

## SoWN Forum, 19<sup>th</sup> March



Lucian Dee, Community Partnerships & Fundraising Manager

# Introducing WCC

**Established as a charity in 1995 in response to the mental health needs of the local community. We are now one of London's most valued counselling services, offering several essential services to our clients:**

**1. Accessible, affordable counselling for all**

- a) We deliver low and no cost individual counselling to people living in London. Offering a fair-pricing model and long-term sessions not available on the NHS

**2. Specialist individual counselling service for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants**

- a) Established in 2004, we offer multilingual counselling in over 20 languages to refugee and asylum-seeking clients living across London. Trauma-informed organisation; culturally competent counsellors with lived experience of immigration/asylum. **Informed by our Expert-by-Experience group of ex-service users**

**3. Holistic support, groups and community partnerships**

- a) We provide a range of social activity groups and offer practical support e.g. referrals/signposting, SIM cards, mobiles / laptops, clothing donation, Food Bank vouchers and more.

*“Waterloo Community Counselling offers an invaluable and vital therapeutic service in London” – Zinzi Mangera-Lakew, Co-Director, Room to Heal*

**17% of WCC's clients are Lambeth residents**

# Low Cost Counselling

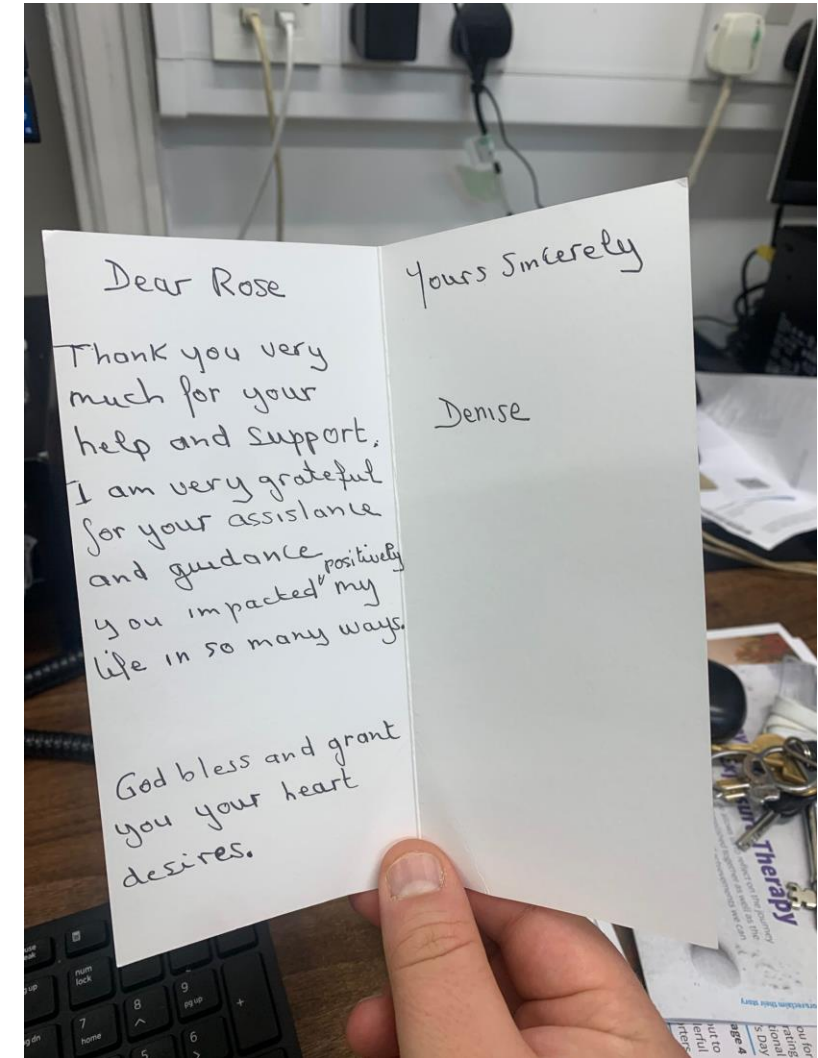
## Who we help:

We work with people above the age of 18, living across London who need support with their mental health. Many of our clients are people who would not be able to afford counselling or psychotherapy from a private therapist, and who may need more support than they could access via the NHS.

## Why we help:

**One in four** people in the UK experience a mental health issue each year. There is a clear and growing need for accessible, low-cost, longer-term counselling and psychotherapy – and there are fewer services offering this.

We are seeing clients present with increasingly complex situations, including challenges related to extreme anxiety, stress, depression, financial pressures and poverty, sexuality, gender identity, family relationships, and more.



# Multilingual Counselling for Sanctuary Seekers

## Who we help:

We work with refugees, asylum-seekers and vulnerable migrants over the age of 18, living in Greater London. We can offer 20+ different languages without the use of interpreters – several counsellors are refugees themselves

## Why we help:

We recognise there is a great need for culturally and linguistically sensitive therapeutic services for refugees and asylum seekers.

People come to us for help due to a range of mental health difficulties including: anxiety, depression, PTSD, loss/bereavement, survivors of sexual abuse/violence, Domestic Violence, experiences of torture, trafficking and modern slavery.



*“Before therapy, I was lonely, fearful, and hopeless and struggled daily with suicidal feelings. I couldn’t sleep or eat and cried most of the days.” - ‘Selam’*

**-In 24/25 WCC supported 394 vulnerable migrants, refugees and asylum seekers**  
**-Clients came from 75 different countries and were seen by our counsellors in 23 different language.**

# Social Groups & Activities

- Isolated refugees and asylum seekers are encouraged to take part in the various social groups and activities that WCC offers.
- These include regular trips and outings, weekly pottery and gardening clubs, men's and women's groups – and more.



## Holistic Support

- We do our best to support our client's various practical issues. We provide Food Bank vouchers and SIM cards. We also often have mobile devices, and sometimes laptops.
- We work with a large network of organisations across London and can make referrals and signpost where possible.

# Impact Statement

2024-25

Waterloo  
community counselling

## VITAL MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR LONDONERS

**7967**  
counselling  
sessions delivered



*"I wouldn't overestimate if I said that counselling saved my life. The counsellor held a safe space for me to heal, she made me feel heard and understood, probably for the first time in my life."*

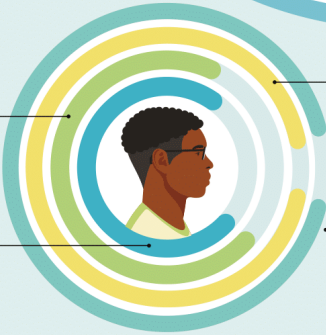
WCC client



**659**  
clients  
supported

**73%**  
reported that their levels  
of anxiety had reduced

**77%**  
reported that their levels  
of depression had reduced



**95%**  
reported improved  
mental health and  
wellbeing

**92%**  
reported increased  
confidence and  
self-esteem

## SUPPORTING MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

**394** vulnerable migrants, refugees  
& asylum seekers supported

*"Counselling helped me to turn my life back. You came into my life when I was severely hopeless, and it made me build my hope and understand my pain. I was so happy to find WCC."*

WCC client

**83%**  
of clients reported  
feeling less lonely  
or isolated

**23** different  
languages  
spoken by  
counsellors



clients  
come from **75** different  
countries



**63%**  
of clients  
from non-  
white ethnic  
backgrounds

**25%**  
of clients  
identify with  
LGBTQ+  
communities



# Impact Statement 2024-25

**3049**

free counselling  
sessions delivered

## REMOVING BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SUPPORT

*"WCC's understanding of situation and specific needs makes it an invaluable service. It's contribution to refugee and asylum-seeker mental health deserves recognition."*

Outreach Coordinator,  
The Bridge at Waterloo

**33** people supported  
with digital inclusion –  
data packages, phones  
and laptops

**757** journeys where we  
reimbursed client  
travel expenses



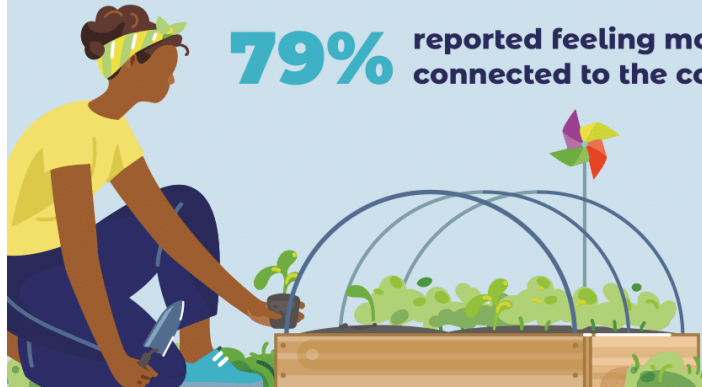
## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONNECTIONS

**213**  
community  
organisations we work  
in partnership with

**227**  
signposts & referrals to  
help tackle clients'  
practical challenges

**79%** reported feeling more  
connected to the community

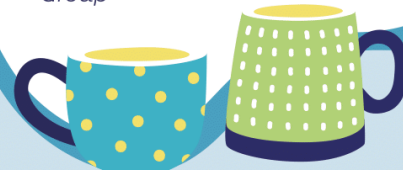
**66%**  
reported  
having  
accessed  
other services



**40** group sessions  
supporting 42 individuals

*"The staff work so hard to involve us, creating meaningful networks we wouldn't otherwise have. There's a feeling of trust that some of us need in life."*

'Joseph', from our 'Meet-Ups'  
Group



# Any Questions?



For more info or to discuss partnership work, please get in touch!

Contact: [Lucian.dee@waterloocc.co.uk](mailto:Lucian.dee@waterloocc.co.uk)

Visit: [www.waterloocc.co.uk](http://www.waterloocc.co.uk) or come to see us at our office on Frazier Street.