Prevent women from being undervalued and challenge gender stereotyping in all of its forms; use the media, employers, local authorities and other organisations to reflect more positive, respectful values, and value women as workers and citizens.
- c. Address the under-representation of NE women in national decision-making and spearhead a campaign to encourage women to take up public and civic roles in decision making processes, including roles within their communities, as local councillors and as MP's.

6.3 The UK Government needs to recognise and take action around the effects of austerity measures upon women in the NE because the measures reinforce

gender inequalities in areas that have already been resistant to change. The Government needs to mitigate these measures by:

- a. Recognising and addressing the barriers to women's employment arising from caring responsibilities. Although the provision of free childcare places for all two to three year old children is welcomed, it is insufficient to address the needs of women in the NE to give them access to equality of opportunity in employment.
- b. Increasing women's financial independence and, to address child poverty, maintaining the universal child benefit. This is crucial in the NE where there is persistent gender inequality, as well as high per capita poverty and so greater reliance on child benefit.
- c. Developing a new national strategy for VAWG which ends the postcode lottery of distribution and provision of services and provides consistent, reliable coverage of services for VAWG with secure, longer-term funding for women's VCOs. There is a risk that Domestic Violence will increase and that is likely to cost the state more in the future if the problem is not addressed.

7 Charitable funding bodies and grant making trusts should provide core grants to sustain women's voluntary organisations in the North East during the economic crisis and support NEWomen's Network to lobby around recommendations 1 to 4 and take the following measures:

- a. Secure the support of key NE women, such as elected members, MPs, Trade Unionists, key business women and women in public positions to head campaigns designed to promote equality and value women's contributions to NE life.
- b. Build the capacity of women's organisations to use the CEDAW along with Public Law and human rights legislation to address women's inequality in the NE.

Appendix 1: Participation in local events (women)

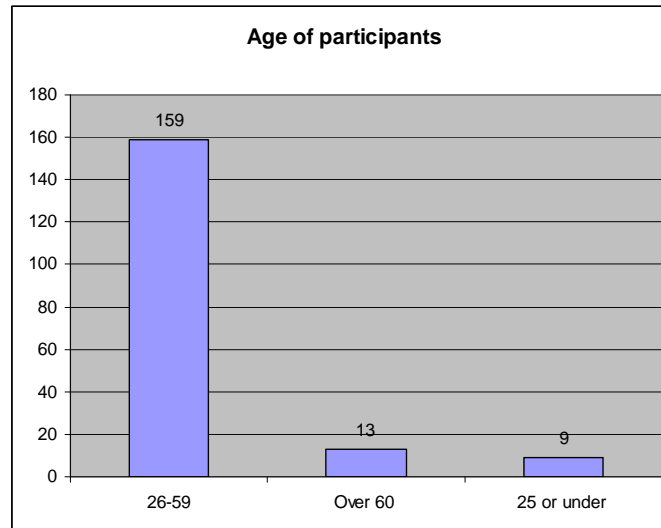
Fifteen events took place and a total of 304 women and 154 different organisations participated. The following table shows the date, location and venue of the events and the number of women participating at each.

Area	Date	Venue	Women participating
Government Equalities Consultation	25th May 2011.	Ben Hoare Bell's Office, Byker	10
North-Tyneside	30 th Jun 2011	Shiremoor Community Centre	16
North Northumberland	5 th July 2011	St James' Church Hall, Alnwick	20
Launch of CEDAW working group for the North East	15 th July 2011	Colby Court Fire Station, Elswick, Newcastle	27
Feminist Leadership Workshops (1)	7 th July 2011	Riverside Community Health Project, Benwell	18
Hartlepool	20 th Sep 2011	Salaam Centre	44
Newcastle (East)	27 th Sep 2011	Tyneside Women's Health, Byker	11
Newcastle (West)	27 th Sep 2011	Riverside Community Health Project, Benwell	28
Women with Learning Disabilities	29 th Sep 2011	Central Square, Newcastle	34
Feminist Leadership Workshops (2)	31 st October 2011	Women's Heath in South Tyneside	6
South Tyneside	18 th Nov 2011	Apna Ghar, minority ethnic women's Centre and Women's Heath in South Tyneside WHIST	33
Tees Valley	15 th Nov 2011	Middlesbrough International Centre	52
East Durham	18 th Jan 2012	Glebe Centre, Murton	15
'Power, Influence. Policy Training	24 th February 2012	Allington House Durham	11
International Women's Event	16 th March 2012	Sunderland Bangladeshi Centre	60

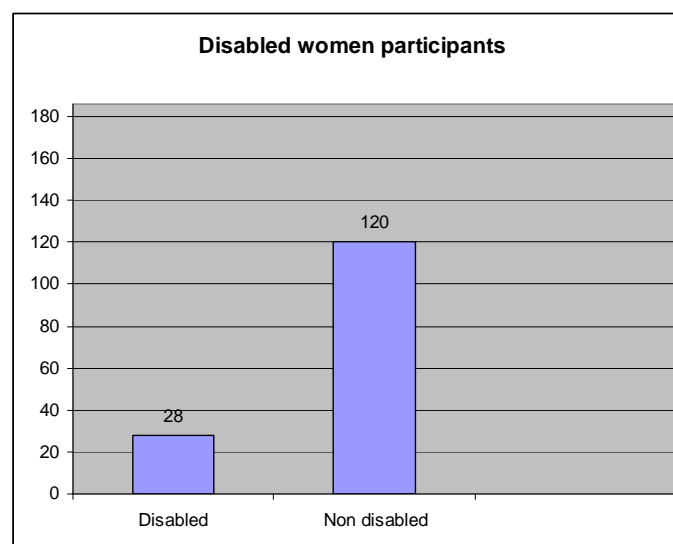
Equality and Diversity monitoring

186 (61%) of women participating completed monitoring forms:

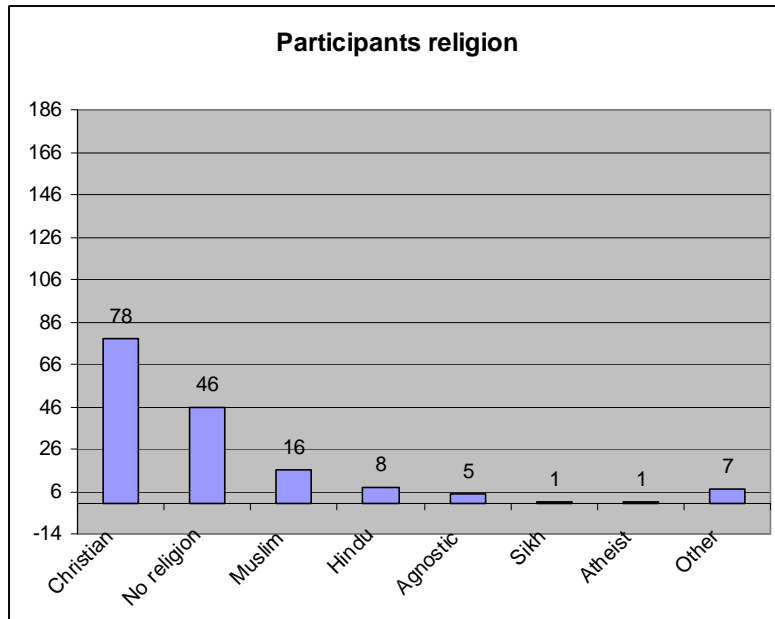
Age – The majority of the participants were aged between 26 and 59, 87.8% (159) of the participants only 7.2% (13) were 60 or over and only 5% (9) were 25 or under. None were 16 and under.



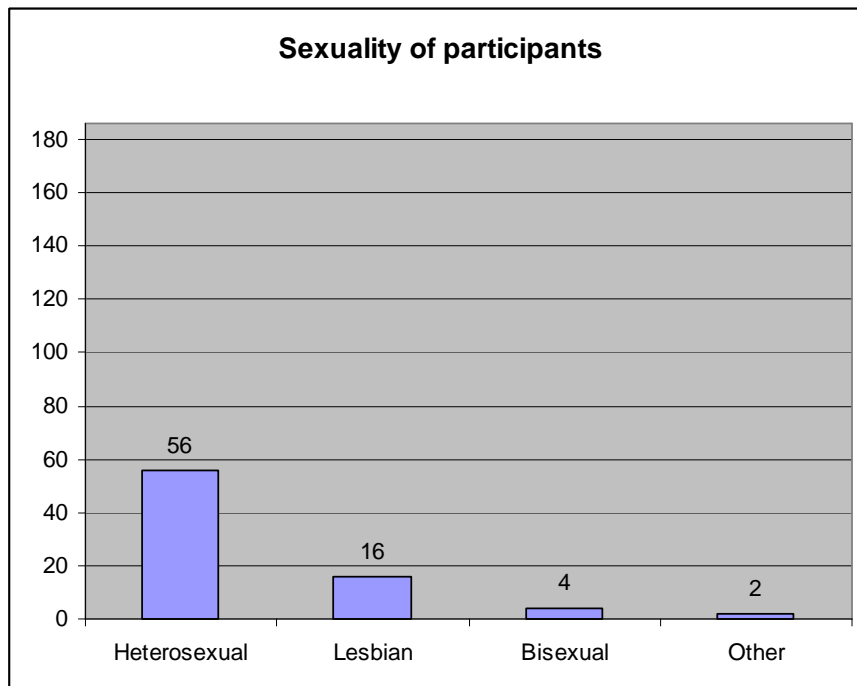
Disabled or Deaf women – 28% (28) stated that they were a disabled woman, 80% (120) stated that they were not.



Religion or belief – 48.1% (78) stated that they were Christian, 28.4% (46) had no religion, 9.9% (16) were Muslims and 4.9% (8) were Hindu's and 3.1% (5) Agnostic. Of the others who stated a religion, 0.6% (1) stated Sikh, 0.6% (1) stated Atheist. Other religions 4.3% (7) stated were Catholic, Pagan (2), Spiritualist and Wiccon, Holistic and Methodist: No-one stated Bahai, Buddhist, Jain or Jewish as their religion.



Sexual orientation – information about sexual orientation was only gathered from 41.9% (78) participants. Of these 71.8% (56) stated that they were heterosexual and 20.5% (16) stated that they were Lesbian, 5.6% (4) stated bisexual and 2.6%(2) stated that ‘another orientation.’



Nationality and/or ethnicity – 73.3% (118) of the participants who completed the nationality and ethnicity monitoring stated that they were White British. The nationalities/ ethnicities of the other participants who completed monitoring forms were:

- Pakistani 3.7% (6)
- Asian British 3.7% (6)
- White and Asian 3.1% (5)

- Indian 2.5% (4)
- Bangladeshi 2.5% (4)
- Any other Black background 2.5% (4)
- Irish 1.2% (2)
- Other white background 1.2% (2)
- Other mixed background 1.2% (2)
- African 1.2% (2)
- Other Asian background 1.2% (2)

There was one participant with each of the following nationalities/ ethnicities Caribbean, Eastern European, Scottish and 'other ethnicity' (not stated). None of those who completed the monitoring forms stated the following ethnicities/ nationalities (although there were Roma and Chinese women involved in the events in Newcastle and Harlepool):

- Chinese
- Chinese British
- Other Chinese background
- White & Black African
- White & Black Caribbean
- Roma / Gypsy / Traveller

Appendix 2: Participation in local events (organisations)

60 80 30
Acorn Project
Acumen
All you Can CIC
ALNWICK MULTINATIONAL GROUP
Angelou Centre
Apna Ghar
Aspire 2 Be
Bangladeshi Centre (Sunderland)
Barnardos SECOS Project
Ben Hoare Bell Solicitors
Blackhall Women's Institute
BOLO- Bangladeshi Overseas Ladies Organisation
Breast Cancer Survival Trust
Bridge Women's Education Project
Business and Professional Women Centre for Women & Democracy
Chandi Group (South Bank)
Children's Centre staff
Children's Centre's South Hartlepool
Children's Social Care
CIIR-Commission for Inter-religious Relations
Communication Workers Union (CWU)
Community Action Northumberland
Community Action on Health
Community Foundation
Community Safety Advocate
Co-op Durham/ Councillor
Co-op Tyne and Wear
Crest
CWU
DTV Probation Trust
Durham County Council
East Durham AAP
East Durham Community Development Trust Limited
East End Community Development Alliance
Education Service
Escape Intervention Services
EVA Rape Crisis
Eva Women's Aid
Family Focus Parent's Group (Sunderland)
First Stop Darlington
Fourth Action
Freedom Project
Northumberland Community Development Network
Northumbria Police
NTyneside Labour Party (Women's Section)
Open Clasp Theatre
Open Gate
Options -SouthTyneside CVS
Oxfam
Panah
Panah Stonham
Pertemps People Development Group
Praxis
Purple Rose
R Social Enterprise
RBA Equality and Diversity Limited
RCHP Women's Group
Regional women & equality organiser
RHWE
Riverside Community Health Project
Riverside Women's Group
Roma Women's Group
Safer Hartlepool
Safer Middlesbrough Partnership
Salaam Centre (Hartlepool)
Sangini
School staff
SHINE
Sixty Eighty Thirty
Soroptimist International Northern
South Tees Hospital Foundation Trust
South Tyneside Women's Group
South Tynside LINK
Splinter Group
Sunderland People First
Sunderland Women's Centre
Sunshine Project
Sure Start Children's Centre's
SWAN
Tees Valley Iranian Community
Tees Valley Women's Centre
The Angelou centre
The Bridge Project
The Co-op
The Healthy Wellbeing
The Safe Project
Them Wifies

Friends of Walker Riverside Park	Thorn tree ward
Gateshead Voluntary Organisation council	Transition Coaching, North East
Harbour	TUC
Hartlepool Carers Centre	Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service
Hartlepool Chinese Association	Tyneside Rape Crisis Centre
Hartlepool College Counsellor	Tyneside Women's Health
Hartlepool College of Further Education	Tyneside Women's Training Group
Hillcroft College	Tyneside Women's Health
hiwecanhelp	Unison
Home Start-Seaham	Unite the Union
Housing Hartlepool	University of Northumbria
Inclusion North	VELA GROUP
Integrated Youth Support Service	Victoria House
Involve (in Murton)	VSW
Learning Choices Northumberland Ltd	WAVESWalker Detached Youth
Link Adapt	Project
Lynfield Children's Centre	Wear Valley Women's Aid
Lynnfield/ Stranton Centre	Wearside Women in Need
Mencap	Women Away
Middlesbrough Council	Women in Action
Middlesbrough Library	Women of wit and wonder
Middlesbrough Mums	Women Supporting Women
Milin Centre	Women Well Being Association
Multicultural East Middlesbrough	Women what do
NASUWT	Women, Girls and 50+ Officer NCL
National Assembly of Women	Sport Development
Newcastle City Council	Women's Health in South Tyneside
Newcastle CVS	Women's Interfaith Media Network
Newcastle Hospital Community Health	Women's Health Advice Centre
Newcastle Muslim Women's Group	Women's Well Being
Newcastle University Feminist Society	Workers Educational Association
NIWE Eating Distress Service	(WEA)
North Northumberland Women's Network	Your Voice Counts
North of England Refugee Service	

Notes

ⁱ <http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-20286-f0.cfm>

²

http://www.wrc.org.uk/resources/tools_to_engage_and_influence/working_internationally/about_cedaw.aspx

³ <http://www.wrc.org.uk/>

⁴ <http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-20286-f0.cfm>

⁵ <http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-20286-f0.cfm>

⁶ <http://www.equal-works.com/Region.aspx?rgid=4>

⁷ <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=1195>

⁸ National census of local authority councillors 2010, Local Government Association, www.local.gov.uk

⁹ Centre for Women and Democracy 2009

¹⁰ Data gathered from female residents of Gateshead Office of Ian Mearns MP for Gateshead (collected July to October 2012)

¹¹ *Final Report on North East Women's Leadership Project*, March 2012

<http://www.newwomens.net/index.php/latest-news-leftmenu-50>

¹² *Final Report on North East Women's Leadership Project*, March 2012

<http://www.newwomens.net/index.php/latest-news-leftmenu-50>

¹³ "The Equality Act should not be interpreted to mean that both sexes should be treated the same. Single sex services are permitted where it can be shown to be the most effective way of providing those services or where the service is needed by one sex only." Equality Act 2010, Schedule 3,

¹⁴ In 'The Health of the Women's Sector' Survey conducted by NEWomen's Network in January 2011, 37% of respondents attributed a reduction in funding to women's organisation to a misinterpretation of the Equalities Act 2010.

¹⁵ A representative from Rape Crisis, 19th April 2012

¹⁶ A research participant from a voluntary sector organisation in Northumberland, June 2012

¹⁷ Third Sector Online, 6 August 2012 -

<http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/Management/article/1144335/sunderland-womens-charity-bridge-goes-administration/>

¹⁸ www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/index.asp/Pageid=123

¹⁹ Northern TUC, 2012

²⁰ Unison, 2012

²¹ <http://www.gmb.org.uk>

²² Office of National Statistics

²³

http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/gor/2013265921/subreports/gor_us_time_series/report.aspx?

²⁴ <http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-20730-f0.cfm>

²⁵ Unison Northern, 2012

²⁶ Guardian front page, 29th September 2012

²⁷ Adapted from - *The Heart of the City, The Voluntary & Community Sector in Newcastle, A report commissioned by Newcastle City Branch, Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service, February 2012 -*

http://www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/assets/files/representinginfluencing/our_research/Unison_Final_Report.pdf

-
- ²⁸ Final Report on North East Women's Leadership Project, March 2012
<http://www.newwomens.net/index.php/latest-news-leftmenu-50>
- ²⁹ www.netmums.com/home/netmums-campaigns
- ³⁰ As footnote 19
- ³¹ WHEC Women's Health & Equality Consortium "Why Women's Health?"
- ³² <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/oct/17/revealed-toll-cuts-nhs-services>
- ³³ <http://www.sotw.nhs.uk/yoursay/consultations/acute-health-services-for-children-and-young-people/>
- ³⁴ Report from A gathering of women, Tuesday 20th September 2011, Salaam Centre, Hartlepool, <http://www.newwomens.net/index.php/latest-news-leftmenu-50>
- ³⁵ www.homeless.org.uk
- ³⁶ www.womensaid.org.uk
- ³⁷ www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel
- ³⁸ www.actionforchildren.org.uk
- ³⁹ www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk/england-17813116
- ⁴⁰ www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk/england-17813116
- ⁴¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-16958373>
- ⁴² <http://www.northeastcouncils.gov.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=461>
- ⁴³ <http://www.chroniclive.co.uk/north-east-news/evening-chronicle-news/2012/01/23/rise-in-north-east-children-taken-into-care-72703-30181250/#ixzz24LDmSTPJ>
- ⁴⁴ Final Report on North East Women's Leadership Project, March 2012
<http://www.newwomens.net/index.php/latest-news-leftmenu-50>
- ⁴⁵ Research participant by email 27.02.12
- ⁴⁶ <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/care/universal-credit-could-shut-womens-refuges/6523130.article>
- ⁴⁷ Originally a ring fenced grant to local authorities intended to fund services to help vulnerable people live independently.
- ⁴⁸
- <http://ncvys.org.uk/UserFiles/NCVYS%20briefing%20on%20HM%20Treasury%20Comprehensive%20Spending%20Review%202010.pdf>
- ⁴⁹ <http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/RP12-40>
- ⁵⁰ BBC News, 12th September 2012 - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-19559785>
- ⁵¹ Coy, M, Kelly, L and Foord, J., *Map of Gaps 2: The Postcode lottery of Violence Against Women support services in Britain*. End Violence Against Women in partnership with the Equality and Human Rights Commission, (2009)
- ⁵² Every woman Safe Everywhere: Labour's Commission into Women's Safety - Interim report, March 2012 <http://www.labour.org.uk/uploads/455bf616-f048-b184-e903-c9629a67745a.pdf>
- ⁵³ Westmarland, N. & Alderson, S. (2010). *Inter-personal violence in the North East: Mapping of services and prevalence estimates*, Durham: Durham University.
- ⁵⁴ <http://www.object.org.uk/council-decisions-table>
- ⁵⁵ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/8568723.stm>
- ⁵⁶ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-16157522>, 14 December 2011
- ⁵⁷ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/10/schedule/1/part/1/enacted>
- ⁵⁸ CLA Helpline 2010-2011, 8686 calls were from men; 15528 from women. Equality and Diversity Information for Community Legal Advice Helpline 2010-2011, Legal Services Commission, January 2012
- ⁵⁹ [Chroniclive.co.uk](http://www.chroniclive.co.uk), 27 August 2011
- ⁶⁰ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>

⁶¹ www.bettertransport.org.uk

⁶² *Annual Equality and Diversity Report Tyne and Wear Public Transport*, NEXUS, 2011-2012

⁶³ Data gathered from female residents of Gateshead Office of Ian Mearns MP for Gateshead (collected July to October 2012)

⁶⁴ *Changing Times : Women's organisations in Newcastle, A study of the current challenges for women's voluntary organisations*, Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service, March 2012 -

[http://cvsnewcastle.org.uk/assets/files/representinginfluencing/our_research/Changing_Times - Womens organisations in Newcastle.pdf](http://cvsnewcastle.org.uk/assets/files/representinginfluencing/our_research/Changing_Times_-_Womens_organisations_in_Newcastle.pdf)

The Heart of the City, The Voluntary & Community Sector in Newcastle, A report commissioned by Newcastle City Branch, Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service, February 2012 -

[http://www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/assets/files/representinginfluencing/our_research/Unison Final Report.pdf](http://www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/assets/files/representinginfluencing/our_research/Unison_Final_Report.pdf)

⁶⁵ *Report on International Women's Event: A partnership project between Women's Resource Centre and NEWomen's Network*. 16th March 2012, Sunderland Bangladeshi Centre - <http://www.newwomens.net/>

⁶⁶ *Hidden Value: Demonstrating the extraordinary impact of women's voluntary and community*, Women's Resource Centre (2012)

⁶⁷ Survey of women's organisation delivering VAWG services conducted by NEWomen's Network in July/August 2012

⁶⁸ *From Not just bread, but roses, too: Funding to the women's voluntary and community sector in England 2004-07*, Women's Resource Centre (2009)

⁶⁹ *The Health of the Women's Sector in the North East – NEWomen's Network* Dec 2011

⁷⁰ *Changing Times : Women's organisations in Newcastle, A study of the current challenges for women's voluntary organisations*, Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service, March 2012 -

[http://cvsnewcastle.org.uk/assets/files/representinginfluencing/our_research/Changing_Times - Womens organisations in Newcastle.pdf](http://cvsnewcastle.org.uk/assets/files/representinginfluencing/our_research/Changing_Times_-_Womens_organisations_in_Newcastle.pdf)

⁷¹ www.ifs.org.uk/budgets