

SWANSEA WOMEN'S AID



2023-2024 IMPACT REPORT



INTRODUCTION

A foreword from our CEO, Lynne Sanders and our Chair of Board, Clare Tregoning.

The past year has continued to be challenging for Swansea Women's Aid (SWA). Demand for our services remain high and we are seeing an increased complexity in the needs of the women we are supporting, with issues such as poor mental health, substance usage and homelessness.

This is against the backdrop of a cost of living and housing crisis that in itself adds pressure onto the families we support and exacerbates their situations. Key has been ensuring that our services are flexible and responsive, offering a high quality, trauma-informed holistic package of support that ensures women and children can access a range of interventions to best suit their individual needs and enable them to move forward positively with their lives.

Times are tough for the third sector, but we continue to strive to achieve our vision where women and children can live safely in their communities and free from violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We are looking at ways to develop new income streams that will help to sustain SWA going forward and enable us to meet our growth objectives. This includes developing new partnerships and looking at opportunities for joint initiatives that will not only enhance our service offer, but also add strength and stability to the organisation in these difficult times.

A huge thanks to our inspirational staff team who strive relentlessly to improve the lives of the families we support and make SWA what is; an organisation holding women and children at its heart, enabling them to raise their voices to push for change and inform and develop our services as equal partners.

Lynne Sanders
CEO

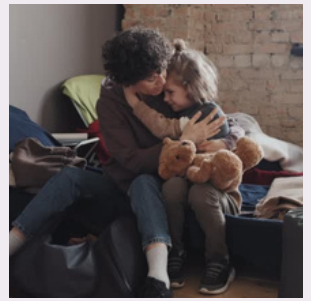


Clare Tregoning
Chair of Board





SUPPORTED HOUSING



Our refuges are secure shared properties to enable women and their children escaping domestic abuse to have a safe place to stay temporarily, while considering their future options.

We also have 4 safe houses which are houses in the community that contain additional safety features.



Swansea Women's Aid have 4 safe houses



and 2 communal refuges - shared by families and single women.

55

women supported in 2023-24.

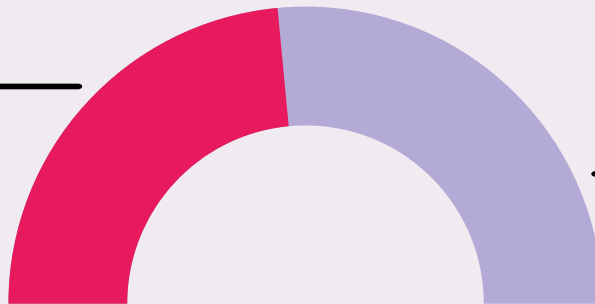
54

children supported in 2023-24.

182

referrals received in 2023-24.

In 2023-24, we ran 22 weekly freedom programme sessions,



and 27 women attended at least one of these sessions!

"I found it extremely helpful, after four years of abuse I was desperately in need of support. I arrived in refuge broken and very afraid. But now full of joy and enthusiasm for life."

"It (refuge) helps you regain your self, learn and grow and be independent."

SUPPORTED HOUSING:

CASE STUDY

X moved into refuge after fleeing physical abuse, psychological abuse, financial abuse and coercive control from her ex partner, having been in abusive situations for much of her life.

This was X's second stay in a refuge, having originally fled abuse from her parents, she then needed to flee again from her partner following an assault. X was a young person and had no experience of maintaining her own tenancy and had experienced abusive relationships all her life, leading to a high degree of trauma

During her stay in refuge, through emotional support, attending Freedom programme and medical assistance, she was able to resolve some of her ongoing trauma.

Due to many years of abuse X came into refuge without much experience of managing accommodation, never having had her own tenancy. She had a background of difficult relationships going back to her childhood. During her time in refuge she was able to gain more experience and to understand how trauma was impacting on current friendships. Before leaving refuge X was able to identify the early warning signs of perpetrator behaviour and take steps to protect herself.

When X moved in she had a fear of leaving the refuge and going outside. Over time, as she began to understand the impact of the trauma she had experienced, she began to increase in confidence and was able to leave the building and to feel a lot more enthusiastic about life.

X built up her skills and confidence by attending the Freedom Programme and gained in confidence and ability to see the warning signs of a potential abuser. She became able to understand more fully her experience of abuse which assisted her in managing her trauma.

Upon leaving refuge, X successfully moved into her own accommodation and had plans to build on her support network. X was supported to develop her own healthy coping mechanisms for managing the effects of trauma and her own emotional wellbeing.

DAISE

Domestic Abuse Information Support and Empowerment Service



526

service users
supported by DAISE
in 2023-24



164

were supported
with legal issues

135

were supported
with their mental
health

70

were supported
with financial
issues

The DAISE (Domestic Abuse, Information, Support and Empowerment) project supports women who are experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse. Support workers have specialist knowledge on issues relating to domestic abuse and how it can affect the lives of women and children and are able to provide confidential, emotional and practical support.



Alongside 1:1 support, the DAISE project also facilitates a series of group sessions

GROUP	NO. OF ATTENDEES
Freedom Programme	24
Recovery Toolkit	10
Own My Life	25

“

It's essential for everyone to do!

Own My Life participant

It's like my Bible, it taught me so much that I didn't realise.

Own My Life participant

”

96%

of women felt that they were better able
to recognise abusive behaviour

AND

felt safer as a result of accessing DAISE
support



CO-PRODUCTION

The Co-Production project focuses on developing a survivor-led co-production centre that provides peer supported activities and programmes to aid women and their children in their recovery from the longer term impacts of domestic abuse.

Survivor co-producers take ownership of the planning, implementation, and delivery of activities. They also have the opportunity to feedback on and influence public body policies and procedures.

10

survivor co-producers have been recruited.



08

survivors have been recruited and trained to engage in influencing activity.



20

survivors have responded to engagement and involvement opportunities.

110

women attended the co-production centre in 2023-24.

79

women said that after attending activities, they felt better able to manage the long-term effects of domestic abuse.

90

women who attended activities said that it improved their wellbeing.

In 2023-24, the project ran:

Support group

Wild swims

Coffee morning

Book club

Yoga

Creative writing

Sharing in a safe space feels very comfortable, being in a room with women who understand but are here and trying to move forward and focus on regaining or gaining peace and taking care of themselves, it feels good and powerful. After the session my mind is quiet and clear, I feel present and hopeful.

CHYPS

Children and Young People's Service

The CHYPS (Children & Young People's Service) project supports 5-17 year olds by providing practical and emotional support to help them recover from their experience of domestic abuse. We aim to promote healthy relationships, raise awareness of domestic abuse and support children and young people to keep themselves safe.

143 children were supported by CHYPS in the year 2023-24

175 children attended prevention workshops in the year 2023-24, focussing on healthy relationships



The S.T.A.R. group, standing for Safety, Trust and Respect aims to act as an early intervention and prevention tool practiced in a group setting.

"If it wasn't for CHYPS my son wouldn't have had the chance to socialise whilst he was not in school. He is a different child now and much happier."

(Parent of a child supported by CHYPS)



In 2023-24, 35 women attended 'Rebuilding the Bond'; a parenting workshop.

100% of parents reported that they felt better able to talk to their children after receiving CHYPS support.

88 children attended play & activity sessions



04 children received play therapy support

89%

felt that they were able to talk to a trusted adult about their experience

91%

felt safer after receiving support from CHYPS

93%

felt that they knew who to talk to or where to go with support for domestic abuse

This year we supported:

36

children aged between 4 and 6

75

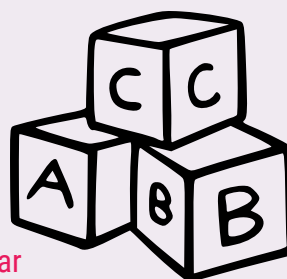
children aged between 7 and 11

31

children aged between 12 and 16

01

children aged between 17 and 18



CHYPS:

CASE STUDY

A was referred to the CHYPS project by her social worker as she was on the child protection register for emotional and physical harm. The social worker expressed concerns that A was anxious, upset and blaming herself for her parents' actions. A had stated that the arguments and controlling behaviour at home were having a negative impact on her school life and general well-being. A told her CHYPS worker that she was unhappy at home and she would often try to sleep over at friends' houses so she could get away from everything. A was also having issues with peers in school who were engaging in unhealthy behaviours such as vaping, self-harm and spreading rumours about each other. A explained that she lost confidence in herself and would often worry about having panic attacks. She became withdrawn and stopped socialising outside of school.

During 1:1 sessions, A engaged in activities and discussions about domestic abuse, healthy relationships, peer pressure, assertiveness, self-esteem, feelings and coping skills. The worker helped A to form a safety plan and to identify a support network of trusted adults. A also gave the worker consent to advocate for her feelings and concerns in a child protection meeting.

As CHYPS support came to an end, A said that she was beginning to feel more like herself. She started socialising with her friends again and distanced herself from those who were making her feel uncomfortable. Her evaluation form showed that her feelings of safety increased from a 3/5 to a 5/5 by the end of support. She commented, "The support has helped me because at the start I was worrying about everything and now I don't worry as much." The worker also had feedback from the social worker who mentioned that A said she really enjoyed the healthy relationships activities.



SWAN

Support

Wellbeing

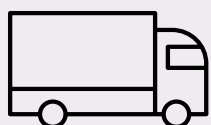
Advocacy

eNablement



The SWAN project supports women who are sexually exploited in Swansea. This could be street sex work, parlour, online or cam work. We provide practical and emotional support with the aim of improving the safety and wellbeing of women.

SWAN offer 1:1 appointments, outreach and crisis support – through daytime and evening services; delivered by a combination of Swansea Women's Aid staff and volunteers.



127 women accessed SWAN via our evening outreach service.



36 women accessed sexual health with SWAN support.



86 women accessed SWAN's daytime support services.



31 women accessed housing support with SWAN support.

“The only reason that I'm here today, writing this, is down to the girls that work for SWAN. The girls are absolutely amazing at what they do for each and every woman they support. There's no other agency or service like SWAN.”

VOLUNTEERING

Swansea Women's Aid is supported by a team of dedicated, compassionate, and skilled volunteers who play a vital role in our work. They assist in collecting and distributing donations to support vulnerable women and children, ensuring essential resources reach those in need. Our volunteers are also instrumental in running our evening outreach service, which operates four nights a week to provide safeguarding and support for sexually exploited women in Swansea. Each volunteer undergoes training in domestic abuse and sexual exploitation, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to offer meaningful support. Additionally, we provide opportunities for volunteers to contribute through administrative, fundraising, and marketing work, helping to strengthen the overall impact of our organisation.



Between 2023-24 **58** volunteered across
4 different projects at Swansea Women's Aid.



“

"I have applied to volunteer with Swansea Women's Aid because I wanted to play an active role in the support women can receive that can turn their lives around as they wish and in their best interests. Through the support I also aim to turn some of their feelings of hopelessness into hope, and address loneliness by having someone who is there for them. I have learned that people who experience certain situations will feel disconnected from the rest of the society and I would like to bring this connection back. My volunteering experience made me grow and learn so much about others and about myself through others."

”



In 2023-24 volunteers gave **930** hours of their time
to support women and children across Swansea.

THANK YOU

A big thank you to all our supporters. With the continued support, help and donations we receive, we are able to continue carrying out our vital work.

National Lottery Community Fund

The Henry Smith Charity

South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner

BBC Children in Need

Swansea Council

WCVA Volunteering Wales Grants

Austin Bailey Foundation

The Waterloo Foundation

National Grid-Community Matters Fund

Moondance Foundation

Home Office – Children Affected by Domestic Abuse Fund

Iscoed Chambers