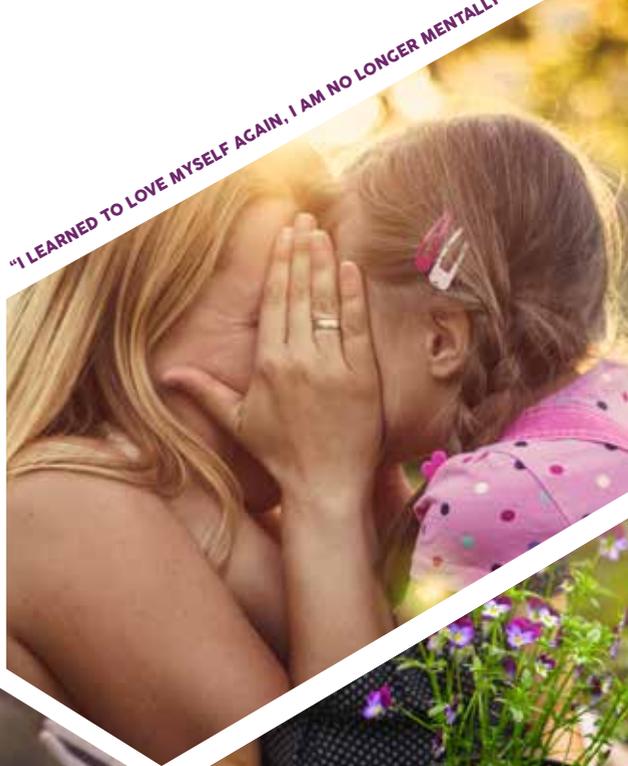


# Therapeutic Communities

Transforming lives of women and breaking the cycle of frequent offending.

*"I LEARNED TO LOVE MYSELF AGAIN, I AM NO LONGER MENTALLY BROKEN."*



**Phoenix Futures**  
**SCOTLAND**  
The charity that is confident about recovery



**It is estimated that  
as many as 90% of  
women in custody in  
Scotland have drug  
and alcohol issues.**

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Scotland's Choice - Report of the Scottish Prison Commission, July 2008



## WHY PRISON DOESN'T WORK FOR WOMEN

Ten years ago the Corston Report (2007) highlighted the need for radical reform to the female justice system in the UK. Since then The Commission on Women Offenders: Final Report (2012) looked more specifically at women offenders in Scotland. Both reports confirm that sentencing women to conventional custodial sentences can be a damaging and ineffective form of punishment and more could be done to support women effectively with their rehabilitation.

Whilst progress has been made evidence would suggest that we still have much to learn and change if we are to support female offenders to reduce offending. In the fourth and final annual report from the Scottish Government on the progress made against the Commissions findings, the Cabinet Secretary for justice says;

**"The changes that have begun both in the community and in custody are progressive and ambitious. The enthusiasm and aspiration that the Commission demonstrated will continue to inform our penal policy in the future, and the further development of stronger community-based provision will deliver better outcomes for both women and men."**

10 years on a report by Women in Prison on the progress made against the Corston Report says

**"It is also difficult for women to get residential rehab as an alternative to prison. Therefore, for some women, prison is the only establishment where they access detoxification services. This is a tragic reflection on the lack of support, care and safety in the community available to women with complex needs."**

At Phoenix we support calls for penal reforms that give women the support they need to address their offending behaviour. Much work has been done to understand what change needs to happen. We remain committed to doing the very best by women in the criminal justice system through a range of approaches that support them to rebuild their lives.

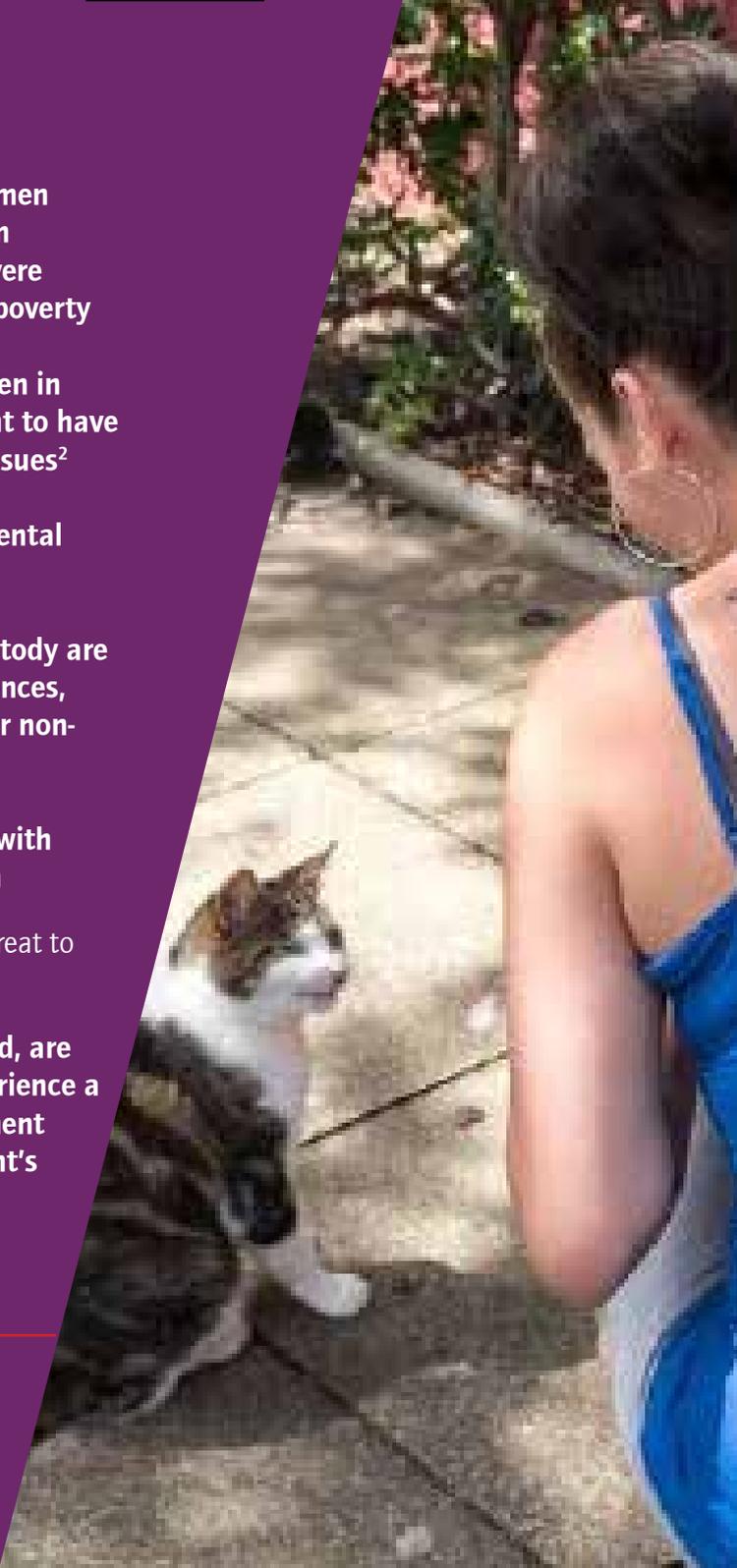
Often women entering the criminal justice system can have complex needs and require specialist support with a range of issues. Many women serving short sentences do not get the opportunity to address the root causes of their offending behaviour either due to sentence length or the services that are available to them.

- **75% of Scottish female prisoners reported histories of abuse and major health problems<sup>1</sup>**

- **The majority of women in prison come from backgrounds of severe disadvantage and poverty**
- **Up to 90% of women in custody are thought to have drug and alcohol issues<sup>2</sup>**
- **80% suffer with mental health issues<sup>3</sup>**
- **Most women in custody are serving short sentences, 6 months or less for non-violent crimes**
- **Many are mothers with dependent children**

And the impact is too great to ignore.

- **Children in Scotland, are more likely to experience a parent's imprisonment rather than a parent's divorce<sup>4</sup>**

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a blue tank top, looking down at a small, brown and white tabby cat sitting on a paved surface. The background shows some greenery and a brick wall.

**70% of women handed Custodial sentences of three months or less will be back in Custody within two years.**

Scotland's Choice - Report of the Scottish Prison Commission, July 2008

1. Scotland's Choice - Report of the Scottish Prison Commission, July 2008  
2. Scotland's Choice - Report of the Scottish Prison Commission, July 2008  
3. Scotland's Choice - Report of the Scottish Prison Commission, July 2008  
4. Perspectives of Children and Young People with a Parent in Prison, 2010

# FEMALE OFFENDING AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE

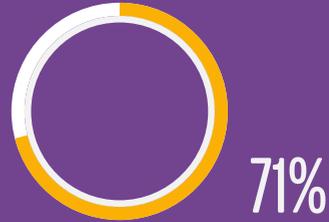
The Commission on Women Offending found overwhelming evidence that women face particular issues that lead to offending.

“We heard evidence that convinced us that although women and men have many shared experiences that contribute to offending, they have distinct features and characteristics.”

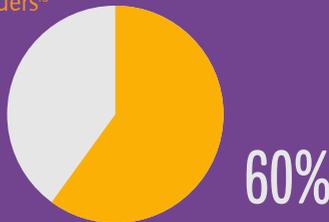
Women are more likely than men to:

- be of lower risk to public safety
- be in prison for dishonesty offences
- be remanded in custody
- have higher rates of mental health problems
- have drug problems
- have histories of physical and sexual abuse, and victimisation
- have dependent children

The statistics of drug abuse amongst women in HMP Corton Vale demonstrate the link



in 2011 71% of the prisoners at HMP Corton Vale reported they had used drugs in the 12 months prior to coming into prison, compared to 61 per cent of male offenders<sup>5</sup>



of women said they had been under the influence of drugs at the time of the offence, compared to 42 per cent of men.<sup>6</sup>



thirty-five per cent of women indicated that they had committed their offence to obtain money for drugs, a higher proportion than males (16 per cent)<sup>7</sup>

**“I stopped but I couldn’t stay stopped, until I was able to deal with all the underlying issues, relationship breakdowns, bereavements, guilt, shame, self-loathing and low self-esteem.”**

**MARIE, SERVICE USER, GLASGOW THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY**

5. Scotland’s Choice - Report of the Scottish Prison Commission, July 2008

6. Scotland’s Choice - Report of the Scottish Prison Commission, July 2008

7. Scotland’s Choice - Report of the Scottish Prison Commission, July 2008

Any holistic and effective response to women's offending in Scotland has to take into account evidenced based approaches and interventions to support women in their recovery from drug and alcohol addiction.

Phoenix has substantial experience of working with women who have poor mental health or experienced physical and sexual violence and abuse.

We know many women use drugs and alcohol to self-medicate as a means to relieve symptoms of an existing mental health condition or deal with violence and abuse they experience.

We know women try and cope in these situations for a long time to protect themselves and their children.

We know that with the right support and help women can make changes in their lives, recover from their addiction and reduce their offending.



**91% of females reported a reduction in offending behaviour by the time they had graduated from our Therapeutic Community**

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2015 / 2016 data sourced from The Outcomes Star



## PROVIDING LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS THAT REDUCE CRIME AND BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY

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For more than 45 years we have worked to help individuals, families and communities recover from problematic substance misuse. During that time we have worked with thousands of women all with varying and complex needs. We have worked across community, prison and residential settings.

**We worked with 4,365 women in the 12 months from April 2015 to April 2016.**

Our history is rooted in the Therapeutic Community model of treatment, which is designed to challenge negative behaviors and teach people the skills to become positive members of a community.

The Therapeutic Community model creates a place where social relationships, structures and groups are specifically designed to provide support and bring about lasting positive change.

**Females who completed the programme at our Therapeutic Community in Scotland self-reported on average a 67% increase in their mental and emotional health by the time they had finished their treatment with us.<sup>8</sup>**

**“I tried other therapies and ways of managing my addiction but none were as successful as the Therapeutic Community model, as it takes into perspective the individual and the person as a whole, and teaches you so much.”**

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**PAULA, SERVICE USER, GLASGOW  
THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY**

## **PHOENIX FUTURES SCOTLAND – THE LEADING PROVIDER OF THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITIES IN THE UK**

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**The Phoenix Futures Group is founded on a passion for showing that recovery from drugs and alcohol is possible.**

We help people affected by drug and alcohol problems, every step of the way.

In 1994 we opened our first service in Scotland, our Therapeutic Community based in Glasgow. From this first service Phoenix Futures Scotland grew, supporting

those affected by drugs and alcohol across the country, in prisons, community and residential settings.

**we helped over 125 people overcome their addiction at our Glasgow therapeutic community in 2015/16.**

We have years of experience working with the Therapeutic Community model and are the only specialist provider of this model in Scotland.



**“Being in the Therapeutic Community has helped me through some really tough times and has made me deal with my negative behaviours”**

**ALEX, SERVICE USER,  
GLASGOW THERAPEUTIC  
COMMUNITY**

## **HOLISTIC AND GENDER SPECIFIC APPROACHES THAT ENCOURAGE POSITIVE CHANGE.**

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Phoenix delivers the Therapeutic Community model of treatment which is a holistic and group based approach to recovery that works to identify areas for change such as negative personal, social, psychological and emotional behaviours. Using the 'community as method approach' women make changes by learning from other members of the community.

**Our Therapeutic Communities provide a safe, supportive environment where residents can participate in a programme**

**designed to look at the underlying reasons for their substance misuse problems.**

A systematic review of Therapeutic Communities concluded there was a strong positive effect for this treatment model compared to a range of control interventions<sup>6</sup>.

The same study also demonstrated positive findings in favour of Therapeutic Communities associated with reduced involvement with the criminal justice system and increased involvement in employment.

# THE VALUE OF THE THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY IN ADDRESSING OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR

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The therapeutic goal of the community is a fundamental change in lifestyle involving abstinence from illicit substances, elimination of antisocial activities, and development of employment skills and prosocial attitudes and values.

While residents must take responsibility for their own recovery process, treatment staff, including ex-offenders, act as role models and provide support and guidance on the recovery process. Individual counselling, group work, peer support, role modelling, and a system of incentives and sanctions form the core of treatment interventions .

Residents of the community live together, participate together in groups, and study together. In the process, residents learn to manage their behaviour, to become more

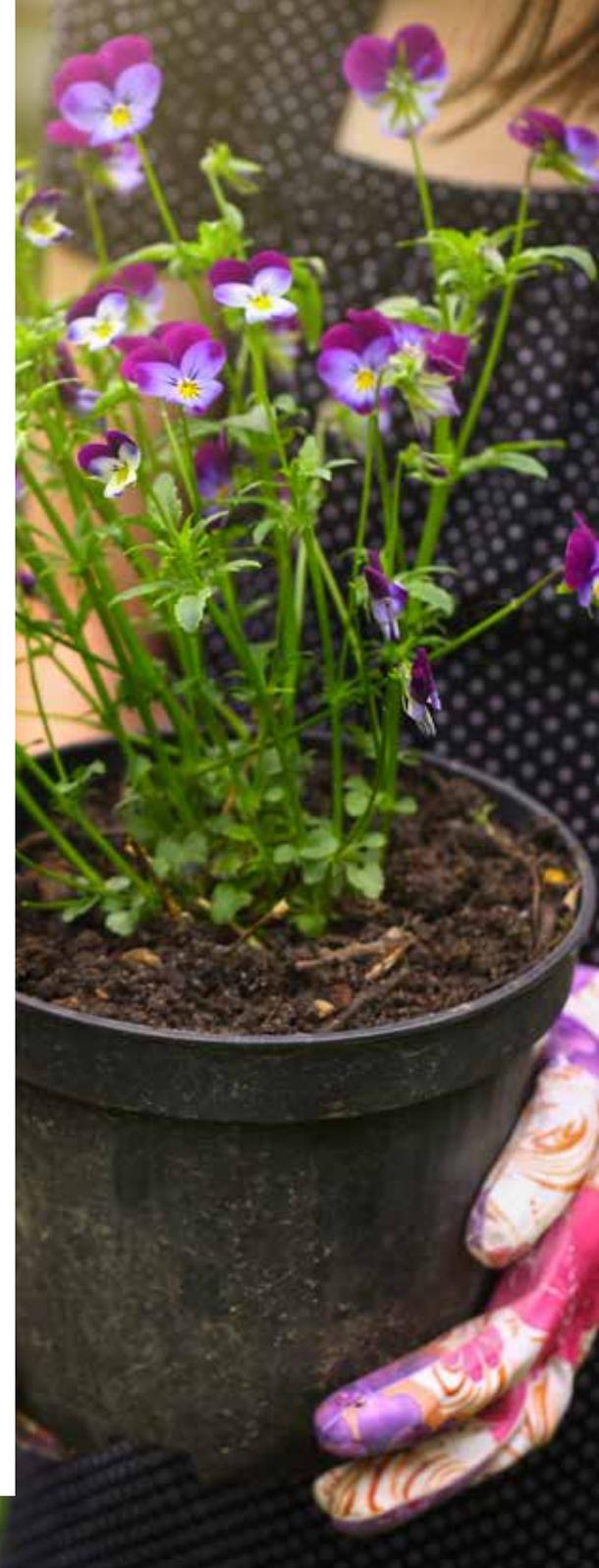
honest with themselves and others, to develop self-reliance, and to accept responsibility for their actions.

There are many tools used in the Therapeutic Community that directly support the development of prosocial non offending behaviour for example:

- **A lack of respect for authority is specifically addressed by the creation of a social hierarchy within the community and a highly structured day.**
- **Staff work as part of the same community but as a role model to support the community to work effectively**
- **Anti-social behaviour, values and beliefs are challenged by the structure of the community**

that fosters a healthy family type atmosphere that supports behaviour change.

- **Negative behaviours such as impulsivity and poor anger management are confronted through group sessions and 1-2-1 work that supports personal growth and development**
- **Anti-social peer networks are challenged by encouraging positive support networks and taking responsibility for each other and the community**
- **Poor social skills are addressed by the use of structured timetable of activity including work programmes and activity such as our Recovery through Sport, Nature and Arts projects**
- **The Therapeutic Community teaches people much more than just how to manage their substance misuse. It encourages residents to adopt a set of values of honesty, concern for others, a work ethic and continuous learning.**





## Jodie's story

# STRIVING FORWARDS AND BEING PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Throughout my teenage years I was in and out of prison on remand, the judge used to send me down for a few weeks as he said that society needed a break from me. As soon as I got out I would be in the same situation, using drugs and alcohol and I would carry on offending, I was sent to hospital to detox several times but nothing ever changed, I was sent back out into the community with the same attitudes and behaviour.

After another hospital admission I was referred to Phoenix and managed to secure funding to go in to residential treatment. I wish I had been referred earlier as it was the first time that I had the opportunity to look at myself and my behaviour. I was challenged by

staff and peers to make changes. I was able to talk about how I felt, which was a big thing for me.

**I got a lot of support from my peers, living as part of a community with responsibilities where I had to be accountable really helped me change my behaviour.**

Now I work for Street Soccer Scotland, with people who are either in recovery or homeless. I am 23 years old and have been clean and sober for the last two and a half years. I look forward to the future and I strive forwards knowing that I am part of the community.

## Jacqui's story

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# HAVING DREAMS, BELIEVING AND ACHIEVING

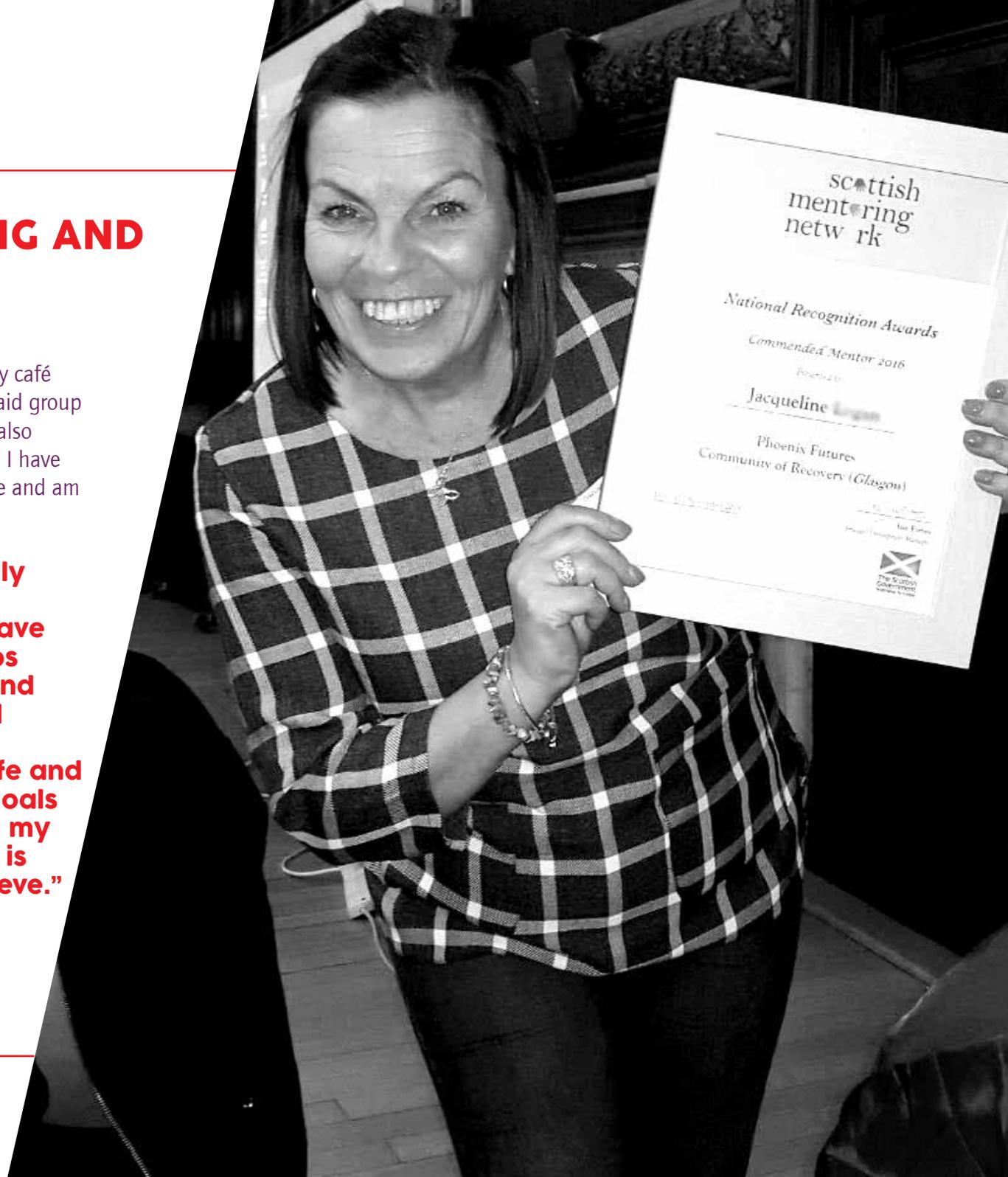
I was 45 when I first came to Phoenix's Glasgow Therapeutic Community, I had spent the past 30 years using drugs and alcohol, my life was chaos and out of control. I would often be in trouble with the police and had been through the prison system.

I spent six months at Phoenix's Glasgow Residential Service where for the first time in my life I had the opportunity to look at my behaviour and attitudes. I spent six months getting to know myself, coming to terms with my past and fixing some stuff that I hadn't been able to deal with before.

I learnt how to take responsibility and I started to develop confidence, self-esteem and self-worth.

After Phoenix I started volunteering in a recovery café where I set up a mutual aid group for women in recovery, I also trained as a peer mentor, I have now gone back to college and am working part time.

**“My life has totally changed, it's manageable, I have built relationships with my family and my children, and I am confident, independent, safe and happy. I've got goals and dreams and my new motto in life is believe and achieve.”**



# WE KNOW THAT WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT AND HELP WOMEN CAN MAKE CHANGES IN THEIR LIVES, RECOVER FROM THEIR ADDICTION AND REDUCE THEIR OFFENDING.

# 76%

of women completed their programme in our Scottish service over the last 3 years

# 80%

of people who complete our TC and supported housing programmes remain drug free.

**We provide safe secure recovery friendly housing for people who complete our Therapeutic Community programme.**

Women accessing treatment have often experienced significant trauma from physical, sexual and emotional abuse – most often from someone close to them. Women can be supported to recover from these experiences.

A nurturing psychological informed environment is essential to delivering effective services for women that provides:

- An environment that fosters a sense of home and safety
- Practical support to manage high levels of destitution and low self care
- Highly skilled and empathetic staff
- Specialist Trauma Informed Care approaches to support women through 1:1 support, group work
- Support and structure from the Therapeutic Community that fosters a sense of confidence and control

Many women who use our services experience significant stigma from communities and in some cases health care professionals.

By supporting women in a range of activities we find ways to build their confidence and skills. Over time women can demonstrate to themselves their families and their communities that regardless of the experiences they have had they can lead productive meaningful and healthy lives .



To find out more about the Therapeutic Community model and more about what Phoenix Futures Scotland does please contact Lyndsey Hague on [lyndsey.hague@phoenix-futures.org.uk](mailto:lyndsey.hague@phoenix-futures.org.uk)

We can arrange a visit to our Glasgow Therapeutic Community so you can see first hand how the programme works, you will be able to meet some of our service users and hear their feedback on how this model of treatment works for them.

**“This programme has given me the chance to be the kind of person that I was always meant to be. To have the opportunity to be part of the community again.”**

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**EMILY, SERVICE USER, GLASGOW THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY**



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