



## Saffires' Vision 2022

### Our Vision

As a Christian charity who believes in the power and authority of Scripture, our starting point has to be God's Word. We turned to key passages that spoke to us in the birth of Saffires - Isaiah 61, John 4, Luke 7 and Genesis 1, 2 and 16. These passages tell stories of women, describe who God is through Jesus, and speak of what it is to be human. From these passages we were able to see:

- That God created all humanity to be equal and hold value and dignity (Gen 1:26-28))
- That God sees each individual, including women, in their unique circumstances (Gen 16; John 4; Luke 7)
- That God responds to suffering with love, compassion and gentleness and offers freedom, forgiveness and acceptance (Gen 16; John 4; Luke 7:48, 50)
- That God's heart is to liberate, heal, bless and restore (Is 61:1-4)
- That God wants to empower those He redeems to be ministers of His truth and love to others (Is 61:4, 6; John 4:28, 39; Luke 7:47, 50)

As we reflected on these passages, dreams began to take shape: a world where nobody is a victim of sexual exploitation; a world where women have exited prostitution and are reintegrated into communities where they are thriving and serving; a world where churches are filled with women who once sold sex but now praise God and serve their communities.

Saffires' overall vision can therefore be summarised as: ***a world where women are free from sexual exploitation and living lives of wholeness and freedom in Christ.***

### Our Mission

In order to move towards our vision, Saffires exists to:

- **Encourage** women to consider routes out of prostitution and support them on that journey;
- provide opportunities for them to **encounter** God;
- facilitate their **engagement** with community, especially church communities; and to
- **empower** women to make their own choices, realise their worth and achieve their full potential.

We seek to work alongside women, recognising that they are the experts in their own lives and should have freedom to make their own choices in respect of any of the goals outlined above.

## Encourage routes out

We recognise that involvement in the sex industry has an impact, usually negative, on all involved - physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. We believe that it is impossible to be involved in the sex industry without being at risk of sexual exploitation at some point. Therefore we believe that to live a life of wholeness and freedom and to be free from sexual exploitation, women need to exit prostitution. However, we also recognise that this has to be a woman's independent decision and is also not a continuous or linear journey. We endeavour to create routes out of prostitution that suit the individual's needs, circumstances and skills, whilst also ensuring the safety of the individual and any dependents.

## Encounter God

In order to live a life of wholeness and freedom in Christ, women need to encounter Him. This may be in the form of shared testimony, opportunities to read the Bible, answered prayer, dreams, experiences of healing, encounters with the Holy Spirit or any other means that God may choose to use. We endeavour to create multiple opportunities for women to explore and express faith, and respect each individual's ways of encountering and connecting with God.

We welcome team members from varied church backgrounds in order to reflect the diversity of God's people and ways of working. We recognise that not all women will be interested in exploring spiritual matters and will respect those choices. A positive response to our beliefs is in no way required in order to access our support or any other services we provide.

We also recognise that there is potential for our faith appearing to be a coercive tool and continuously hold ourselves accountable to prevent this.

## Engage with community

We believe that every person is made to be in relationship with others - to have friendship, support and belonging - and has much to offer the wider community. We endeavour to prevent the isolation of women working in the sex industry and create opportunities for women to build or join communities where they will not only be nurtured and encouraged but also be able to offer their own skills and qualities for the good of others. We also want to create opportunities for women to engage with church communities which are often uniquely diverse and have a strong ethos of compassion, love and encouragement.

## Empower self-esteem

We long to see women being engineers of their own change and so where possible we strive to allow women to make their own choices. We want to speak hope and truth into women's lives so that they grow in confidence in who they are and are empowered by changes in the way they view themselves, increasing their sense of self-esteem, worth and value. We want

to give women a voice of their own rather than always speaking on their behalf, but will seek to prioritise the safety of women and protect their recovery over and above any public declarations. We want to partner with women to achieve their goals rather than acting on their behalf.

Our Mission is to ***provide holistic support to women affected by or involved in prostitution.***

## Our Core Values

### Value the individual

We are committed to the women we serve and their wellbeing is central to our work. We embrace the diversity of humanity and aim to ensure all women, regardless of their culture, background or faith have equal opportunity to access services. We believe in the equality and value of all human beings and endeavour to treat women with respect, valuing them highly and recognising the dignity they inherently possess.

This applies not only to our service users, but also to volunteers and staff. As a team, we value one another and regular prayer is part of our organisational practice.

### Commit for the long haul

We commit to serving women on a long term basis, irrespective of their individual choices and beliefs. Provision of our services is in no way dependent on their response to our beliefs.

We endeavour to provide an ongoing service to women for as long as they wish to partner with us. We understand that healing and recovery is not a linear process and at times women may return to previous patterns of behaviour, however we will continue to provide support at every stage of the journey irrespective of the trajectory of progress.

### Respond to individuals

Each woman we engage with is an individual with her own story, skills and gifts. As such, we seek to respond with individualised support that recognises the unique person. We encourage women to make informed choices and take up new opportunities and believe all women should have the chance to progress, achieve and thrive. We seek to respect their decisions and wishes and empower them to be the author of their own stories.

Within our team, we recognise the unique gifts each person brings and seek to create opportunities for those gifts to be utilised where possible.

## Embrace vulnerability

We believe in the power of vulnerability to combat shame and to facilitate connection with others. We endeavour to create safe spaces where service users and team members are able to bring their whole selves and be welcomed, seen and loved. We strive to safeguard the vulnerabilities of others and provide support that moves them to a place of courage and stability.

In order for vulnerabilities to be shared, we need to be actively living out the values around responding to and valuing individuals so that each person feels safe and loved unconditionally.

## Work to the highest of standards

As an organisation we strive to operate at the highest of standards and follow best practice where possible. This enables us to build a strong reputation and work more easily with other organisations and partners, as well as creating a safe environment for staff and volunteers to work within. We expect all of our team members to pursue excellence in their role and to protect and further the good reputation of Saffires. We will support our team to achieve this as far as is reasonable including ensuring access to regular and relevant training and encouraging everyone to pursue training opportunities. All team members are expected to hold each other accountable to living out all of our values and following our code of conduct.

## Our Name

We chose the name Saffires when we began in 2015 because we believe it communicates the value and worth of women. Sapphires, like all gemstones, are formed under great pressure in darkness and some cut stones will reflect light in a beautiful star shape. This special quality mirrors our belief that God can take anybody from the deepest of dark places and bring them into the light where they will reflect His beauty.

Sapphires are also mentioned in the Bible as one of the foundation stones of heaven, and we want women to know that they are created to be part of God's eternal kingdom of light and love.

The spelling of the gem stone was changed to maintain our unique identity.