



THE  
**BIRTH PARTNER**  
PROJECT

**IMPACT REPORT**  
**2022-23**

[birthpartnerproject.org](https://birthpartnerproject.org)

# CONTENTS

Statement from the Chair	3
What we do	5
Journey so far	7
Our team	8
Who we support	9
Our impact	11
Financial statement	13
Our thanks	14



# STATEMENT FROM CHAIR



Laura Santana, Chair



2022-23 has been an impressive and resilient year for The Birth Partner Project (TBPP). We welcomed new members of staff (Amalia, Emma and Han), and our team of dedicated volunteers continues to grow and flourish. This year marked the slow transition from COVID crisis back to a 'normal' way of life and we saw the return of face-to-face training, relaxation of strict hospital rules and the recommencement of normal volunteer support services.

The trustees and I have been impressed by how the service has matured over the year, and the level of holistic support deepen. We now run a weekly drop-in service run by Wellbeing Officer Emma Stubley. Here pregnant mothers and new mums meet to share experiences and get vital information about access to healthcare and social support.

Sinnead Ali, our Volunteer Co-ordinator has expanded our volunteer training to include sessions around trauma informed care, baby first aid, baby loss awareness as well as strengthening our training around cultural competency, racism and working with interpreters.

Our Project Manager Emily Robertson has provided key leadership and support to staff over the year, and she continues to build our profile and push for key improvements for maternal and neonatal outcomes for the women and children we support.

Our Fundraising and Communications Officer Amalia Syeda-Aguirre's 'Big Give' triumph at Christmas and successful National Lottery Community Fund and Nisa funding bids ensures that our vital work is safeguarded. While Han Gao (our Finance Officer) guarantees our financial responsibility and accountability to our funders and the board.

At board level, we welcomed Christianah – a former TBPP service user and refugee. She brings a deeper level of understanding and experience that informs the Board’s direction. Chantal Patel, Associate Professor of Law and Medical Ethics at Swansea University, also joins us, bringing her expert experience in legal and charity sectors.

As we continue to support women through a time of crisis within maternity services – weakened through Covid as a result of staff shortages, sickness and reduction of services, it is imperative that we do not lose sight of the important focus of our project – that women should not have to birth alone. Working with Welsh Government, the NHS and third sector we will continue to strive to amplify the voices of the women we support and to improve outcomes for women their families.



# OUR TRUSTEES AND STAFF



**Laura Santana**  
CO-FOUNDER & CHAIR

**Smitha Coughlan**  
TREASURER

**Emily Robertson**  
PROJECT MANAGER

**Amalia Syeda-Aguirre**  
FUNDRAISING & COMMS OFFICER

**Han Gao**  
FINANCE OFFICER

**Emma Stublely**  
WELLBEING OFFICER

**Sinnead Ali**  
VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR

**Billie Hunter**  
TRUSTEE

**Ellen Bryant**  
TRUSTEE

**Andrea Powell**  
TRUSTEE

**Caroline Parkes**  
TRUSTEE

**Chantal Patel**  
TRUSTEE

**Christianah Tosin**  
TRUSTEE

# WHAT WE DO

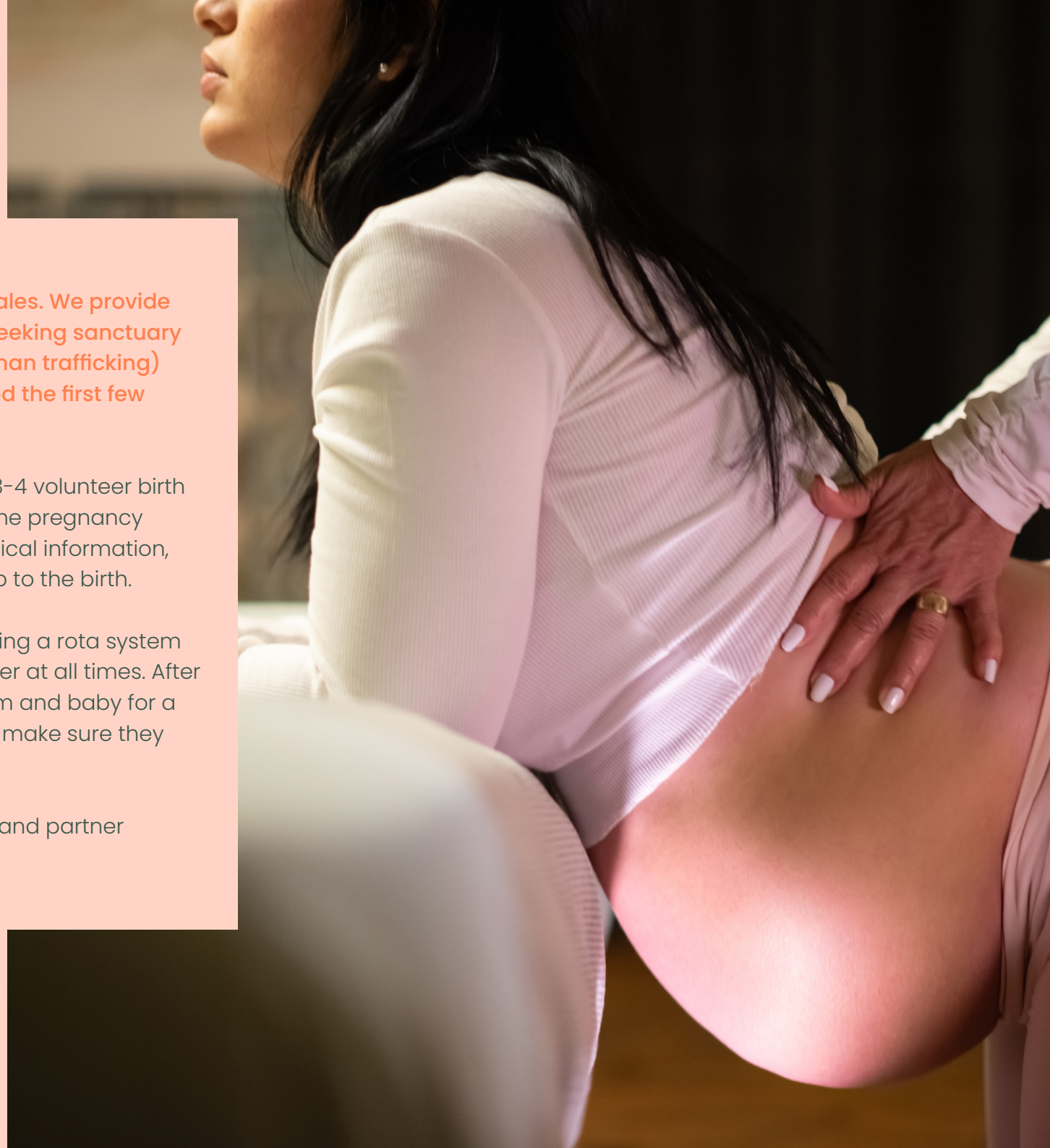
## BIRTH PARTNER SERVICE

The Birth Partner Project is based in Cardiff, Wales. We provide volunteer birth partners to pregnant women seeking sanctuary (asylum-seekers, refugees and victims of human trafficking) who would otherwise face pregnancy, birth and the first few weeks with their newborn baby alone.

Each woman is supported by a small team of 3-4 volunteer birth partners, who meet together from week 36 of the pregnancy onwards to build friendships and provide practical information, emotional support and guidance in the lead up to the birth.

When labour begins, we provide 24-support using a rota system to ensure that the woman has someone with her at all times. After birth, our volunteers continue to meet with mum and baby for a further 8 weeks to offer additional support and make sure they have everything they need.

Our referrals come from community midwives and partner organisations.





## VOLUNTEER TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Volunteers are at the heart of our project. We have a dedicated staff member focused on the recruitment, training, support and wellbeing of the volunteer birth partners. We provide a specialist induction training for new volunteers and offer ongoing trainings and development opportunities throughout the year as well as regular debrief and supervision and socials.

In order to diversify and enrich our team we have created new roles for those people who may have less time but just as much compassion for the work. We are introducing Post-partum support roles and drop-in support volunteer roles following a listening campaign.



## WEEKLY DROP-IN SERVICE

Women who used our services and came to the end of our support period identified the need for an ongoing space to meet and support new arrivals on their pregnancy and post-partum journey. With funding from Safer Beginnings the weekly drop-in was piloted to enable self-advocacy, peer support and access to information and resources.

We host a weekly drop-in space for pregnant and new parent sanctuary seekers focusing on maternity wellbeing. We provide hot food (donated by partners Atma Lounge), bus fares, access to resources and signposting to specialist services. The weekly sessions which are co-produced with the women who use our services include post-partum relaxation and yoga, sling workshops, baby first aid, creative wellbeing, horticulture workshops and participant-led dance classes.

# VOLUNTEER STORY



Gillian is the CEO of a National Arts Organisation and a mum of 4. Gillian joined the project as a volunteer in January 2022 and has since birth partnered 6 women as well as attending lots of training and participating in regular socials and learning and development opportunities.

Gillian says "I had been looking for the 'right' volunteering opportunity for some time and I knew that I wanted to give my time to something that centred women and also would have a hyper local impact if possible. When I read about TBBP I immediately felt that it had the possibility of providing me with the potential for feeling rewarded for my time while also meeting a measurable need for the charity. As I was looking for a long-term volunteering commitment so it was important to me to have those both met.

Being a volunteer with The Birth Partner Project has far exceeded my expectations overall and I'm really passionate about the impact the charity has for women seeking sanctuary. The stand out moment for me so far is realising how privileged I am to be welcomed in by these women at a very particular point on their journey through life."



# THE JOURNEY SO FAR

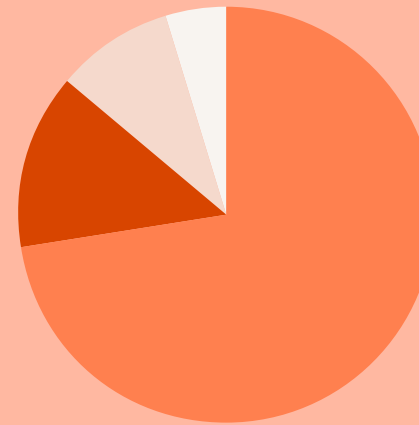


# OUR TEAM 2022/23

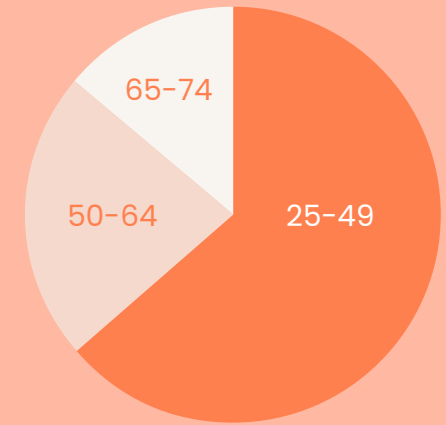
We have a wonderful team of 20 active birth partner volunteers, 8 trustees and 4 part-time staff members



## WE ARE A TEAM OF DIVERSE MEMBERS



Ethnicity



Age range

- > Of those who submitted data, 16 are white British/European; 3 have mixed or multiple ethnicities; 2 are black British and 1 is of Asian descent
- > 5 members of our team have a family history of seeking sanctuary in the UK

# WHO WE SUPPORT

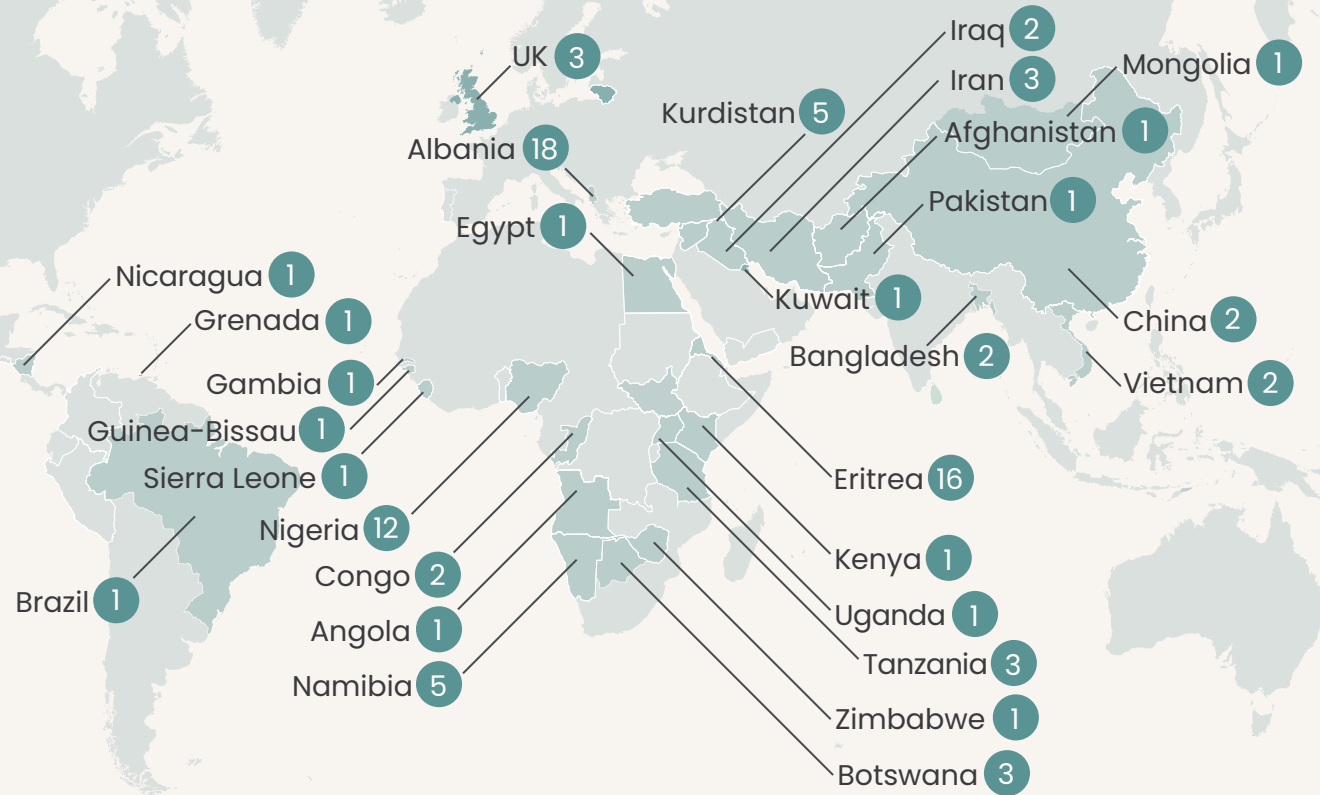
## NATIONALITY

The women we have supported to date have come from 30 countries of origin, of whom 17% were from Albania, 15% from Eritrea, 11% from Nigeria and 10% from Namibia.



## IMMIGRATION STATUS

Asylum-seeker	72%
Refugee	12%
Student visa	1%
UK resident	5%
Unknown	10%



## LANGUAGES

The women we supported spoke 21 languages.



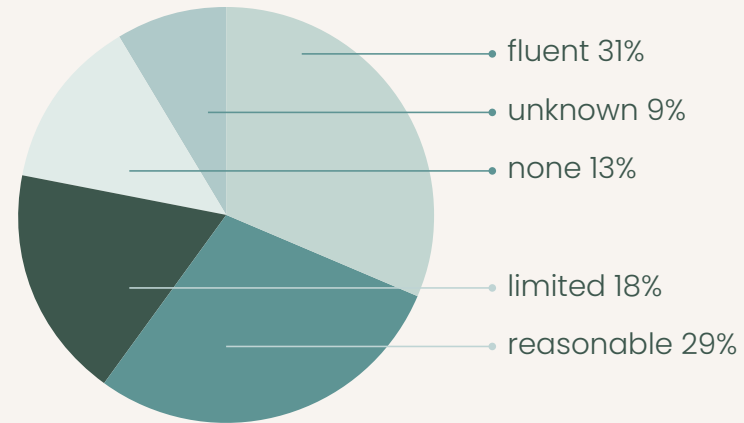
- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Albanian        | Nuistani      |
| Amharic         | Pashto        |
| Arabic          | Persian/Farsi |
| Edo             | Portuguese    |
| English         | Ruturo        |
| French          | Spanish       |
| Kurdish-Sorani  | Swahili       |
| Kurdish-Badhini | Tigrinya      |
| Mandarin        | Urdu          |
| Mandinka        | Vietnamese    |
| Mongolian       |               |

## BIRTH OUTCOME

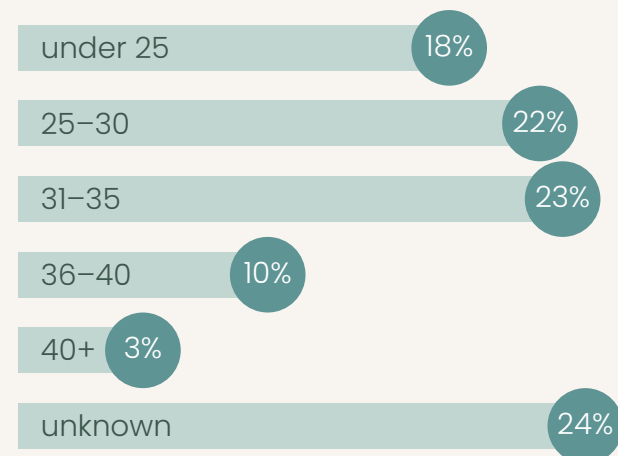


- 44% Caesarean section
- 27% Induced
- 74% Consultant-led care

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ABILITY



## AGE RANGE



.....

## SELF-REPORTED OUTCOMES

**100%** of women and birthing people we supported felt an improvement in their mental wellbeing as a result of TBPP support

**90%** of women felt they were listened to and their voice was heard

**83%** of women were more aware of their rights and choices in terms of birth and labour

**71%** of women felt more confident in looking after their new babies and how to access support if they needed it

**85%** of women felt a reduced sense of loneliness and isolation



# OUR IMPACT

## WHAT DIFFERENCE DID HAVING A BIRTH PARTNER MAKE?

“I did not have anyone until I had you. I had so many questions and concerns but when I met TBPP those worries went away from my heart, that feeling was really good. I was always so overwhelmed and sad thinking there would be no family. But when I phoned the charity it made me feel happy. **I found out I'm not alone.** What you're doing is really a great job. I was a person who had nobody, this was something that I really wanted. This is a really important project”

“I was so much happy and when I was delivering she was holding my hand, **it felt like someone from my family** next to me, giving me peace and strength”

“It made me feel safe, took away my anxiety – like they were watching over me and the baby. It gave me hope and optimism. My heart was at rest. Before TBPP I used to pay my friend to accompany me to come to my hospital appointment, **TBPP gave me the physical support** – holding my hand. It saved me from spend that extra money to facilitate my friend. I have a reliable team. Being in this new place, it gave me a family. It gives you safety, in case anything happens you feel like you have someone to call. It has helped me get used to the place quickly, not feel all alone.”



## WHAT WAS THE BEST THING ABOUT HAVING BIRTH PARTNERS?

“When you come to this country, you are isolated and alone. When you don’t have anybody but you have them for support. They help gaining baby items from charities. That was the best thing , if you are alone, they are with you.”

“Their support... because the situation I was in definitely needed their support. They said “whenever you need help and you’re when alone and we will be there.” The feeling of not being alone, that was the best thing.”

“The physical support, being physically there. The physical touch, the massage. Being there just sitting while I was in hospital. My babies heart almost stopped on a scan... imagine if I went through that alone. Humans like someone to be there physically. Someone to touch and be there, that was therapy to me. The next one was when they ask what I need and they’d bring me what ever I mention. It made me feel special.”

“Good listeners – very good listeners what I shared and made me really comfortable. They were helpful as much as they could. Usually if people are asked for something they think twice but the birth partner project, they just helped. Helping hands!”

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Statement of Financial activities for the year ending 30th June 2022

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<b>RECEIPTS</b>				
Donations	2,953		2,953	580
Fundraising				346
Arnold Clark	1,000		1,000	19,929
The Moondance Foundation		15,000	15,000	
WCVA		46,016	46,016	
Community Foundation Wales		2,000	2,000	13,500
<b>Subtotal (gross income)</b>	<b>3,953</b>	<b>63,016</b>	<b>66,969</b>	<b>34,355</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>				
Cost of raising funds	97	38	135	96
Cost of charitable activities		35,552	35,552	5,442
Support costs	540	5,655	6,195	1,077
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>41,246</b>	<b>41,882</b>	<b>6,615</b>
<b>Net receipts</b>	<b>3,316</b>	<b>21,770</b>	<b>25,067</b>	<b>27,740</b>
Cash funds brought forward	73	31,364	31,291	3,551
<b>Total cash funds at year end</b>	<b>3,243</b>	<b>53,134</b>	<b>56,378</b>	<b>31,291</b>
<b>ASSETS AND LIABILITIES</b>				
Cash at bank	3,243	53,134		
<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>3,243</b>	<b>53,134</b>		



# OUR THANKS

Our heartfelt thanks to our funders and our partners as well as the wonderful trainers we bring in to support us in delivering our work.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



# THE BIRTH PARTNER PROJECT

 07871 911415

 [info@birthpartnerproject.org](mailto:info@birthpartnerproject.org)

 [birthpartnerproject.org](http://birthpartnerproject.org)