

International Women's Day 2023

Reflections on International Women's Day by people who've experienced homelessness and those working to break the cycle of homelessness in Leicester.

March 2023

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International Women's Day 2023



A tribute

Over the last 30 years, I have worked with so many great women who have made huge contributions to Action Homeless, both people experiencing homelessness and staff. Many have been inspirational, many women and their children have been brave. I worked with and supported many brave women when I managed our Domestic Violence project where our work continues today.

The most inspirational woman I ever knew was Maggie Bodell – Stagg. She worked as a support worker at Mayfield House which is where I first met her when I took over her job there, from then I was proud to say she was my friend. Maggie was a well-loved and much respected member of our community here in Leicester, serving for 17 years on the City Council and becoming Lord Mayor in 2002, raising £100,000 for her deserving charities.

She had the zest for life which is rarely seen. If you had met Maggie she would have left an impression that you will never forget. Kind, generous to a fault but with a strong and remarkable character that stood her as a great orator in her professional and personal life. Maggie had a heart of gold always thinking of others before herself, over the years being a member of several charitable organisations, helping those in need and giving her time freely and unselfishly.

Her 35 years working in homelessness and care organisations, culminated with the last 10 years at the Salvation Army, being the national funding officer for all the Salvation Army elderly care homes.

Very sadly, Maggie passed away in 2022. Maggie was indeed a very inspirational woman, a great inspiration to me and a great friend. I miss her deeply every day and would like to embrace her on International Women's Day 2023.

Ange Potts

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Reflections from the frontline of our homelessness services

"International Women's Day is an important opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women and to raise awareness of the challenges that women face. Women make up a significant percentage of the homeless population, caused by variety of factors. Prior to joining Action Homeless, I was unaware of the many factors that lead women into homelessness. It's inspiring to be part of a team that raises awareness and supports women."

Muntaha Mohamed

"It's empowering to work in a team of women, especially with all our clients at flora being male and only 2 females at Stretton. I believe the team bring assertiveness when needed and at the same time are very compassionate and understanding. I admire how firm, direct and precise my manager is when dealing with conflict. This has helped me learn and have more confidence in dealing with difficult situations. Working with the women living in our services has confirmed how resilient, strong and brave we are."

Sabrina Ally

"I have always felt privileged to work in an area I feel so passionate about. Since joining Action Homeless I have felt extremely proud to work in such a strong female led and female based team. From the Action Homeless team itself to the strong and dedicated female professionals from external agencies, it feels like an honour to be surrounded by such inspiring and caring women."

Joanna Ludlam

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Reflections on homelessness by women who have personal experience

"When faced with being homeless, it was the most harrowing experience ever to be endured. I realise that I was given a roof over my head but suddenly you are a number in the system; you're suddenly in the wrong catchment area to see a doctor. But still I was grateful, because I was safe"

Anonymous

"You feel dirty, you feel worthless, you lose your family and friends, you lose your dignity, you lose your belongings, you feel like giving up on life, you feel like nobody cares about you, you wonder if you will have food or a roof over your head daily."

Anonymous

"In the end, it's made me more confident. I understand how to manage money better and make sure my bills are paid. It's made me more independent and led to interactions with new people. It's helped me get the help I need to move forward in life. It gave me the confidence to bid for properties and get my own place."

Anonymous

"I was made homeless due to it being overcrowded at my parents, therefore I was put in a mother and baby unit when I was 8 months pregnant. I had a lot of support during this time and was offered a property back near my parents. I was so lucky."

Anonymous

"Isolating, lost, running away, paranoid, no place in the world, hiding, low self worth, rock bottom, lonely, the world becomes scary, grieving, abusing my body, psychosis, hyper sexuality, bi-polar diagnosis, hospital stays."

Anonymous

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