

Bristol Fawcett

Annual Report for 2014



Foreword

Bristol Fawcett is an activist group for local members of the Fawcett Society. Our members are volunteers who are committed to being active in the vibrant local campaign for gender equality.

We support the aims of the [Fawcett Society](#) and we work at a local level to:

- Raise awareness of Fawcett and the work that Fawcett does
- Campaign and lobby to improve policy and services for women and girls
- Bring an informed gender equality perspective to local decision making bodies.

This is our eighth written annual report, which is intended to be a reference point for current, new and prospective members and supporters, as well as a chance for us to document and celebrate all we have achieved. This report provides a short overview of our activities in the course of the last year since our last AGM, from December 2013 to December 2014.

Information about our membership, communications and finances are provided at the end of the report.

This report also marks the end of an era for me. After 13 years as co-ordinator of Bristol Fawcett, the time has come for me to step aside from the role. It has been a very great pleasure to belong to this wonderful group and I am proud of the part we have played in raising awareness and making positive change for women and girls in the city since our first meeting in 2001. The members of Bristol Fawcett are an extraordinary force for good in this city and it has been a rare privilege to work with, learn from, and spend time in the company of such brilliant women. I also want to pay tribute to the men and women who support our work through advocacy, engagement, fundraising and administrative support, facilitating the work led by the core of activist women in the group.

There will be some changes in the coming year as the group develops a leaner, smarter system of working that will also be more open and more democratic – our website will be archived and our new home will be via the Fawcett Society Local Groups page. Our members will publicise our activities via Facebook and Twitter. Our Annual Report next year may be delivered as a video presentation from the group. These are all exciting developments that will free up our members to focus on doing what we do best, and what we want to be doing – activism for a fairer, safer, more fulfilling environment for women and girls in Bristol and beyond.

Read on to find out more about our activities in the past year.

Helen Mott, Co-ordinator
December 2014

Message from Fawcett Members

On behalf of members, friends and supporters of Bristol Fawcett, we would like to record here our deeply-felt thanks to Helen for the long years of work that she has given to the Bristol Fawcett group and to the women and girls of Bristol. She has steadfastly carried out what has often seemed an impossibly broad role and has acted as nurturer, organiser, chivvier and inspiration of members' individual and collective efforts to progress the work described in this and previous Fawcett annual and other reports – and managed to make us smile and laugh along the way. This she has done with enormous integrity and awesome skills of analysis and organisation. She has been instrumental in bringing Bristol Fawcett to a position where we are almost always consulted when equality issues are under consideration in the city, including by those whose traditional position would not have been to work with the feminists. For this we owe her a great debt of gratitude: what she has done can never be undone and we will continue to be inspired by her example.

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Our campaign themes and sub-groups

The campaign for gender equality and for women's liberation is wide-ranging. Opportunities and imperatives for activism are endless. To keep the task manageable, and to provide clear focus, we select and concentrate on a small number of strategic themes at a time. We have also developed a number of sub-groups so that our members can work together in detail on projects that they as individuals are particularly suited to. The campaign themes which were active this year cover: Women's Poverty (Cutting Women Out); Counting Women In; Women in Sport; and SEVs (Sexual Entertainment Venues). We also continued our campaigning work on Gender in Education and began to develop a return to working on Trafficking.

How do sub-groups work?

General terms of reference and strategy for each sub-group are agreed at main Bristol Fawcett meetings and sub-groups can then meet to work on detail. Sub-groups report back to the main meetings to agree policy and communications, to feed in about activities and to draw on the resources of all our members. While our sub-groups are led by Bristol Fawcett members, the groups benefit enormously from the involvement of individuals and representatives from other local organisations who share our aims and are able to contribute their time and expertise.

Cutting Women Out

Nationally and locally, Fawcett continues to highlight and object to government policy that disproportionately impacts on women and on the most vulnerable in society.

In March, our member Jackie was invited to talk to Bristol East Labour Party about the effects of the cuts on women in Bristol.

In April, for International Women's Day, our member Pamela gave a talk on behalf of the Confronting Women's Poverty group in Bristol.

November this year saw the publication of a major piece of work, our updated report "**Cutting Women Out in Bristol**". In 2011 our member Anna Mapson wrote the first Bristol Fawcett report on the cuts, which projected the impact on women in Bristol of the public sector cuts to spending and welfare. The report was an important resource for politicians, decision makers and campaigners in the city and really helped to focus minds on the injustice of these cuts as well as their cumulative impact. After three years of continued austerity measures and additional cuts, we wanted to update the information and provide an up-to-date analysis of the situation for women in the city.

On 5th November 2014 we published the results of many months' work by Anna: our updated report which provides data and analysis across nine broad areas. It paints a grim picture of increasing inequality between men and women in the city as a result of the centrally imposed

cuts to welfare, public services and support for the vulnerable.

Some of the key highlights from the report are:

- **Employment** – The West of England Strategic Economic Plan 2015-2030 does not address gender inequality, the needs of women, or women’s access to employment. Areas where women are employed more, such as social care, have not been earmarked for investment. Women’s employment will benefit the least from the projects selected from the government’s investment in the areas selected by the Local Enterprise Partnership such as telecommunications, construction, marine energy and transport.
- **Barriers to employment** - Nationally the cost of childcare rose by 19% in 2013, and Bristol was the top city outside London where unemployed parents would like to work but can’t afford to. Funding for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes has been reduced over the last few years whilst at the same time it is a requirement to pass an English test to claim Job Seekers Allowance. Those who fail to start, participate in, or complete their training face a benefit sanction despite no childcare provision to attend classes, and few within school hours, so mothers, especially single parents struggle to attend.
- **Housing** – Single women (including single parents) are the main recipients of housing benefits. Over 5,000 single women in Bristol are claiming Local Housing Allowance (LHA) for private rented accommodation compared to 3,324 men. Housing in Bristol will become ‘very unaffordable’ for those on LHA by 2021.
- **Incomes and Poverty** – Women in Bristol (and nationally) are poorer than men and receive a higher proportion of their income from benefits, including tax credits and out of work benefits. Lone parents, disabled women, carers and BME women are set to be particularly badly hit by the tax and benefit changes.
- **Violence against Women** – 43,340 women in Bristol are likely to be raped or sexually abused at some point in their lifetime and 68,800 women in Bristol are likely to experience domestic violence. Bristol City Council has increased funding for organisations working in this field, in stark contrast to other cities where large cuts have been made. Bristol has a strong multi-agency approach to working to end all types of violence and abuse against women and girls and domestic and sexual violence against men.
- **Women’s Voluntary Organisations** – Many women’s voluntary organisations are facing funding cuts whilst dealing with increasing demand from communities as a result of the recession and the impact of other public spending cuts.
- **Transport** – Patchy bus routes can leave women isolated and unable to get to work, to further education centres or to reach support organisations. This has an impact on their life chances and social mobility.

Copies of the report have been sent to Bristol’s Mayor and Councillors, the Police and Crime Commissioner and other decision makers in the city. The report has been widely publicised and has featured in a number of blogs, magazine articles and radio interviews as well as being presented to local organisations. In the first month since its publication the report has

been downloaded from our website over 1,400 times.

Our thanks go to all those who contributed to the publication and dissemination of this report from our interviewees to those who contributed research, updated chapters, checked facts, proof-read the drafts, sought and donated funds, designed graphics and managed the publicity.

“Cutting Women Out In Bristol” (Bristol Fawcett, 2014) is available to download from:
<http://www.bristolfawcett.org.uk/Documents/Economy/BristolCuttingWomenOut.pdf>

Counting Women In

The Fawcett Society has its roots in the campaign for women’s suffrage. Equality for women in political and public life remains a central concern for Fawcett both nationally and locally. This year, we have been working on campaigns for the local elections in May 2014 and the forthcoming General Election in May 2015.

We also belong and contribute to the Bristol Women’s Commission Task Group on the Representation of Women.

The Counting Women In Subgroup met regularly throughout 2014 to discuss and record campaign actions. Actions were divided up across the membership and were taken between meetings. The group decided to change the scope of the campaign this year which meant fewer actions were taken in relation to local elections in order to put more focus on the general election.

Local Elections 2014

We asked all candidates in the Local Elections to respond to a series of questions relating to issues of concern for women in Bristol. We produced a report which was downloaded from our website 322 times.

We tweeted about women’s concerns and about the importance of women’s votes throughout the build-up to the local elections.

We designed and produced a logo demonstrating women’s and men’s unequal representation in Bristol’s Council which was used extensively in our materials and communication in the run-up to the elections, and was also circulated by others.



This year we saw 24 of Bristol's 70 seats up for election. Women represented only 29% of all candidates in the election.

The election results are at

<http://www.bristol.gov.uk/LocalElectionViewer?XSL=main&ElectionId=68>

By our calculations we started off with 5/24 of these seats being held by women (20.1%) and we ended up with 6/24 of the seats being held by women (25%).

In terms of overall council makeup, we started with women representing 20/70 (28.6%) and we now have 21/70 (30%). This figure of 30% is 2.7% below the national average in 2014.

Of the 3 elected women councillors who stood down or lost their seats, they were replaced by men in each case (Hengrove, Redland, Southville).

2 elected women councillors held on to their seats (Henleaze, Southmead).

4 elected men who stood down or lost their seats were replaced by women (Brislington West, Hartcliffe, Lockleaze, St George West).

The European election result had better gender representation: four out of six MPs elected in the region are female.

General Elections 2015

The group's major milestones this year have been to write six new briefings to influence and inform Prospective Parliamentary Candidates on the issues of most importance to women in Bristol. We also look forward to working with Bristol Women's Voice on a Women's Question Time event in March 2015 where women will have the opportunity to ask questions of those standing for Parliament.

Our briefings for candidates cover the economy, health, childcare and caring, transport, violence against women and girls and political representation. Members of the group have now begun talking through the briefings face-to-face with the individual candidates. The briefings are being positively received. The dialogue will help to inform candidates' views and

continues the process of building relationships between Bristol Fawcett and our current and future Members of Parliament.

We were pleased to deliver a workshop on our politically-focussed campaigning to Fawcett members and local groups at Fawcett's AGM in November.

Sexual Entertainment Venues (SEVs)

Bristol Fawcett has been active in campaigning against the proliferation of lap dancing clubs (SEVs) since 2002. Members of this group collate research on SEVs and their relation to gender equality. Members of the group monitor applications made for SEVs in Bristol and publicise consultations by the Council's Licensing Committee. When we are made aware of breaches to SEV licence conditions we notify the Council's Licensing Team. We require the statutory authorities to take their responsibility for equality and safety seriously, which means that as long as SEVs are in operation they must be monitored and assessed and held to account and the safety of the performers must be paramount.

In 2011, Bristol City Council decided to set a cap of two SEVs in central Bristol and one in Old Market.

The sub-group has limited its activity in 2014 to notifying members about the three applications for SEV licence renewals by the three existing clubs – Urban Tiger and Central Chambers in the city centre and Temptations T3 in Old Market. Applications were received in November and December and hearings will be held in the new year. This year, Temptations have also applied for a licence variation which, if granted, would allow the club to open from 12pm on a Saturday through to midnight on a Sunday.

The use of "Back to School" and "Student" promotions by the clubs this year have been of concern. Young women and young female students are, respectively, the most frequently victimised members of the population for domestic abuse and for sexual offences including rape¹. A study of male student behaviour published this year concluded that the frequently documented association between heavy drinking and sexual violence is mediated by the extent to which male students engage in sexually objectifying women. In other words, "alcohol use intensifies the objectification of women in a manner that increases sexual violence risk"². SEVs combine the sexual objectification of women with the promotion of alcohol consumption.

Our overall aim is to work with Bristol City Council in the implementation of a nil cap for SEVs in the city.

¹ Appendix Table 4.09, Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences 2012/13 (ONS) and Table 2.7 of ONS Overview of Sexual Offending in England and Wales, 2009-2012.

² Gervais, S. J., DiLillo, D., & McChargue, D. (2014, January 13). Understanding the Link Between Men's Alcohol Use and Sexual Violence Perpetration: The Mediating Role of Sexual Objectification. *Psychology of Violence*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/a0033840

Women in Sport

In April 2013 Bristol Fawcett set up a sub group addressing the under-representation of women and girls in sport. The objectives of this group are:

1. To improve the coverage and visibility of women's sports and sportswomen.
2. To support and promote sport for girls and women.
3. To challenge gendered assumptions about women's sport.

This year (2014) we have accomplished a number of achievements:

- The Sport Watch website (<http://sportwatchbristol.wordpress.com/>) has been going from strength to strength. The site has attracted over 4500 views in the past 12 months, doubling the amount from last year (our twitter followers have also doubled). Together, our small team has published over 40 articles throughout the year. We've covered a wide range of sports including fencing, cycling, netball, roller derby, football, rugby, tennis, rowing, martial arts, frisbee, skiing, hockey, and Gaelic football. In addition to this we've facilitated some excellent articles from guest writers, including stories about motor sports, marathon running, and an analysis of semi-professional women's football.
- We interviewed Elsa Hammond who set out to row 2,400 miles across the Pacific Ocean in a boat decorated with the names of inspirational women. We also interviewed Jane Leslie who won 2014's Triathlon Grand Final in the over 65 age group.
- Our strategy for the new year is to build upon our interview webpage, by providing a platform for sporting role models from which to encourage and inspire more women and girls to get active, take part in, and excel at sport.
- We developed and printed Sport Watch postcards which we subsequently handed out at sporting events, increasing publicity for the website whilst encouraging others to contribute and write their own articles.
- We have researched and publicised 193 women's sporting events this year as part of our strategy to encourage the public to show up and support their local teams.
- Aside from our website, Nicola Waterworth has spoken at the WSFF (Women's Sport & Fitness Foundation) conference at UWE in February, and attended the ESDF Annual Conference at Walsall University in September. On top of that she has been appointed a Trustee of the Women's Sport Trust, as well as organising guided cycling tours about Bristol's history, and organising women and cycling events in Southmead and Knowle.
- We were invited to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women and Sport in June. Nicola Richardson took part in the discussion and wrote an article for Sport Watch summarising the meeting. The discussion also led to Nicola writing an inspiring article that covered five reasons why sport is not a scary word, encouraging women and girls to get involved.

- Last year we gave recommendations to the Mayor's Sport Commission, and this year we have been following up on our involvement with the Sport Commission and its outcomes, by actively increasing women's representation in sport, and by publicising our thoughts on the place of women and girls in the Commission's final report this year. We also responded to Bristol's Cycling Strategy Consultation, writing an excellent report that can be found here: <http://bristolfawcett.org.uk/Documents/Sport/BristolCyclingStratBF140728.pdf>
- In February, Women and Sport Group member Stephanie produced a video to inspire young women to get involved in sport. Find it here: <http://www.vimeo.com/83226022>
- We have also been published in the Bristol Woman magazine. Nicola Richardson wrote an excellent article on encouraging girls and women to participate in sport, which can be found on page 48 of the magazine here: http://bristolwoman.org.uk/mag/004_Bristol-woman.pdf.
- And finally, we are massively excited that our fabulous group member Susie, who has contributed so much to this group as well as to the Counting Women In group, starts an internship on the International Sports Desk at CNN commencing in January 2015.

Overall the group has had a very successful year, addressing gender inequality in sport through positive coverage of a range of women's sporting issues.

We would like to thank Wesport for supporting and launching the Women's Coaching Network in June, and members of the Women & Sport Strategy Group.

<http://bristolfawcett.org.uk/Sport.html>

<http://sportwatchbristol.wordpress.com/>

Twitter: [@SportWatch_](https://twitter.com/SportWatch_)

Anti-Trafficking

Bristol Fawcett members have been engaged with awareness-raising work about human trafficking, and specifically trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, since 2007. This year we renewed our commitment to addressing trafficking in the city from a feminist perspective by building relationships with the city's Anti-Slavery Partnership, the successor to the Anti-Trafficking Partnership.

We look forward to contributing to awareness raising events next year, when the Modern Slavery Bill will enter legislation.

Bristol's Anti-Slavery Partnership: www.aspartnership.org.uk

Gender Equality in Education

We remain committed to ensuring that gender inequality, and violence against women and girls, are subjects to be actively and skilfully addressed in Bristol's education settings from early years to colleges and universities in order to promote real social change. Our main route for achieving this is through our ongoing membership of the city's "**Bristol Ideal**" task group. This group includes representatives from the voluntary and community sector as well as the statutory sector including public health and education specialists.

The "**Bristol Ideal**" is an ambitious, achievable project to change our city by setting out a standard for all schools and early years providers across Bristol to be effective in tackling and preventing violence and abuse against women and girls (VAAWG), by encouraging young people to develop the skills to enjoy healthy and respectful relationships and by providing staff with the information they need to help young people to be safe. Every young person deserves to be equipped with the tools to recognise, challenge and prevent gendered violence in their lives.

Bristol is uniquely well-placed to take the initiative and lead the way with our strong partnerships of skilled professionals, effective campaigners, specialist academics at both of our Universities and genuinely committed politicians. We believe that the Bristol Ideal has the power to transform lives. Our members have contributed in a number of ways to the development of this project from project planning to IT support to briefing a range of interested parties. We will continue to give our wholehearted support to this fantastic project.

The Bristol Ideal was formally launched in spring 2014 with the support of the Mayor and Cabinet, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset, and each of Bristol's four Members of Parliament. The project is going from strength to strength and is being recognised as best practice. This year in addition to making submissions to a number of consultations, the Bristol Ideal team were visited by the Parliamentary Education Select Committee as a part of their PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) and SRE (Sex and Relationships Education) enquiry. The team were also visited in Bristol by the Permanent Secretary to the Home Office.

Bristol Fawcett strongly support all calls for PSHE and SRE to be a compulsory part of the school curriculum for all children. We support the End Violence Against Women Coalition campaign and we provided a statement to Caroline Lucas MP in support of her PSHE campaign.

<http://www.bristolideal.org.uk/>

Twitter: [@thebristolideal](https://twitter.com/thebristolideal)

Other Activities

We are proud to be represented on **Bristol Women's Mayoral Commission**. Bristol was the first major UK city to become a signatory to the European Charter for the Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. Bristol will develop, implement and adopt a strategy and action plan to give effect to the Charter – this work is being undertaken by the [Commission for Women](#) led by our friends from [Bristol Women's Voice](#). The Commission has tasks groups working on: Women and Representation; Transport; Safety and Violence; and the Economy. We contribute to each of these workstreams and are members of the Representation task group.

Our member Anna Mapson continues to represent us on the national Board of Directors of the Fawcett Society. Anna and fellow member Alex Ivory have undertaken a number of pieces of work for Fawcett looking specifically at the role of local groups.

We have a wonderful new logo, designed by our member Heather, which features on this report and on all our communications.

During the year we have been represented at a number of **conferences** and **events**, and written a number of **consultation responses** and **reports** not referred to elsewhere in this report:

- In January we lobbied our MPs expressing our concern at the proposed “Gagging Bill”.
- We attended the “Bristol for Democracy’ Meeting in January, where we asked questions about electoral systems in local government and raised concerns about Bristol’s draft Local Economic Plan.
- We wrote and published a response to the Mayor’s Budget Proposals for Bristol in January.
- In February we provided a chair for a panel for the “Women, Work and Value” event funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and hosted by the University of Bristol.
- In March we attended the International Women’s Day event hosted in Bristol by Bristol Women’s Voice, and our member Jackie Furneaux gave a talk about her adventures as a motorbike enthusiast.
- We attended and contributed to the visit to Bristol of the UN’s Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls as she undertook her Mission to the UK in April.
- Also in April, a five day exhibition “No Images of Women” took place in Bristol highlighting issues of the objectification of women. The preview event raised funds for Bristol Fawcett for which we are very grateful.
- We attended the Labour Party Commission on Women’s Safety in June.

- In October our member Lesley carried out training for Alliance Homes on Understanding Gender Based Issues.

Membership

Bristol Fawcett is an activist group, established in 2001, whose members seek not primarily to talk about feminism but to 'do' feminism and make a difference however we can to awareness, policy and practice in the local area.

Our core membership is a group of women who give their time, their ideas and their expertise on a regular basis to the projects and events that we undertake, meeting monthly and communicating between meetings via email. This year, 27 people expressed an interest in joining Bristol Fawcett as committed activists. There are 32 people on our Yahoo eGroup and this is representative of the number of active core members of Bristol Fawcett. Our average monthly meeting attendance is seven members. There are also many local women and men who support Fawcett's work by contributing financially to the national organisation through Fawcett membership. We have many local supporters who are members of our wider networks including our Facebook group and our Twitter followers, and who take part in and advise us on our activities.

We warmly welcome new members and new supporters.

Can Sonmez, Membership officer

Membership enquiries: www.bristolfawcett.org.uk/Join%20Us.html

Communications

A significant feature of Bristol Fawcett – which contributes to our success in making a difference – is the strength of our **networks**. We communicate regularly with hundreds of local, regional and national organisations as well as local activists, via our website, Facebook and Twitter. Our members are active in a number of local and national organisations. This year we have worked with and campaigned alongside a great range of local and national organisations.

We have an average of 3,300 visits per month to our website. This year our home page, our events page and our pages on the economy were the most visited.

Our Facebook Group has almost 300 members, and we have over 1300 followers on Twitter.

Website: www.bristolfawcett.org.uk and <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/get-involved/local-groups/bristol/>

Facebook: Bristol Fawcett Society (group) or www.facebook.com/groups/134736719941910/

Twitter: [@BristolFawcett](https://twitter.com/BristolFawcett)

Summary of Accounts 2014

Opening balance:

The opening balance in the Fawcett accounts for 2014 was £4,166.

Income:

Income received in year totalled £1,509. This was made up of:

Funding stream	Amount	Description
General funds	£43.25	No Images of Women exhibition
General funds	£4.48	Interest
General funds	£61.76	Fundraising evening
General funds	£20.00	Donation from a member
Cutting Women Out report	£1,400.00	Unison
TOTAL	£1,529.49	

Bristol Fawcett would like to express our thanks to:

- the 'No Images of Women' exhibition organisers for their donation.
- Barbara Quin and Alex Ivory for organising a very successful fundraising evening.
- UNISON for supporting our updated report on the impact of the cuts on local women.

All contributions have been allocated to general funds.

Expenditure:

Expenditure paid in year totalled £3,268. The breakdown of spend is as follows:

Funding stream	Amount	Description
General expenses	£52.10	Web & e-mail hosting
Women In Sport	£82.37	Blog hosting and production of postcards
Cutting Women Out	£3,133	Report writing, design and printing costs
TOTAL	£3,268	

Closing balance:

The closing balance at the end of 2014 is £2,428. The breakdown of funds is as follows:

Funding stream	Opening balance	Closing balance
General expenses	£2,140.76	£1,935.98
Counting Women In	£70.00	£70.00
Anti trafficking	£421.86	£421.86
Cutting Women Out/Confronting Women's Poverty	£1,533.40	£0.00
TOTAL	£4,166.02	£2,427.84

Stephanie Poyntz
 Treasurer, Bristol Local Fawcett Group
 7th December 2014