

SISTERS OF SUPPORT

Monthly Email Newsletter curated by our Directors. Issue 002-07/25



2ND EDITION

We are overwhelmed by the response we have had to the release of our monthly publication. We would like to take this time to thank everyone who got in touch to congratulate us and to thank everyone who contributed to the first edition, all many more going forward.



Photo: Left to right Tina (Director) Amy (Director) Joy Allen PCC

AWARDS

We are thrilled to announce that we won corporate LimeWire innovation and excellence award.



We have also become finalists for BBC Radio Tees Make A Difference Awards 2025 - September



SUMMER RAFFLE

Saturday 26th July | Ayclife Music Festival

We're thrilled to be at Ayclife Music Festival this summer – and even more excited to announce our Sisters of Support Summer Raffle!

With fantastic prizes, great music, and a brilliant community atmosphere, this is the perfect way to have fun and support a meaningful cause.

♥ Every ticket sold helps local women facing mental health challenges or difficult life pressures find a safe, peer-led space where they can be heard, supported, and empowered.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of local businesses and supporters, we've already opened new groups and launched exciting projects this year – and with your help, we can do even more.



GROUP DATES

Come along to one of our welcoming and supportive community groups this July! Here's where and when you can find us:

Shildon Group

- Monday 7th July
- Monday 21st July

Bishop Auckland Group

- Monday 14th July
- Monday 28th July

Aycliffe - Simpasture

- Tuesday 8th July
- Tuesday 22nd July

Aycliffe - Gilpin

- Tuesday 15th July
- Tuesday 29th July

All sessions are a chance to connect, share, and support each other. New faces are always welcome!



Photo: L2R, Donna, Sam (Choir lead) Vikki,(Facilitator)

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

- Buy Tickets for the Raffle
- Spread the word to friends, family, or colleagues.
- make sure you follow our social media

Let's make a difference – together.



Photo: Vikki, facilitator, Knife Angel

CONTACT US

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SCAN ME FOR OUR WEBSITE

MEMBERS CORNER

My journey with SOS

My name is Williamena, a passionate facilitator at the Shildon group, but you can call me Will! I hail from Bishop Auckland, but thanks to my dad's job, I've lived in a few places. My journey really kicked off when I met Amy, one of the founders of SOS, while diving into various volunteer roles. I've worn many hats, from an involved tenant and SEN parent running support drop-in sessions to serving as a Town Councillor.

When the Shildon group was born in October 2023, I jumped at the chance to become a facilitator, eager to make a difference and support our community further!

But life threw a curveball at me in early 2024 when I, along with fellow councillors, became targets of an online hate campaign. It was tough, especially as I lived close to the perpetrator's family, making things even trickier. The situation escalated dramatically when someone with severe mental health issues attacked my husband, my home, and even two brave police officers. While we can't say for sure that the online harassment led to this, it was a harrowing time.

After that incident, I felt the urge to pull back from my volunteer work and focus on my family. I thought I was responsible for putting them in danger. Thankfully, the incredible Sisters of Support stepped in, showering me with unwavering support and strength. They helped me see that I wasn't to blame and encouraged me to keep fighting for the community work I love.

Now, I'm back on my feet, even stronger and more determined than ever! I've relocated from Shildon and recently attended the Armed Forces Day at Trimdon Grange Community Centre, showcasing the amazing work that Sisters of Support does. I can't wait to bring more groups to new areas and continue making a positive impact together!

Let's keep the momentum going!



Photo: Williamena Keal, Trimdon Armed Forces Day



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Reflecting on a Remarkable Month

It has been an eventful month since the release of our first edition, and we decided to keep this update more concise, given the wealth of information shared previously. We are truly grateful for the kind words and feedback we have received from our community.

This past fortnight, I had the privilege of spending a transformative three days in London with my university class. Navigating the vibrant atmosphere of the capital posed significant challenges for my health; however, the lessons learned through Sisters Of Support empowered me to seek help when needed. I embraced the support of my classmates and occasionally found the strength to ask for assistance. This experience has prompted me to reflect on the daily challenges many face, particularly the barriers created by a lack of available support. Sisters Of Support remains a steadfast resource for women, a place where help is always within reach, and where I have found my own identity.

Our primary focus this month has centred on the Knife Angel campaign. The front cover features a photograph of myself alongside fellow Director Tina and Joy Allen, our Police and Crime Commissioner, after a meaningful interview. We established a stall in the town centre's temporary hub throughout the campaign, successfully raising funds for our organisation and the remarkable North East Air Ambulance Service. The closing ceremony was both poignant and moving, prompting deep reflection on the impact of knife crime on our youth.

June has also been a month dedicated to our volunteers. Over four weekends, we relied on our newly formed Events Team to facilitate the Knife Angel initiative. Our members stepped up in significant numbers, ensuring the success of our information stand throughout the campaign. I am continually inspired by the selflessness of our community, who dedicate their time to support our mission. It is moments like these that remind me of the incredible spirit within Sisters Of Support.

In our members' corner, Will has ventured into a new area alongside her daughter Mercedes, who generously donated teddies for our tombola, raising £32. More importantly, Will has made valuable connections in Trimdon, which may soon lead to the establishment of a new branch. Her unwavering dedication over the past two years exemplifies the essence of Sisters Of Support, and we could not be prouder of her.

Carrie, Tina, and I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported us throughout June. Your dedication has truly inspired us, and we are in awe of your commitment.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY

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