

North East Probation – WHIST Women’s Hub

[keywords: *women offenders*]

Overview

Women’s Health in South Tyneside (WHIST) is a charity, established in 1986, to address gaps in provision and support for women in the local area, with a particular focus on health and wellbeing. They provide a range of services, on a drop-in basis, in their women-only space, including individual and group-based support, exercise classes, personal development courses and life skills training, cookery classes, and information and advice, as well as a creche and coffee bar. In late 2023, South Tyneside Probation co-located our services for the 50-60 women under our supervision in the WHIST building – so that the women could be supervised in a more conducive, female-focused environment, away from the main probation office, and make use of the wide range of support services provided by WHIST.

Its impact

As a women-only space, the women find the hub a safer and more conducive environment to meet with their probation officer, and value the access to additional wrap-around services provided by WHIST. Probation staff have also seen an improvement in compliance and engagement.

What’s special about it

We feel this partnership arrangement provides real benefits to the women in our care, in a cost-effective way and efficient way, by making effective use of an existing, complementary service.

Wider applicability

While not all areas have a resource like WHIST, we feel this approach could be applied in many other areas too, with similarly wide-ranging benefits and improvements in outcomes for women on probation.

Further information

Contact: clare.knox@justice.gov.uk

See also: www.whist.org.uk