

**“HOW WILL YOU
HELP MAKE
VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN
AND GIRLS
UNACCEPTABLE?”**

Women's Aid


UK GENERAL ELECTION 2024

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CANDIDATES

WHO ARE WOMEN'S AID?

Our Vision: The Women's Aid NI vision for the 21st century is the elimination of domestic abuse.

Our Mission: We exist to challenge attitudes, structures and systems which perpetuate domestic abuse. We work through our work to enable women children & young people to live free from abuse.

Our Ethos: Our strong ethos has been built upon our rich heritage of campaigning to end domestic abuse, which began in the 1970's and continues to be based upon our working premise of: for women, with women , by women which is inherent in our service development and delivery.

KEY FIGURES IN 2022/2023



**518 WOMEN &
342 CHILDREN**

Stayed in Women's Aid
Refuges throughout NI



7,543 WOMEN

Received floating support
in their local homes



7 BABIES

Were born to women
staying in one of our
Refuges



274 WOMEN

Who were pregnant
received support from
Women's Aid.



EVERY 16 MINUTES

The PSNI respond to a
domestic abuse incident



20 WOMEN

Have been murdered in
Northern Ireland since 2020

MAKE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS A THING OF THE PAST

On Thursday 4th July, the public will go to the polls to choose their new Member of Parliament in the UK General Election.

Since the last General Election in 2019, we've seen levels of reported domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence increase, and specialist support services like Women's Aid are struggling to meet the demand. All victims of abuse need support, and we need commitment from politicians to ensure violence against women & girls is never accepted or acceptable.

You have the power to vote for your local MP who can help improve the lives of victims of domestic abuse in your community.

It's a vital opportunity for you to use your voice and ask key questions of your candidates on how they will help victims of abuse as they canvass for your vote.

HOW DOES VOTING WORK IN THIS ELECTION?

For electing Members of Parliament in the UK General Election, a voting system known as 'first past the post' is used.

This means when you go to vote on Polling Day, you can only choose ONE candidate, whom you mark your choice by putting an 'X' beside their box on your ballot paper.

Polling Day is Thursday 4th July 2024 and the opening times at your designated Polling Station are 7am - 10pm.

BALLOT

Belle Fast

Liz Burn



Ann Bridge

Women's Aid



**5 KEY QUESTIONS
YOU CAN
ASK YOUR
CANDIDATES
IN THE UK
GENERAL ELECTION**

1

“DO YOU SUPPORT SUFFICIENT WESTMINISTER FUNDING & RESOURCES TO BE DEDICATED TO THE DOMESTIC & SEXUAL ABUSE STRATEGY AND THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS STRATEGY?”

After extensive campaigning to highlight that Northern Ireland was the only part of the UK without a Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy, Women’s Aid are proud that our campaigning has seen the development of a Strategy and an implementation plan. This is in a year when Women’s Aid Federation NI lost their core funding, and now are the Women’s Aid Federation in the UK without a government funding commitment.

26,018

The number of people who signed Women’s Aid’s petition in 2021 calling for a VAWG Strategy for NI

We need Women’s Aid Federation NI funding restored, and ensure sufficient funding resources to see the implementation of a new Domestic & Sexual Abuse Strategy, and the introduction of a VAWG Strategy. These Strategies have the opportunity to make a real & meaningful difference to the lives of women & girls in your community. We strongly urge our MPs to realise how vital this funding is, and use it to implement changes on the ground to truly tackle these issues for all citizens.



2

“WHAT WILL YOU DO TO HELP STOP THE MURDER OF WOMEN & GIRLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND?”

On average, one woman is killed every 3 days in the UK. In Northern Ireland specifically, a woman is killed on average every other month.

Overwhelmingly, women are most likely to be murdered in their own homes by a male known to them as either intimate partner or a male relative.

We as a society need our politicians to do all that they can to ensure women are safe in their own homes from perpetrators, and that gender-based violence is never seen as acceptable or minimised in any way. We are calling on candidates to ensure that stopping gender based violence is something they meaningfully commit to.



20

The number of
women murdered in
Northern Ireland
since 2020

3

“WHAT WILL YOU DO TO HELP VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE WITH INSECURE IMMIGRATION STATUS?”

Women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) often experience additional barriers as they do not have the same entitlements to benefits and amenities, even when they experienced horrific violence at the hands of a perpetrator.

These women often aren't entitled to essential services like social housing due to their immigration status. Women and their children who are victims and survivors of domestic abuse can wait years before their immigration status is resolved, leaving them in a never ending 'limbo' situation following the abuse inflicted upon them.

We are calling on the UK Government to prioritise the cases of victims and survivors of domestic abuse so they can start to rebuild their lives and not be stuck in an endless 'limbo' for years. We need Immigration reform that prioritise the cases of survivors of gender-based violence, who are continuously being re-traumatised by an immigration system that is not trauma informed.

**“I DID NOT COME TO
THE COUNTRY TO BE
ABUSED, AND NOW
I'M STUCK.”**

Survivor



4

“WILL YOU LOBBY THE UK GOVERNMENT TO ABOLISH THE TWO CHILD BENEFIT CAP?”

Many victims and survivors of domestic abuse often experience financial abuse as part of the abusive behaviour.

Financial abuse results in women being in debt, quite often caused by the perpetrator, which literally leaves them starting with nothing as they try to break free from the abuser's control.

The “two child limit” on child tax credits means that tax credits cannot be claimed for a third or subsequent child if they were born after 6 April 2017. Women's Aid urges the Government to reverse this policy, which will disproportionately impact women and their children.



WE MUST CREATE A BENEFITS SYSTEM THAT HELPS SUPPORT VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE MEANINGFULLY REBUILD THEIR LIVES – INCLUDING THE SCRAPPING OF THE TWO-CHILD LIMIT.

5

“DO YOU BELIEVE THAT VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE SHOULD BE LESS SAFE SIMPLY BECAUSE OF THEIR UK POSTCODE?”

Victims and Survivors of domestic abuse will often move between UK regions as they try to create distance between themselves and their perpetrator, and also as they try to rebuild their lives.

However, due to the devolved nature of the UK Political System, accessing services and specialist support for women & their children can depend on simply what UK postcode area the person happens to be in at that time. Victims and survivors of domestic abuse should have equity in terms of support provision and we simply don't have enough data on the provision gaps throughout the UK.

Women's Aid NI are therefore calling on the UK Government to create a full mapping of support services to focus on gaps in provision – no victim of domestic abuse should be any less safe than their counterparts in other UK postcode.





1

Antrim, Ballymena,
Carrickfergus, Larne
& Newtownabbey
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T: 028 2563 2136

2

Armagh Down
Women's Aid

T: 028 3025 0765

3

Belfast & Lisburn
Women's Aid

T: 028 9066 6049

4

Causeway & Mid
Ulster Women's Aid

T: 0300 373 1055

5

Fermanagh
Women's Aid

T: 028 6632 8898

6

Foyle
Women's Aid

T: 028 7141 6800

7

North Down & Ards
Women's Aid

T: 028 9127 3196

8

Omagh
Women's Aid

T: 028 8224 1414

9

Women's Aid
Federation

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