



SWA

Swansea Women's Aid



ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

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FOREWORD

It has been a challenging but rewarding year for Swansea Women's Aid. As always, the women and children we support are at the heart of all we do and we are facing increasing demand, but still struggling with short-term funding and a lack of capacity.

With this in mind, we successfully applied to Pilotlight, a capacity building charity and have been working with them to focus on our strategic goals and how we are going to achieve them. This support has been invaluable and has provided us with access to senior business leaders who have assisted us with our strategic goals and how best to achieve them.

This work is ongoing, but already the rewards can be seen internally and we are confident that we will be best placed to move forward positively, working together with the women we support to drive the organisation into a future that focusses on innovative, high quality services that holistically meet their current needs and best enable their futures.

There have been key achievements this year. The first is our success in achieving the Welsh Women's Aid (WWA) National Quality Service Standards. Whilst we have always prided ourselves on the quality of our services and governance, we now have the quality mark that evidences this and we are amongst the first of the WWA member organisations to achieve this.



The second key achievement is the creation of the Seren Môr consortium which is a partnership of specialist violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence organisations that work across Western Bay. The Memorandum of Understanding between, BAWSO, Hafan Cymru, New Pathways, Port Talbot and Afan Women's Aid and ourselves has been signed and we are having a formal launch in April 2018.

This is a vital development, recognising as it does that the collective approach strengthens us all, putting us in a stronger position competitively and in a position to draw on each other's strengths.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our team for their endless hard work, mutual support and dedication without which we could not achieve what we do. They are absolute stars!

Lynne Sanders, Chief Executive
Liz Hope, Chair

MISSION, VISIONS AND VALUES

Vision

A world where women and children are free from abuse.

Mission statement

Supporting and empowering women and children to live free from domestic violence and abuse in all its forms.

Values

Excellence – in all we do and how we do it

Equality – non-discriminatory and non-judgemental

Diversity – everyone welcomed and valued

Women and children at the heart of all we do – being supported, informing and directing services

Innovation – in service delivery and planning

Integrity – honesty, reliability, trustworthiness

Empowerment – encouraging women and children to reach their full potential

Confidential – respecting privacy and lawful

Collaborative – working with others to change things for the better

OUR OBJECTIVES

Prevention: We want to educate, raise awareness, share best practice and evolve to stop all forms of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

Protection and Support: We want women and children to be able to access specialist high quality provision that is appropriate to their needs at the time they need it.

Progression: We will provide opportunities for women, children and families to enable them to reach their potential and flourish.

Sustainability: We want to ensure the sustainability of Swansea Women's Aid through the management of financial risks, maximising quality, valuing our workforce and effective governance.



PREVENTION

Our Objective: We want to educate, raise awareness, share best practice and evolve to stop all forms of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

Our Delivery: We have proactively raised awareness of domestic abuse issues through involvement in a wide range of events and the provision of talks and training to other agencies.

Professional training

Our training focuses on enabling front-line staff such as social workers, community mental health teams, young people services to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and know how to deal with it. Topics covered include:

- Identification, assessment and risk management
- Types of abuse
- Barriers to disclosure
- Impacts of abuse
- Perpetrator behaviours
- How to keep women and children safe
- Awareness of VAWDASV service provisions in Swansea

“It opened my eyes and I can now see things more clearly. I feel more confident in knowing what to say if I think one of my clients is being abused at home”

This year we have trained 160 professionals and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with many recognising that this training is essential for their line of work.

“The training was informative and delivered well. Good use of videos and case studies made it very accessible and though it was a difficult subject, I enjoyed the discussions. Very useful. Why haven't I had this sooner?”

PROTECTION AND SUPPORT:

Our Objective: We want women and children to be able to access specialist high quality provision that is appropriate to their needs at the time they need it.

Our Delivery: This year we have expanded our services in recognition of the increasing number of women and children approaching us for protection and support. 848 women and 126 children and young people received face -to-face support and access to supplementary services and a further 1120 women received telephone support.

Supported Housing

We have 2 refuges and 3 safe houses, offering 16 units of emergency accommodation to women and children who are no longer able to remain at home due to their experience of domestic abuse. Our specialist team work hard to maximise their safety whilst also enabling them to move on from the trauma they have experienced and move on to a brighter future.

This year we supported 88 women and their 66 children in our accommodation.

83% of women felt safer

82% felt their quality of life and wellbeing had increased



“I feel I have grown and strengthened in ways I could not have imagined before the help of SWA. I have managed to become a more active member of society and do not feel isolated from the community as I once did and I feel much safer and stronger. I’m also very grateful for the guidance to access the services needed for moving”

CASE STUDY ONE- SUPPORTED HOUSING

V is in her 50s and has a history of being in abusive relationships, sustaining serious physical injuries leading her to experience severe emotional trauma which led to her neglecting her physical, mental, and disability health needs. The long-term trauma led to anxiety and depression as well as self-blame for the abuse she had experienced and, as she was financially controlled by her perpetrator, she had a number of debts in her name.



Having been in refuge once before and returning to her perpetrator, V was keen to look at how she could find ways to recognise the signs of domestic abuse to help her avoid getting into a similar situation again. Given her history, she did not feel safe or trust herself to make the right choices and had few friends.

She attended the Freedom Programme whilst living in refuge and was feeling more confident that she would be able to recognise the signs of domestic abuse. This would help her to manage her future relationships better and increase her personal safety, thus improving her daily lifestyle.

We also supported her in managing her accommodation in preparation for when she had a place of her own and helped her to attend community groups such as Connect so that she could get out the refuge and make new friends.

The trauma caused by the long-term abuse V experienced resulted in her neglecting her physical, mental health and disability needs. During the course of her stay, she engaged with her GP and the Community Mental Health Team, taking small gradual steps to improving her overall wellbeing.

CASE STUDY ONE- SUPPORTED HOUSING- CONT

As she had mental health issues, we referred her to a specialist debt advisor for people who have mental health needs who gave budgeting assistance too and V successfully applied for ESA and PIP. Due to being financially controlled in her past, V really struggled with managing her money but now feels more confident as a result of the support she has received.

V has now moved into long-term supported housing and is in receipt of continual support to build on the progress she has already made. She intends to continue with the Freedom Programme, as she has found this useful in assisting her in breaking the cycle of abusive relationships. Whilst she still experiences anxiety and depression, she is looking forward to returning to part-time work that she is able to manage along with her mental health issues.

Cost Savings due to stay in refuge

Prevention - Crime – DA call-outs **£16076**

Housing – homelessness presentations, evictions, repossession **£10846**

Health – hospital in-patient, A&E attendances, alcohol misuse etc **£14997**

Social Services – Residential care (Older People) **£302 per week**

Based on the Supporting People Unit Cost Database

DAISE (DOMESTIC ABUSE INFORMATION, SUPPORT AND EMPOWERMENT)

The DAISE team offers crisis support via drop-in sessions and one-to-one appointments in 5 different venues across Swansea. A great deal of work is carried out in relation to risk assessment and management as the majority of the women are currently experiencing domestic abuse, rather than it being historical abuse. The support is tailored to needs and can consist of housing related support, legal advice, debt management, child contact, protection orders etc. Women can duck in and out of the support, utilising it when most needed and every effort is made to ensure that the service is as flexible as possible to maximise their opportunities to engage with it.

This year, we supported 622 women.

As well as the drop-ins and appointments, we also offer supplementary services in recognition of the profound impact of the trauma the women have experienced. This year **54 women** accessed complementary therapies, **41 women** accessed homeopathy and **36 women** accessed counselling.

Feedback is consistently positive with women valuing the flexibility of the service and the support received from the team.

“Keep doing what you are doing. You have really helped me and my children”

“Thank you. I know I can always count on you being there when I need you. You have saved my life”



CASE STUDY TWO- DAISE

Y was in an abusive relationship for 16 years. She suffered extreme physical violence together with emotional, psychological, financial abuse, isolation tactics and stalking/harassment. Her husband had numerous affairs throughout the marriage and left her and her children a few months before she accessed DAISE.



During her first appointment, Y was extremely anxious as her husband had returned to the home and stolen her expensive coats and jewellery. The criminal investigation against him resulted in “No further action” and the bail conditions that had been protecting her were removed. Y was extremely anxious about this and we supported her to access legal advice immediately to obtain a Non-Molestation Order and an Occupation Order as an alternative form of protection, as she was at high risk of further abuse from her husband.

Her immigration status was also uncertain at this time. Early 2017, she was granted temporary leave to remain in the UK under the Domestic Violence provision and we supported her to successfully make claims for Council Tax reduction, Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit to supplement her low income from her job.

Having left Y with a large amount of debt, he also defaulted on the mortgage payments. Shelter could not assist with this, as the mortgage was solely in her husband’s name and the mortgage company had commenced proceedings for repossession. We referred Y to Housing Options and helped her to complete an application form for housing.

CASE STUDY TWO- DAISE-CONT

Y attended the Freedom Programme which has increased her self-confidence and her awareness of domestic abuse and helped her make some friends locally. She has also started the Recovery Tool Kit which she is enjoying and finding really helpful in helping to make friends and increase her self-confidence.

Y is now feeling positive about her future and looking forward to being rehoused. She is feeling safe and has had her debts reduced and income maximised. Her self-confidence is growing and she no longer feels as isolated, as she has made new friends.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICE (CHYPS)

We were able to expand this service from January 2018 due to funding from the Big Lottery. We offer one-to-one tailored support to children and young people (CYP) aged 5 to 17 years in our accommodation and in the community and specialist group programmes too. These provide them with the opportunity to talk about what they have witnessed or experienced in order to process it and make sense of what has happened and help them to develop safety plans.

In recognition that domestic abuse can affect the mother-child relationship, parenting workshops are also offered to the mothers of the children being supported.

This year we have supported **38 CYP** and **7 parents** have attended parenting workshops.

86% of children reported a better understanding of domestic abuse.

88% of children reported that they are able to talk to their mum/trusted adult about their experiences.

80% of children reported that they feel safer.

90% of parents in refuge reported an improvement in their child's wellbeing.



"I think that you would enjoy this group because it was fun and helped me with my problems with dad. I also got new friends from coming to STAR group. I enjoyed meeting other children who had experienced things that were similar to my problems. I enjoyed meeting Stacey, Lisa and Kat who helped me and I'm sure will help you.

Boy aged 10, in letter to future participants in STAR Group:

CASE STUDY THREE- CHYPS

C aged 10 received support from CHYPS in a group and on a 1:1 basis. C was referred to the project due to witnessing physical and emotional abuse towards his mother from her ex-partner. When C first attended S.T.A.R. (Safety, Trust and Respect) group he was unwilling to share his experiences. As the group sessions progressed, covering topics such as “what is domestic abuse?” and safety planning, C’s understanding of what he had experienced grew and the team observed an increase in his confidence.



C felt comfortable discussing his thoughts and feelings during group and his mother reported that he spoke more freely to her about what had happened in the past.

During the time C was receiving support at group, a situation had arisen within the family and his mother requested he receive additional 1:1 support. C spoke about an argument that had happened at his father’s house and about how he had used his safety plan to stay safe. He also said that he had spoken to mum about it because he had been feeling sad.

C enjoyed group and said that he didn’t want it to end – he wished he could come back and do it all again! Mum has also reported that since attending group the relationship between C and herself has improved.

Since his support ended C has attended several SWA events, where he has spoken to other young people and professionals about the support he received from the CHYPS service.

“I have learnt lots about domestic abuse and how to stay safe. It has been nice making friends who have been through the same things.”

CHANGING ATTITUDES TOGETHER (CHAT)

We work with young people aged 9 – 18 years who have experienced domestic abuse and are using abusive behaviours in their close relationships, aiming to promote healthy relationships and prevent domestic abuse in future relationships by supporting them to acknowledge and change their behaviour.

This year we supported 22 young people.

97% better able to develop non-abusive relationships

84% had improved communication skills

“With Sam (CHAT worker) on board it has been brilliant. Sam got the situation here straight away. She was so good and the techniques she taught me the work she did with C (daughter) has been such a big help to our relationship. I’m so grateful for Sam coming to help us.”

Parent comment



How has support helped you? “Teach me skills to help manage arguments at home. Have someone to talk to about my problems.”

Young person comment



CASE STUDY FOUR- CHAT

S, aged 12, had lived for a period of two years in a household where her mother was a victim of domestic abuse from her then husband. She witnessed the physical and emotional abuse that was directed towards her mother and, on occasions, towards herself. At the time when she was referred to CHAT she was being physically violent towards her mum and grandmother.



Mum told the CHAT worker that S would make threats if she did not get what she wanted. Her attendance at school was very poor, she did not take part in physical education lessons and did not show motivation to do any activities.

When support first began, S seemed very 'closed off' and did not want to discuss what had happened. She was dishonest about her behaviour and was difficult to make conversation with. During the sessions, the CHAT worker and S discussed healthy and unhealthy relationships, S learned what domestic abuse was and created a safety plan. The worker helped S to find new ways to cope with strong feelings of anger, and S learned that it was not OK to use violence against others. The support incorporated sessions that aimed to boost S's self-esteem, in order for her to have the tools to empower herself in challenging situations.

By the time support ended, S was no longer using violence against her family members. She talked about her experiences and was able to verbalise her feelings. She had also begun taking part in physical education lessons and had made new friends who were positive role models.

S told the CHAT worker that she hopes to become a lawyer, so that she can help other victims of domestic abuse.

"It's mad to think I've been emotionally abusive. I feel like a different person."

PROGRESSION

Our Objective: We will provide opportunities for women, children and families to enable them to reach their potential and flourish.

Our Delivery: Via a range of provisions we have supported 229 women and 8 young people to move forward with their lives positively, be that through improved wellbeing and self-confidence, achieving qualifications, accessing further education/ volunteering or through participating in focus groups and feeding their experience into key consultations with Welsh Government officials.

Freedom Programme

The Freedom Programme examines the roles played by attitudes and beliefs on the actions of abusive men and the responses of victims and survivors. The aim is to help survivors to make sense of and understand what has happened to them. The Freedom Programme also describes in detail how children are affected by being exposed to this kind of abuse and very importantly how their lives are improved when the abuse is removed.

In the past year, we have run 6 courses attended by 117 participants.

"I am an equal
and deserve to
be treated as
one"



"Finding it
absolutely
amazing that I
wasn't alone"

RECOVERY TOOL KIT

The Recovery Toolkit is a 10-week programme for women who want to focus on recovery after experiencing domestic abuse. It's designed to:

- Help women understand how domestic abuse effects their thoughts about themselves and the world.
- Explain how domestic abuse impacts on their thoughts, self-esteem and confidence.
- Help women recognise negative automatic thoughts and destructive patterns that may be holding them back from moving forward with their recovery.
- Help women assess their current boundaries, communication styles and identify any changes they need to make.
- Build up a bank of resources and strategies women can use to aid their recovery and help them cope with challenges that life brings.
- Improve their self-confidence and the quality of their life
- Help women understand the impact of abuse on children and parenting and how they can make positive changes.
- Encourage women to make a positive action plan for their future.

In the past year, we have run 3 courses attended by 73 participants.

**"I'm stronger
and value
myself more"**

**"Made me more
confident to do what I
need to do to move
on"**



THRIVE

The THRIVE project delivers bespoke programmes that offer support to young people who have been affected by domestic abuse with a specific focus on mental health and wellbeing. The programmes run for 12 sessions and aim to help young people come to terms with their experiences and to develop positive lifestyle and coping strategies. Its key objectives are to:

- Understand domestic abuse, its impact and what constitutes abusive behaviours
- Understand and avoid/reduce self-harming behaviours
- Understand and avoid/reduce substance misuse
- Develop their confidence and self- esteem
- Develop their understanding of mental health issues

In the past year, we have run 2 programmes and 8 young people aged 14-18 participated.

What did you like about the THRIVE course? “Meeting new people who feel/going through the same stuff as I am”.



STEP AHEAD

The Step Ahead Project offers one-to-one support to participants with a work limiting health condition, be it physical or mental, to overcome barriers they may face trying to enter work, education, or training, aiming to improve their confidence and increase their skills.

As well as helping women identify existing work- related skills and achievable goals, they can also develop literacy, numeracy and practical skills. Women also have access to I.T. to improve their computer literacy, as well as being able to search for work, training or volunteering opportunities.

32 women accessed the project this year.

15 achieved part qualifications, 8 entered volunteering, 9 entered further learning, 8 completed job searches.



“It’s made me feel stronger, it’s made me feel that my opinion matters and that I matter as a person – it’s made me feel important because other women starting out want to know how I got to this stage and it makes me feel I’ve got something to give back.”

“Doing my criminal psychology assignment gave me back some of my confidence and aspirations that I used to have [before my relationship]...I’d really love to do a degree before I’m 40”

One day soon I’ll do a job interview and I’ll have positive things to say about what I’ve done in the last few years; I won’t be filled with dread, I can talk about how I’ve learned new things and had good experiences”

YOUR OPINION MATTERS (YOM)

The current Your Opinion Matters group has been meeting since September 2017. It is made up of 7 women who have used our services and is facilitated by a member of the SWA team. They receive training and encouragement through the group to enable them to participate in service review and development, external consultations and meetings and speak at key events in order to ensure that the voice of survivors/victims of domestic abuse are heard and inform policy, strategic planning etc. In the past year they have:

- Met with local AMs to highlight the current issues women experiencing domestic abuse face
- Attended WWA 's Survivors Empowering and Educating Services (SEEDS) event in Cardiff
- Met with Pilotlighters to highlight their experience of receiving support from SWA
- Completed survey re. Swansea Council's draft VAWDASV strategy
- Participated in the early stages of research being undertaken by King 's Lynn College on developing interventions with perpetrators of domestic abuse who are also substance misusers
- Participated in SWA Annual Review workshop with service users
- Participated in the Swansea Council focus group re. drafting its new homelessness strategy
- Attended Swansea Council White Ribbon Day event
- Provided Feedback on SWA's 3 year goals
- Met with Kay Evans, Welsh Government, to discuss survivor engagement
- Provided Feedback on Seren Môr consortium logo designs

"With domestic abuse you are disempowered. With YOM you are able to build self-esteem back up, it give you strength."



SUSTAINABILITY

Financial Activity

Our total income increased in the last year **from £722,774 to £809,190** in spite of a generally challenging financial climate. Included in this is a diversification of our funding streams in line with our fundraising objectives.

Governance

We completed our first Governance Health Check utilising WCVA's self - assessment toolkit.

Our compliance rate was 90%

Quality Assurance

National Quality Service Standards

We achieved the WWA National Quality Service Standards (NQSS) Award this year. The NQSS provide evidence that specialist services are operating within a quality framework, a strengths-based, needs-led and gender-responsive model of intervention that supports survivors and their children to build resilience, and leads towards independence and freedom. The development of these standards and their roll out across Wales has been supported by the Welsh Government and the National Adviser:

"One of my key responsibilities as National Adviser is to improve the consistency, coordination and quality of service provision across Wales enabling individuals, wherever they live, to access inclusive, high quality services that meet their needs. The WWA National Quality Service Standards provide a framework of evidence based, quality assurance for the provider, commissioner and individual accessing the services. The introduction of the Quality Service Standards should underpin sustainable commissioning models for VAWDASV services; providing a quality mark that all providers should aspire to achieve"

Rhian Bowen-Davies, National Adviser for Violence against Women, other forms of Gender-Based Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

We are delighted to be in receipt of this award and are among the first of the WWA member organisations to have achieved this.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2018

		2018	2017
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets		0	0
	Total Fixed Assets	0	0
Current Assets			
Stock		150	150
Debtors		24,360	14,075
Cash at Bank and in Hand		511,605	446,489
	Total Current Assets	536,115	460,714
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		-35,694	-37,035
	Net Current Assets	500,421	423,679
	Total Net Assets	500,421	423,679
Funds			
Restricted Funds		114,780	93,755
General Funds		85,641	29,924
Designated Funds		300,000	300,000
Total Funds		500,421	423,679

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31ST MARCH 2018

	Designated Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2018	Total Funds 2017
	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:					
Donations	0	2,669		2,669	5,363
Charitable activities	0	194,974	611,547	806,521	717,411
Total	0	197,643	611,547	809,190	722,774
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	0	165,517	550,465	715,982	639,955
Governance costs	0	0	16,466	16,466	15,976
Total	0	165,517	566,931	732,448	655,931
Net Income/(Expenditure) for the year	0	32,126	44,616	76,742	66,843
Transfers between funds	0	23,591	-23,591	0	0
Net movement in funds	0	55,717	21,025	76,742	66,843
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward at 1st April 2017	300,000	29,924	93,755	423,679	356,836
Total funds carried forward at 31st March 2018	300,000	85,641	114,780	500,421	423,679

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT

We are delighted to announce that Swansea Women's Aid CEO Lynne Sanders was nominated for South Wales Evening Posts Community Awards 2017 in the Ambassador category and was highly commended by the panel. For three decades Lynne has championed the cause of women and children experiencing domestic abuse, starting as a volunteer and rising through the ranks to Chief Executive.

Siobhan Parry, the SWA DAISE Team Leader, who nominated Lynne for the award says:

"She is a role model to the team and everyone around her, dedicating her passion, time and commitment to leading the organisation in providing excellent services for women and children in Swansea affected by domestic abuse."

The trustees, staff and volunteers are delighted that Lynne has received this long overdue recognition. On receiving this commendation, Lynne said:

"I am delighted. I would be nothing without our fantastic team who work relentlessly to support each other and the families in contact with us. This commendation recognises all of our efforts. It is also a tribute to all of the women I have met who have inspired me over the years. Their strength and determination despite adversity is truly amazing and is the perfect catalyst for driving us to make even more effort in the future."



A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg
University Health Board

AND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATIONS



We'd also like to thank Eglwys Bethl Sgetti, Bishopston Amateur Dramatics Society and the many generous individuals who have kindly given donations.

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