

## A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1987 a group of women from a variety of backgrounds came together on a voluntary basis with the aim of developing a support service for women and girls in Barnsley. Over two years they met, raised money and trained, before opening a helpline service in 1989 for women who had experienced sexual abuse. Initially this functioned on a shoestring. They had no premises of their own and the bare minimum of equipment. On Thursday evenings they would wind the telephone downstairs to a borrowed office and take calls in the 2-hour session. For the rest of the week, the answer phone was locked in a filing cabinet in a disused attic!

In 1991 after securing additional funding, they moved into better premises and were at last able to offer face to face counselling to women in a safe and comfortable environment. The workload increased on all fronts over the years and the recruitment of new volunteers, and employment of a Development Worker and part-time Admin Worker in 1996, enabled the services to women to be extended in line with client demand.

BSARCS now employs 31 staff and last year offered support to over 1500 Barnsley women, men, children and young people. Support offered includes: Support through the justice process (ISVA)

- Wellbeing Advocacy
- Counselling
- Children's Therapy
- Group work
- Family support