

# women's aid

Federation Northern Ireland



24 HOUR

Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

FREEPHONE

**0808 802 1414**

Open to *all women and men* affected by domestic & sexual violence

☐ text support to 07797 805 839    ✉ 24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org



**ANNUAL REPORT  
2013-2014**

Published by Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland.

**Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland**

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Text **support** to 07797 805 839

Freephone from all landlines and mobiles. Translation service available.

**Open to *all women and men* affected by domestic & sexual violence**

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**Annual report 2013-2014**

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland 2014

# Vision and Mission

## Our Vision

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland's vision for the 21st century is the **elimination of domestic, sexual and all forms of gender-based violence and abuse.**

## Our Mission

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland challenges attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that perpetuate domestic, sexual and gender based violence and abuse; and, through the provision of safety, support and prevention services and the promotion of healthy and non-abusive relationships, works to end gender based violence locally and globally.

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# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

As we mark the end of another year, it gives me great pleasure and pride to look back on the progressive strides and successes the year has brought for Women's Aid Federation NI.

This year has witnessed a progressive shift in Government strategy as we welcomed the production of a draft combined strategy to tackle both domestic and sexual violence and abuse. The draft strategy, **Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland 2013 – 2020** has been produced by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Justice. The draft strategy presents a clear vision: **...that zero tolerance for violence and abuse becomes the norm in our communities.** Women's Aid Federation NI, in partnership with its nine member groups has worked closely with Government Officials to influence the content of the strategy. Women's Aid across Northern Ireland is completely committed to supporting the delivery of this strategy, as the lead agency in addressing domestic and sexual violence and abuse. We recognise that domestic and sexual violence and abuse are complex problems requiring combined solutions and we continue to work in partnership with a range of agencies and Government Departments to develop coordinated responses and services for all.

As a foundation for this strategy and to support Government in its delivery, on March 5<sup>th</sup> 2014, we were delighted to launch our extended 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline. Ministers for Health, Justice and Social Development spoke at the launch and gave their commitment to, and

endorsement for, the service. Throughout 2013/14 the 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline managed a total of 55,029 calls, an increase of 15.6% in calls managed compared to 2012/13.

We will continue to press for government departments and other agencies to commit resources to ensure that our core work can be sustained. We are concerned that indications from the government departments suggest a difficult financial time ahead. To address this concern a robust Fund-Raising Strategy has been developed and will be put in place during the forthcoming year.

To strengthen the position of Women's Aid in Northern Ireland, we have continued to work on our constitutional review with our nine member groups. We plan to ensure we are fit for purpose, and positioned strategically, to meet the challenges of the future environment.

The success of Women's Aid Federation NI, as always, is attributed to the support and dedication of staff, volunteers, membership, Board of Directors and funders. Together these individuals and organisations help us to deliver our vision of eliminating domestic, sexual and all forms of gender-based violence and abuse. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to each and every one of them for their invaluable support and commitment.

**Christine Whiteman**

Chair

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2013/14 has presented a wealth of both challenges and opportunities for Women's Aid Federation NI and I am delighted to report that we have risen to the challenges and positioned ourselves strategically to avail of opportunities.

It has been a year that has witnessed an unprecedented increase in levels of work across all areas, including in training, policy, campaigning, in our partnership working and of course in our 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline. We have maintained and developed our position as the lead agency addressing domestic violence and have extended our service provision through our Helpline expansion to include support provision for victims of sexual violence. The 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline was officially launched at Stormont Hotel on Wednesday 5 March 2014. This was an exciting development for Women's Aid in Northern Ireland, having always recognised the interconnectedness of domestic and sexual violence and abuse in all areas of service provision. To support this key development, Women's Aid Federation NI led on the roll out of accredited training - **The Role of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Practitioner**, delivering this to 51 Women's Aid staff members.

We have continued to ensure domestic and sexual violence remain high on the public agenda by utilising all opportunities to keep abreast of, and to influence, all government policy developments. Throughout 2013/14 we responded to 24 government policies. We wholeheartedly welcomed Government's decision to produce a

combined strategy to address both domestic and sexual violence and abuse, **Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland 2013 – 2020** and were delighted to draw upon our expertise as the lead agency addressing domestic and sexual violence in Northern Ireland to critically analyse the draft document and provide government with a comprehensive and clear response.

We are privileged to have worked in partnership with our nine member groups to achieve our collective vision of eliminating domestic, sexual and all forms of gender-based violence and abuse. As Director of Women's Aid NI, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our highly skilled Federation staff team and the dedicated staff and volunteers of Women's Aid groups across Northern Ireland. Thanks are also due to the Federation Management Board for their continued commitment and strategic leadership.

We know there is still much to be done and while it has been a progressive and successful year, we are aware of the challenges that lie ahead, particularly in relation to sustainability. However, we recognise the vital role we play, in creating positive change on a daily basis for thousands of women and children who are experiencing violence and abuse and it is in this knowledge that we move forward with optimism and determination.

**Annie Campbell**

Director

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland

## PSNI statistics 2013-2014

The level of domestic abuse crimes and incidents recorded in 2013/14 is the highest level recorded since 2004/05 when statistics collation, in its current format, was introduced.

### In the year 2013/14

- 27,628 incidents with a domestic motivation were reported to the PSNI.
- The PSNI responded to a domestic incident every 19 minutes of every day.
- 12,720 domestic abuse crimes were reported, this represents approximately 12% of the overall crime in Northern Ireland (102,746).
- The total number of all recorded offences of murder was 17. Those classified as having a domestic abuse motivation totaled 7. Therefore, 41% of all murders in Northern Ireland in 2013/14 had a domestic abuse motivation.
- There were over two and a half times as many domestic abuse crimes as drug offences.
- There were more domestic abuse crimes (12,720) than burglary offences (9,067).
- There were six and a half times more domestic abuse crimes (12,720) than thefts of motor vehicles (1,943).
- There were 2,234 sexual offences recorded including 550 offences of rape.

### All data is taken from the following PSNI reports

1. Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland: Monthly Update to 31 March 2014. Published, 8 May 2014. PSNI Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency  
(Providing final figures for 1st April 2013 – 31 March 2014)
2. Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland: Quarterly Update to 31 March 2014. Published, 8 May 2014. PSNI Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency  
(Providing final figures for 1st April 2013 – 31 March 2014)

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

## Expansion of the Helpline

On 5th March 2014, the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline officially launched its services with an event at the Stormont Hotel. The launch marked the official expansion of the Helpline service to include support for victims of sexual violence. The expanded Helpline was launched by Minister for Health, Edwin Poots, Minister for Justice, David Ford, and Minister for Social Development, Nelson McCausland, who all spoke at the event. The three Ministers, whose departments jointly fund the Helpline, gave their commitment to, and endorsement for, the service. The event was extremely well attended and supported by both voluntary and statutory partners. There was

also a high level of media coverage which helped raise awareness of the Helpline as a regional service available to all women and men affected by domestic and sexual violence.





## Party Conferences

This year we took our message to all the main party political conferences. It proved an excellent opportunity to inform political party members about the expansion of the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline and the services our local Women's Aid groups offer. We also had the opportunity to raise awareness of issues relating to domestic and sexual violence that affect constituents across Northern Ireland, and discuss policy developments which impact upon victims of domestic and sexual violence with decision makers.



**We continue to inform political representatives and key policy makers of the effects of domestic and sexual violence, and promote the work of Women's Aid across Northern Ireland.**

# 24 HOUR DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE HELPLINE

The 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline is managed by Women's Aid Federation NI and is open to **all women and men affected by domestic and sexual violence**. This freephone service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Helpline has now been successfully funded for nine years by the Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, DHSS&PS, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Community Safety Unit, Department of Justice.

On 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014, the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline officially launched its services

with an event at the Stormont Hotel. Edwin Poots, Minister for Health, David Ford, Minister for Justice and Nelson McCausland, Minister for Social Development all spoke at the launch and gave their commitment to and endorsement for, the service. The event, which officially launched the expansion of the Helpline service to include sexual violence, was extremely well attended and supported by both voluntary and statutory partners. There was also a high level of media coverage which helped raise awareness of the Helpline as a regional service available to all women and men affected by domestic and sexual violence.



As with previous years we have experienced an increase in calls to the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline. The Telephone Helplines Association has a recommended strike rate of 75%, a rate which measures the proportion of calls getting through to a Helpline Worker. By the end of this year the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline had an average strike rate of 81.5%.

### **Training and support**

The complex needs of service users are becoming more demanding and the skills base for the Helpline workers is becoming more specialised to deal with the changing nature of the calls. All Helpline staff members are fully trained by Women's Aid Federation NI and receive on-going training, both internal and external together with one to one line management supervision and both one to one and group practice related supervision.

All staff have attended core accredited Women's Aid Understanding Domestic Violence training (Open College Network Level 3). Core training also involves attendance at both ASIST Training and Mental Health First Aid. All staff are trained in LGB&T Awareness through Rainbow. Staff also receive comprehensive training in the law and domestic violence, housing issues, telephone skills, listening skills, written communication skills, equality, disability, email and text communication skills. There is also core training in IT skills to facilitate the use of our online database recording and monitoring system, UKROL and our email and text service.

Helpline staff alongside Women's Aid staff from

our local Women's Aid groups undertook the Toolkit Training with Respect in September 2013. The Toolkit gave all staff a greater understanding of how to deal with male callers experiencing domestic violence. This training was funded through the Department of Health. Additionally staff attended training with external voluntary and statutory agencies which include our local Health Trusts, WAVE, DRCC (Dublin Rape Crisis Centre), Nexus, NI Council for the Homeless – WRAP Training, Children in Northern Ireland, the Law Centre, Barnardo's Safe Choices Training and Ascertainment Training on alcohol and drug dependency.

### **Roundtable event**

The Helpline hosted a roundtable discussion event on men as victims of domestic violence on 26 September 2013. Respect, the lead agency dealing with both male victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, who run two Helplines focusing on those areas, spoke at the event. The main focus of the event, which was funded by the Department of Health, was to bring local support services for men together and to examine how to engage with men who are experiencing domestic violence, ensuring accessibility of the Helpline service to men. The Helpline also launched a new leaflet for men experiencing domestic and sexual violence at this event.

### **Sexual violence**

Sexual violence has always been part of the work of the Helpline as it is often an aspect of domestic violence. During this year the Helpline continued its work in relation to sexual violence, building on

the training and development work completed within the previous year. We have built an excellent relationship with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, the acknowledged leaders in training in this field in Ireland. We continued to strengthen links with partner organisations e.g. Nexus, Lifeline and the Rowan through joint working arrangements including training and development. The Helpline was part of development and implementation of the Women's Aid QCF Qualification in Sexual Violence and Trauma: Tackling and Preventing Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse. More information regarding this course is provided in the Regional Training section of this report.

### **Outreach**

During 2013/14, Helpline staff attended a range of outreach events including, Men's Health Week at Belfast City Hall, Domestic Violence Partnership Events, Women's Groups events, launch of Anti-Homophobia and Anti-Transphobia Week, Belfast Pride and Foyle Pride. The Helpline has delivered awareness raising training sessions to Belfast Metropolitan College and the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency. Information stands were also set up at Shopping Centres across Northern Ireland. The Helpline has a dedicated Facebook page promoting the Helpline service. The followers continue to grow which is encouraging.

### **Conferences and partnerships**

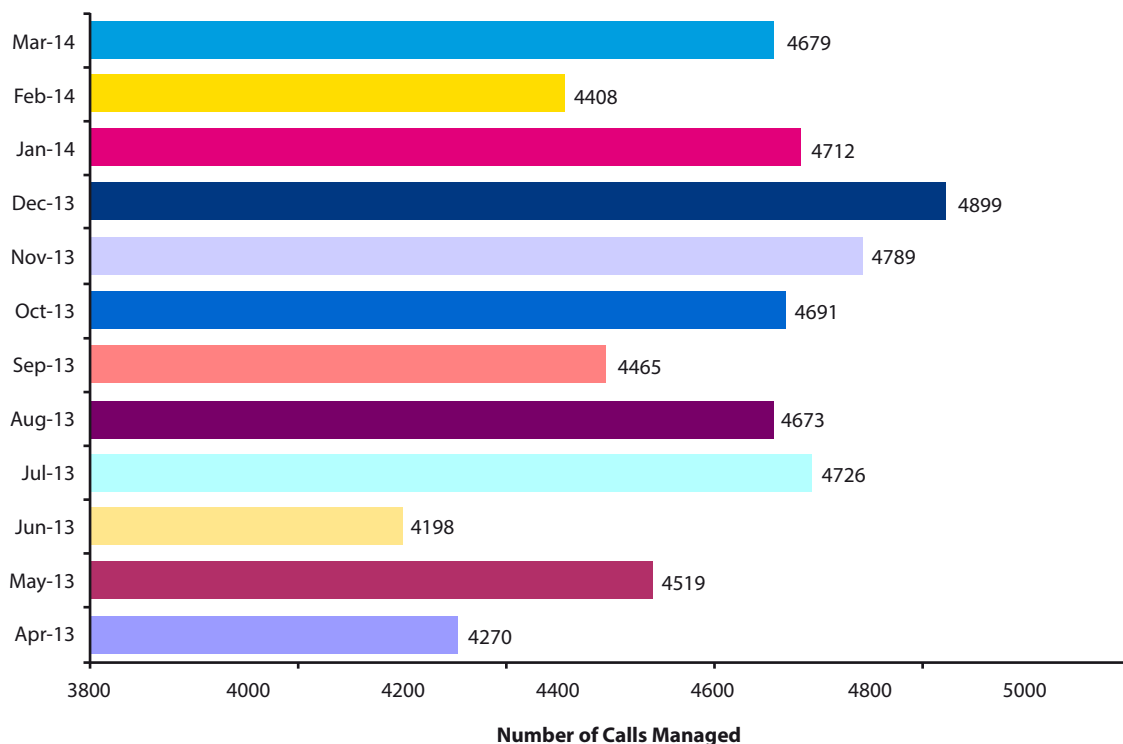
Helpline staff attended various conferences throughout 2013/14 including NOTA, Contact/Lifeline, Northern Ireland Council for the Homeless, St Mary's SARC Conference (Manchester), Respect, CFNI Conference on Women and Peacebuilding, Domestic Violence Behind Closed Doors Conference (DV Partnership) and NSPCC. The Acting Helpline Manager sits on the Regional Strategic Group's Prevention and Support Sub Group, the Child Maintenance Stakeholders Forum and is Vice-Chair of the NI Helpline Network which is run through the Public Health Agency.



### **Helpline Quality Standard**

The Helpline obtained the Helplines Association (now known as the Helplines Partnership) Quality Standard in December 2012 and continues to maintain high levels of best practice associated with this standard. The 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline was the first Helpline in Northern Ireland to achieve this standard and continues to work hard to maintain best practice in every area of the service.

### Number of calls managed by Helpline: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014

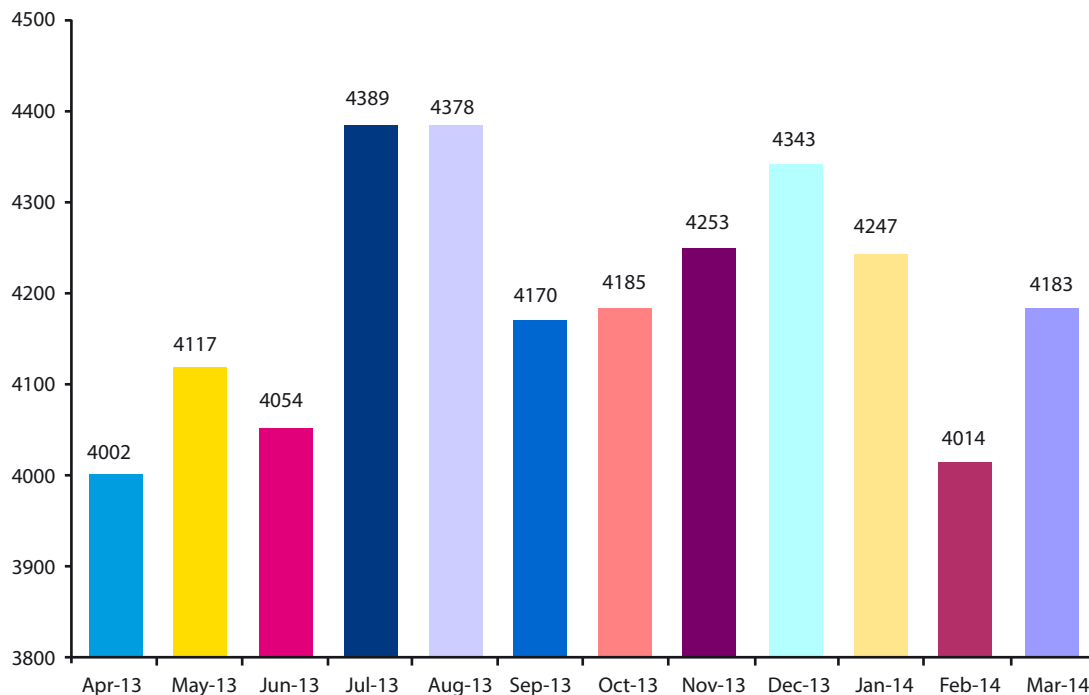


A total number of 55,029 calls were managed during the year. In the previous year, April 2012 - March 2013, the total was 47,597 calls managed. The total increase was 7,432 calls. This is an increase of 15.6% in calls managed.

(Calls managed include all calls answered and all calls made by Helpline staff to follow up specific support and advice. For example, arranging refuge accommodation for a woman may involve Helpline workers making a number of calls out.)

**55,029 Helpline calls managed: April 2013 – March 2014**  
**429,435 calls managed from 1995 - 2014**

### Number of calls answered by Helpline: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014



A total number of 50,335 calls were answered during the year.

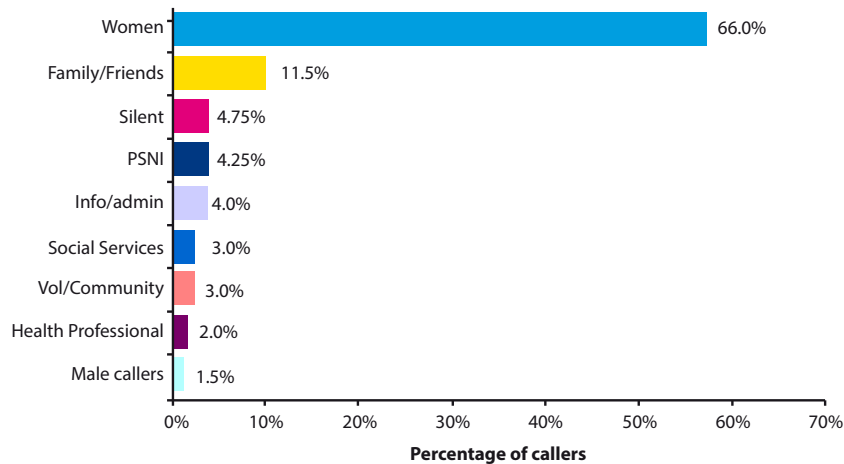
In the previous year, April 2012 - March 2013 the total was 44,664 calls answered.

The total increase was 5,671 calls. This is an increase of 12.7% in calls answered.

The figures reflect the seasonal patterns with busy periods occurring at Christmas, New Year, and Bank Holidays.

**50,335 Helpline calls answered: April 2013 – March 2014**

### Breakdown of callers: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014



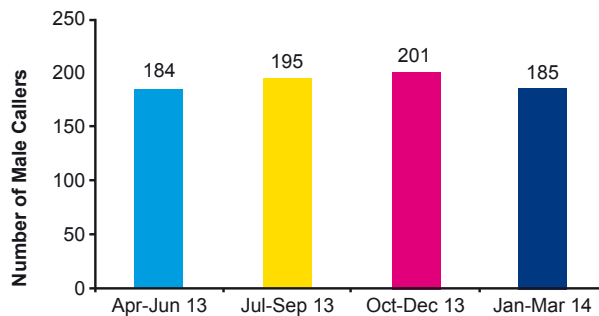
This table outlines the categories of callers to the Helpline. The majority of callers to the service are from women. The percentage of male callers this year rose to 1.5% from 1.25 % in 2012/13.

## 66% of callers to the Helpline are women seeking support

### Male callers: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014

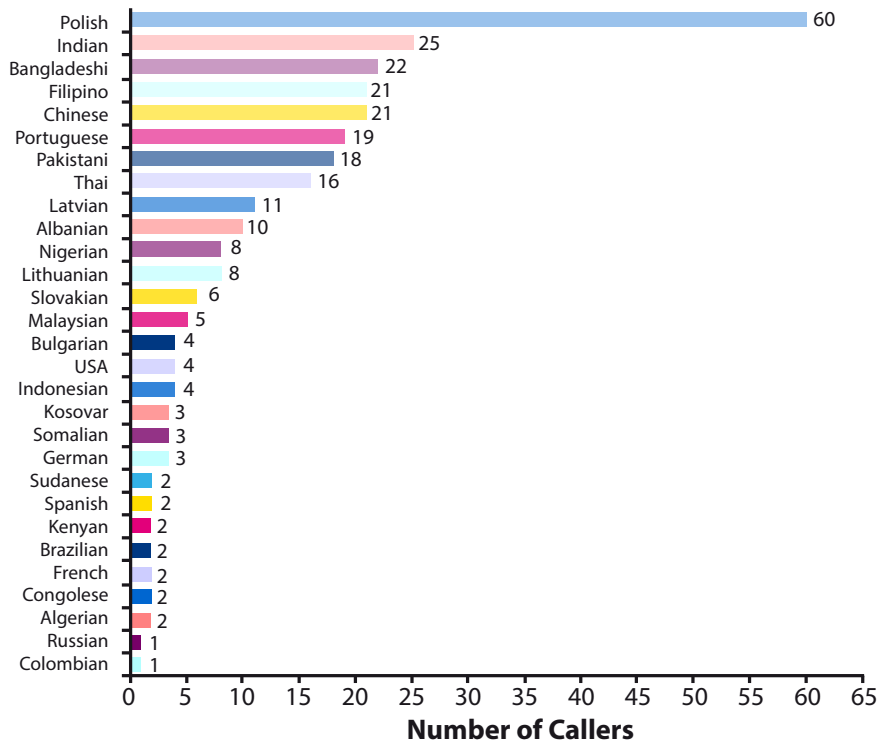
A total of 765 male callers contacted the Helpline for emotional support and information. This was an increase of 91 calls from the previous year.

Callers wishing to speak to someone face to face were signposted to Men's Advisory Project and a variety of other services including Parenting NI, men's health projects, counselling services and NIHE. The Helpline offers the same level of emotional support over the telephone to all women and men calling.



## 91 increase in male callers

### Calls from foreign nationals and black and minority ethnic women: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014



A total of **287** calls to the service were from foreign nationals and black and minority ethnic women; the total for last year was 272. This is a slight increase of 15 calls. This equates to 0.9% of calls answered.

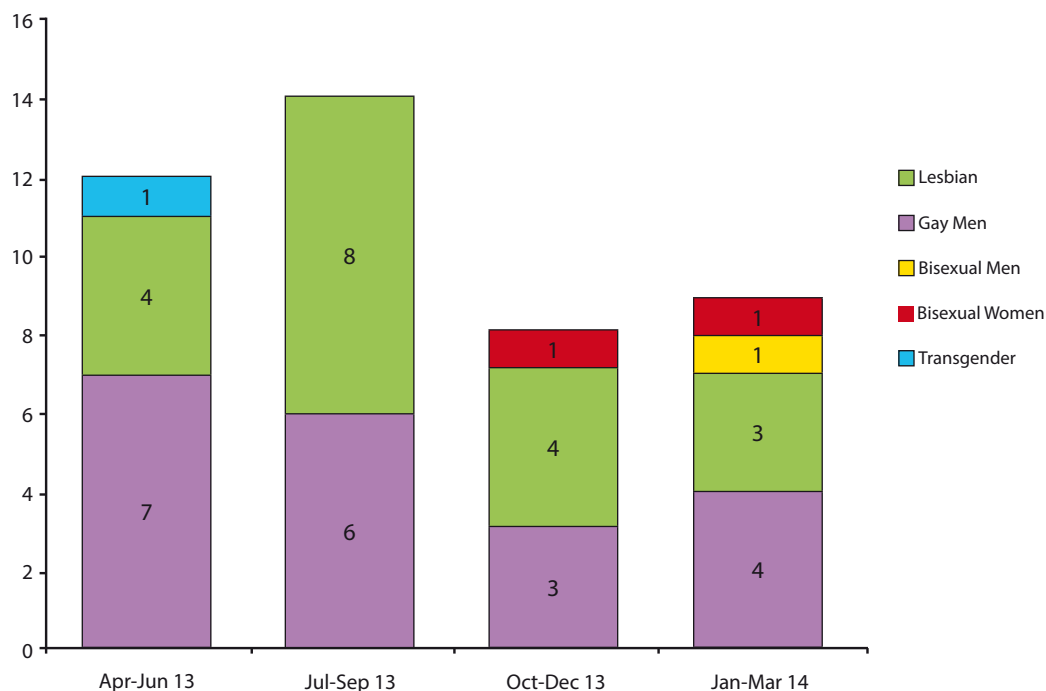
In addition, a total of 77 women from the Travelling community contacted the Helpline during this period. This was an increase of 32 calls from the last year.

The Helpline uses the Language Line translation and interpretation service.

**32 increase in women callers from the Travelling Community**



### Calls from the LGBT Community: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014



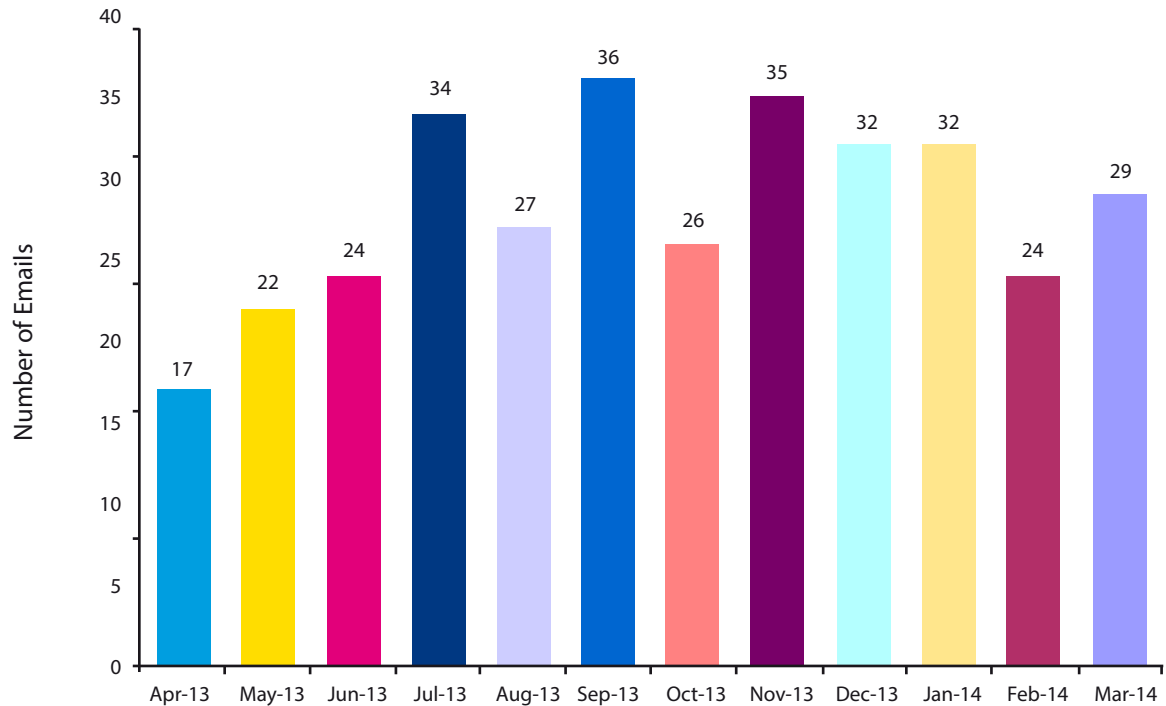
The total number of calls from the LGBT community during this period was 43, which is a slight increase from last year when it was 41.

The Helpline is aware that domestic and sexual violence and abuse is still very much a taboo subject and LGB&T people are worried they will be discriminated against if they ask for help, or believe that help is only available for heterosexual people.

The Helpline continues to forge links within the LGB&T community and work with organisations such as Rainbow, Carafriend, GLYNI, Family Ties, Lesbian Line and Here NI (formerly LASI), to increase the accessibility of the service. During this period Helpline staff and volunteers attended both Belfast and Foyle Pride with our Information Stall as part of our outreach to the LGB&T community.

**43 calls from LGBT community**

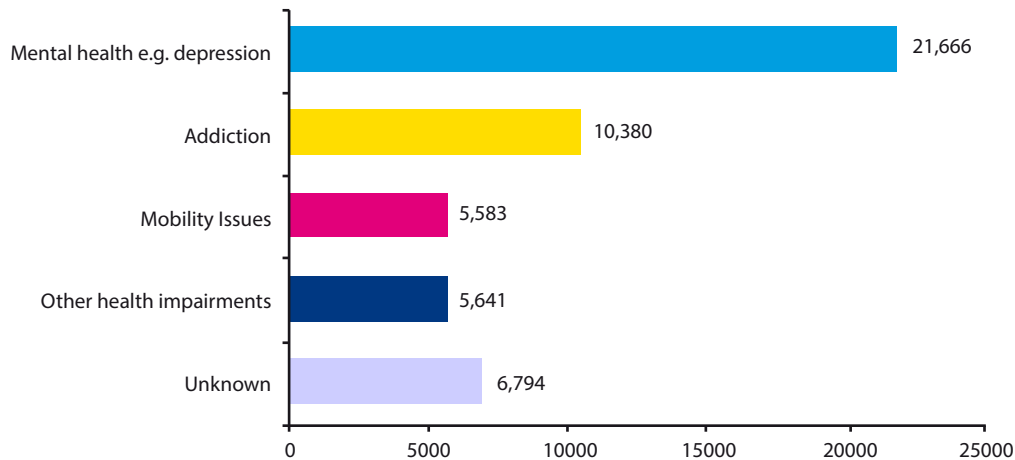
### Email Support Service: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014



The Helpline continues to promote its multi-channel approach, including the email and text service. The total number of e-mails for support during 2013/14 year was 338. The figure for last year was 168 showing a significant increase of 170 (101%) in emails for support during this period. Through further awareness raising in 2014/15, we anticipate further increase in the number of email supports provided.

**338 emails for support – an increase of 170 from 2012/13**

### Health and wellbeing issues raised by women callers: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014

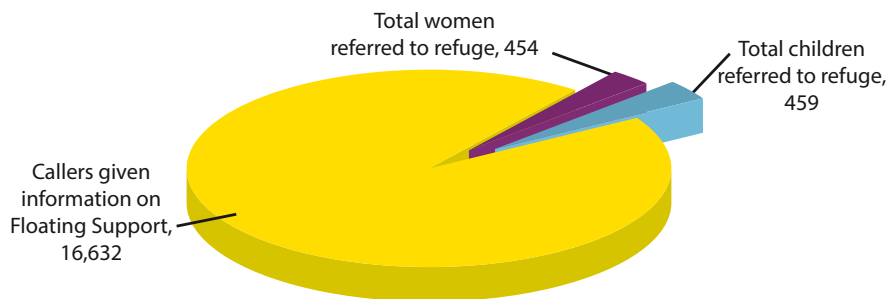


- Mental health: anxiety, suicidal thoughts, panic attacks. A minority of callers have a diagnosed mental illness. (65% of callers)
- Addiction: alcohol, illegal drugs, prescribed medication. (31% of callers)
- Mobility issues: difficulty walking, wheelchair user. (17% of callers)
- Other health impairments: epilepsy, diabetes. (17% of callers)
- Unknown: did not disclose. (20% of callers)

The majority of women callers to the Helpline have experienced a negative impact upon their emotional health and wellbeing as a result of domestic violence. More people are contacting the Helpline with mental health issues and complex needs. These categories may overlap e.g. mental health and addiction.

**21,666 callers reported mental health issues**

### Referrals to other Women's Aid services: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014

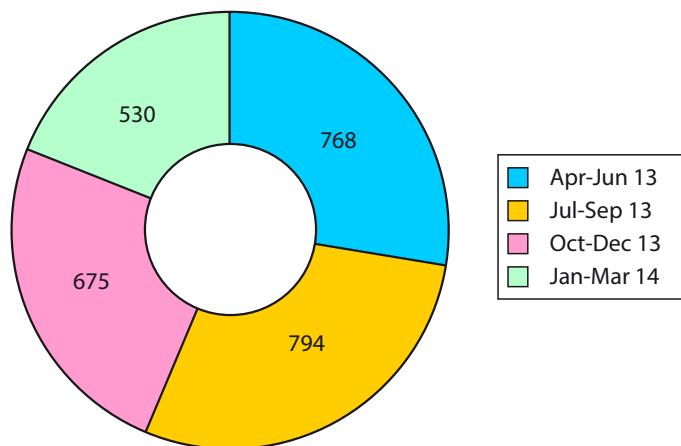


Floating Support is an outreach service providing support to women victims of domestic violence, to enable them to remain in their own homes. During 2013/14 16,632 callers were given information on Women's Aid floating support services. This is an increase of 4,091 from the total of 12,541 the previous year, a rise of 32%.

The total number of women referred to refuge during this period was 454, an increase of 70 from last year's figure of 384. The total number of children referred to refuge was 459, a slight increase of 4 from last year's figure of 455.

**16,632 callers were given information on Women's Aid Floating Support services.**

### Volunteer Hours worked on Helpline: 1st April 2013- 31st March 2014



Volunteers are a core part of the Helpline team, throughout the year they contributed a total of 2,767 hours to the service, an average of 7.5 hours per day, 365 days of the year.

Helpline calls have increased, with three lines open during busy periods. This would not be possible without the valuable contribution made by our volunteers.

The total value of this contribution in kind is £33,370. This represents the mean average hourly bank staff rate of £10.05 per hour multiplied by 2,767 hours, plus associated employer's costs of £5,561. This is a major contribution to the operating costs and reflects 14% of the overall staff costs.

**We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all volunteers who give their time to the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline. Their passion and commitment is greatly appreciated.**

# REGIONAL POLICY & LOBBYING

Policy and lobbying are an essential part of Women's Aid Federation NI's work to challenge the attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic and sexual violence.

Throughout the year, our Regional Policy & Information Co-ordinator, Louise Kennedy, has worked in consultation with local Women's Aid groups across Northern Ireland to develop policy positions. In November 2013, Anne O'Reilly joined Women's Aid Federation NI as Regional Support & Development Manager, bringing her expertise on older women and rural women to the policy team.

The overall policy & lobbying work is led by Annie Campbell (Director) with lead roles on different issues assigned to Sarah Mason (Finance & Training Manager), Sonya McMullan (Acting Helpline Manager), Anne O'Reilly (Regional Support & Development Manager) and Louise Kennedy (Regional Policy & Information Co-ordinator).

## **Our work for 2013/14 was prioritised under 6 main strands:**

- Access to Justice
- Access to Welfare
- Support for Victims
- Children & Young People
- Women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)
- All forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Our lobbying and policy engagement is informed by our regional lobbying strategy, which identifies key policy issues that impact the women and children who use our services.

## Access to Justice

It is vital that victims of domestic and sexual violence are able to access the justice that they deserve, and that all justice agencies and staff have an adequate understanding of domestic and sexual violence and the needs of victims. Women's Aid has worked tirelessly throughout 2013/14 to ensure that domestic and sexual violence remain priority issues for policing and justice agencies. Our Director Annie Campbell continued to sit on the Regional Strategic Group of Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse (RSG), as well as chairing the Protection & Justice sub-group of the RSG.

### Department of Justice

During 2013/14, Women's Aid engaged with the Department of Justice (DOJ) on a wide range of criminal justice issues that directly affect the women we support. We contributed to the consultative process on potential changes to legal aid, stressing that it is a fundamental human right for women and children to live free from the threat of domestic violence, and that finance should never be a barrier to accessing protection and support from the courts. We also contributed to consultations on changes to bail rules, and assisted the DOJ in the formulation of government guidance to working with intimidated witnesses.

Women's Aid welcomed the launch of the 5 Year Victims & Witnesses Strategy in June 2013, and took part in pre-consultation discussions on the creation of a Victim Charter and review of criminal compensation as part of the roll out.

We continued to engage with Criminal Justice Inspection NI on issues relating to our work

supporting women experiencing domestic violence during this period. In October 2013, CJINI conducted a follow up review of how criminal justice agencies tackle domestic violence in Northern Ireland. Women's Aid continues to press for full implementation of all CJINI recommendations in this regard.

### Policing

During this year, Women's Aid continued to work with the PSNI and Northern Ireland Policing Board to improve the policing of domestic and sexual violence. We engaged with the PSNI and NIPB through the Strategic Consultation Group, and shared our views on the regional Policing Plan through stakeholder consultation with the Consultation Group. We responded to consultations on how to improve the quality of policing and public confidence in policing, and contributed to the initial review of Public Protection Units (PPUs) with the PSNI.

Women's Aid worked with PCSPs across Northern Ireland in 2013/14, to ensure that sufficient priority is assigned to domestic violence in each policing district. We remain concerned that a key focus on domestic and sexual violence has not been sufficiently integrated into the PCSPs.

### Listings Court

Women's Aid is encouraged by the progress of the pilot domestic violence listings court in Derry and see it as a vital step towards improving access to justice for all victims of domestic violence. We look forward to seeing it rolled out across Northern Ireland in the near future.

## Access To Welfare

### Welfare Reform

Women's Aid remains deeply concerned that proposed changes to the welfare system will make it even more difficult for women to free themselves and their children from abusive relationships. We have grave concerns that the introduction of Universal Credit, the Bedroom Tax, and the imposition of financial sanctions may leave women with no option but to remain in abusive relationships.

Women's Aid has actively lobbied to mitigate the worst aspects of the proposed welfare reforms in conjunction with the Welfare Reform Group, a collective lobby of civil society organisations. Women's Aid was also active in the Women's Ad Hoc Policy Group and the women's sector activist group Reclaim the Agenda, which organised the Empty Purse Protest in June 2013 and is also linked with the Trade Unions' welfare reform group.

We welcomed concessions on the administration of Universal Credit from the then Social Development Minister, Nelson McCausland, which specifically target victims of domestic violence and abuse. However these flexibilities do not go far enough to fully protect victims from financial abuse, and we continue to call for more robust concessions to be put in place which will reduce the potential for abuse. We are also strongly opposed to the so-called Bedroom Tax, which if implemented will

force many women fleeing abusive relationships into further debt, or deter them from leaving a relationship for fear of the financial ramifications.

### Housing Issues

Women's Aid continued to engage on matters relating to housing during this period, as it remains a key issue for women fleeing domestic violence situations. During this period Annie Campbell was a member of the PSI Homelessness Partnership Sub Group 4, looking at improving services to vulnerable homeless people.

In June 2013 Women's Aid Federation NI developed a paper for Ulidia Housing Association to support the development of a business case for the remodelling of refuges. This briefing paper was used as a template by some Women's Aid local groups in ongoing negotiations for rebuilding or refurbishing refuges.

We will continue to work with DSD, NIHE and Housing Associations to ensure that all Women's Aid refuges are fit for purpose for the 21st century.

**Women's Aid remains deeply concerned that the changes to the welfare system will make it even more difficult for women to free themselves and their children from abusive relationships.**



# Support For Victims Of Domestic & Sexual Violence

## Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse

In 2013/14 work continued to combine the Government's sexual violence and domestic violence strategies. Women's Aid took part in intensive stakeholder consultation with Departments of Health and Justice and the RSG Protection & Justice Subgroup at pre-consultation stage to help inform the draft strategy, which was published for public consultation in January 2014. Women's Aid also fully participated in the public consultation stage, by facilitating victim-led focus groups of women and young people, consulting extensively with our local Women's Aid groups, and sharing our expertise with other stakeholder groups during the consultation period. In March 2014, Women's Aid Federation

**Women's Aid remains very concerned that the Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse strategy doesn't have a budget attached. Without the necessary resources it will not be possible to fulfil the full potential of this comprehensive strategy.**

NI facilitated a roundtable session on the draft Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse strategy for Belfast PCSP.

During this year, Women's Aid Federation NI has also continued to meet our obligations under all

five strands of the Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence action plan.

## Partnership working

Every person affected by domestic and sexual violence requires support tailored to their individual need, and this can be achieved only by effective joined-up partnership working between expert civil society organisations and a committed government. Women's Aid further developed partnerships with statutory and civil society organisations through our participation on the RSG Prevention & Support sub-group, and our local groups' activity in local Domestic Violence Partnerships, which link into the work of the RSG on Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse.

**Women's Aid strongly believes it is only through effective partnership work that we can achieve our vision of the elimination of domestic and sexual violence. We are committed to working with our strategic partners to increase protection and provide support for all victims of domestic and sexual violence.**

During this year, Women's Aid developed a protocol with the defence forces to improve its response to domestic and sexual violence which was launched at Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn in October 2013.

## Support for victims of sexual violence and abuse

Women's Aid welcomed the opening of The Rowan Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in 2013, and the further expansion of the SARC's operations to take public self-referrals from September 2013. This represents a vital improvement in the provision of support for victims of sexual violence, and Women's Aid will continue to work closely with The Rowan SARC to provide support to victims of sexual violence.

## Adult Safeguarding

Women's Aid also worked with other support agencies to improve the safeguarding of vulnerable adults through the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NIASP) and local Adult Safeguarding Partnerships (LASPs). We contributed to the consultation on NIASP's strategic plan, to ensure that domestic violence is recognised as an important issue in the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

## MARAC

Women's Aid plays a full part in Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) - we regard them as essential for the protection of



high risk victims of domestic violence. Women's Aid Federation has taken an active role in the MARAC Regional Operational Group to ensure that MARAC is fully implemented. We contributed to the development of the MARAC Information Sharing Agreement which was officially signed off by the MARAC Operational Group and the Regional Steering Group in December 2013.

MARAC governance checklist applications were submitted by WAFNI and all local Women's Aid groups in February 2014 for core membership of MARAC.

Women's Aid also contributed to the extensive consultation on the MARAC Operating Protocol during this period.

**During 2013 Women's Aid referred 286 women to MARACs. Since 2010 Women's Aid has made 1,068 referrals to MARACs. After the PSNI, Women's Aid is the biggest referrer of high risk victims of domestic violence to MARACs across Northern Ireland.**

Women's Aid notes with concern that despite concerted efforts there remain no specialist IDVAs to support victims through the MARAC process, and no ISVAs to support victims of sexual violence attending the SARC. This is contrary to established best practice for supporting victims who engage with MARAC and SARC.

### **IDAP**

Throughout 2013/14, Women's Aid worked in partnership with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) on the court mandated Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP), for perpetrators of domestic violence. Women's Aid provided Women's Safety Workers across Northern Ireland. Women's Safety Workers increase the protection and safety of women, partners and ex-partners, and children of perpetrators on the IDAP programme.

During this period Women's Aid Federation NI worked alongside PBNI and the 5 Trusts to develop the new non-court mandated perpetrator programme, for which Women's Aid will be providing the Women's Safety Workers. This important programme is now due to be rolled out in December 2014.

### **Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland (PPANI)**

Throughout this period, Annie Campbell (Director) sat on the PPANI Victims Advisory sub-group. This

**325 women were engaged with a Women's Aid Women's Safety Worker in 2013/14. A further 128 children were referred to the service.**

sub-group aims to bring the experiences of victims in relation to public protection issues to the PPANI Board. Women's Aid will continue to press for increased protection for women and children from serial perpetrators of domestic violence.

### **Human Trafficking**

Women's Aid is committed to ensuring that the support needs of women who are victims of modern day slavery are met. At the beginning of 2014, Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid won the contract to support all adult female potential victims of human trafficking in Northern Ireland. In addition to supporting female victims of trafficking, Women's Aid continued in our awareness raising activities on human trafficking, partaking in seminars and information sharing sessions with other stakeholder groups and members of the public.

We also responded to consultations on Lord Morrow's Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) Bill, and provided written and oral evidence to the Justice Committee. Women's Aid voiced its support for Clause 6 of the Bill which would criminalise those

who buy sexual services, on the grounds that the sex industry exploits and abuses vulnerable women and is a violation of women's human rights and dignity. We campaigned alongside organisations such as Ruhama, Equality Now, Eaves, European Women's Lobby (EWL), Northern Ireland Women's European Platform (NIWEP), and Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) for the passage of the Bill. We also lobbied for the Bill to establish support pathways for those in prostitution who wished to exit.

On the international stage, Women's Aid Federation NI co-signed an open letter to Canadian Parliament in 2013, urging them to penalise those who buy sexual services.

Our years of experience supporting victims of gender-based violence, including supporting victims of human trafficking, has best placed Women's Aid to advise on the way forward in

improving Northern Ireland's response to human trafficking, based on best practice and using a victim-centred approach.

### **Working with men**

While the core work of Women's Aid remains providing support for women and their children who are affected by domestic, sexual and all other forms of gender-based violence, we recognise that men are also victims of abuse. Our 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline is open to all women and men affected by domestic or sexual violence. In 2013/14 we worked with men's groups to explore joint working between the women's sector and men's sector, through the Gender Advisory Panel and through roundtable discussions facilitated by the men's domestic violence charity Respect. We continue to seek ways to work constructively with men's organisations to ensure that all victims of domestic and sexual violence receive the support and assistance they need.

**At the heart of all our partnership work is our determination to increase protection and provide support to all victims of domestic and sexual violence.**

## Children & Young People

Women's Aid believes that every child living in a household where domestic violence is happening is a victim of abuse and is in need of protection and support services. Yet funding continues to be inconsistent and patchy for essential support work with children and young people who have experienced domestic violence. Women's Aid has serious concerns about the sustainability of children & young people's services in the long-term, with key areas of work under threat of closure due to lack of funding.

In 2013/14, we continued to engage with groups such as Children in Northern Ireland on issues relating to children and young people. We also contributed to a number of consultations concerning children and young people. Sarah Mason (Finance & Training Manager) sat on the RSG Children & Young People's sub-group, which is a key sub-group linked to both the RSG on Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse and the Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership. Our Director Annie Campbell sat on the Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) and the CYPSP Early Intervention sub-group. The CYPSP is a key partnership which brings together a range of agencies, including voluntary and community sector organisations, with the aim of improving

the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland. We will work within the CYPSP to ensure that domestic and sexual violence is recognised as a critical issue blighting the lives of many children and young people.

**Women's Aid believes that every child living in a household where domestic violence is happening is a victim of abuse and is in need of protection and support services.**

### Preventative Education

Preventative education work with children and young people is vital to change societal attitudes to the point where domestic violence is unacceptable and no child or young person is left without information or support. Women's Aid continued to roll out our project funded by the Department of Education to deliver the Helping Hands Preventative Education programme to teachers across all five Education and Library Boards. We continued to lobby this year to ensure that children and young people's services remain a high priority for government and that our programme continues to be rolled out across Northern Ireland.

### **The Child Sexual Exploitation Inquiry:**

In March 2014, Women's Aid submitted written evidence to the Inquiry on Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland. As an organisation which supports women and their children who have been affected by domestic and sexual violence, we work with young women and girls who are vulnerable

to sexual exploitation, either by older perpetrators or by their peers. There are clear links between domestic violence and sexual exploitation, and Women's Aid will continue to work with DHSSPS and expert children's organisations such as Barnardos and NSPCC to tackle child sexual exploitation in all forms.

## **Women With No Recourse To Public Funds**

Women with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) are being denied access to safe refuge accommodation because refuges are dependent on government funding. These women are not eligible for benefits or housing assistance such as housing benefit whilst in refuge. As such, many non- UK national victims of domestic and sexual violence are essentially trapped, faced with an impossible and inhumane choice between destitution and a life of violence and abuse.

Women's Aid is willing and committed to providing support, emergency accommodation and assistance for all women and children who are victims of domestic violence.

However we are severely limited in our capacity to do so due to a lack of funding and resources.

### **Emergency Fund**

In March 2012, the Emergency Fund provided by OFMDFM to assist vulnerable destitute migrants with no recourse to public funds ceased. Although the amount of money available was small, it made an enormous difference to women without recourse who were trapped in abusive situations, and this funding gap is a huge blow for some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

Women's Aid endeavours to support all women who need help due to domestic violence – however, without any financial assistance our services are placed under a huge strain.

# All Forms Of Violence Against Women And Girls

Women's Aid believes that all forms of violence against women and girls are grounded in gender inequality. To eradicate violence against women, therefore, we must tackle the root causes and redress the many inequalities between women and men that are ingrained in our society. Women's Aid in Northern Ireland works at local, regional, European and international level to campaign on VAWG-related issues and gender inequality in general.

## **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW):**

Following Women's Aid Federation NI participation in the 57th meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2013, we continued throughout 2013/14 to share the key messages and best practice on violence against women and girls from the event with government departments and key stakeholders.

Through her role as NIWEP Board member, Louise Kennedy worked with other women's organisations across the UK as part of the CSW Alliance, to work for the full implementation of the CSW 57 Agreed Conclusions. As part of the funding agreement with the Department of Justice, Louise and her NIWEP colleague Emma Johnston of YouthAction NI compiled a report on CSW57, which included recommendations for Northern Irish government departments on how to implement the Agreed Conclusions. This was followed by presentations of the recommendations to the Community Safety Unit, the RSG, the All-Party Group on UN Security

Council Resolution 1325 and other civil society organisations.

## **CEDAW:**

In advance of the CEDAW committee's examination of the UK in July 2013, Women's Aid contributed to the Northern Ireland Shadow Report in conjunction with NIWEP. We also contributed extensively to research conducted by Monica McWilliams for the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) on the impact of domestic violence on BME women, which accompanied and informed NICEM's shadow report to CEDAW.

## **Women, Peace & Security:**

In October 2013, Women's Aid submitted written evidence to the Westminster Associate Parliamentary Group Inquiry on UNSCR 1325. On the back of this submission, Louise Kennedy (Regional Policy & Information Coordinator), Orla Conway (Omagh Women's Aid) and Noelle Collins (Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid) were invited to give oral evidence to the inquiry hearing in the Northern Ireland Assembly in December 2013.

Our evidence drew attention to the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence in Northern Ireland, with particular focus on the impact of the conflict on violence against women. We reported our experience supporting women who had been abused but were unable to report to police because of their community's hostility to police, women who did not report abuse because of their perpetrator's membership of paramilitaries

or security forces, and the negative impact of a weaponised society on women.

In October 2013, our Director Annie Campbell was part of a women's sector delegation that met with Dr. Meghan O'Sullivan, vice-chair of the Haass talks. The meeting explored the legacy of the conflict, in relation to the exclusion of women from the peace-building process and the effects this has had on the women of Northern Ireland.

#### **Four Nations engagement:**

Throughout 2013/14, Women's Aid in Northern Ireland has continued to work with women's organisations across the UK and Ireland to coordinate our efforts to eradicate domestic and sexual violence. As members of the End Violence Against Women (EVAW) coalition, we attended meetings on collective working and took part in UK-wide campaigns on banning rape pornography, calling for specialist sexual violence services in the wake of Jimmy Savile revelations and Operation Yewtree, and endorsing the EVAW submission to the VAWG Inquiry in Westminster.

### **Women's Aid has called for research to be conducted into the links between sexual violence and the conflict as a matter of urgency.**

In April 2013 and in January 2014, Women's Aid Federation NI met with our sister organisations Women's Aid Federation England, Scottish Women's Aid and Welsh Women's Aid in Cardiff as part of the collective effort to eradicate domestic & sexual violence across the UK.

Women's Aid in Northern Ireland also works with organisations in the Republic of Ireland, particularly in border regions. We remain committed to sharing and implementing best practice to tackle domestic and sexual violence, and to that end we worked with Dublin Rape Crisis Centre in advance of the expansion of our 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline. In November 2013, our Director Annie Campbell addressed the West Cork Violence Against Women conference to share our good practice with our sisters in the Republic, including our partnership work with organisations across Northern Ireland and the programmes Women's Aid runs for women and children.

#### **Supporting grass roots activism:**

Women's Aid is a feminist organisation and a supporter of grassroots feminist action in Northern Ireland. In 2013/14 we gave our support to Hollaback! Belfast, the local branch of the international movement to end street harassment. We remained members of the Reclaim the Agenda movement, a collective of women sector representatives, grassroots feminist activists, trade union activists and interested individuals who campaign on poverty, discrimination, healthcare, domestic and sexual violence, gender equality and affordable childcare.

Women's Aid Federation NI successfully campaigned alongside women's organisations all over the world to urge Facebook to change its policy of not removing content that promotes violence against women. The #FBrape campaign was hugely successful in that it forced Facebook to change its policies and procedures and also raised awareness of the issue with 60,000 tweets and 5,000 emails shared in support throughout the campaign.



# Connecting

We continue to develop and sustain our relationships with key partners across all sectors and participate actively on a number of policy fora. These include:

## **Stopping Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy - DHSS&PS and DOJ**

Regional Strategic Group

Protection & Justice sub-group

Prevention and Support sub-group

Children & Young People's sub-group

MARAC Operational Group

## **Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Board**

- Early Intervention sub-group

## **Other**

- Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) Policy Forum
- Child Maintenance & Enforcement Division Stakeholder Forum (CMED)
- Disability Action (Research)
- End Violence Against Women (NI) Working Group
- End Violence Against Women UK Expert Advisory group
- Human Trafficking Social Care Group, Department of Justice (with Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid & Foyle Women's Aid)
- NICVA Women's Policy Forum
- NI Human Rights Consortium

- NI Women's European Platform (NIWEP)
- CSW Alliance
- OFMDFM Gender Advisory Panel
- PBNI - Un-adjudicated Domestic Abuse Programmes Regional Steering Group
- Queens University DV Research Special Interest Group
- Rural Women's Policy Forum
- Skills For Justice Steering Group
- Stranmillis College Safeguarding Forum
- UK/ROL (Refuge Online) London
- Women's Ad Hoc Policy Group
- Women's Aid Federations across the UK and the Republic of Ireland
- Reclaim the Agenda
- International Women's Day Committee
- Welfare Reform Group
- PSI Homeless Partnership Sub Group 4 on Service Improvement
- PPANI Victims Advisory sub-group
- Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NIASP)
- Women's Reference Group of the Policing Board NI
- Human Trafficking NGO Engagement Group
- CRISPP
- NIPB Strategic Consultation Group
- Women's Sector Consortium
- Government Voluntary Sector Joint Forum
- NIRWN Board
- WRDA Board

## Policy Responses

- Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister: Delivering Social Change for Children & Young People
- Department for Social Development: Proposal for Anti-Social Behaviour Bill
- Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation: Call for Evidence
- Northern Ireland Policing Board: Draft Policing Plan 2014 – 2017
- Department of Justice: Draft Guidance – Working with intimidated witnesses
- Department of Justice: Custodial Arrangements for Children in Northern Ireland
- Associate Parliamentary Group on Women, Peace & Security: Written & Oral evidence on UNSCR 1325
- Department of Justice: Consultation on Northern Ireland Law Commission Report on Bail in Criminal Proceedings
- Committee for Justice: Written Evidence on Trafficking & Exploitation (further provision and support for victims) Bill
- Northern Ireland Office: Draft Legislation: Anonymous Registration: protecting voters at risk in Northern Ireland
- Policing Board Northern Ireland: Policing Plan survey
- Political & Constitutional Reform Committee: Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill
- Department for Social Development: Principles of a Person's Own Home
- Home Office / Department of Justice: NI Update on CAHVIO / Istanbul Convention Progress
- Children & Young People Strategic Partnership: Draft Action Plan for Looked After Children and Homelessness 16+
- Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland: Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016
- Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership: Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018
- Committee for Justice: Proposed changes to Criminal and Civil Legal Aid
- Department of Justice: Proposals for the reform of financial eligibility for Civil and Criminal Legal Aid
- UN CEDAW: Shadow Report Consultation
- Department of Justice: Consultation on proposals for the use of live links in weekend courts
- Department of Justice: Consultation on Safeguards to Protect Individual Decisions on the Granting of Civil Legal Aid
- Supporting People: Housing Related Support Strategy
- Department of Justice: Discretionary Support policy: A consultation on the service design

**Women's Aid Federation NI responded to 24 policy consultations in 2013/14**

# REGIONAL TRAINING

Regional training aims to develop highly skilled and qualified staff across Northern Ireland and to educate, inform and challenge the public, media and other agencies of the impact and effects of domestic violence.

## Accredited training



Women's Aid Federation NI is an accredited centre with Open College Network (OCN) and continues to effectively deliver accredited courses at level 3.



Women's Aid Federation NI is also an Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) Recognised Provider. This enables the organisation to quality assure various

programmes by awarding ILM Development Awards on successful completion of the following:

- Train the Trainers to Develop Social Guardians Facilitators to deliver Helping Hands.
- Effective Communication Skills for Social Guardians Delivering Helping Hands.

## Accredited Training Provided

- OCN Level 3 The Role of the Domestic and Sexual Abuse/Violence Practitioner (Part of QCF qualification)
- OCN Level 3 Understanding Domestic Violence
- OCN Level 3 Court Support Training
- OCN Level 3 Training Skills for Trainers
- Keeping Safe Child Protection- endorsed by Volunteer Now
- Foundation Level in Certificate of Protective Behaviours

## Quotes from staff who took part in accredited training:

“An excellent training session. I really enjoyed it & learnt so much. I have taken back so many new ideas and a positive attitude that the work I do truly helps women & children to 'survive their journey' Thank you”

“A brilliant training session, well delivered, interesting and educational. Thank you.”

### UK wide accredited training

Women's Aid Federation NI has successfully continued to work with the other UK Federations and Skills for Justice in England to develop a national core curriculum for domestic violence training. We are delighted to announce that a new domestic and sexual violence qualification has been listed on Qualifications and Credit Framework and is now available to access. The **Tackling and Preventing Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse** Qualification is available at 3 stages of learning and accreditation (QCF):

This progressional award enables staff to access training and increase their level of qualification on an ongoing basis and provides nationally recognised transferable skills within the UK. This qualification has been mapped to the Domestic & Sexual Violence National Occupational Standards (NOS).

### The certificate consists of 4 units

1. Understanding domestic and sexual abuse/violence within a social and historical context.
2. Professional responses to children and young people with experiences of domestic and sexual abuse/violence.
3. The role of the domestic and sexual abuse practitioner.
4. Domestic and sexual violence/abuse services and a coordinated community response.

The **Certificate** in tackling and preventing domestic and sexual violence and abuse has been approved by the Home Office as:

“suitable training for all IDVAs and other specialist domestic violence services”.

A presentation about this new qualification was delivered by the training team to local Women's Aid Groups at a Regional Issues Day in November 2013. There was particular interest in the benefits of staff gaining the full Certificate qualification.

# New Training Developments

## The Role of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Practitioner

This training programme enables practitioners to offer an effective response to individuals affected by domestic and/or sexual violence. In response to the merging of the Government's Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategies, and the expansion of the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline, Women's Aid Federation NI has developed this new specialised and accredited training programme to ensure best practice for all staff. The training team, along with Eileen Murphy (Women's Aid Armagh Down) and Sonya McMullen (24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline) has developed materials for one unit from the new Domestic & Sexual Violence Qualification entitled 'The Role of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Practitioner'. The roll out of this training commenced in November 2013. Successful completion of this 2 day course and associated assessments will gain an OCN level 3 unit certificate (6 Credits).

### The main objectives of the course are to:

- understand the principles of advocacy work relating to domestic and sexual abuse/violence services
- understand risk in relation to domestic and sexual violence and how to apply appropriate methods of risk assessment with adult victims/survivors

- understand how to provide a first response to a domestic and sexual violence victim/survivor at the point of crisis
- understand how risk assessment informs safety planning and risk management processes
- understand legal interventions towards increasing the safety of victims/survivors and their children
- know the local services available to victims/survivors of domestic and sexual abuse/violence in order to increase their safety
- understand how to provide emotional support to colleagues working in the field of domestic and sexual abuse/violence.

Three very successful phases of this training were delivered during November 2013 to December 2013 across Northern Ireland and a total of **51 Women's Aid staff** attended.

Thank you to all those groups who provided venues for training delivery, namely Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid, Women's Aid Armagh Down and Foyle Women's Aid.

Thank you to the excellent guest speakers who contributed to the training.

**51 Women's Aid staff attended the new training programme, The Role of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Practitioner**



(L to R - Mairead Lavery, Public Prosecution Service (PPS), Sonya McMullan, Acting Helpline Manager, 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline, Inspector Anne Marks, PSNI/Rowan SARC)

#### Comments from participants who took part included:

“I will be a more responsive and assertive practitioner to women and children, who are, or have experienced sexual and/or domestic violence.”

“Training was very helpful, supportive and informative to improve confidence and skills.”

“I recognise I was already working with victims of domestic & sexual abuse but now feel better informed & resourced.”

## Internal Training Delivered April 2013 – March 2014

Training	Accreditation	Duration	Content	Numbers Attended
The Role of the Domestic and Sexual Abuse/Violence Practitioner	OCN Level 3	2 Days 3 Groups	A two day specialised and accredited training programme to ensure best practice for all staff working within the role of domestic and sexual abuse/violence practitioner.	51
Understanding Domestic Violence	OCN Level 3	6 Days	Core training for all staff, including impact of domestic violence on children and young people	31
Train the Trainers to Develop Social Guardians Facilitators to deliver Helping Hands	ILM	2 Days	A two day train the trainers programme for Women's Aid staff to deliver Developing Social Guardians to deliver Helping Hands to teachers	15
Keeping Children Safe – Child Protection <b>Module 2:</b> training for staff & volunteers <b>(Includes module 1)</b>	Youthnet	1 day	This programme reflects Women's Aid Child Protection policy and procedures	57
Keeping Children Safe - Child Protection <b>Module 3:</b> training for managers, supervisors and management committee members <b>(Includes module 1)</b>	Youthnet	1 day	This programme reflects Women's Aid Child Protection policy and procedures	14
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>168</b>

**168 members of Women's Aid staff across Northern Ireland attended training.**

## External training delivered April 2013 – March 2014

**685 representatives from external agencies attended training provided by Women's Aid Federation NI**

Training Provided	Agency	Duration	Numbers Attended
Foundation Level in Certificate of Protective Behaviours	West Cork Women's Project	2 Days	13
Awareness Raising of Women's Aid Services	Emergency Out of Hours Duty Social Workers	1 Workshop	55
Developing Social Guardians in Understanding the Impact of Domestic Violence on Children & Young People	Regional Training Unit, Stranmillis College	1 Day	25
Developing Social Guardians in Understanding the Impact of Domestic Violence on Children & Young People	Children in Northern Ireland (CINI)	1 Day	21
Supporting Children & Young People Under Stress	CCEA Regional Conferences Belfast & Cookstown	4 Workshops	130
Effective Communication Skills for Social Guardians Delivering Helping Hands	Teacher Training supporting North Down & Ards Women's Aid	2 Days	9
Effective Communication Skills for Social Guardians Delivering Helping Hands	Stranmillis College: Research into delivery of the Helping Hands programme within Early Years	2 Days	12
Awareness Raising of Women's Aid and safeguarding issues in relation to children's experience of domestic violence	Northern Ireland Medical & Dentists Training Association (NIMDTA)	8 Workshops	400 (8 x 50 approx.)
Our Place – Safe Space Exploring children's experiences and needs in relation to domestic violence	QUB Improving Children's Lives International Conference	Paper/Symposium	20
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>685</b>

### Comments from Participants include:

“The session was very informative and challenging in a positive manner. Gave me an insight into Women's Aid and how to be aware of domestic violence.”

“The course has had a huge impact on my own personal development, I feel passionately about giving children tools to cope + empowerment. This training will help me in delivering the Helping Hands programme.”



## Improving Children's Lives – QUB International Conference

The training team delivered a symposium as part of the Queen's University Belfast, **Improving Children's Lives** international conference in February 2014. This international, interdisciplinary conference was attended by over 200 participants, including:

- Academics
- Practitioners
- Services Commissioners
- Policy makers

The symposium **"Our Place – Safe Space"** explored the impact of domestic violence on children and profiled the excellent services provided by Women's Aid across Northern Ireland to meet the needs of children and young people who have experienced, or who are at risk of experiencing, domestic violence.

## Keeping Children Safe - Child Protection

Women's Aid Federation NI delivers training on all areas of safeguarding children and young people experiencing domestic violence including, Keeping Children Safe - Child Protection training. This is a recognised and endorsed training programme developed by Volunteer Now, supported by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and certificated through Youthnet. This programme is delivered by skilled accredited Keeping Safe trainers within Women's Aid Federation NI. All staff and volunteers regionally within Women's Aid are trained on child protection as part of their core training.

**Keeping Children Safe training** is a unique suite of modules which gives participants the opportunity to explore the current, relevant issues in safeguarding children including legislation, statistics and good practice. Participants learn through a variety of methods including presentation, group work, scenarios and case studies.

Module	Title	Suitable for:
Module 1 (3 Hours)	Keeping Children Safe: An Introduction	Staff/volunteers with no direct contact with children/young people
Module 2 (6 Hours)	Keeping Children Safe: training for staff and volunteers ( <b>Includes module 1</b> )	All staff/volunteers with direct contact with children/young people
Module 3 (6 Hours)	Keeping Children Safe: training for managers, supervisors and management committee members ( <b>Includes module 1</b> )	Managers, supervisors and management committee members

**In the last year 71 staff and volunteers within Women's Aid have received Keeping Children Safe - Child Protection Certificates.**

### Quotes from participants when asked, what was the most useful aspect?

“Exploring Governance Role and identifying gaps in procedures”

“Using the knowledge gained in conjunction with our own child protection policy”

### Continuing professional development for Women's Aid Federation NI training team

The training team at Women's Aid Federation NI appreciates the importance of continuing

professional development to ensure up to date and extensive knowledge of subject areas and to facilitate transfer of new learning in all regional training developments.

### Training accessed by Women's Aid Federation Regional Trainers 2013- 2014:

Title	Provided by:	Days
Disorganised Attachment and Child Protection	BAPSCAN	1
Body Right - educating young people concerning the facts, the law, the meaning and legal implications of consent and the impact of sexual violence	Rape Crisis Centre Dublin	4 Days
Working with Traumatized Parents and Babies	HSCNI	1 Day
Immigration Law & People Trafficking	Law Centre	1 Day
'You Can Heal Your Life' Residential	Dialogues, Birmingham	7 Days
Inside the Mind of the Child Sexual Offender	INEQE, Belfast	1 Day
Respect Toolkit Helpline Training	RESPECT	1 Day
ILM Assessment Day	ILM	Workshop
Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).	ASCERT	Workshop
CEOP Ambassador Training	CEOP	1 Day
Child Sexual Exploitation	BAPSCAN	1 Day

### Future training initiatives

We look forward to a busy and productive year ahead with some exciting training initiatives already on the horizon. These include:

- Continued rollout of QCF Qualification units
- Work with Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Association
- Accredited ILM Award for facilitator training on You and Me, Mum
- PSNI Recruit Training

# JOURNEY TO FREEDOM



Journey to Freedom is a personal development group process, for women who have experienced (or who continue to experience) domestic violence.

This is the second year using the newly updated pack and Women's Aid facilitators have been really positive about the benefits. The new pack, whilst retaining the main structure, key activities and materials from the original process, has been updated and further developed. The pack has now been distributed to all our member groups and feedback to date has been really positive. We recently translated the materials to Braille to increase access onto the programme for those with visual impairment.

## Anticipated 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

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 wellbeing 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.

# Journey to Freedom: The Stepping Stones



**624 women took part in the Journey to Freedom Programme.**

## PREVENTATIVE EDUCATION PROJECT

Women's Aid Federation NI believes that preventative education work with all children and young people in schools and community settings is essential to ensure that attitudes within society are changed to the point where domestic violence is unacceptable and no child or young person is left without information or support.

This is year four of a project funded by the Department of Education. Women's Aid Federation NI has developed an innovative programme to build capacity for primary school teachers to deliver Helping Hands. The capacity building programme, Developing Social Guardians to Deliver Helping Hands, has been delivered to Primary School Teachers across the five Education and Library Board Areas since 2010 and this year 2013/2014 was the fourth successful roll out of this training.

### Programme outcomes:

- Assist teachers to understand the context and impact of domestic violence in the lives of children and their families.
- Assist teachers to develop preventative and early intervention strategies in relation to children who do not feel safe, specifically children affected by domestic violence.
- Enable teachers to deliver the Helping Hands programme linked to the curriculum.

Teachers who successfully complete the two day programme are eligible for an ILM Development Award entitled: *Effective Communication Skills for Social Guardians delivering Helping Hands*.

### Totals for 2013 - 2014

Number of Women's Aid Staff who accessed Train the Trainers on Developing Social Guardians	Number of Local Women's Aid groups involved	Numbers of Primary Schools involved	Number of teachers who accessed the two day training programme
12	9	110	150

### Feedback from teachers who took part:

“This course has had a huge impact on my own professional development. I feel passionate about giving children tools to cope and empower them.”

“I feel this course has provided me with the confidence to deliver the elements of PDMU in key stage 2.”

**Trained to date 2010 - 2014:**

**Teachers  
663**

**Schools  
442**

### **Heading for Healthy Relationships (H4HR)**

We are excited to be nearing completion of our innovative preventative education pack for post primary education settings. During the development process of the QCF unit The Role of the Domestic & Sexual Violence Practitioner, extensive work was carried out in relation to the impact of sexual violence. This has helped to shape

the proposed content for H4HR. Furthermore, in the last year, Women's Aid Federation NI has met with NEXUS to work in partnership to develop a final module for inclusion in H4HR with particular focus on sexual abuse. We look forward to finalising this much needed pack and rolling it out with the necessary teacher support and training across Northern Ireland.





# YOU AND ME, MUM

The aim of this 10 week programme is to empower, support and develop further understanding of the role of mothers in addressing the needs of their children and young people who have lived with domestic violence.

This year saw the successful completion of the independent evaluation of the You and Me, Mum programme. The purpose of the evaluation process was to *“Conduct an external independent evaluation to assess the impact of the **You and Me, Mum** programme on women and children throughout Northern Ireland Women’s Aid”*. The full evaluation report presents an in-depth evaluation of progress, key achievements, impact and areas for development relating to the **You and Me, Mum** programme.

Women’s Aid Federation NI, through the full evaluation report, seeks to highlight the importance of the programme, demonstrate its effectiveness

and success, reflect upon key achievements and plan effectively for future development and roll out.

An evaluation methodology was developed to include a range of both quantitative and qualitative methods. It was of vital importance that the approach would centre on the active involvement of mothers who had participated or were currently engaged in programme delivery. Additionally, the expert opinion of Dr John Devaney, Director of Social Work Education, School of Sociology, Social Policy & Social Work, Queen’s University Belfast was sought in relation to the content and importance of the **You and Me, Mum** programme.

The evaluation process clearly demonstrated the importance, impact and key achievements associated with the **You and Me, Mum** programme. The benefits to and social impact on, the whole family unit demonstrated by the evaluation process is profound. Feedback from mothers involved, overwhelmingly highlighted the importance of the programme and the need for continued delivery. All mothers involved in the evaluation openly and honestly shared the wealth of benefits they and their children have gained from the programme leaving no uncertainty in relation to the success of the programme. It is evident the programme has been truly instrumental in bringing about positive change for hundreds of families across Northern Ireland.

Women’s Aid Federation NI will continue to monitor and evaluate the programme and offer facilitator training to Women’s Aid staff on an on-going basis.

## Evaluation methodology:

- 5 focus groups involving a total of 22 programme participants and 9 programme facilitators
- 8 semi structured interviews with key Women’s Aid staff
- 82 questionnaires, completed by a range of stakeholders
- 3 case studies completed with programme participants
- Review and analysis of statistical data

**Some thoughts from mothers who participated in the evaluation process:**

“I had done a couple of courses with Women’s Aid which helped me cope but doing the You and Me, Mum course was great for me to help my children, to recognise and understand to some extent what they had also gone through, although I thought I had protected them from so much.”

“It built my confidence in my role as a mother. It helped me realise that I was trying my best to protect my children. It also helped me to realise my children are not badly behaved, they were just reacting to a difficult situation.”

“It all changed...my kids are happier, I am happier...we can talk to each other instead of shouting and there’s wider respect in the household.”



**71 mothers participated in You and Me, Mum.**



# WOMEN'S AID GROUPS: REGIONAL STATISTICS

Statistical data can never evidence the full picture of the devastating impact of domestic and sexual violence. Statistics do however show the extent of need for support for victims, and offer a brief snapshot of the work carried out by local Women's Aid groups across Northern Ireland, who are members of Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland.

## Number of Women and Children Staying in Refuge: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014

999 women stayed in refuges

747 children stayed in refuges

402 women unable to access refuge in their area

59 women were supported during their pregnancies

## Refuge

A total of 999 women and 747 children stayed in Women's Aid refuges during 2013/14. These figures show a significant increase of 119 (13.5%) women staying in our refuges compared to 2012/13, and an even bigger rise of 201 (36%) children. 402 women were unable to access refuge services in their area because there were no beds available for them. This presents a decrease from last year's figure of 424 of 22 women (5%). A small number of these women were able to be accommodated in Women's Aid refuges in other parts of Northern Ireland, but for many women the extremely high demand for our lifesaving services meant that there were no bed spaces for them and their children.

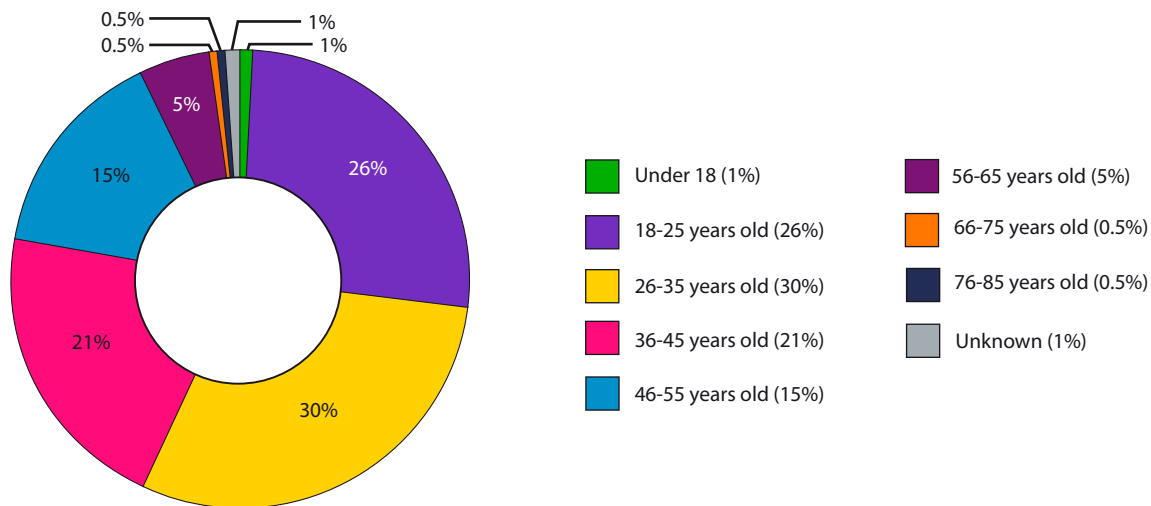
As these figures show, refuge services are as vital as ever for women and children who are victims of domestic violence – on average, approximately

5 women and children come to stay in refuge every day because they are not safe in their own homes. During the year 59 women in refuge were supported during their pregnancies.

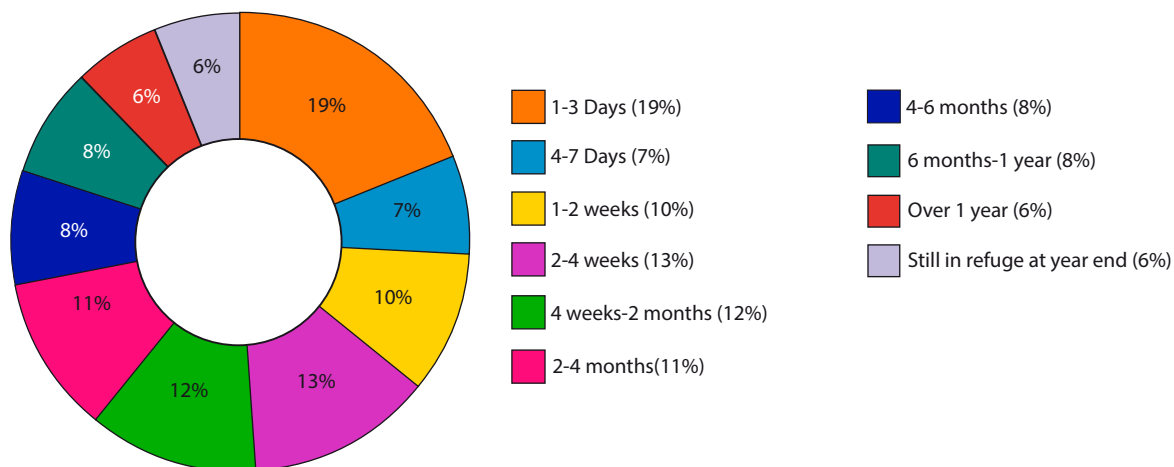
### Age range

Domestic violence affects women of all ages. It is important to recognise that many women suffer for years before reaching out for support. The age range of women staying in Women's Aid refuges is illustrated in the chart overleaf. The most predominant age group this year is the 26 – 35 year olds, who represent 30% of all women staying in refuge in this year. The second highest group are 18 – 25 year olds, who make up 26% of those staying in refuge in this year. 1% of women who stayed in our refuges were over 66 years old.

### Age range of women staying in Women's Aid refuges: 1st April 2013 - 31 March 2014



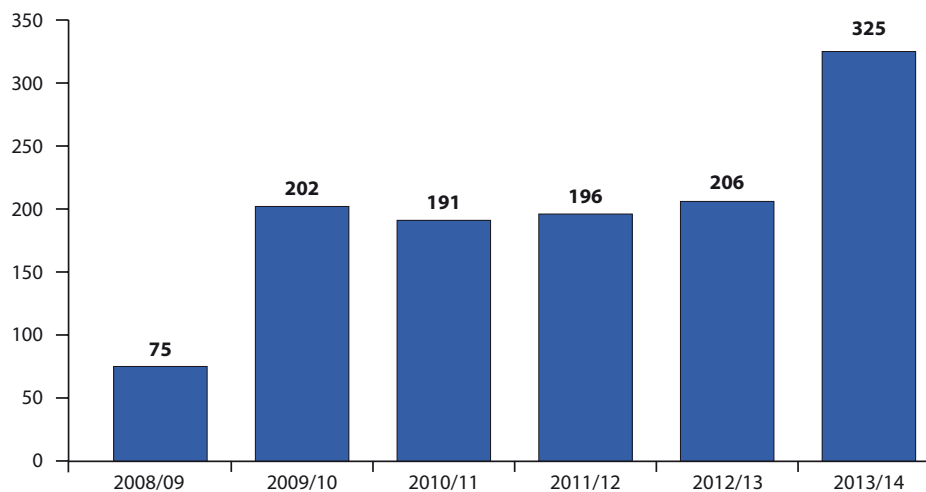
### Length of stay of women & children in Women's Aid refuges: 1st April 2013 - 31st March 2014



## Disability

The number of women in refuge who disclosed having a disability, including addictions, was 325. This was an increase of 119 women (58%) from 2012/13 when the figure was 206. Out of the 325 women with disabilities, 166 presented with mental health issues.

**Number of disabled women in our refuges between 08/09 and 13/14**



**325 disabled women stayed in our refuges**

## Floating Support & Outreach Services

The number of women accessing Floating Support and other outreach services across Northern Ireland has remained steady in 2013/14. A total of 3,558 women accessed Floating Support services this year, a similar figure to 2012/13 when the number was 3,659. This represents a slight decrease of 101 (2.8%). There was a significant increase in the number of women accessing our other outreach services this year – a total of 1,662 women accessed these services, an increase of 105% on 2012/13, when the figure was 811. This brings the total of women accessing all community based services to 5,220.

- PSNI
- Social Services
- Nurses / Doctors / Midwives / Health Visitors / healthcare professionals
- NI Housing Executive
- Probation Board NI / IDAP
- The Rowan SARC
- Simon Community
- Housing Associations
- Solicitors
- Other Women's Aid groups
- Citizen Advice Bureaux
- Victim Support NI
- Lifeline
- SureStart
- Barnardos
- Family Support Hub
- Community Mental Health
- Homestart
- Addiction services
- MARAC
- Action for Children
- Age NI
- Carecall
- St Vincent DePaul
- Belfast Migrant Centre
- Women's Groups
- Counselling services
- Political parties / representatives
- Friends/relatives
- Schools
- Church groups

4,869 children were indirectly supported through the Floating Support service. This represents an increase of 9% on the 2012-13 figures, when 4,469 children were indirectly supported.

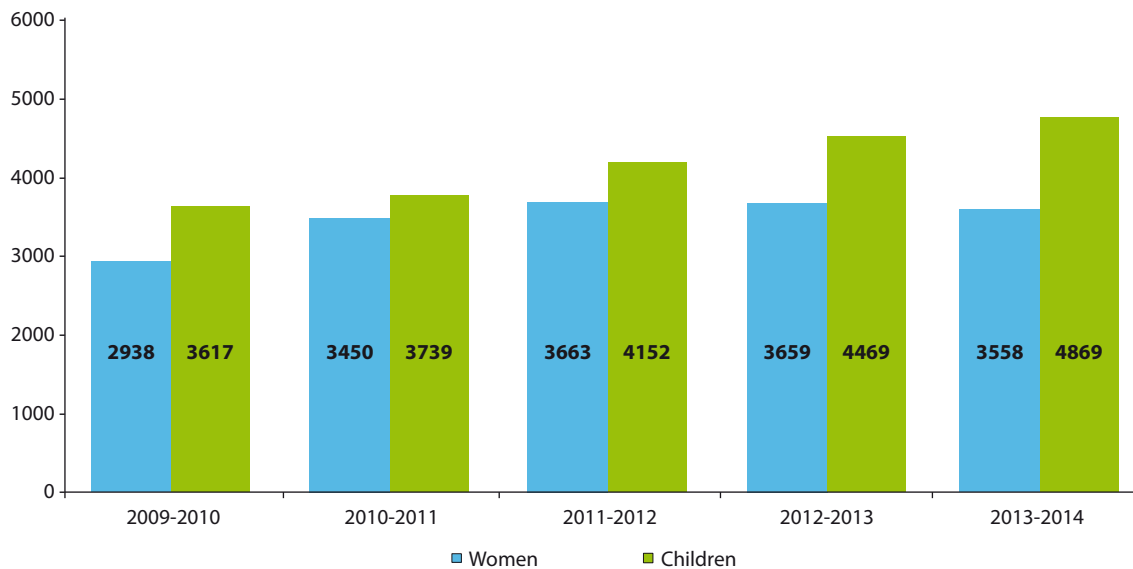
Referrals to our outreach services come from a variety of sources, including the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline, which is open to all women and men affected by domestic & sexual violence. Among the agencies and individuals contacting Women's Aid to refer women to our services are:

Unfortunately, in spite of our efforts, waiting lists continue to operate across our local groups for community-based outreach support. This shows the real need for the expansion of such vital support initiatives for victims of domestic violence

in Northern Ireland. Nonetheless, our outreach services continue to enable many women and their children to access support whilst remaining in their own homes and communities.

**A total of 3,558 women accessed Floating Support  
4,869 children were indirectly supported through the Floating Support service**

**Numbers of women and children supported through Floating Support over past five years**



**5,220 women were supported via all community based outreach services**

## Black & Minority Ethnic Women

Northern Ireland is becoming an increasingly diverse society, and Women's Aid is dedicated to ensuring our services are inclusive for all women and children. As part of our efforts to reach out to women from black and ethnic minority communities, information leaflets on domestic and sexual violence are published in 12 different languages. In addition, our 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline, which is open to all women and men affected by domestic and sexual violence, uses Language Line translation service which all of our local Women's Aid groups can access.

In 2013/14, 175 women from black and minority ethnic communities, including the Travelling

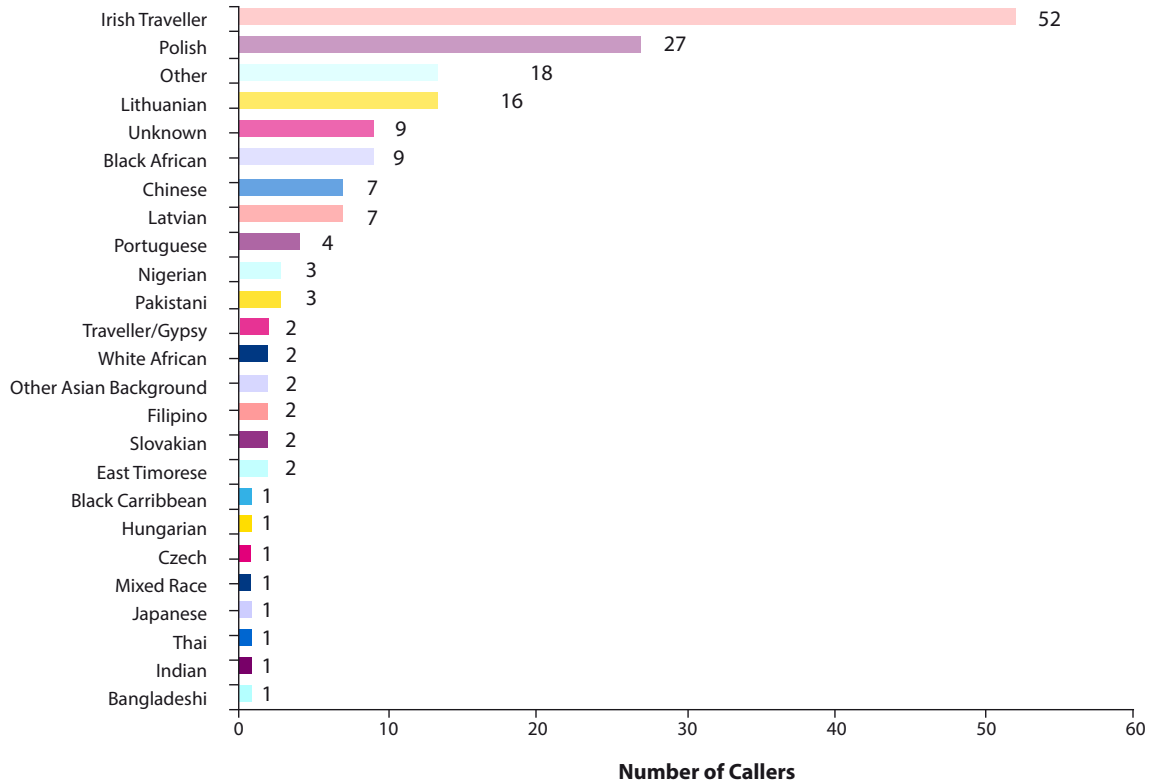
community, were accommodated in our local refuges – this is an increase of 43 women (33%) from 2012/13, when the figure was 132.

263 women from BME communities accessed Floating Support services, an increase of 39 women (17%) on last year's figure, which was 224. A further 113 BME women accessed other Women's Aid outreach services. This brings the total number of BME women who accessed all our outreach services to 376.

Women's Aid is actively seeking ways to reach out to women and children from all communities who need our services.

**175 women from black and minority ethnic communities, including the Travelling community, stayed in refuge  
376 BME women accessed Women's Aid outreach services**

## Women from black, minority and ethnic communities accommodated in Women's Aid Refuges 1st April 2013 – 31st March 2014



### No Recourse to Public Funds

The number of women who are victims of domestic violence and have no recourse to public funds in Northern Ireland continues to be a source of concern for Women's Aid. Between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2014, a total of 27 women who presented as having no recourse to public funds stayed in our refuges. 13 of these

women had children and the number of children accommodated was 16. This was an increase of 5 women from 2012/13 when the figure was 22. Women's Aid strives to help as many women in this harrowing situation as possible. However without dedicated emergency funds to provide for their basic needs, many of these women are left with no choice but to stay in an abusive relationship.

## Perpetrators of abuse

Women's Aid in Northern Ireland supports women who have been victims of domestic and sexual violence and their children, regardless of who has committed that abuse. Our statistics show that the vast majority of domestic violence and abuse against women is perpetrated by male intimate partners or ex-partners. As in previous years, during 2013/14, Women's Aid also supported women whose perpetrators were family members, same-sex partners, or others such as neighbours, employers, friends or traffickers.

Of the women who stayed in our refuges, 44% of perpetrators were current husbands, partners or boyfriends, 35% of perpetrators were ex-husbands, partners or boyfriends, 1% were same sex partners or girlfriends, 12% were family members or relatives, and 8% were other perpetrators such as neighbours, employers, friends or traffickers.

Of the women who accessed our Floating Support service, 37% of perpetrators were current husbands, partners or boyfriends, 47% of perpetrators were ex-husbands, partners or boyfriends, 0.1%

were same sex partners or girlfriends, 5.9% were family members or relatives, and 10% were other perpetrators such as neighbours, employers, friends or traffickers.

The statistics show that with the right support behind them, many women can and do leave abusive relationships. This is especially evident in the Floating Support numbers, where many women will have been supported through the crisis stage of leaving an abuser and are now receiving vital ongoing support to rebuild their lives while staying in their own homes.

The statistics also help dispel the myth that a victim is partly at fault for their abuse because they do not leave their abuser. As the numbers clearly show, abuse often does not end when a woman flees an abusive situation. However, with support from expert organisations like Women's Aid and the committed efforts of government and statutory support agencies, it is possible for victims to break free from their perpetrator and build a new life.

## Women engaged in group work programmes

Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, women participated in a range of personal development courses run by our local groups. 624 women took part in the *Journey to Freedom* programme, 71 mothers participated in *You and Me, Mum*, and a further 859 women partook in a number of other programmes offered by individual local

Women's Aid groups. In all, a total of 1,554 women participated across 33 programmes dealing with issues such as recovering from abuse, parenting, self-esteem building, stress management, numeracy, literacy, and coping with trauma through art.



## Women supported as part of the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP)

During the year 2013/14, a total of 325 women were engaged with a Women's Aid Women's Safety Worker, the support for women and children offered when their partners or ex-partners are undertaking the IDAP perpetrators programme run by PBNI.

Of these 325 women, 106 were new referrals during 2013/14. The remaining 219 women had

been referred in the previous year and continued to receive support. There are on average, 80 men a year coming through IDAP regionally; the numbers of women referred clearly show the serial nature of many of these perpetrators.

An additional 128 children were referred to the Women's Safety Worker service in 2013/14.

## Children and young people in Women's Aid: 1st April 2013 – 31st March 2014

Women's Aid across Northern Ireland is committed to meeting the needs of all children and young people affected by domestic violence. This year, we have continued to roll out our visionary strategy for children and young people, **Our Place – Safe Space**. Outcomes measured through our performance management framework clearly demonstrate the impact of this invaluable work.

In 2013/14, 747 children and young people were accommodated in refuges, and 4,869 were indirectly supported through Floating Support. 1,096 crèche sessions were held with 656 children, and 1,084 one to one sessions were held with children in refuge.

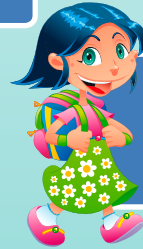
15 babies were born to women in refuge, ensuring that both mother and baby had a place of safety and were able to access vital support during this special time.

Listening to the voices of children and young people is fundamental to how we run our services and during this period we held 75 children's meetings, 152 youth forum meetings and 26 consultation events with children and young people in our refuges.

150 teachers were trained to deliver the Helping Hands programme to children in primary schools, to increase their understanding of safety and support.



**747 children were accommodated in refuge.**



**4,869 children were indirectly supported through the Floating Support service.**



**15 babies were born to women in refuge.**



**1,084 one-to-one sessions with children in refuge**



**152 youth forum meetings**

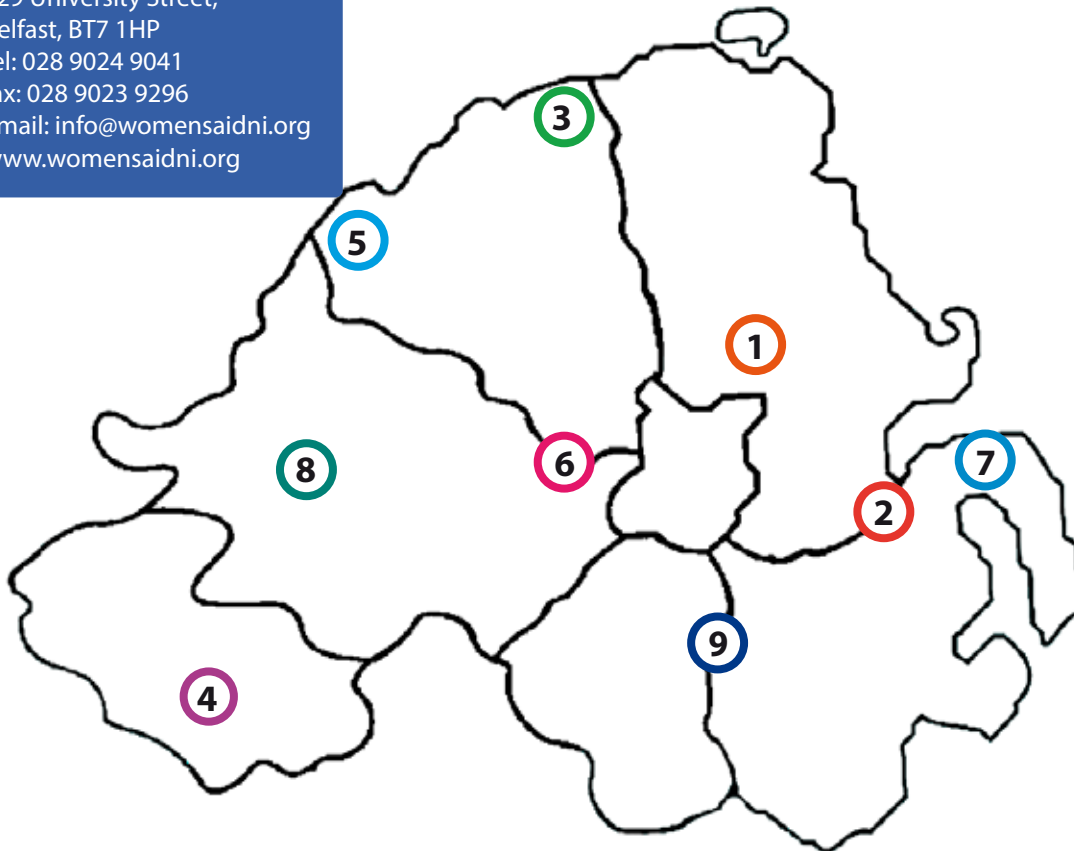


**150 teachers were trained to deliver the Helping Hands programme to children in primary schools.**

## Women's Aid Groups

### Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland

129 University Street,  
Belfast, BT7 1HP  
tel: 028 9024 9041  
fax: 028 9023 9296  
email: [info@womensaidni.org](mailto:info@womensaidni.org)  
[www.womensaidni.org](http://www.womensaidni.org)



24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline: 0808 802 1414

Text **support** to 07797 805 839 Email: [24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org](mailto:24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org)

Open to *all women and men* affected by domestic & sexual violence

## Contact details for Women's Aid groups

### 1. Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne and Newtownabbey Women's Aid

2 Cullybackey Road, Ballymena, BT43 5DF  
t: 028 2563 2136  
f: 028 2565 3304  
e: womensaidareaoffice@btconnect.com  
w: www.womens-aid.org.uk

### 2. Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid

30 Adelaide Park, Belfast, BT9 6FY  
t: 028 9066 6049  
f: 028 9068 2874  
e: admin@belfastwomensaid.org.uk  
w: www.belfastwomensaid.org.uk

### 3. Causeway Women's Aid

23 Abbey Street, Coleraine, BT52 1DU  
t: 028 7035 6573  
f: 028 7032 6949  
e: womensaidcoleraine@btinternet.com

### 4. Fermanagh Women's Aid

17 Darling Street, Enniskillen, BT74 7DP  
t: 028 6632 8898  
f: 028 6632 8859  
e: womensaidfermanagh@btopenworld.com

### 5. Foyle Women's Aid

Pathways, 24 Pump Street, Derry, BT48 6JG  
t: 028 7141 6800  
f: 028 7136 5134  
e: info@foylewomensaid.org  
w: www.foylewomensaid.org

### 6. Mid - Ulster Women's Aid

27 Old Coagh Road, Cookstown, BT80 8QG  
t: 028 8676 9300  
f: 028 8676 9300  
e: admin@midulsterwomensaid.org.uk  
w: www.cookstownwomensaid.org.uk

### 7. North Down & Ards Women's Aid

18 Bingham Street, Bangor, BT20 5DW  
t: 028 9127 3196  
f: 028 9145 5245  
e: ndawomensaid@hotmail.com  
w: www.ndawa.org

### 8. Omagh Women's Aid

27 Market Street, Omagh, BT78 1EL  
t: 028 8224 1414  
f: 028 8224 1414  
e: info@omaghwomensaid.org  
w: www.omaghwomensaid.org

### 9. Women's Aid Armagh Down

7 Downshire Place, Belfast Road, Newry, BT34 1DZ  
t: 028 3025 0765  
f: 028 3026 9606  
e: newrywomensaid@btconnect.com  
w: www.womensaidnewry.co.uk

# Women's Aid Groups: Highlights of the year

## Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne and Newtownabbey Women's Aid

### Make it Better Appeal

A fundraising initiative "Do one thing – to make it better" was launched in May 2013 to raise funds for children and young people living with domestic violence. Local actress Alexandra Ford, also known as Dymrna from "Give My Head Peace" is the Patron for the Make It Better Appeal. The appeal has raised £17,685 in the year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

### Criminal Justice Worker

This is a new post and commenced in October 2013, based within D District Public Protection Unit. The worker will work closely with the PSNI to support victims, promote ongoing engagement with the criminal justice system and improve the levels of confidence in PSNI.

### Family Portrait – Voice of a Victim

The Voices group is a youth advocacy and support group. The group is representative of both males and females and represents a mix of service users as well as other interested young people who have a desire and a commitment to making a difference for those experiencing domestic violence. Young people involved in the Voices group had a keen interest in drama and were committed to producing a powerful play that would represent young people's experiences of violence in the home. ABCLN Women's Aid and the Voices group built upon the success of the play and developed it into an innovative DVD and education resource. The official launch of the DVD was 11th December 2013 at Mossley Mill and attended by Chief Constable Matt Baggott and Justice Minister David Ford.

## Don't Silence the Violence

This short film was launched (10<sup>th</sup> March 2014) at The Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings, Stormont. The film was produced to raise awareness of domestic violence. The film was funded by Japan Tobacco International (JTI) and produced in collaboration with The Ulster Orchestra, Causeway Media and a group of Women's Aid ABCLN Service Users. It illustrates the harrowing cycle of abuse a woman experiences at the hands of her violent partner. What's extraordinary about this film is that the actors' voices have been muted out. The only sound is that of the gripping soundtrack composed and performed by The Ulster Orchestra.

Don't Silence the Violence is available to view on Women's Aid ABCLN website [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk) and YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6anD52lxKoE>

## Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid

### Demand for services

Skilled and experienced staff teams continued to provide support to women and children across a number of projects. We worked with Women's Aid colleagues on the 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline as it expanded to include sexual violence. We contributed to a number of government consultations, in particular, the new integrated Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy.

### Older Women's Project

With funding from the Big Lottery Fund we established a new specialist service for older women aged 60+ years. Two dedicated workers meet the specific needs of this particular age group who

often experience complex dynamics and additional barriers when seeking help. To launch the work we hosted a very successful event in November, and referrals have been consistently coming from a variety of sources, including women themselves.

### **Trafficked women**

We were successful in securing the contract to continue providing services to women who are trafficked as a result of sexual and economic exploitation, to ensure that they get the appropriate safety and help. The work assists the Justice Minister to meet legal requirements under the European Convention on Human Trafficking.

### **MARAC**

We contributed to the MARAC process and provided support to women assessed as high risk. Work was progressed to sign off on the Information Sharing Agreement and Operational Protocol. Additionally, work was progressed with the Chief Inspector in District D Lisburn Policing area and other funding bodies to place a worker in the station to provide an immediate response and pathway into our services. This model of co-working with the PSNI is similar to that operating successfully in Belfast Districts A and B for a number of years.

### **Governance**

New Directors/Trustees were recruited onto the Board to develop the skill base and provide effective governance. The Board and senior staff worked to progress the Constitutional Review process currently underway within Women's Aid, to ensure fit for purpose, effectiveness and sustainability to meet the opportunities and challenges in the current and future environment.

### **Partnership**

Partnership working underpins all our work and staff continued to play a key role in a number of partnerships including the Domestic Violence Partnerships of both the Belfast and South Eastern Health Trusts.

### **Causeway Women's Aid**

#### **Demand for services**

We have seen an increase in demand for services throughout 2013/14. Our refuge accommodated more women in this year than in the previous five years and demand for floating support and community based outreach increased to the point that we have had to introduce a new Triage service.

#### **Extending services**

The Triage Worker responds to all referrals and ensures crisis management and risk assessment. This ensures that everyone who is referred has immediate support and we do not have to operate a waiting list for services with all the corresponding problems this entails.

#### **Criminal Justice Worker**

In January of this year we were happy to recruit our Criminal Justice Worker who is based within the Public Protection unit in H District PSNI. Her role is to respond to PSNI referrals and to support them throughout preparation for court and through criminal cases. The worker will also ensure referral and signposting to any additional support required.

## **S.E.A.D.S programme**

In recognition of the needs of our service users we have developed a new twelve week programme that sits alongside and enhances our current training provision. Based on CBT principles and responding to increased reporting of abuse through social network sites and mobile phones etc the S.E.A.D.S programme has emerged. Self Esteem And Digital Safety are at the core of this programme and we are delighted to have been able to respond to a growing concern for our service users.

These services are built upon the strong foundations of pre-existing services, a dedicated and highly motivated staff team and increased partnership working.

## **Looking forward**

New services will be rolled out across the next year and we have every confidence that they will improve support to service users. Finally we would like to extend thanks to all funders who have supported us through 2013/14.

## **Fermanagh Women's Aid**

### **Demand for services**

Fermanagh Women's Aid supported 405 women and 242 children as well as providing emergency accommodation to 11 women and 8 children. This is the highest number supported in 21 years of operation and while we are shocked at the ever rising levels of violence in Fermanagh homes, we are proud to be a source of support to these families. Our automatic internal referral system for

children continues to enable families to recover from their domestic violence situation.

## **Restructuring**

A restructuring process provided a Services Coordinator, a renewed focus on service quality, increased ability to manage service demand and also created new opportunities for enhanced services across the County. The structure allows more effective strategic, financial and services management while advancing the strategic position of Fermanagh Women's Aid.

## **International delegation**

Fermanagh Women's Aid hosted a delegation of women from the Republic of Yemen, providing an exciting opportunity for international best practise sharing and opportunities for service replication in the Republic of Yemen.

## **Guard Against Violence**

Guard Against Violence, supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs allowed more cohesive cross border partnerships to develop with other domestic violence services. Fermanagh Women's Aid's international work extended to Jerusalem, where our Guard Against Violence Trainer travelled at the invitation of Intercomm Belfast with a group of Northern Irish teenagers. The trip allowed for greater understanding of the impact of conflict on women and the role of conflict in desensitising communities to violence.

## **New centre**

Fermanagh Women's Aid relocated to the Safe Hands Centre where Men's Action Network, YOYPIC and an on-site Solicitor are also based. We

are delighted to have taken the next step in wrap around services for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

### **Safer Aging Fermanagh Project**

The Safer Ageing Fermanagh project, supported by the Big Lottery was launched in February 2014 and is providing invaluable peer support, one to one support and safety programmes to older people across Fermanagh. The project has gained support from WHSCT, PSNI and the voluntary sector and has become an integral part of the service.

### **Foyle Women's Aid**

#### **Change management process**

Foyle Women's Aid finally completed and implemented a change management process and are now on track to ensure we can meet the targets and outcomes identified within the research to improve services and address the changing needs of women and children within the Foyle Area.

#### **Opening of Ashley Wood**

We celebrated the official opening of our Ashley Wood House and Ashleywood Mews projects, replacing communal refuge with independent living units. We were delighted that Baroness of Basildon, Angela Smith took time out of her busy schedule to officiate on the day. We are grateful for her ongoing support on the issue of tackling violence against women and we look forward to her continued advice and support as we roll out our new five year strategy also launched on the day. We had an impressive line-up of speakers including, Colm McQuillan (Supporting People),

Bert Groen (European Alliance of Justice Centres) and Darren McGrellis, who spoke very movingly about the continued impact on his family of their sister Caroline's murder. The new accommodation and service has proved successful with families and this is reflected in the evaluation process. We were delighted when the collaborating team including QMAC Construction, APEX Housing Association, Tate Stevenson Architects and Foyle Women's Aid won the top award for the Ashleywood project at the CEF/Specify Construction Excellence Awards 2013.

#### **Teenlink**

Last year we launched Teenlink in partnership with Zakkon which is getting very busy and receiving referrals from a wide range of agencies. We are delighted to be offering this program for all of the young people diversely affected by witnessing and experiencing domestic violence.

#### **Accreditation and validation**

Last year we also had a Supporting People validation visit and did extremely well. We also qualified for a Bronze Investors in People Award. All of this extra work was achieved on top of the increased numbers of referrals and the new developments. The achievements were down to the participation and hard work of an exceptional team in Foyle.

### **Mid Ulster Women's Aid**

#### **Birthday celebration**

Mid-Ulster Women's Aid celebrated a 20th birthday this year. The celebration, which took place in



the Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown combined the achievement of being in operation for 20 years with the announcement that the organisation had changed its name from Cookstown and Dungannon Women's Aid to Mid-Ulster Women's Aid. The new name is in line with the new super council name and better reflects the area that we cover as an organisation. Our geographical boundaries remain the same and are co-terminus with the new Mid-Ulster Council boundary. The event, held on Friday 8 November 2013 was attended by, amongst others, Lord Morrow, Cllr Ken Reid, Chair of Dungannon and South Tyrone Policing and Community Safety Partnership and Sean McGuigan, Mayor of Dungannon Council. Also in attendance was Michelle Gildernew, MP, Catherine Elattar, Chair of Magherafelt District Council and a number of other Councillors from all three councils.

## **Refuge**

The refuge accommodated 47 women and 34 children throughout the year, from a new born baby to a senior citizen. Fifteen of the women were from Black and Minority Ethnic communities, whose first language was not English. This presented a challenge in itself. However some of these women were able to avail of our English classes held weekly in the Refuge.

## **Personal development programmes**

Throughout the past year we delivered 8 personal development programmes in our resource centre which equates to a total of 68 sessions with an average of 13 women at each session.

## **External awareness raising**

A total of 28 domestic violence awareness raising sessions were delivered to 284 participants. The

participants were from a range of statutory, voluntary and community agencies as well as individuals from various professions.

## **Family support**

Our family support service is into its second year now and has continued to have high demand. The project has incorporated the Transformers programme, which has proved very popular and well received by the young people.

## **North Down and Ards Women's Aid**

### **Floating support**

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.

### **Children services**

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. Helping Hands and Transformers groups continue to be successful in meeting the needs of children and young people. Feedback has proven to be very positive.

## Refuge

Referrals to refuge services have 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.

## Recruitment and administration

Our Finance Manager retired this year, and we have been very successful in our recruitment and appointment of a new Finance Manager. This past year also saw a recruitment of new members to the Management Committee bringing a wider range of skills and experiences.

## IT developments

We continued to work in partnership with Foyle, Causeway and Omagh Women's Aid towards realising the new IT system and we are looking forward to going live early in 2014-2015. We are also delighted to report on the launch of our new Website.

## Looking forward

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.

## Omagh Women's Aid

### Web site

Omagh Women's Aid launched a new website

– [www.omaghwomensaid.org](http://www.omaghwomensaid.org) and a Facebook page. The website was co-ordinated, designed and built by a community development student on placement with us and with the help of two local IT students as part of their IT course work.

## Sexual violence

Staff responded to the advent of the new sexual and domestic violence strategy and the new 24 Hour Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline by attending the new SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre), viewing its facilities and meeting its staff, undertaking two days accredited training on sexual violence and attending the national SARC conference in Manchester.

## International Women's Day

We celebrated this in Omagh with a well-attended event in Omagh Library. Guest speakers included the High Sheriff of Tyrone and Omagh Women's Aid and a line-up of local talented female performers.

## Partnership working

Children affected by domestic violence were supported by Omagh Women's Aid and NSPCC working in partnership to deliver NSPCC's DART (Domestic Abuse Recovering Together) programme. All the children who participated were already in receipt of one to one support from Women's Aid, but really enjoyed the opportunity to come together and make new friends.

## Child sexual exploitation

The focus turned to violence against young people as staff attended a conference and a series of local events in the West to raise awareness of and highlight the issue of child sexual exploitation. The

Young Person's Worker at Omagh Women's Aid continues to support a number of young women who are victims of child sexual exploitation.

### **Visit from UN Special Rapporteur**

Omagh Women's Aid was pleased to host a visit by the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Professor Rashida Manjoo, as part of her forthcoming report to the UK government. The event took place at Mid-Ulster refuge and was attended by service users, community and voluntary sector representatives, staff and volunteers from Women's Aid.

## **Women's Aid Armagh Down**

### **Services for women, children and young people**

2013/14 was an extremely busy year for our organisation involving an extension to our services which enabled the establishment of a Support Service Resource Centre in Armagh City and Portadown town. We are delighted this vital support can now be accessed locally for women, children and young people in these areas as our waiting lists continue to escalate in all areas throughout the Armagh & Down area.

### **Working regionally**

Together with Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland, we were at the forefront of the

development and delivery of accredited regional specialised training for Women's Aid staff in sexual violence and abuse support service.

Our vision is to work alongside all Women's Aid groups in Northern Ireland and all relevant stakeholders in order 'to achieve the elimination of domestic & sexual violence and abuse in our society and creating a society wherein Domestic & Sexual Violence and Violence against Women is unacceptable.'

### **High quality service**

We continue to meet our funder's high standards of service delivery and were delighted to obtain Level B in Supporting Peoples Quality Assurance Framework. Through the continuous dedicated work of staff and volunteers we ensure that women, children and young people's support needs are met and their level of safety is increased through comprehensive risk assessment and management processes. We continue to strive towards continuous improvement in our service delivery and in working in partnership with all relevant agencies.

### **Strategic planning and development**

We are currently finalising our draft Strategic Plan for 2014- 2020 which has at its heart the strategic objective to use the 'Opportunity to Make a Difference' in the lives of victims of domestic & sexual violence and abuse. Our goal is to keep women, children and young people safe and free from harm.

# FINANCE

Please note that the accounts that follow are an extract from the original document. A copy of the full accounts is available upon request by calling 028 9024 9041 or emailing [info@womensaidni.org](mailto:info@womensaidni.org)

**NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S AID FEDERATION LTD**  
**(COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014**

### Company Information

<b>Management Board</b>	Christine Whiteman (Chair) Lorna McAlpine (Vice-Chair) Anne McMahan (Secretary) Margaret McMahan (Treasurer) Elsie Jordan Tara Maguire Ursula Marshall Bronagh McKee Agnieszka Martynowicz	<b>Bankers</b>	First Trust Bank Donegall Square North Belfast
<b>Secretary</b>	Anne McMahan	<b>Solicitors</b>	Flynn & McGettrick 9 Clarence Street Belfast BT2 8DY
<b>Auditors</b>	Lynn, Drake & Co Ltd Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor 34 B-D Main Street Moira BT67 0LE	<b>Registered Office</b>	129 University Street Belfast BT7 1HP
		<b>Charity Number</b>	XN 45049
		<b>Registration Number</b>	NI 021741
		<b>Governing Document</b>	Memorandum and Articles of Association
		<b>Legal Status</b>	Company Limited by Guarantee

The Management Board (Board of Directors) presents their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2014.

## Objects of the Charity

The aims of the Charity (which has nine member groups throughout Northern Ireland) have been encapsulated in the following mission statement:

*Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation exists to challenge attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic violence. We seek, through our work, to promote healthy and non-abusive relationships.*

### The following are key aims of the Organisation:

Women's Aid is the lead voluntary organisation in Northern Ireland addressing domestic violence and providing services for women and children. We recognise domestic violence as one form of violence against women. Women's Aid seeks to challenge attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic violence and, through our work, promote healthy and non-abusive relationships.

To oversee the delivery of a strategic and operational plan and development of a new strategic plan post 2014.

The core work of Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland is structured under the four key aims:-

#### 1. Challenge attitudes and beliefs / policy

##### **Challenge the attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic violence by lobbying, campaigning and influencing the policy agenda**

- To educate and inform the public, media, police, courts, social services and other agencies of the impact of domestic violence.
- To advise and support all relevant agencies in the development of domestic violence policies, protocols and service delivery.
- To work in partnership with all relevant agencies to ensure a joined up response to domestic violence.

#### 2. Prevent Domestic Violence

##### **Promote healthy and non-abusive relationships through research, education and training**

To provide a range of support services to enable women who are leaving a violent situation to rebuild their lives and the lives of their children.

- To provide a range of support services to children and young people who have experienced domestic violence.
- To run preventative education programmes in schools and other settings.

#### 3. Support grassroots work

##### **Support the work of local Women's Aid groups**

- As the umbrella body tackling domestic violence in Northern Ireland we co-ordinate and lead local Women's Aid groups on all regional initiatives and developments.
- Develop and support local Women's Aid groups to provide refuge accommodation to women and their children suffering mental, physical or sexual abuse within the home.
- To manage the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline which provides the key co-ordination role for women accessing refuge and other services. (Funded under a separate Service Level Agreement)
- Develop and deliver a range of child protection training through Regional Children's Planning meetings with Women's Aid local groups. This supports the provision of services to children and young people who have experienced domestic violence.
- Work with local Women's Aid groups to develop and sustain a regional fundraising strategy.

#### 4. Manage and Develop Resources

##### **Manage and develop resources – personnel, financial resources, estate – to meet the challenges of a changing political, economic and social policy environment**

- To ensure effective leadership and management through good governance and support to our Board of Trustees.
- To manage, supervise and train all staff and volunteers on a continuing basis.
- To maintain rigorous financial auditing and accounting systems.
- To consider the impact of the Review of Administration on the Federation and local Women's Aid groups. A change process is currently being facilitated by the Federation.
- To identify and secure funding for new premises for Women's Aid Federation NI offering disabled access, safety of night workers access, secure parking and adequate space for training and development.
- To oversee the delivery of the current strategic and operational plan and development of a new strategic plan post 2014.

##### **Decision Making Structures**

The governing body of Women's Aid Federation, the Management Board, is drawn from membership of our affiliated groups and expertise from external co-options. The Management Board is responsible for the strategic direction of the organisation and oversees the management of the organisation. The day-to-day management and operation of the activities are carried out by a staff team, lead by the Director and Management Team, who also report regularly to the Board.

##### **Identified Risks**

Uncertain and short term funding continues to make future planning extremely difficult. We will continue to negotiate with government departments to extend their commitment to ensure that our core work can effectively continue and secure the sustainability of all our projects. We are concerned that indications from the government departments that fund us suggest a difficult financial time ahead. A robust Fund-Raising and Income Generation Strategy and Action Plan has been developed and will be put in place during the forthcoming year. Some projects continue to be at risk with short-term funding.

##### **Volunteers**

Volunteers play a key role in all the services of Women's Aid. We are able to sustain our 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline with the vital support of our volunteers. The Management Board members (Directors) also volunteer their time freely to attend regular monthly Board meetings, sub groups and offer ongoing support to the organisation.

##### **Review of the transactions and financial position of Women's Aid Federation**

Women's Aid Federation's funds have mainly been applied to the objects specified by each project's funders. It is policy to meet all restricted fund deficits by transfers from the accumulated unrestricted funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities indicates that the Organisation had incoming resources of £841,885 in the year which was exceeded by resources expended of £990,446 by £148,561 and this amount has been transferred to the Organisation's accumulated funds.

The Balance Sheet at 31 March 2014 shows a net Accumulated Funds balance at that date of £293,240.

No significant events have occurred since that date of the Balance Sheet which affect the Organisation or which materially affect these financial statements.

## Fixed Assets

There were no additions to fixed assets during the year.

The following persons were members of the Management Board at some time during the year to 31 March 2014: -

Christine Whiteman	Elsie Jordan
Lorna McAlpine	Ursula Marshall
Anne McMahan	Margaret McMahan
Tara Maguire	Bronagh McKee
Agnieszka Martynowicz	

The Management Board in each year shall consist of one member nominated by each affiliated group. If a Group has no-one able to serve, its committee may ask a second member of another group to act on their behalf. In the event that there are insufficient nominations and/or an identified skills deficit, the Management Board will seek co-options.

## Reserves Policy

The charity's policy is to retain a level of free reserves, which matches the needs of the organisation, both at the current time and in the foreseeable future. The reserves required should be sufficient to meet committed grant expenditure and the running costs for a period equivalent to six months annual expenditure. The charity will continue to monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis and the Board will review the appropriateness of the policy annually.

## Charitable Status

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd enjoys charitable status by the authority of the Inland Revenue under reference XN 45049.

## Members

The members of the company at 31 March 2014 were as follows: -

Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne & Newtownabbey Women's Aid  
Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid  
Causeway Women's Aid

Foyle Women's Aid  
Fermanagh Women's Aid  
Mid Ulster Women's Aid  
North Down & Ards Women's Aid  
Omagh Women's Aid  
Women's Aid Armagh Down

## Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors are responsible for preparing the Report of the Directors and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the directors are required to

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Statement as to disclosure of information to Auditors

So far as the Board of Directors are aware, there is no relevant information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and each director has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a director in order to make them aware of any audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

## Auditors

The auditors, Lynn, Drake & Co Ltd, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

By Order of the Management Board



**Anne McMahon**  
Secretary

**22 November 2014**

## Report of the Independent Auditors to the members of Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd.

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd for the Year Ended 31 March 2014 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

This report is made solely to the charity's Members, as a body in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's Members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's Members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

## Respective responsibilities of the management board and auditors

The management boards' responsibilities for preparing the annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable Northern Ireland law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards are set out in the statement of directors' responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with the relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view, are properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006. We also report to you whether, in our opinion the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements.



In addition, we report to you if, in our opinion, the charitable company has not kept adequate accounting records, if the charitable company's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if certain disclosures of directors remuneration specified by law are not made.

We read the report of the management board and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

### **Basis of Opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the management board in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularities or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of the information in the financial statements.

### **Going concern**

In forming our opinion, we have considered the adequacy of the disclosures made in note 1 on page 12 of the financial statements concerning the uncertainty of certain grant funding and the need for the company to seek an overdraft facility. In view of the significance of these uncertainties we consider that it should be drawn to your attention but our opinion is not qualified in this respect.

### **Opinion**

In our opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2014 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to smaller entities;
- the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006; and
- the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements.



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**Alistair Wells (Senior Statutory Auditor)**  
**22 November 2014**

**For and on behalf of Lynn, Drake & Co Ltd**  
**Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors**

**1<sup>st</sup> Floor**  
**34 B-D Main Street**  
**Moira**  
**BT67 0LE**

**NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S AID FEDERATION LTD (COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2014 £	Total Funds 2013 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>					
<b>Activities in furtherance of the Charity's objectives:</b>					
Grants Receivable	27,671	-	761,309	788,980	761,277
Income from charitable activities	52,719	-	-	52,719	69,779
<b>Activities for generating funds:</b>					
Interest receivable	186	-	-	186	300
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>80,576</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>761,309</b>	<b>841,885</b>	<b>831,356</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>					
<b>Costs of generating funds:</b>	-	-	23,255	23,255	22,706
<b>Charitable Expenditure:</b>					
Costs in furtherance of charitable objectives	200	-	896,059	896,259	867,015
Management and Administration of the Charity	35,591	-	35,341	70,932	35,490
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>35,791</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>954,655</b>	<b>990,446</b>	<b>925,211</b>
<b>Net (Outgoing)/Incoming Resources</b>					
Before Transfers	44,785	-	(193,346)	(148,561)	(93,855)
Transfer between Funds	(134,691)	-	134,691	-	-
<b>Net Incoming Resources for the Year</b>	<b>(89,906)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(58,655)</b>	<b>(148,561)</b>	<b>(93,855)</b>
<b>Funds Balance brought forward at 1 April 2013</b>					
	176,131	205,000	60,670	441,801	535,656
<b>Net Movement in Funds in Year to 31 March 2014</b>					
	(89,906)	-	(58,655)	(148,561)	(93,855)
<b>Fund Balance carried forward at 31 March 2014</b>	<b>86,225</b>	<b>205,000</b>	<b>2,015</b>	<b>293,240</b>	<b>441,801</b>


There were no recognised gains or losses other than those included in the statement of financial activities above.

**NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S AID FEDERATION LTD (COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2014**

		<b>2014</b>		<b>2013</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Tangible Fixed Assets		53,000		53,000
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Debtors & Prepayments	182,110		170,069	
Bank Accounts	121,176		295,298	
Cash in Hand	252		-	
		303,538		465,367
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Amounts falling due within one year		(63,298)		(76,566)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<b>240,240</b>		<b>388,801</b>
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>		293,240		441,801
<b>Liabilities</b> – Amounts falling due after more than one year		-		-
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>293,240</b>		<b>441,801</b>
<b>Represented By: Accumulated Funds</b>				
Unrestricted – General		86,225		176,131
Unrestricted – Designated		205,000		205,000
Restricted		2,015		60,670
<b>Balance at 31 March 2014</b>		<b>293,240</b>		<b>441,801</b>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the Management Board on 22 November 2014 and signed on its behalf by;



**Christine Whiteman**



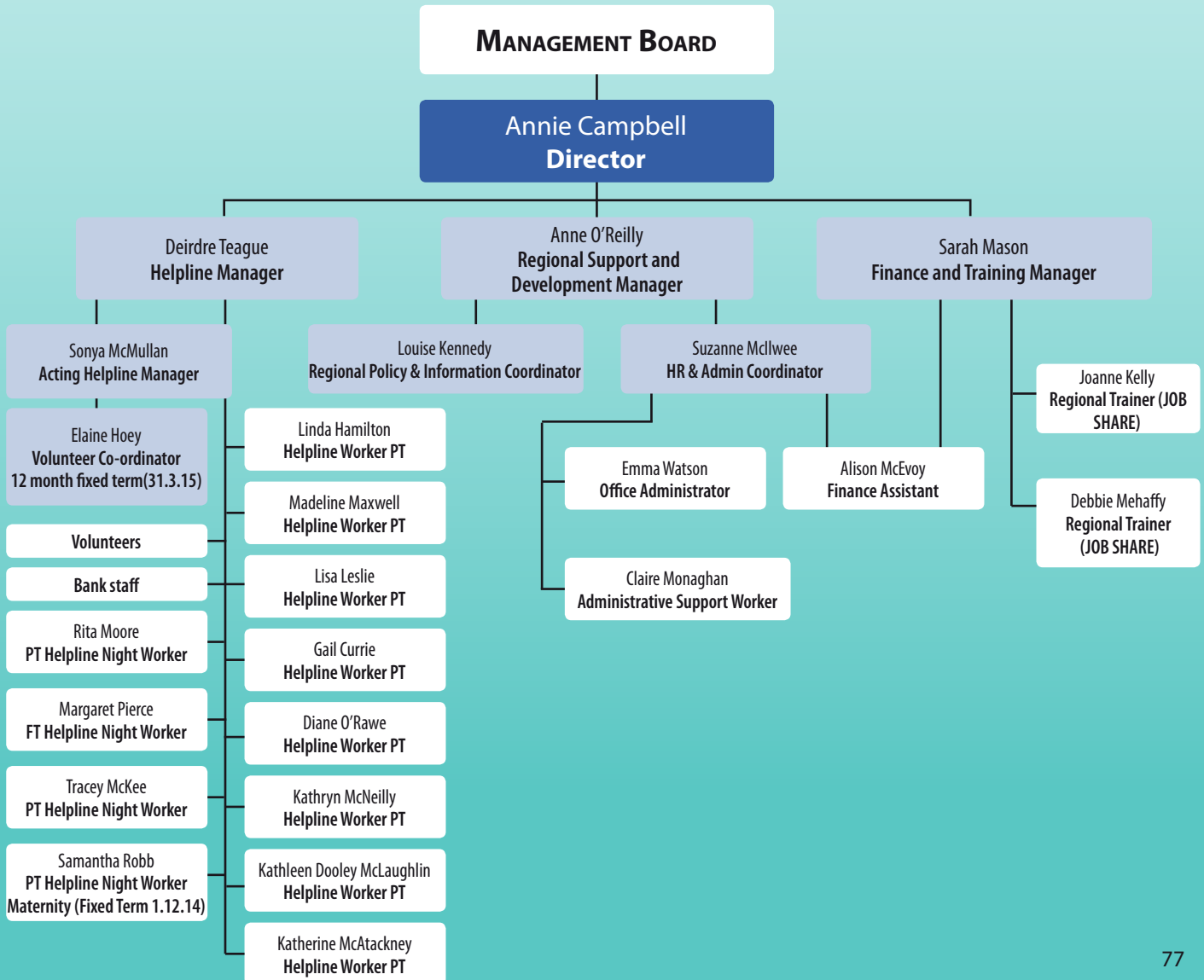
**Margaret McMahon**

# THANK YOU

Women's Aid Federation NI would like to thank all our donors for their ongoing support and acknowledgement of our work and for enabling the continuation of so many vital projects.

- Community Safety Unit, Department of Justice
- Department of Education
- Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety
- Health & Social Care Board
- Individual Donors & Legacies
- Migrant Help
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Probation Board Northern Ireland
- Volunteers

# WOMEN'S AID FEDERATION NI ORGANISATIONAL CHART







24 HOUR

## Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

FREEPHONE

**0808 802 1414**

Open to *all women and men* affected by domestic & sexual violence

📱 text **support** to **07797 805 839** ✉ [24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org](mailto:24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org)

women's aid

Federation Northern Ireland