

# Engaging with women to address health inequalities

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Craven Women's Health Network



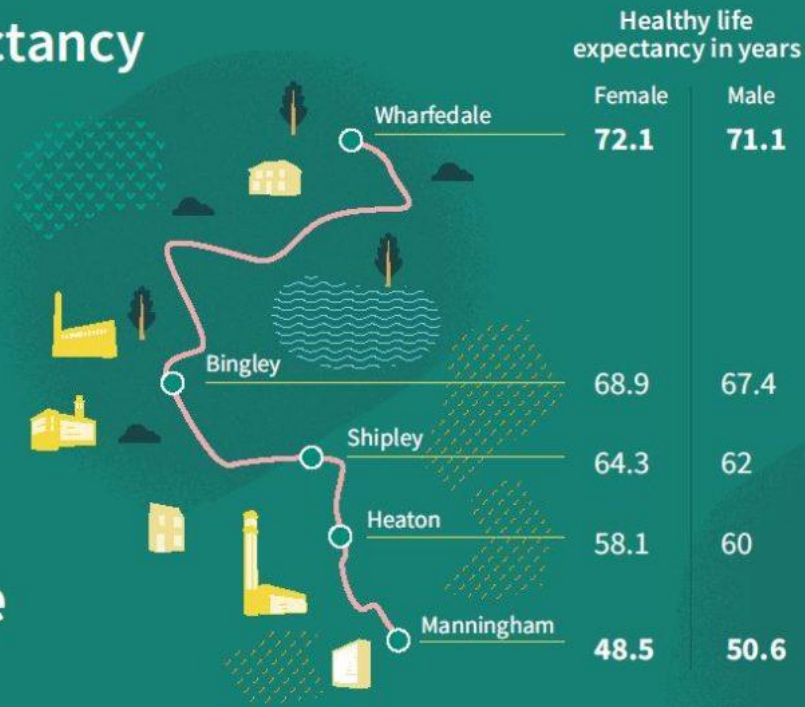
# Our place

## Healthy life expectancy

It's not just about how long people live, it's how well they live too. If we take away the time people are living with poor mental wellbeing and ill health – we get what is known as **healthy life expectancy**.

10 miles  
20 years  
less healthy life

Data source: Office of National Statistics, 2009 - 2013



Bradford district and Craven stretches from Bradford city centre, past Keighley in the Aire Valley, through the large market towns of Ilkley and Skipton, to Ingletton in the Craven basin.

As a partnership we serve a GP-registered population of over **648,000 people** in this mixed urban and rural area covering **595 square miles**.

Across Bradford district and Craven, there are **significant health inequalities** in communities and the gap in how long people will live is stark. People in the **most deprived areas** of our district are living with **more ill health** and dying earlier.

# Women's Health Network

The Bradford District & Craven Women's Health Network (WHN) is a **collective of women** who have an interest in the health and wellbeing of women and their families.

It was set up by the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in 2016 after 8 months of **research and consultation** with local and national women and women's groups.

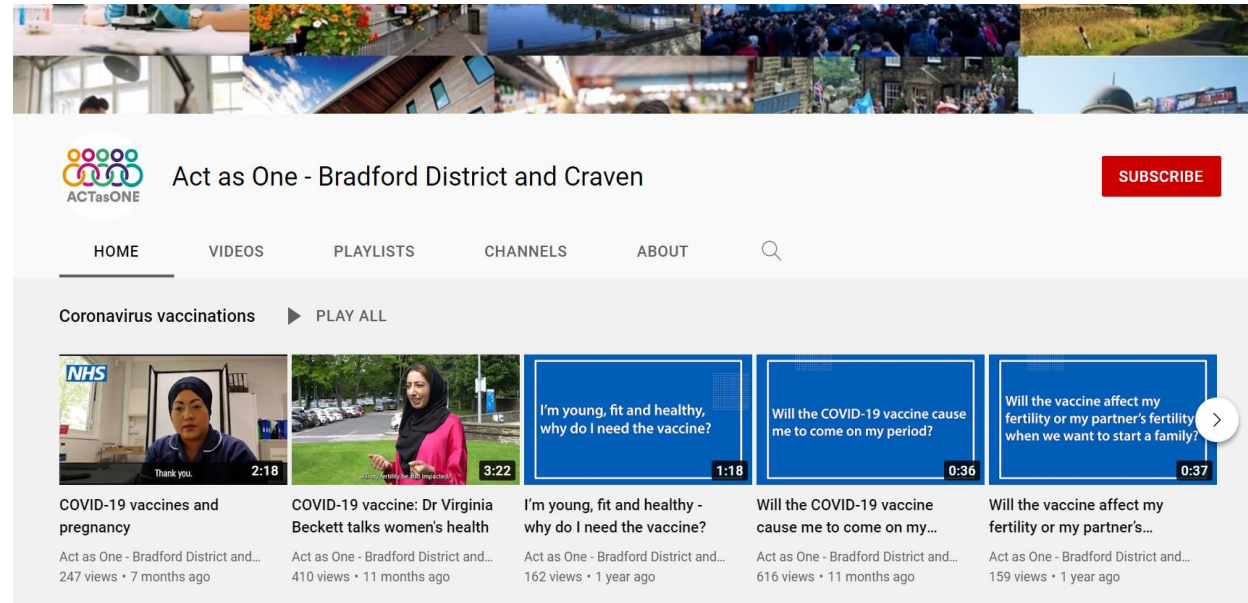
WHN is **coordinated by a dedicated team** working in VCSE organisations. This is **recurrently funded** as part of a programme that supports and builds capacity in our VCSE sector.



# Outcomes led by women in our communities



- Sharing insight to shape the commissioning of an integrated domestic violence support service
- Talk Cancer – raising awareness and increasing screening uptake
- Covid-19 & vaccination – trusted voices challenging misinformation and reaching communities



# How does it feel?

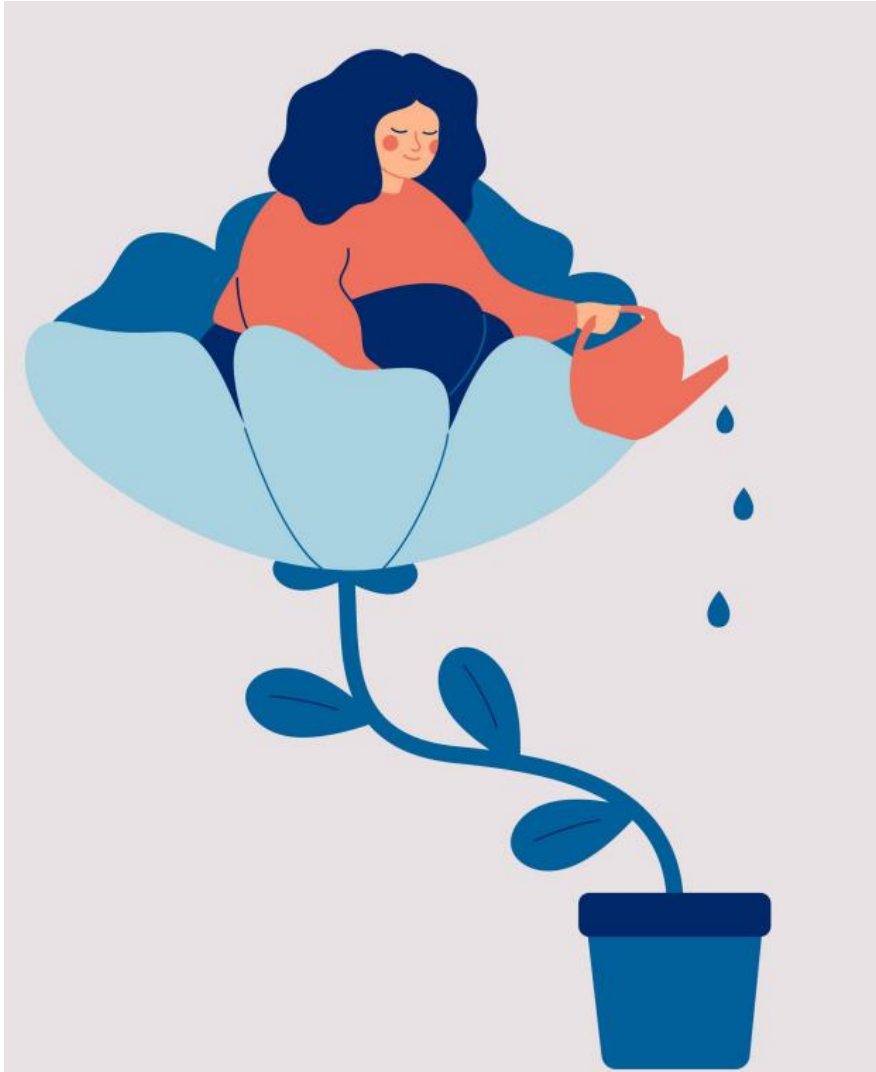
“The affective dimension of WHN is central to its success and sustainability, including the atmosphere of meetings, solidarity, trust, how the network feels to members, members’ passion and pride about WHN, and other intangibles.” BCU Evaluation

*“...it’s hard to explain sometimes, but if you’ve ever been to any of our events, they feel very warm, there’s a lot of laughter, there’s a lot of kindness. We’d have people chatting, we’d have people crying in the meetings - in a good way.”*





# Secrets of our success?



Planting the seeds and creating the right conditions for things to grow and thrive.

- VCSE roles and resource
- Relationship building
- Reaching out vs reaching in
- Letting go of our agenda
- Developing leaders
- Critical mass vs critical yeast

*“a few strategically connected people have greater potential for creating the social growth of an idea or process than large numbers of people who think alike.”*

# Masira Hans

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My journey as Chair of  
Women's Health Network



# Who Am I?

Young Muslim South Asian Female

Community Development

Community Engagement

Counsellor

Lead Programme Manager

Chair of Women's Health Network



## When did I get involved?

- Since the inception of WHN in 2016!
- First meeting
- Celebrating International Women's Day

## How did I progress to become Chair?

- December 2018
- Encouragement and support from seniors

# Projects to be proud of

- **Continuous engagement**
- **Acting as a community connector**
- Involvement of men in the discussions around women's health
- Menopause
- Painful periods
- Misogyny
- Dispelling myths regarding the Covid vaccine

# Challenges

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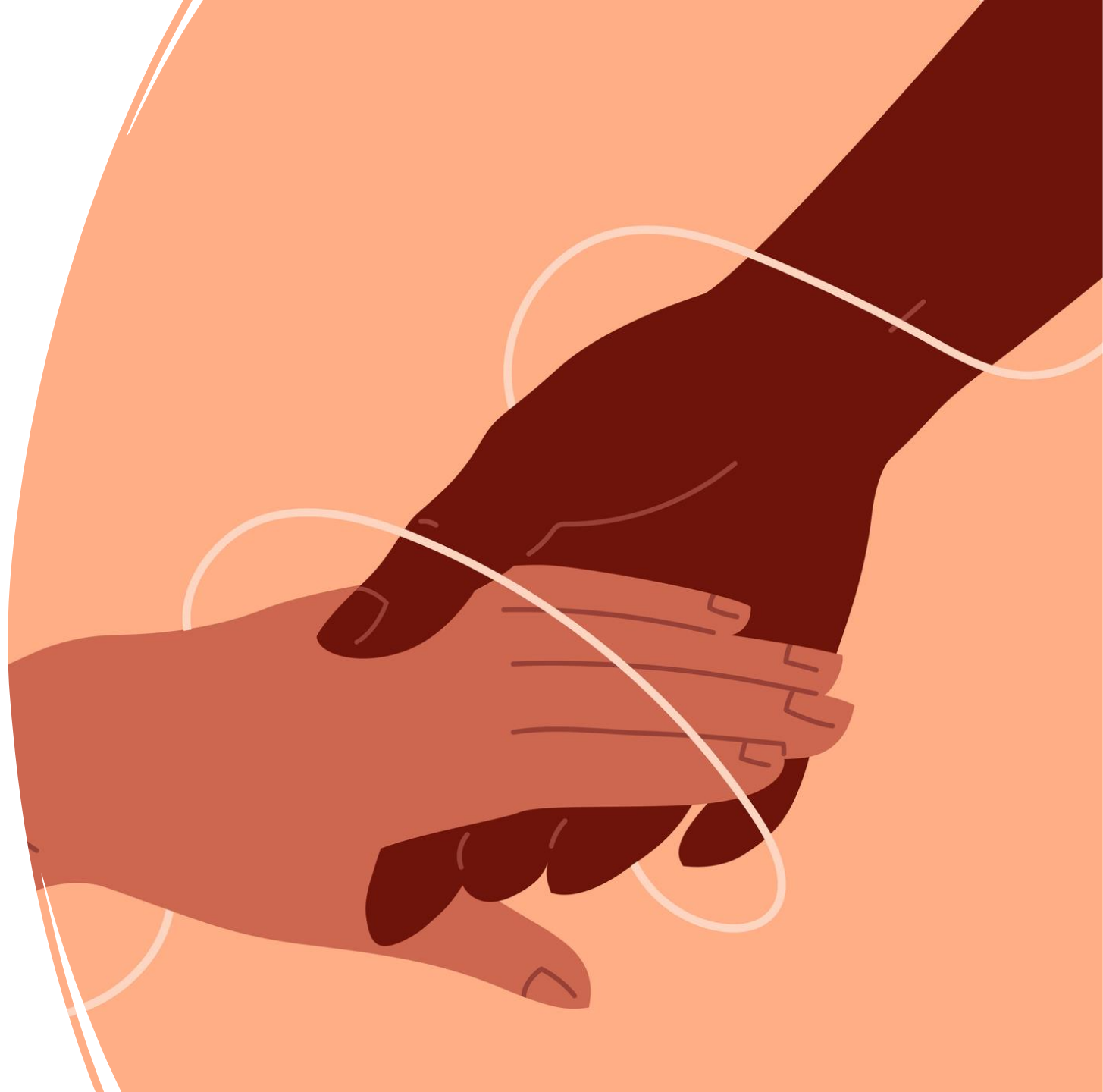
- Unconscious bias
- Maneuvering the system
- Covid-19
- Systemic challenges



# What does WHN mean to me?

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- Empowerment
- Diversity
- Opportunity



# Any questions?

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## Links

[WHN information and video case study](#)

[City of Birmingham University evaluation report](#)

[WHN Covid-19 vaccine videos](#)