

2013/2014



North Down and Ards Women's Aid

Annual Report

2013/ 2014

women
abuse
men
Domestic
violence

Chairperson's Report

One in four women: An analysis of 10 separate domestic violence prevalence studies found consistent findings: 1 in 4 women experience domestic violence over their lifetimes and between 6-10% of women suffer domestic violence in a given year (Council of Europe, 2002).

The vast majority of the victims of domestic violence are women and children, and women are also considerably more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of violence, and sexual abuse. Women may experience domestic violence regardless of ethnicity, religion, class, age, sexuality, disability or lifestyle. Domestic violence can also occur in a range of relationships including heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender relationships, and also within extended families.

The work of North Down and Ards Women's Aid continues year by year as we try to raise awareness that domestic violence is a crime that reflects on the whole community. The power and control of the perpetrator destroys the life and personality of the victim and has a damaging effect on the development of their children. It causes anger, heartache and resentment in families, and deprives the wider community of the valuable contribution the victim might make. Domestic violence is a financial burden on the whole of society.

The Board of Directors, staff and volunteers are dedicated in raising awareness of domestic and sexual violence, providing support services for women and children who are victims and ensuring a safe refuge for those who have to flee their home as a result of domestic violence.

North Down and Ards Women's Aid has been seeking additional funding from Supporting People which will significantly increase the level of Floating Support we can provide to women and children. We would like to thank all our funders, without whom this valuable work wouldn't be possible.

I would like to personally thank the staff and volunteers for their tireless work and to my fellow Directors for all their work and support. *Lesley Mackie*

Chief Executive Officer's Report

This year has seen an ever-increasing demand for services from all programme areas. Both Refuge and Floating Support staff continue to support ever-increasing numbers of women with ever more complex needs.

Floating Support services continues to experience an increasing number of referrals. Negotiations continue with Supporting People for an extension to our Floating Support contract which will increase staffing numbers. The Assessment worker post provides a single point of entry referral system which ensures that essential support and crisis services and enhances our risk management process.

The Children Services programme continues to grow and develop. The new Art workshop initiative was extremely successful during the summer months, supporting a number of children and young people. A follow on event to the Art Workshops which was held at Christmas time was a cartoon drawing seminar, facilitated by two local, professional artists. This seminar was an exciting and fun experience for the children and young people who attended. Helping Hands groups and Transformers groups continue to be successful in meeting the needs of children and young people. Feedback has proven to be very positive. One-to-one work with young people offered this year, and has been successful.

Referrals to refuge services has also increased this past year. Staff continue to provide safety, protection and support to refuge families, many who experience complex needs. Negotiations have begun with the Housing Association to explore a new location for a new refuge.

Our Finance Manager retired this year and we have been very successful in our recruitment and appointment of a new manager. This past year saw a recruitment of new members, which provided the Management Committee with a wider range of skills and experiences. The new members completed their induction training and additionally, the full Management Committee completed Governance training, facilitated by WAFNI. The Management Committee sub groups established this year are: Human Resources, Policies and Finance.

We continued to work in partnership with Foyle, Causeway and Omagh Women's Aid towards realising the new IT system. Although anticipated to up and running within 2013-2014, there was a delay. Looking forward to going live early in 2014-2015. We are delighted to report that this year saw the launch of our new Website. We also designed and distributed our new service leaflets. Looking forward we recognise that there is a need for new refuge/new location and improved refuge facilities. There is also the need for expansion of the Floating Support team to manage increasing referrals and manage the associated risks. Both of these issues are a priority for 2013-2014. We also look forward to the implementation of our new IT system.

As in previous years staff members have continued to remain committed to providing high quality, professional services to all service users. I would like to thank all staff for their continued hard work and dedication. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the management committee for their commitment, professionalism and dedication during a very active and production year. *Beth Scott*

Funding Report

Funding is always an issue with North Down and Ards Women's Aid and in these very difficult and lean times we have had to apply stringent measures to ensure continuing delivery of our much needed services.

However funding shortages have had serious impact on staffing, training, prevention work and courses for children and young people. Floating Support continues to make high demands on staff and there is an urgent and increasing need for additional staff in this essential service. Unfortunately our funding for Floating Support and Supporting People has been without increment for five and six years respectively.

Our search for new sources of funding continues to be a priority and we are currently pursuing possible opportunities. We have also been very grateful for the generous financial support from local churches, schools, business and professional clubs and private donors, without which our task would be very difficult indeed.

We were excited to receive a substantial donation from Ards PCSP for updating our Refuge . We wish to extend a big 'thank you' to our anonymous donor and to everyone who supported us throughout the year. Your support is essential at these difficult times.

Thank You

North Down & Ards Women's Aid would like thank all our donors for their on-going support and acknowledgement of our work and for enabling the continuation of all our vital services.

Ards Community Policing Safety Partnership
Awards for All
Children In Need
Health & Social Services Board
NIHE Supporting People Programme (including Floating Support & Housing Management)
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust
Sure Start Ards
Henry Smith Charitable Trust
Lloyds TSB
PSNI

In addition to the above named organisations, we would like to thank:

Individual members of the community, statutory and voluntary agencies, local businesses, community groups including local church groups and volunteers for their continued support and donations throughout the year.

Age Range of Women in Refuge	Number of women
Under 18 (not with Mum)	0
18 - 25	8
26—35	7
36—45	7
46—55	3
56—65	0
66—75	1
76—85	0
85 +	0

Refuge Report

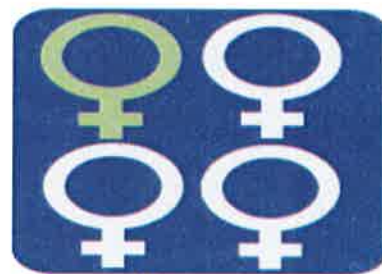
The Refuge Team comprises a Refuge Team Manager, 2 Refuge Workers, 1 Night Worker and 2 Children & Young Person's Workers. This dedicated, skilled team provides support and advocacy to women and their children who find that they are in need of the temporary, safe accommodation. Often when families present at Refuge, they have complex needs which require significant individual support.

The majority of referrals from external organisations are:
The 24hr Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline, Social Services and PSNI

Support services provided in Refuge include:

- Risk and Needs Assessments
- Support planning
- Support in achieving goals/outcomes
- Support and practical assistance in establishing and stabilising benefits
- Support and assistance in identifying individual needs
- Application for permanent housing accommodation
- Liaising/working closely with Social Services, PSNI, Solicitors and other external organisations

A total of 26 women and 30 children were accommodated and supported in the refuge this year.



One In four women
experience domestic
violence world wide



Floating Support services are delivered by a team of 2 part time staff members. This team provides support on a 1-1 basis for women, offering appointments from our offices in Newtownards and Bangor with home visits offered as required. This service continues to operate at full capacity as the demand for the service increases again this year. Extra support to the Floating Support team was introduced two years ago to assist in managing the number of requests for services. This staff member is an Assessment Worker and this year met with 245 women at the initial point of contact and provided assessment and crisis intervention support through robust risk and needs assessment. Practical support for safety issues/safety planning is a large part of this role. This year 66 women engaged in the Floating Support 1-1 services this year.

Journey to Freedom programme is a personal development group process for women who have experienced, or who continue to experience, domestic violence. This programme was originally developed by staff in North Down and Ards Women's Aid in 1997, as a positive response to women, to enable them to address their experiences of domestic violence, move on and create positive change for themselves. This year 18 women attended 'Journey to Freedom' support groups in North Down and Ards Women's Aid.

Anticipated Journey to Freedom outcomes for women:

- Increased confidence/self esteem
- Establishment of peer support
- Clear understanding of domestic violence
- Improved awareness of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships
- Reduction in feelings of isolation, guilt and shame
- Increased ability to process thoughts and understand experiences
- Improved access to information, advice and support
- Provision of opportunities to access other services within Women's Aid and with other agencies
- Increased skills and abilities
- Development of a more positive outlook for themselves and their children
- Improved relationships and attachments with children
- Increased confidence in parenting role and abilities

Anticipated outcomes for children: 81 children were indirectly supported through Floating Support Services, 252 children were indirectly supported through our Assessment Service.

Children are safer and supported as a direct result of the above outcomes for mothers. As mothers become more aware of the impact domestic violence has had upon the whole family, they can begin to put in place the safety and support strategies to enhance the safety and well-being of their children. Women who have participated in the Journey to Freedom process report increased confidence in their parenting and a range of benefits for the whole family such as:

- A safer environment
- The existence of a support framework for the whole family
- A clearer understanding of the impact of domestic violence on children and how they can be supported



Floating Support Statistics

<u>Services 2013—2014</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Number of Children Indirectly supported by our service</u>
Assessment Service	245	252
Floating Support Service	66	81

<u>Relationship of abusers</u>	<u>Number of women</u>
Husband	28
Boyfriend	4
Live in Partner	1
Ex-husband	15
Ex-partner	14
Mother	1
Other family member	1
Multiple Abusers	2

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number of women</u>
Under 18 (not with Mum)	0
18—25	8
26—35	17
36—45	37
46—55	3
56—65	1
66—75	0
76—85	0
85 +	0



Childrens' Services

Refuge - Over the last year we have seen a significant increase in referrals for the Women's Support Services which has increased the demand for crèche provision, group work programmes and individual support for the Children's Services within the Refuge and Centre setting. The Refuge Team and Children's Workers have continued to work in close partnership with the PSNI and Social Services this year to provide additional support for several of our families within the Refuge.

The playroom has seen an increase in children attending throughout the year which has provided the opportunity for the Helping Hands programme to be delivered to 3 families within the Refuge. This year we have had 45 children and 23 families residing in the Refuge with a total of 619 individual crèche sessions facilitated by the Children and Young Persons Workers. The Children's Workers posts have enabled the Team to continue to meet the educational and recreational needs of our children and young people by developing and advancing the Children's Services programmes.

Crèche provision in the Centre - This year the demand for Crèche support has increased. Crèche support includes provision of child care for our two Journey to Freedom weekly support groups and individual childcare for mothers availing of support from the Assessment Worker and Floating Support Team. This year there has been a total of 57 children availing of the crèche facilities.

Helping Hands - The Helping Hands groups have continued to be delivered to all children from the ages of 4-7 years old through group work activities and individual sessions. This year we ran 3 group sessions with a total of 10 children and 10 mothers attending the programme. We have introduced Family Work groups for children aged 4-10 years old. These groups are for mothers who wish to engage in the programme together with their children as a family unit. This approach has been very successful with a total of 4 families and 7 children completing the work and several families being referred by Social Services to attend the programme. The Family Work has encouraged positive interactions between the mothers and their children in an environment that meets each child's educational and individual needs.

Transformers/Family Work - This year we have seen a rise in referrals for children aged 8-12 years old to attend the Transformers groups and several requests from mothers to attend group work activities with their children as a family unit. This year we have ran one Stage 2 group and three Stage 1 Transformers groups with a total of 13 children attending and completing the programmes. Due to several referrals from our Assessment Worker we have introduced Family Work programmes for mothers who wish to avail of support as a family unit. This programme has been adapted to meet the needs of each individual family and is for a period of 6 weeks. This year we have had 2 families avail of this service with a total of 7 children attending the programme and several referrals for the group from Social Services.

Art Workshops - The Art Workshops have been developed to offer additional support for children who have attended the Transformers programmes and for children and siblings of children who have received support from the Children's Workers within our Centre and Refuge setting. These groups were developed in May 2013 and were run over the summer period while children were not attending school activities. These groups were very successful with a total of 4 groups delivered within the Centre setting and 19 children attending the programme over the summer period. These groups will continue to run over the summer period on a yearly basis.

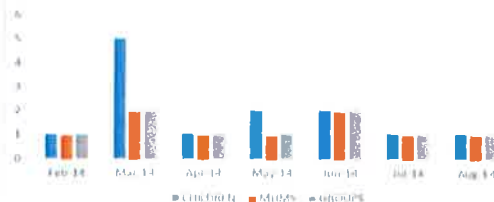
Cartoon Workshop - On the 2/12/2014 we organised to have a company called Elephant Shoes Inc. Limited to come to our Centre to run a Cartoon activity workshop for our Christmas party. This party was run for all our children who had completed the Transformers, Family Work and Art Workshop programmes throughout the year. A total of 13 children and 3 staff attended the party and engaged in fun art activities followed by a Christmas party.

Christmas at Stream vale Farm - At Christmas we provided a Christmas Trip to Streamvale Farm for all our families within the Refuge and Centre setting. A total of 18 children and 9 mums and 2 staff attended the Trip. The children were treated to the story hay ride followed by a visit to the reindeers and farm animals. Santa was there to provide presents and activities for all the children followed by hot dogs and ice-cream. The trip was well attended and requests from all the children and mothers were in demand for the Trip to run next Christmas.

Group Work 2005-2014



FAMILY WORK 2014



WORKING TOGETHER TO
END VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN