



Women's Aid  
Federation NI

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**24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline: 0800 917 1414**  
**Open to anyone affected by domestic violence**

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**Annual report 2008–2009**

**Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland**  
**2009**



## **Our Vision**

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland's vision for the 21st century is the elimination of domestic violence.

## **Our Mission**

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

## **Our Goal**

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland strives to welcome and support all women, children and young people, including those with disabilities and those without, women from minority communities, different cultures, races, languages and sexual orientations and from a wide age range.



# CONTENTS

Chairperson's Report	5
Director's Report	6-7
Regional Policy and Lobbying	8-11
Regional Training	12-15
Children's Services	16-17
You and Me, Mum Project	18-21
24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline	22-27
Women's Aid Local Groups	28-39
Finance	40-49
Thank you	50
Federation Organisational Chart	51
Women's Aid Historical Timeline	52-57



# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

This year we celebrate 30 years of Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland. We were formed back in 1978 by the first three Women's Aid groups in Northern Ireland, Belfast, Foyle and Coleraine; three years after the first refuge was opened in Belfast in 1975.

Throughout the 1970's independent refuges for women and children victims of domestic violence were being set up as part of an international feminist movement which included Great Britain, Ireland, USA, Canada and Australia and many European countries. In the UK and Ireland many of these groups came together to share their experiences and used the name 'Women's Aid'.

Our mission then in Federation was to develop new Women's Aid groups and with the enthusiasm and commitment of hundreds of women and supporters across Northern Ireland we have done just that. We now have a thriving network of 10 local groups spread across Northern Ireland with 12 refuges and 15 resource centres.

During the last 10 years Women's Aid groups across Northern Ireland gave refuge to 12,579 women and 12,748 children and young people.

The 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline started by Women's Aid Federation in 1995 is now fully supported by a Service Level Agreement and open to anyone affected by domestic violence. During the last 14 years the Helpline has managed 212,215 calls.

Behind these statistics are stories of shattered lives and an abuse of women and children's human rights. Behind them also are stories of hope and courage and liberation.

This year we have started on our own internal change process challenging ourselves to make sure we are structured in the best way to ensure the delivery of empathic, professional and effective services for women and children victims of domestic violence across Northern Ireland. We will meet that challenge as we have met all the others along the way.

Thanks are due to all our funders who have supported our work throughout the year; a full list of funders appears on page 50.

Special thanks are due to the Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, DHSS&PS, Community Safety Unit, Northern Ireland Office and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive who jointly fund the Service Level Agreement for the 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline.

Finally warm thanks are due to the committed members of the Federation Management Board and to the enthusiasm and hard work of the Federation staff and volunteer team, ably led by Annie Campbell, Director.

**Christine Whiteman**  
Chair  
Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland



## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Thirty years on and the need for the work of Women's Aid across Northern Ireland is as urgent as ever.

We can take great pride in our work across all those years and in this current year, with calls managed by the 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline increasing again to 27,663 and Women's Aid local groups providing refuge to 1058 women and 890 children.

But the question remains 'Why is Violence Against Women still so endemic in our society and indeed across the globe'?

Women's Aid in Northern Ireland emerged from the feminist movement in the 1970's with a clear analysis that violence against women is a manifestation of unequal power relationships between women and men at all levels of society. We recognise domestic violence as one form of violence against women.

When we look around in 2009 we see the routine denigration of women in the popular media; the surveys showing acceptance of violence in relationships by young boys and girls; the range of obstacles and denials and myths that still make it so difficult for women to disclose the brutality, physical, emotional or sexual, in their homes.

Our analysis remains the same now as back when we were formed that domestic violence is an abuse of power and that until women and men are truly equal in society and across the world that abuse will continue.

We have still a long way to go but in this our 30th birthday year we are also proud to acknowledge how far we have come – crimes of violence in the home are no longer treated as 'just a domestic', there is protection under the law, our refuge and support services are there to help women. Crucially we have partners in government, police, statutory agencies and civil society who work with us to help victims of domestic violence.

We value the Tackling Violence at Home government strategy partnership and are fully committed to playing our part in it, even if at times the process can feel painfully slow.

Signs of positive movement for us this year included a shift in the work around preventative education in schools with an encouraging dialogue beginning between ourselves and the Department of Education. With 7,145 children and young people accessing Women's Aid prevention programmes this year we know how essential this work is and how critical to building a different future.

We were delighted with the strong cross-party support for the work of Women's Aid we received during the debate on a Domestic Violence Motion at Stormont on 31st March 2009 and are keen to build on this foundation with all our MLA's.

When Women's Aid was formed 30 years ago the issue of domestic violence was shrouded in secrecy and silence and we campaigned to bring it into the light and to demand services for women and children. This legacy remains with us. This year we were delighted to see our efforts to raise awareness of the reality of human trafficking and sexual exploitation in Northern Ireland finally accepted, and a pilot project established between the NIO and Women's Aid to provide support for women who are victims of this modern day slavery.

Our mission is the elimination of domestic violence; we intend being here for the next 30 years or for however long it takes to fulfil that mission.

This year I would like to thank as always the team of Senior Managers of the 10 local Women's Aid groups for their dedication and expertise.

Many thanks go to the talented and hard-working team of Federation staff and volunteers; with particular thanks to the support and enthusiasm of Federation Senior Managers Deirdre Teague and Sarah Mason.

And finally thanks to the committed volunteers who make up our Management Board; led by the Chair Christine Whiteman, with great skill and dedication.

**Annie Campbell**

Director

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland



## POLICY & LOBBYING

Policy and lobbying work forms an essential part of Women's Aid Federation's work to challenge the attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic violence by lobbying, campaigning and influencing the policy agenda.

In August 2008 Federation welcomed Gillian Clifford as our first Regional Policy & Information worker. The overall policy & lobbying work is led by Annie Campbell, Director with lead roles on different issues assigned to Sarah Mason, Finance & Training Manager, Deirdre Teague, Helpline Manager and Gillian Clifford, Regional Policy & Information worker.

### Tackling Violence @ Home

During this period we were active participants in the interagency Tackling Violence @ Home regional strategic partnership, chaired by NIO and DHSS&PS, with places on the Regional Strategic Group and on the Protection & Justice sub-group, the Children's & Young People's sub-group and the Training sub-group.

### Partnership in action: MARAC & MODV

We participated in the planning for the next TV@H Action Plan for April 2009 – September 2010 pressing to ensure that actions were sharper and addressed the key issues identified by Women's Aid across Northern Ireland. For example we have continued to support the roll out of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC's), and pressed for the development of a full range of perpetrator programmes, eg MODV which are standardised, quality assured and provide built in support for the women whose partners or ex-partners are on the programmes.

### Preventative education: breaking the cycle

Preventative education has been a clear focus for our lobbying work this year and we were delighted to gain financial support from DHSS&PS to agree an action point 'To secure funding and develop a strategic approach to deliver the Helping Hands / No Fear / Heading for Healthy Relationships across schools'.

## **Stormont Domestic Violence Motion**

A Domestic Violence Motion debated at Stormont on 31st March 2009, provided an excellent foundation for our public affairs work. We issued a briefing to all political parties and made contact with all of their policy officers. The result was strong cross-party support for the work of Women's Aid and a clear statement from MLAs deplored domestic violence and in particular it's effects on women and children in Northern Ireland.

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The key issues we identified from the motion and that have formed the basis for our ongoing lobbying work are:

- Children and Young People

Women's Aid calls for a strategy to ensure that the essential support work with children and young people is properly resourced with sustainable funding streams dedicated to these areas.

- Preventative education

Women's Aid calls for a sustainable funding stream to be developed to ensure that essential preventative work with children and young people in schools is properly resourced.

- Research

Women's Aid calls for Northern Ireland specific research to be undertaken to examine the full extent and effect of domestic violence on children and young people in Northern Ireland.

- Refuge provision

Women's Aid call for any gaps in refuge services identified by our research to be examined and arrangements made to fill the gaps.

- Access to Legal Aid

Women's Aid calls for an immediate amendment to the Legal Aid rules with an automatic right given to all victims of domestic violence to access legal protection and justice free of charge.

- NRPF

Women's Aid calls for an emergency fund to be set up by government to ensure that there is adequate financial support for women who are victims of domestic violence, and who have no or limited recourse to public funds, to enable them to take refuge from their abusers.

On an ongoing basis we continue to provide information to politicians / Councillors and key policy makers on the effects of domestic violence and the work of Women's Aid across Northern Ireland.

### **End Violence Against Women Lobbying – Meeting the Ministers**

We also continued to lobby departmental Ministers and officials on the conclusions of the Making the Grade 2007 report and the broader violence against women issues. During this period 5 Ministerial lobby meetings were held with the following departments:

- Arlene Foster, MLA, Minister for the Department of Enterprise Trade & Investment
- Rt Hon Jeffrey Donaldson MP, MLA, Junior Minister Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister
- Margaret Ritchie MLA, Minister Department for Social Development
- Sir Reg Empey MLA, Minister Department for Employment and Learning
- Caitriona Ruane MLA, Minister Department of Education Northern Ireland

These meetings, held in conjunction with Amnesty International and a variety of representatives from the public, community and voluntary sectors, have been very positive and have opened a dialogue across departmental remits on the issue of violence against women. In addition we began the work of developing contact with a range of party policy officers, political researchers and policy advisors.

### **Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland**

Women's Aid Federation jointly held the women's sector seat on the Bill of Rights Forum and the Criminal Justice & Victims working group which produced its report at the beginning of April 2008. We continued to monitor the development of the Bill of Rights, pressing for full implementation of the UN international human rights Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) aimed specifically at addressing the inequalities and gender-specific issues faced by women, particularly violence against women in all its forms.

### **Trafficking**

We have continued our lobbying work on trafficking and were rewarded when the UK signed up to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking of Human beings in December 2008. We worked with two of our local Women's Aid groups to tender for a pilot support project for the women victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, which is currently ongoing. A few short years ago the fact that there were victims of human trafficking in Northern Ireland, which had become apparent to Women's Aid from experience, had been denied so getting this support work embedded was a great step forwards.

## POLICY RESPONSES

During this period we responded to 14 policy consultations drawing on the expertise of Women's Aid across Northern Ireland:

- DHSS&PS: Consultation on proposals for Health & Social Care Reform
- NIO Elections Unit: Consultation on anonymous voter registration scheme in NI
- NIO Criminal Justice Directorate: Draft Guidance on Public Protection Arrangements NI
- Committee on Standards & Privileges, Northern Ireland Assembly: Consultation on Proposed Amendments to the Northern Ireland Assembly Code of Conduct and the Guide to the Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members
- OFM/DFM: Civic Forum Review
- EACYP/C/NACYP/WACYP/SACYP: Consultation on Children's Services Plan 2008-2011
- NI Federation of Housing Associations: Consultation on Draft Communications Strategy
- NIO Criminal Law Branch: Reform on the law of murder, manslaughter and infanticide
- OFM/DFM: New Strategy for Victims and Survivors
- Northern Ireland Law Commission: First Programme of Law Reform
- NIO/Community Safety Unit: "Together. Stronger. Safer"- Community Safety in Northern Ireland
- PSNI: Equality Impact Assessment: Support for Victims Policy
- DHSS&PS: Legislative Framework for Mental Capacity and Mental Health Legislation in Northern Ireland

### NI Policing Board

Throughout this period we contributed extensively to the Northern Ireland Policing Board's Thematic Review on Domestic Violence. We were very pleased that the subsequent report contained many of our key recommendations.



# REGIONAL TRAINING

Training is a vital part of the work of Women's Aid Federation, both internally for staff development and externally raising awareness of domestic violence and Women's Aid Services.

The last year has been a busy year within training, with promotion of specialised training programmes to the 10 local Women's Aid groups in Northern Ireland and external agencies throughout Northern Ireland.

Women's Aid is the lead voluntary organisation in Northern Ireland addressing domestic violence. The aim of the work of Women's Aid Federation is to develop effective local support and prevention strategies for women, children and young people affected by domestic violence. We do this by working directly with Women's Aid groups and the external agencies providing education, recreation and caring services for women, children and young people.

The training team managed by Sarah Mason, Finance and Training Manager, includes Debbie Mehaffy, Young Person's Development Worker with the welcome addition of Joanne Kelly, Regional Trainer who was recruited in September 2008.

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## Accredited Training

We are an accredited centre with OCN (Open College Network) and continue to effectively deliver accredited courses at level three.

- OCN level 3 New worker Training (6 day programme)
- OCN level 3 Court Support (6 day programme)
- OCN level 3 Group work & Facilitation skills (6 day programme)
- OCN level 3 Effective Helping Skills

Women's Aid has also positively contributed to Skills for Justice in the development of new National Occupational Standards for Preventing and Tackling Domestic and Sexual Abuse and Violence.

The main element of the regional training is ongoing continued professional development training for all Women's Aid staff and volunteers in Northern Ireland. The following table outlines the extent of the training programme for this year.

# INTERNAL TRAINING DELIVERED

Training	Accreditation	Duration	Content	Numbers Attended
New Worker Training	OCN Level 3	6 Days	Core training for all staff, including Impact of domestic violence, help seeking process	50
Impact of DV on children & young people	-	1 Day	Raise awareness of impact of DV on children and young people	47
Protective Behaviours	PB UK Foundation Certificate	2 Days	A proactive and empowering program to promote a practical approach to personal safety	17
Keeping Safe Child Protection	Certificate	2 Days	This programme reflects Women's Aid Child Protection policy & procedures	20
Advanced Awareness of DV Cycle	-	1 Day	Women's Aid view of Lenore Walker's cycle of violence	18
Prevention Strategies	PB UK Foundation Certificate	4 Days	Outlines best practice delivery of Women's Aid preventative programmes. Includes Protective Behaviours and Impact of DV on children & young people	14
Childhood Trauma	-	1 Day	Childhood Trauma made available through Women's Aid Federation and delivered by Eamon McCreave	23
You and Me Mum Train the Trainers	-	2 Days	Develop skills to facilitate delivery of You & Me Mum, 10 week self-help programme	30
Helpline Volunteer Training (Induction & Shadowing)	-	6 Months	Develop skills, ability and knowledge to effectively work on the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline.	29
Management Training	NVQ Level 4	6 Months	Develop skills effectively. Manage people and resources	4

Comic Relief

This year saw the further development of working in partnership with the other Federations in England, Scotland and Wales as part of a Comic Relief funded project. There are three agreed outcomes for the project which aims to produce a core curriculum for domestic violence training which takes account of the different roles and needs within the sector.

## **Outcome One**

There will be an agreed core curriculum for domestic violence training across the UK, ensuring a consistent approach to meeting the training needs of staff in all relevant sectors.

## Outcome Two

Women's Aid staff are supported through continuing professional development, thus allowing them to offer the best possible services to women, children and young people with experience of domestic abuse.

### **Outcome Three**

A network of qualified and accredited trainers will be enabled to deliver training to meet the needs of staff in all relevant sectors.

One of the key achievements has been the sharing of training materials, policies, procedures and best practice across all Federations. Women's Aid Federation NI is

also working with Open College Network and the Scottish, Welsh and English Women's Aid Federations to develop further accredited units.

## Tackling Violence at Home Strategy

## Action Plan 08 –09 Strand Four

**To coordinate the implementation of the Training Strategy, in conjunction with the Training Sub-Group, the Local Domestic Violence Partnerships and all relevant agencies/organisations.**

## **Regional Training Strategy**

Tackling Violence at Home, the government's strategy for addressing domestic violence and abuse in Northern Ireland, recognises the need for a co-ordinated approach by all the relevant government departments, statutory and voluntary agencies to the prevention of domestic violence and effective response where it occurs.

In order to take this work forward, Women's Aid Federation sits on the Training Sub Group of the Regional Strategic Group on Domestic Violence. We also have a Regional Training Strategy Group with representatives from all ten local Women's Aid groups to facilitate, co-ordinate and develop a regional strategic approach to training across Northern Ireland.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the local groups for their ongoing commitment and contribution to this project.

## **External Training**

Women's Aid is committed to providing quality training to agencies who in the course of their work come into contact with women and children affected by domestic violence. The aim of our training is to develop the skills and capacity of organisations to respond more effectively to victims of domestic violence.

## **PSNI Training**

We continue to successfully co-ordinate and deliver domestic violence awareness training to PSNI (Police Service Northern Ireland) new recruits. A pool of qualified Women's Aid trainers deliver this valued training which has a direct impact on police response to domestic violence.

In addition, staff within Women's Aid groups also deliver training locally to PSNI and other statutory bodies.





## Children's Services

**890** children and young people stayed in Women's Aid refuges in Northern Ireland this year  
Women's Aid recognises that children and young people are often the forgotten victims of domestic violence. We understand through our work that children can be affected in many different ways when living with domestic violence.

The aim of the work of Women's Aid Federation is to highlight the diverse needs of children and young people and to develop effective local support and prevention strategies for children and young people affected by domestic violence. We do this by working directly with Women's Aid groups and the external agencies providing education, recreation and caring services for women, children and young people.

The Young Person's Development worker ensures that the needs of the children and young people who stayed in our refuges last year, and the many others who are not so visible, are highlighted with the range of agencies and government departments which have a responsibility for them. Through consultation with local Women's Aid groups the project ensures that children's issues are high on every agenda and government strategy. The Young Person's Development worker represents these issues on relevant groups.

**2,753** children and young people accessed Protection and Support Services

## **REPRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **The Children's Sub Group of the Regional Strategic Group on Domestic Violence.**

Responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Tackling Violence at Home Strategy Action Plan 08-09 Strand Three: Support

#### **Key Action**

Support for children and Young People affected by domestic violence

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### **The Children and Young People's Committee of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board, re: Children's Services Planning.**

The four Area Children and Young People's Committees are charged with improving the health and well being of vulnerable children outlined in the **Northern Ireland Children's Services Plan 2008-2011**

#### **Priority Theme**

Children affected by Domestic Violence

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### **Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland, strategic planning group in relation to Children's and Young Peoples Services**

### **Women's Aid Children & Young People's Services Directory**

Through consultation with local Women's Aid Groups, a directory of services provided by Women's Aid to Children and Young People who experience domestic violence has been developed. The directory provides information on services provided by Women's Aid and how they link to the Hardiker Model of need which reflects the Northern Ireland Family

Support Model as developed through the Children's Services Planning process.

## **Preventative Education Programmes In Northern Ireland**

Women's Aid preventative work in schools has been ongoing for approximately 10 years, is ground-breaking in its approach and is highly regarded across Northern Ireland by schools who have accessed it. Women's Aid prevention programmes help children and young people recognise inappropriate behaviour, create strategies in seeking help and support if required, and confidence to develop and sustain healthy relationships.

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

#### **Funding**

In the last year Women's Aid Federation have been successful in our funding bid to the DHSS&PS, Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit to take forward our prevention work within schools.

### **Tackling Violence at Home Strategy Action Plan 08-09 Strand One: Prevention**

#### **Education in Schools**

To secure funding and develop a strategic approach to deliver the Helping Hands/ No Fear/Heading for Healthy Relationships packages across Schools.

.....  
Children and Young people have accessed Women's Aid Prevention Programmes

**7,145**



# You and Me, Mum

## Funding

This project is funded by the DHSS&PS, Domestic and Sexual Violence Unit, for three years.

## Tackling Violence at Home Strategy

### Action Plan 08-09 Strand Three: Support

Continued development and roll-out (and associated funding) of 'You and Me, Mum' programme for mothers supporting children and young people who have lived with domestic violence.

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The main purpose of the project is to empower, support and develop further understanding of the role of mothers throughout Northern Ireland in addressing the needs of their children and young people who have lived with domestic violence.

Women's Aid believes through its ethos that the building of resilience of children and young people is essential. After a successful three year funding bid to the Domestic and Sexual Violence Unit, DHSS&PS, Women's Aid are now in a position to roll out the programme across Northern Ireland.

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**“Children who are experiencing domestic violence may benefit from a range of support services, and some may need safe guarding from harm. Often, supporting a non-violent parent is likely to be the most effective way of promoting the child’s welfare.”** (Department of Health. Home Office. Department for Education and Employment 1999)

Women's Aid have set the following project targets for the year 2008-09:

### **Project Target One**

**To develop and implement a roll-out plan to ten Women's Aid groups in Northern Ireland through the You and Me, Mum Train the Trainers programme.**

#### **Aim of training:**

To introduce facilitators to You and Me, Mum - a ten week self help program.

#### **By the end of this program you will be able to**

- Further explore the effects of domestic violence on a mother
- Further explore the effects of domestic

violence on children and young people

- Further explore the mother/ child relationship dynamic, when domestic violence is prevalent
- Promote and develop effective communication skills with mothers, children and young people
- Promote healthy and non-violent relationships
- Explore key Protective Behaviour messages and strategies for keeping mothers, children & young people safe.

Since the commencement of train the trainers on You and Me, Mum Women's Aid now have 74 fully trained facilitators throughout Northern Ireland delivering the You and Me, Mum programme to mothers.

### **Project Outcome One**

<b>Women's Aid Group</b>	<b>Total Number of Facilitators Trained</b>
Antrim, Ballymena,C'Fergus, Larne & Newtownabbey	6
Belfast & Lisburn	20
Causeway	7
Cookstown & Dungannon	5
Craigavon & Banbridge	4
Fermanagh	7
Foyle	5
Newry, Mourne, South Down & South Armagh	11
North Down & Ards	4
Omagh	3
Helpline Staff	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>



## **Project Target Two**

**Access to You and Me, Mum programme throughout Women's Aid Groups in Northern Ireland, through a 10 week programme for mothers.**

### **Aim of training:**

To improve the lives of mothers and their children who have suffered domestic violence.

### **Thoughts from mothers who took part**

"Attending the course does not mean you

have a problem with your child. You're OK. You just want it to be better for them".

"I felt recharged and able to do something about helping my child."

"More aware of the children's feelings and where they come from".

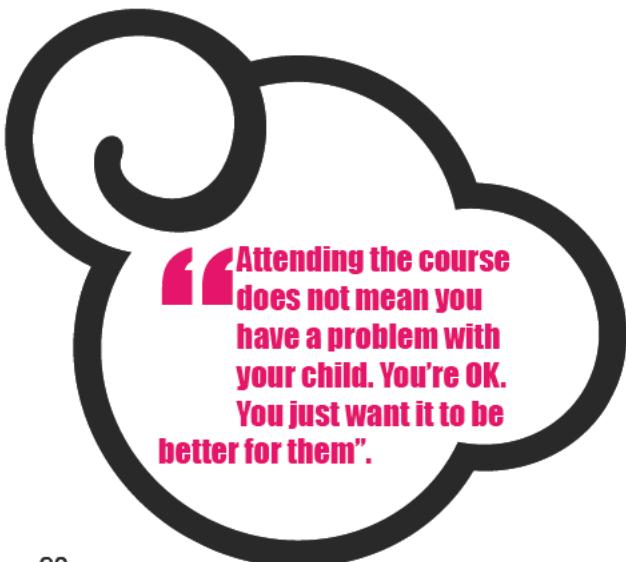
"Helped me deal with guilt I feel and helped me to be stronger for my children"

"Course is difficult but good- it benefits me to know about my child's' experience."

## **Project Outcome Two**

April 2008-March 2009

Total Number of You & Me, Mum Groups	Total Number of Mothers Attended	Total Number of Children & Young People Indirectly Supported
13	87	180



## You and Me Mum – 3 Months On After Completion of the Programme

After a three month period Women's Aid facilitators went back to mothers participating and asked:

**Q** “Has You and Me, Mum influenced your relationship in any way with your child or young person?”

**A** “We talk to each other and listen to each other”

“It’s made my relationship with my eldest child much better and we listen to each other a lot more”

“I know I am making a better connection with their feelings and confusion- Before I didn’t fully realise that their feelings were similar to my own”

“I try to be more understanding to my kids- who are all very young- appreciate their confusion and try to find ways to allow them to express their feelings”

“We are all getting on better and looking forward to new things”

“My relationship with my kids has improved a great deal. Because I now take time for us rather than the three of us spending time in separate rooms alone”

“I feel stronger and I can even be more supportive to them. Relationships in the home are closer”



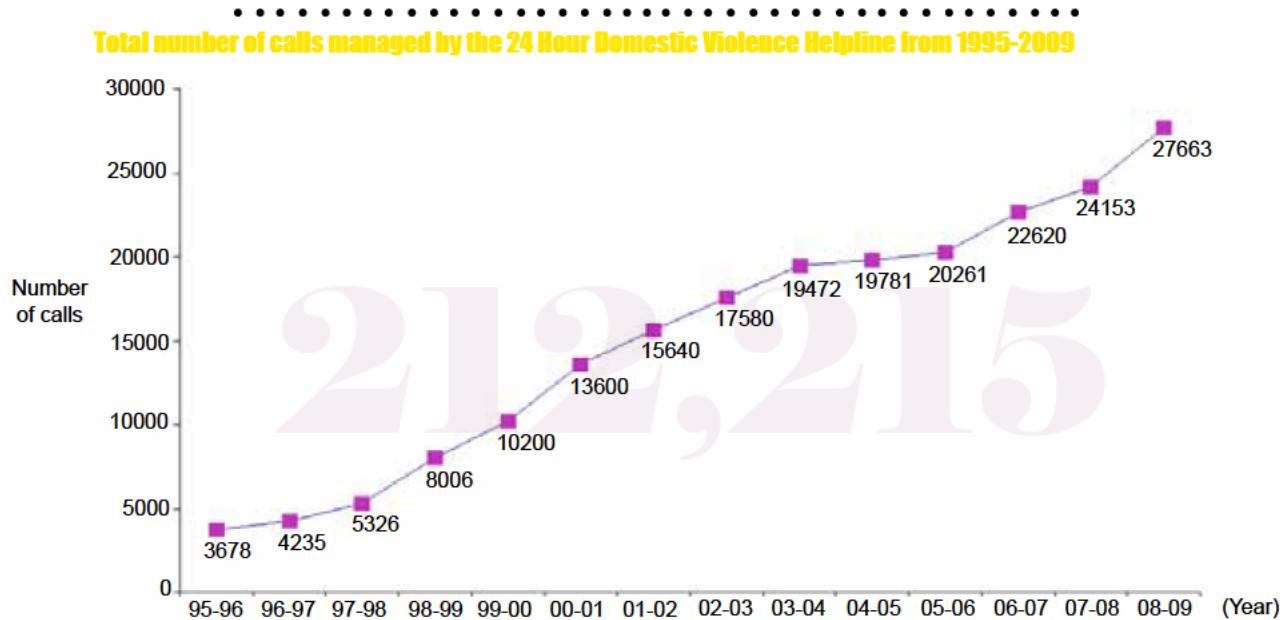
**“It’s made my relationship with my eldest child much better and we listen to each other a lot more”**



# HELPLINE

The 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline is managed by Women's Aid Federation and is open to anyone affected by domestic violence. This freephone service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Helpline Manager, Deirdre Teague manages the overall Helpline service. The Helpline has 7 part-time staff and 4 full-time staff and a pool of Bank staff who provide occasional cover. Sonya Lutton, the Volunteer Co-ordinator, manages and trains the Helpline volunteer team.



In 1995 the 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline was established and in the 14 years since then the Helpline has managed 212,215 calls, with calls increasing year on year.

When most of us are enjoying time off with our families and friends – such as Christmas Day or New Year's Eve – our volunteers and staff have kept the Helpline open over the years, providing a lifeline to those for whom holidays often bring only an increase in abuse and misery.

This report covers the third successful year of the Service Level Agreement with Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland to manage the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline, funded by the Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, DHSS&PS, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Community Safety Unit, Northern Ireland Office.

During this period the Helpline managed 27,663 calls, an increase of 14% on the previous year. 5,307 callers were given information on Women's Aid floating support services, an increase of 19% on the previous year.

Systematic isolation of the victim characterises domestic violence and in rural areas this is further exacerbated by geographical isolation and transport

difficulties. Having a Freephone 0800 number has ensured that there is an equality of access to the Helpline across Northern Ireland; a path is opened out of the isolation.

The majority of callers to the service are women who are experiencing domestic violence. Statutory agencies, including PSNI, social services and health professionals use the Helpline to increase support for the women and children they work with.

The service signposts callers to a variety of statutory and voluntary agencies eg, mental health support teams, Nexus, Men's Advisory Project, Parents Advice Centre and social services. Concerned family and friends also contact the Helpline for information and support.

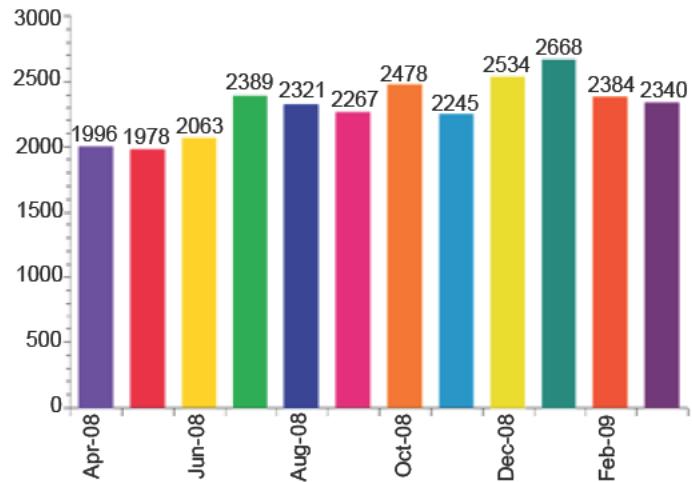
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**27,663** Calls were managed by the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline  
between April 2008- March 2009

#### UKROI

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The Helpline is linked into the UK Refuges online, a database of domestic violence services across the UK. It provides up to date information on vacancies in refuges and availability of other domestic violence services. • • • • • • • • •

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The Helpline is working to ensure that harder to reach groups, such as migrant workers, those in rural areas, disabled people, and those in same sex relationships are aware of the service. Important links have been made with Disability Action, NICEM, Rainbow and STEP NI which will be built upon in future years. In August 2008 the Helpline participated in the Gay Pride festival with a Helpline stall where we received a warm welcome.

### Number of Calls Managed by the Helpline: 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009

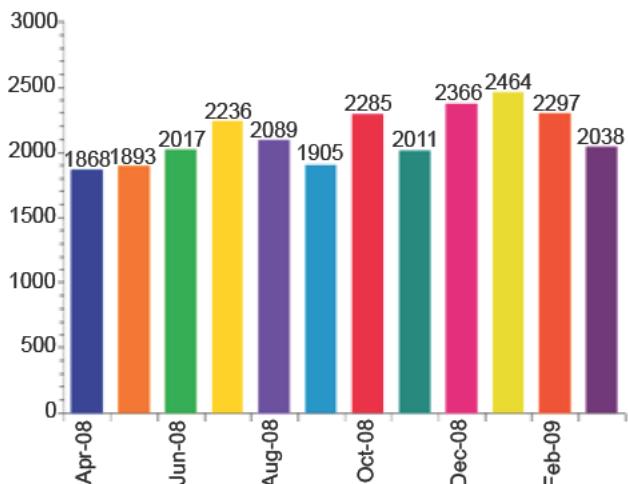


14% Increase  
in the total  
number of  
calls  
managed

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

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.

### Number of Calls Answered by the Helpline: 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009

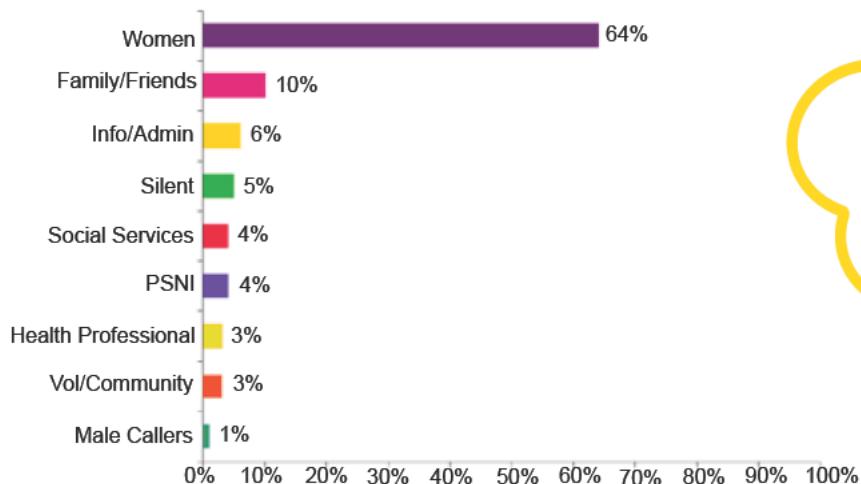


The Helpline increased its strike rate throughout the year from 75% at the beginning of the year to 79%, which exceeds by 4% the Telephone Helplines Association recommended strike rate of 75%.

The strike rate is the percentage of incoming calls answered compared to the remaining percentage of incoming callers who find the line engaged.

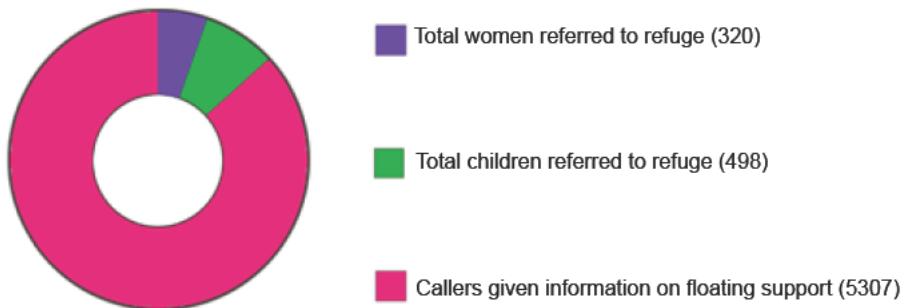
A total number of 25,469 calls were answered during the year; this was an increase in 22% on the previous year.

### **Breakdown of Callers: 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009**



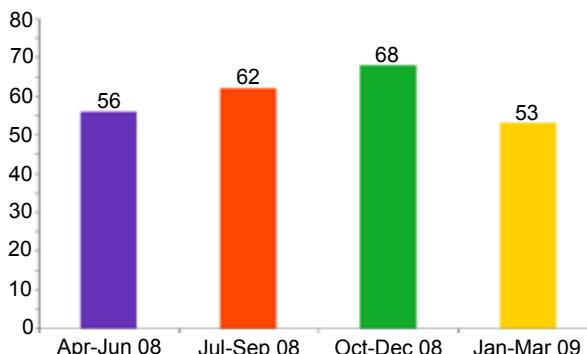
**The majority of callers to the service are from women, which reflects the levels of domestic violence experienced by women.**

### **Referrals to Other Women's Aid Services: 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009**



Floating Support is an outreach service to provide support to women victims of domestic violence to enable them to remain in their own homes. These referrals have increased by 19% since last year.

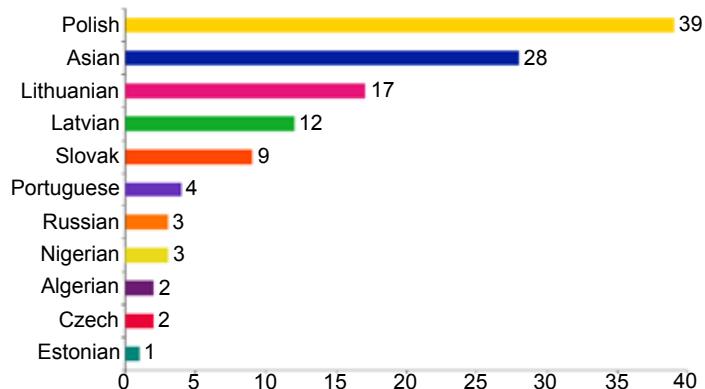
### Male Callers: 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009



A total of 239 male callers were signposted to Men's Advisory Project, Men to Men, Men's Action Network, Tara Centre, Aisling Centre and a variety of statutory and support services. This equates to 1% of calls answered.



### Calls from Foreign Nationals & Black & Minority Ethnic Women: 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009



A total of 120 calls to the service were from foreign nationals and black and minority ethnic women. This equates to 0.5% of calls answered.

The Helpline uses the Language Line translation and interpretation service.

## **Helpline Volunteers**

Volunteers are an essential part of the Helpline team: throughout the year they contributed a total of 3,268 hours to the service, an average of 9 hours per day, 365 days of the year.

Volunteers receive training in domestic violence awareness raising, listening skills, child protection, legal options, signposting and the impact of domestic violence on children. The Helpline provides new volunteer training bi-annually, in January and September.

Coming from all walks of life, our highly

trained and dedicated volunteers bring their own unique perspective and a rich diversity to the organisation. They all, however, have one thing in common – a strong belief in the work they do and a determination to support those who ring us for help.

Helpline calls have increased, with three lines open during busy periods, which would not be possible without the contribution of our volunteers. They have a strong sense of ownership of the service and have been instrumental in its development over the past 14 years.

**3,268** Hours contributed by volunteers to the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline this year

## **Garden of Oasis**

In May 2008 Women's Aid Federation were delighted to receive a Volunteer Development Agency award at Stormont during Volunteer Week for creating a 'Garden of Oasis' for our Helpline volunteers.

This arose from our recognition of the stressful nature of Helpline volunteering work and our respect for the invaluable support of our volunteers.

**£31,046** is the total value of the volunteer hours worked in kind



# WOMEN'S AID LOCAL GROUPS

## Statistics

It is important to recognise that statistical data can never give the full picture of the impact on women and children of living with the devastating effects of domestic violence. Statistics can however give a brief snapshot of the work carried out by Women's Aid Federation and the ten autonomous groups operating throughout Northern Ireland.

### Number of Women and Children Staying in Refuge

A total of 1,058 women and 890 children stayed in Women's Aid refuges during this year. Whilst this figure represents a small decrease on last year, what has remained constant, is that every day in Northern Ireland another 5 women and children come to stay in refuge because they are not safe in their own homes.

**From 1998/99 to 2008/09 12,579  
women and 12,748 children &  
young people have stayed in our  
refuges**

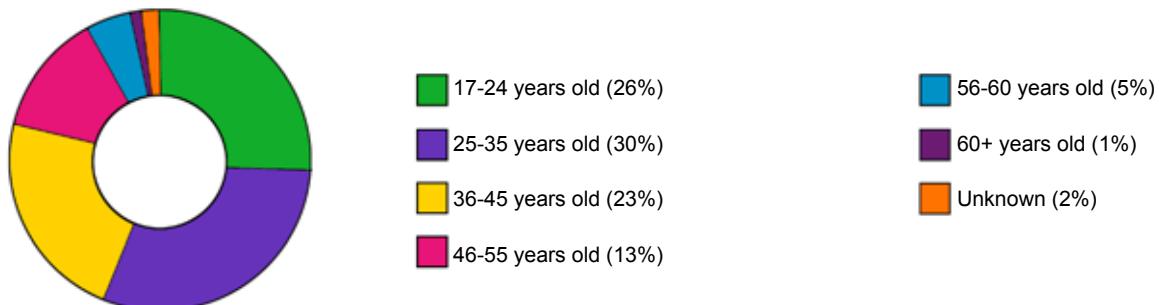
1,058

.....  
**Women stayed in refuges throughout Northern Ireland between  
April 2008 - March 2009**

890

.....  
**Children stayed in refuges throughout Northern Ireland between  
April 2008 - March 2009**

### **Age range of women staying in Women's Aid refuges: 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009**



#### **Age Range**

The age range of women staying in Women's Aid refuges in 2008/09 is illustrated above. Once again, the most predominant age group is the 25-35 year olds who represent 30% of all women staying in refuge this year. The second highest group are those aged 17-24 years old who made up 26% of those staying in refuge. Overall, 79% of women in refuge this year were aged between 17 and 45 years old. However, domestic violence impacts all age groups in society. 13% of women were aged between 46-55 years old, with 5% aged between 56-60 years old. 21% of women in refuge in Northern Ireland in 2008/09 were over the age of 46.

• •

### **Length of stay of women & children in Women's Aid refuges: 1st April 2008 - 31st March 2009**



## **Black & Minority Ethnic Women**

As Northern Ireland continues to become an increasingly diverse society, so Women's Aid has responded to the challenges of this changing environment. Women's Aid has published information leaflets in 6 different languages. In addition, our 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline uses the Language Line translation and interpretation service which all of our ten local Women's Aid groups can also access. In 2008/09 190 women from black, minority and ethnic communities, including the travelling community, were accommodated in our local refuges. This figure represents a slight decrease on 2007/08 from 199 women. 74 women from BME communities also accessed floating support services. Women's Aid is actively seeking ways to reach out to women and children who need our services in all communities and offer support.

190

**Women from black, minority and ethnic communities were accommodated in our local refuges**

74

**Women from black, minority and ethnic communities accessed our floating support services**



## **Disability**

The number of women coming into our refuge who disclosed having a disability was 75 with a further 219 women with a disability helped through Floating Support.

## Floating Support

The number of women accessing floating support and outreach work in Northern Ireland has continued to increase significantly. A total of 2,814 women and 2,753 children accessed floating support during 2008/09. This represents a 38% increase on the previous year. This growing area of support enables women and their children to access support whilst remaining in their own homes and communities. A wide range of agencies work together to access support for women experiencing domestic violence. As such referrals to floating support can come from a variety of sources including the 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline. Among the agencies contacting Women's Aid to refer women to our services are:

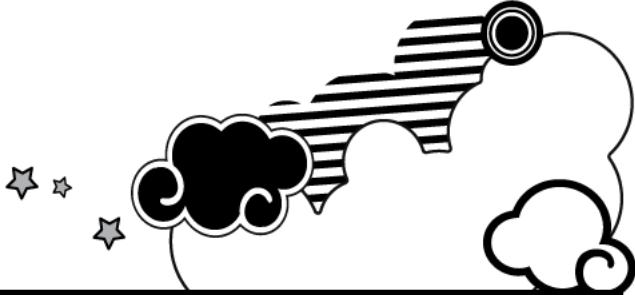
- Youth Justice Agency
- Probation Board Northern Ireland
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Citizens Advice Bureaux
- Samaritans
- PSNI
- Doctors
- Hospital
- Health Visitors
- Mental Health Services
- Community Practice Nurse
- Social Workers
- Solicitors
- Other Voluntary Organisations

2,814

Women were supported through Floating Support throughout Northern Ireland between April 2008 - March 2009

2,753

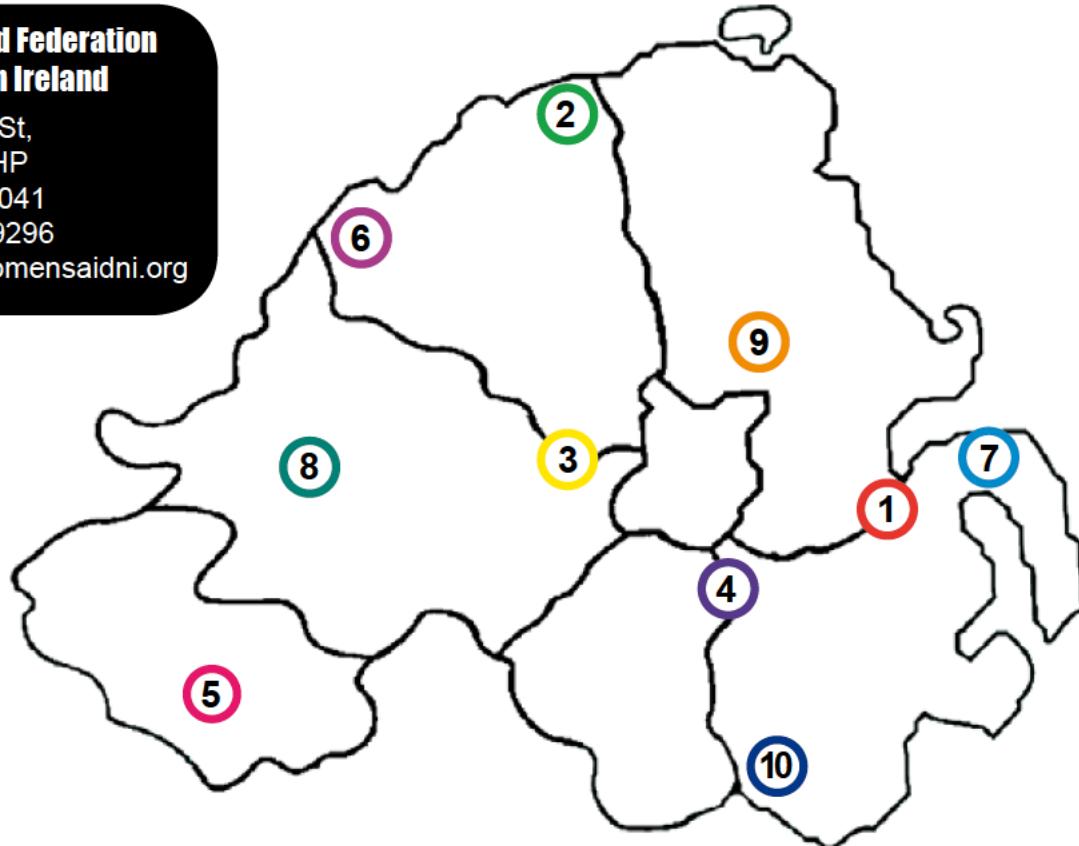
Children were supported through Floating Support throughout Northern Ireland between April 2008 - March 2009



## WOMEN'S AID LOCAL GROUPS

**Women's Aid Federation  
Northern Ireland**

129 University St,  
Belfast, BT7 1HP  
tel: 028 9024 9041  
fax: 028 9023 9296  
email: info@womensaidni.org



**24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline 0800 917 1414**  
open to anyone affected by domestic violence

## **1. Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid**

30 Adelaide Park, Belfast, BT9 6FY  
tel: 028 9066 6049, fax: 028 9068 2874  
email:admin@belfastwomensaid.org.uk

## **2. Causeway Women's Aid**

23 Abbey Street, Coleraine, BT52 1DU  
tel: 028 7035 6573, fax: 028 7032 6949  
email:womensaidcoleraine@btinternet.com

## **3. Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid**

27 Old Coagh Road, Cookstown, BT80 8QG  
tel: 028 8676 9300, fax: 028 8676 9300  
email:womensaidcookstown@hotmail.com

## **4. Craigavon & Banbridge Women's Aid**

Office 1, Floor 1, Legahory Centre, Craigavon BT65 5BE  
tel: 028 3834 3256, fax: 028 3832 2277  
email:info@craigavonbanbridgewomensaid.org.uk

## **5. Fermanagh Women's Aid**

27a High Street, Enniskillen, BT74 7DQ  
tel: 028 6632 8898, fax: 028 6632 8859  
email:womensaidfermanagh@btopenworld.com

## **6. Foyle Women's Aid**

Pathways, 24 Pump Street, Derry, BT48 6JG  
tel: 028 7128 0060, fax: 028 7128 0061  
email:marie.brown@foylewomensaid.org

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

18 Bingham Street, Bangor, BT20 5DW  
tel: 028 9127 3196, fax: 028 9145 5245  
email:ndawomensaid@hotmail.com

## **8. Omagh Women's Aid**

27 Market Street, Omagh, BT78 1EL  
tel: 028 8224 1414, fax: 028 8224 1414  
email:fiona@omaghwomensaid.org

## **9. Women's Aid in Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne & Newtownabbey**

2 Cullybackey Road, Ballymena, BT43 5DF  
tel: 028 2563 2136, fax: 028 2565 3304  
email:womensaidareaoffice@btconnect.com

## **10. Women's Aid Newry, Mourne, South Down & South Armagh**

7 Downshire Place, Belfast Road, Newry BT34 1DZ  
tel: 028 3025 0765, fax: 028 3026 9606  
email:newrywomensaid@btconnect.com

## **Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid**

### **Modernisation Programme**

The plans for the modernisation of the refuges in Lisburn and North Belfast are developing well. We will be improving facilities for women and children, with en suite bedrooms to ensure privacy while still maintaining the self help ethos and communal living to enable women to get and give mutual support. A number of self contained move on units will be integrated into the refuges. They are designed to meet the diverse needs of women and children supported through the crisis intervention stage but who need ongoing support.

### **Recruitment**

A new post was recruited with funding from the Department of Education. The Young Women's Project provides support and intervention to young women aged 16-25 who have experienced domestic violence as a child, or are currently in, or have in the past been in, an abusive relationship.

Plans were put in place to secure funding for a second PSNI Support Worker to be located in District B Public Protection Unit.

### **Partnership Working**

The Belfast Domestic Violence Partnership was re-established with the strategic and operational objectives, action plan, structure and membership agreed. A part time Co-ordinator has responsibility for developing the work of the partnership which is progressing very well.

In addition we worked in partnership with the NIO, Foyle Women's Aid and Women's Aid

Federation NI to support women who are victims of human trafficking.

## **Mothering Through Domestic Violence**

This year saw our group host a hugely successful seminar "Mothering through Domestic Violence" held to raise the issues and difficulties that women who experience violence as mothers. Professor Marianne Hester, a well known author, academic and researcher gave the keynote address.

## **Causeway Women's Aid**

### **Community Safety Partnerships**

In 2008 / 2009 we extended links to the Community Safety Partnerships within our area and as a result were able to establish a weekly outreach to Ballycastle. A Morning session for drop-in support and 'You and Me Mum' programmes is followed by an afternoon session for children. Having begun to deliver this service in September 2008 we have had a steady flow of women accessing support and have almost thirty children who have used the service.

### **Youth Forum**

Our Youth Forum continues to be active and they have made a considerable difference to our working environment by designing and painting a fabulous mural depicting the journey of a victim of domestic violence in the entrance of our Women's Centre in Coleraine.

### **30th Anniversary Year**

All of our other services are in high demand and with the arrival of 2009 we have entered our 30th anniversary year. We plan to

continue to work hard to ensure excellent services for all women and children who need our support.

### **Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid**

#### **New Resource Centre**

Cookstown and Dungannon Women's Aid held the official opening of our new Resource Centre on Monday night 10 November 2008 along with our Annual General Meeting. The Resource Centre, which was partly funded by the Big Lottery and the Henry Smith Charity, was jointly opened by representatives of both funders and the current Chair of the organisation. The event was very well supported and attendees included teachers, solicitors, police and local political representatives.

#### **Protection & Prevention Programmes in Schools**

Funding continues to be secured from both the Cookstown and Dungannon Community Safety Partnerships to deliver protection and prevention programmes in both primary and post primary schools. The demand is rising year on year and more and more time is spent on delivering these vital programmes throughout the academic year.

#### **You and Me, Mum**

This year 4 staff members underwent the training to deliver the new 'You and Me, Mum' programme, which focuses on how domestic violence can affect a mother and her children. One 10-week programme has been delivered in all three of the Council areas that we cover with excellent feedback and evaluations from both facilitators and participants.

#### **Domestic Violence Awareness Raising**

The organisation continues to raise awareness wherever and whenever we are asked. This year we delivered in excess of 30 awareness raising sessions to both statutory and community groups throughout the Cookstown, Dungannon and Magherafelt Council areas.

#### **Craigavon and Banbridge Women's Aid**

(Incorporating Armagh City and District)

#### **Safe Accommodation**

Refuge occupancy remains high and steady and while the majority of our residents are from the local area, the number of women being referred/self referred with limited or no recourse to public funds continues to be a significant issue of concern.

#### **Community Based Services**

We continue to deliver a high level of Outreach, Aftercare and Counselling, both in the Community and at our Centre. As this service remains largely unfunded we have looked for new, innovative, efficient and effective ways of doing more of the same, differently. To that end initiatives both resurrected and set up in this year include, for example, seven shared venue provisions. This enables us to receive and manage the high referral numbers as well as making it easier for our clients to access their support.

#### **Prevention and Intervention**

Schools and parenting support work continues and is delivered collaboratively with our Women's Aid colleagues in Newry,

Mourne, South Down and South Armagh as well as Cookstown and Dungannon.

### **Fermanagh Women's Aid**

This year, Fermanagh Women's Aid travelled a remarkable 74,510 miles to deliver their services to 156 Women and 85 children across the county of Fermanagh.

### **Red Nose Day**

This year presented a number of exciting opportunities. Funding was received from BBC Children in Need and the work of our group with children was featured in the 2008 Red Nose Day television appeal, which brought a great deal of recognition for our work.

### **Creative Arts Project**

The Arts Council also provided funding for a creative writing and environmental art project which proved to be a tremendous success. The paintings by Fermanagh women, were sold in a local gallery to members of the general public. The sense of achievement these women felt was wonderful to witness. Such was the success of this initiative that staff felt that the loss of funding for this particular work represents a considerable loss.

We intend continuing to travel the roads of Fermanagh next year to deliver our services to the women and children who are in need of them.

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

### **Ashley Wood House & Pump Street Buildings**

This year saw the successful negotiation of the hand over of Ashley Wood House and Pump Street buildings by DHSS&PS. Foyle Women's Aid are very grateful to Minister McGimpsey, MLA for his intervention, visit to the services, and ongoing support which has greatly contributed to the realisation of the organisation's development plans. Once realised these will provide a much wider more comprehensive service for all victims of domestic violence in the Foyle area.

### **Lottery People's Millions**

The success in winning the Lottery People's Millions and the creation of our beautiful secret garden has been a wonderful contribution to our project and is greatly utilized by all. We also had the honor of two visits from Minister Paul Goggins MP who, after receiving presentations and meeting the development group at Foyle, was very encouraging of the overall vision for the service.

### **Trafficking**

We were delighted when he later returned to launch the pilot project to support women victims of human trafficking. Foyle Women's Aid are part of a pilot interagency project with Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid and Women's Aid Federation NI, funded by the NIO. We collectively provide the crucial support for women who suffer many aspects of abuse and exploitation as a result of being trafficked. Many thanks to the Poppy project in London

who were generous with their time and expertise on this matter during our visit.

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

### **Retirement of Management Coordinator**

The last year for North Down and Ards Women's Aid has been one that has witnessed the development and expansion of existing projects. It has also been a year that has witnessed the end of an era for North Down and Ards Women's Aid. Hilary Forrester, Management Coordinator who worked for the organisation for a period of 18 years retired in March. While Hilary has moved on, she will be remembered for the rich legacy in service development and organisational growth that she has left behind. Sandra McNamee replaced Hilary Forrester as Management Coordinator in March 2009.

### **Core Services & innovative work**

In the year April '08 to end March '09 the refuge accommodated 36 women and 43 children. The floating support service remains busy and 76 women availed of this service. Children and young people remain of paramount importance and our children's projects such as "Transformers" and "Helping Hands" continue to be well attended and positive feedback illustrates the social value of this innovative work and the impact it has for both women and children.

### **School Prevention Programmes**

Prevention work is extremely successful and two workers dedicate their time to raising awareness of self-esteem and healthy relationships in both primary and post primary

schools with a total of 1544 pupils in the area having attended classes.

### **Training**

We will continue to develop our training provision to external agencies to ensure they are aware of the nature and context of domestic violence and to encourage them to put in place positive supports for women and children.

## **Omagh Women's Aid**

### **Refurbishment Programme**

This year saw a programme of substantial refurbishment for both our Resource Centre and our Refuge. The Centre got a long overdue new kitchen and the training room also got a make over. The new furniture and fittings and fresh decor are proving very popular with all who use the Centre. The Refuge saw a programme of works carried out to update facilities in the bedrooms and to provide for new computers for use by women and children. This work was generously funded by DSD.

### **Ministerial Visit**

In January the staff and women in the refuge were delighted to welcome Minister Margaret Ritchie, MLA to the refuge to see the results of the improvement programme and to have a cup of tea and a chat with some of the women and children.

### **Residential**

Staff and Management Committee enjoyed a strategic planning residential in Sligo

in the autumn. As well as considering the strategic direction of Omagh Women's Aid, the weekend also provided the opportunity for staff and committee members to get to know each other better.

### **Court Support Project**

In order to meet better the needs of women going through the family and domestic proceedings courts, Omagh Women's Aid, with funding from Omagh Community Safety Partnership, have developed a Court Support Project, staffed by a team of accredited volunteers. It is hoped to launch the project formally in the coming months.

### **Women's Aid in Antrim, Ballymena, C'fergus, Larne & Newtownabbey**

### **White Ribbon Charter**

In December 2008 we launched a year long campaign to secure signatures for our "White Ribbon Charter". This involved an event on 9th December 2008 where 100 men signed the Charter which is now in Stormont for signature by all MLA's. Copies of this Charter have been circulated for signature across all areas and it is planned that all signed copies will be presented to the Minister during the 16 Days of Action in 2009. The Charter states "I will not commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women".

### **Health Minister Attends AGM**

Michael McGimpsey MLA Minister for DHSSPS attended our AGM on Wednesday 26th November 2008 to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the refuge in Ballymena. He unveiled a plaque which read "From October

1998 to October 2008 653 women and 662 children have sought Refuge within these walls".

### **Minister Announces Funding Package**

On 16th December 2008 Minister of State Paul Goggins MP visited the Naomi Centre in Ballymena where he announced a welcome funding package of £350,000 for the refurbishment of the Women's Resource Centre.

### **Women's Aid Newry, Mourne, South Down & South Armagh**

### **25th Anniversary Year Celebration**

An important diary date this year was our themed "Summer in the City" Gala Ball to celebrate the achievements of Women's Aid in the Newry & Mourne area. The Minister of Education Caitriona Ruane MLA attended the ball along with hundreds of local business people, councillors and local community people to celebrate our achievements. At a Civic Reception the Mayor of Newry & Mourne presented Eileen Murphy (Area Manager) with a beautiful Tyrone Crystal ball in recognition of the years of commitment dedication and success achieved for the women and children in Newry & Mourne and the surrounding areas.

### **Prevention programmes for Women**

Securing funding through Investing for Health enabled us to run core therapeutic support programs such as Body Talks, Journey to Freedom and 'You Me, Mum' and Health & Wellbeing self care workshops. A total of

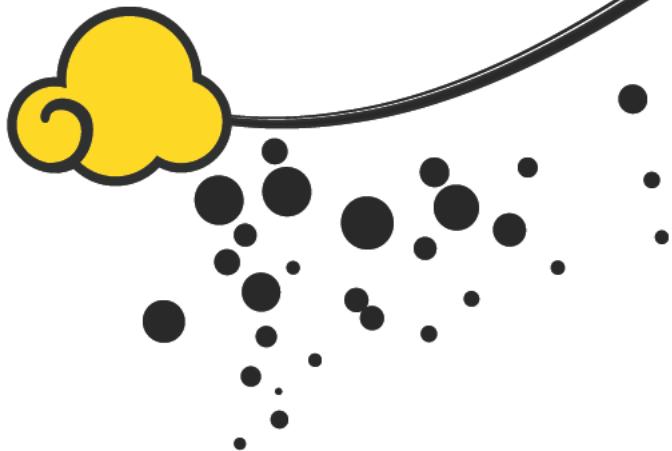
830 women participated and the positive feedback and evaluation from each woman demonstrated the high level of need to continue to help women effectively manage the impact of domestic violence on their lives.

### **Prevention Training in Schools**

A high number of participants received the training with 372 children in 15 primary schools and 497 young people in 16 post primary schools accessing the programmes. These programmes were funded through a collaborative funding application of the three Women's Aid groups in the Southern Trust area through the Southern Health and Social Service Board Family Support Intervention project.

### **Men Overcoming Domestic Violence (MODV)**

In this year we supported 21 women and 9 children whose partner or ex partners are on the PBNI's MODV perpetrator programme.





# 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*

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd  
(Company Limited By Guarantee)**

**Extract from the Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 March 2009**

**Company Information**

**Management Board**

Christine Whiteman (Chair)  
Lorna McAlpine (Vice-Chair)  
Anne McMahon (Secretary)  
Donna Coyle (Treasurer)  
Stephanie Fox  
Elsie Jordan  
Margaret McMullan  
Margaret Kennedy  
Margaret McMahon  
Monica Patterson  
Ursula Marshall  
Laura McMahon

**Secretary**

Anne McMahon

<b>Auditors</b>	Lynn, Drake & Co Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors 40 Main Street Moira BT67 0LQ
<b>Bankers</b>	First Trust Bank Donegall Square North Belfast
<b>Solicitors</b>	Flynn & McGettrick 9 Clarence Street Belfast BT2 8DY
<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 2009.

### **Objects of the Charity**

The aims of the Charity (which has ten 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 2010.

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.
- 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 2010.

#### **Decision Making Structures**

The governing body of Women's Aid Federation, the Management Board, is largely drawn from membership of affiliated groups. 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. 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 £867,102 in the year which exceeded resources expended of £729,719 by £137,383 and this amount has been transferred to the Organisation's accumulated funds.

The Balance Sheet at 31 March 2009 shows a net Accumulated Funds balance at that date of £375,875.

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

The following persons were members of the Management Board at some time during the year to 31 March 2009: -

Debbie Coyle	Donna Coyle
Anne McMahon	Edna Dunbar
Maria McBride	Stephanie Fox
Margaret McMullan	Kim Harvey
Laura McMahon	Elsie Jordan
Margaret McMahon	Ursula Marshall
Monica Patterson	Lorna McAlpine
Margaret Kennedy	Christine Whiteman

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.

## **Management Board Responsibilities**

Company Law requires the Management Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Directors are required to: -

- select suitable policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Management Board are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## **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 2009 were as follows:-

Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid  
Fermanagh Women's Aid  
Causeway Women's Aid  
Foyle Women's Aid  
Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid  
North Down & Ards Women's Aid  
Craigavon & Banbridge Women's Aid  
Omagh Women's Aid  
Newry & Mourne, South Down & South Armagh Women's Aid  
Women's Aid in Antrim,  
Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne &  
Newtownabbey

### **Auditors**

In accordance with Article 392(1) of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, a resolution proposing the re-appointment of

Lynn, Drake & Co as auditors to the Company will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

By Order of the Management Board

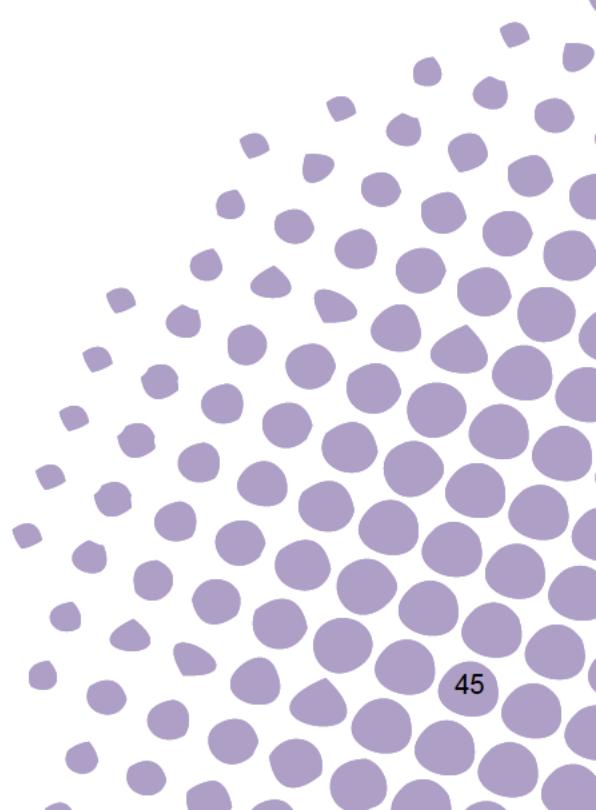


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Anne McMahon

Secretary

1 August 2009



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

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Women's Aid Ltd for the Year Ended 31 March 2009 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 and accounting policies set out.

This report is made solely to the charity's Members, as a body in accordance with Article 243 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity'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 and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. We report to you whether in our opinion the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the charitable company has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding directors' remuneration and transactions with the company is not disclosed.

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 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.

### **Opinion**

In our opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice of the state of the company's affairs at 31 March 2009 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- the Financial Statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986; and
- the information given in the directors'

report is consistent with the financial statements.

*Lynn Drake & Co*

**Lynn, Drake & Co  
Chartered Accountants and Registered  
Auditors**

**40 Main Street  
Moira  
BT67 0LQ**

**1 August 2009**

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2009

<i>all amounts are in pounds sterling</i>	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2009	Total Funds 2008
<b>Incoming Resources</b>					
<b>Activities in furtherance of the Charity's objectives:</b>					
Grants Receivable	11,082	—	815,979	827,061	661,832
Income from charitable activities	35,491	—	—	35,491	41,915
<b>Activities for generating funds:</b>					
Interest receivable	4,550	—	—	4,550	4,029
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>51,123</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>815,979</b>	<b>867,102</b>	<b>707,776</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>					
<b>Costs of generating funds:</b>	—	—	13,490	13,490	13,501
<b>Charitable Expenditure:</b>					
Costs in furtherance of charitable objectives	1,158	—	699,102	700,260	723,713
Management and Administration of the Charity	—	—	15,969	15,969	15,723
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>1,158</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>728,561</b>	<b>729,719</b>	<b>752,937</b>
<b>Net (Outgoing)/ Incoming Resources</b>					
Before Transfers	49,965	—	87,418	137,383	(45,161)
Transfer between Funds	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Net Incoming Resources for the Year</b>	<b>49,965</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>87,418</b>	<b>137,383</b>	<b>(45,161)</b>
<b>Funds Balance brought forward at 1 April 2008</b>	48,029	89,398	101,065	238,492	283,653
<b>Net Movement in Funds in Year to 31 March 2009</b>	49,965	—	87,418	137,383	(45,161)
<b>Fund Balance carried forward at 31 March 2009</b>	<b>97,994</b>	<b>89,398</b>	<b>188,483</b>	<b>375,875</b>	<b>238,492</b>

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2009***all amounts are in pounds sterling***Fixed assets**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
Tangible Fixed Assets	58,478	64,636

**Current Assets**

Debtors and Prepayments	65,604	61,008
Bank Accounts	270,353	130,599
Cash in Hand	—	119
	335,957	191,726

**Liabilities**

Amounts falling due within one year	(18,560)	(17,870)
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**Net Current Assets**

<b>317,397</b>	<b>173,856</b>
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<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>	<b>375,875</b>	238,492
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**Liabilities – Amounts falling due after more than one year**

	—	—
	375,875	238,492

**Provisions and charges**

Deferred Capital Grant Reserve	—	—
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<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>375,875</b>	<b>238,492</b>
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**Represented by: Accumulated Funds**

Unrestricted – General	97,994	48,029
Unrestricted – Designated	89,398	89,398
Restricted	188,483	101,065

<b>Balance at 31 March 2009</b>	<b>375,875</b>	<b>238,492</b>
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Approved by the Management Board on 1 August 2009 and signed on its behalf by:

**Christine Whiteman**
**Donna Coyle**



# THANK YOU

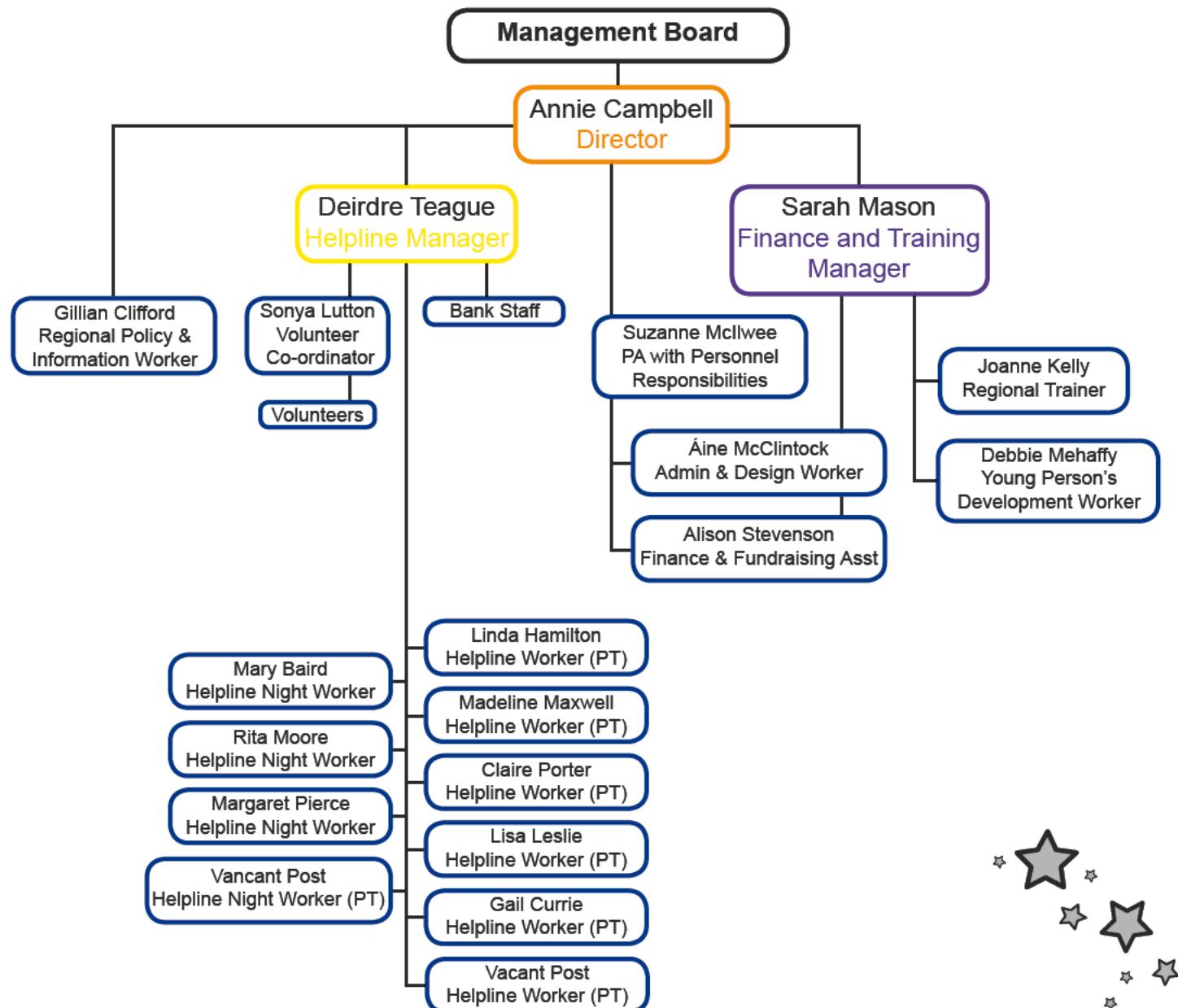
Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland would like to thank all our donors for their ongoing support and acknowledgement of our work and for enabling the continuation of so many vital projects.

- Charities Aid Foundation
- Comic Relief
- Community Safety Unit, Northern Ireland Office
- Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety
- Eastern Health & Social Services Board
- Individual Donors
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Northern Ireland Volunteer Development Agency
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Private Investors
- Probation Board Northern Ireland
- St Columba's Parish Church
- The Body Shop
- The Enkalon Foundation
- The Estate of the Late Dr John Clarence Steen Houston
- Topshop (Arcadia Group)
- Volunteers

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*Designed by Áine McClintock and printed by Dorman & Sons Ltd.*

# WOMEN'S AID FEDERATION NI ORGANISATIONAL CHART



(Current structure as of November 2009)

# WOMEN'S AID HISTORICAL TIMELINE

## 1975:

First Refuge in Northern Ireland opened in Belfast.

## 1977:

- Women's Aid groups set up in Belfast, Foyle and Coleraine.
- House of Commons Select Committee recommends one refuge unit per 100,000 capita.

## 1976:

Refuge opened in Derry.

## 1978:

- Belfast, Foyle and Coleraine Women's Aid groups formed the Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation.
- Larger refuge opened in Belfast.
- Refuge opened in Portrush.

## 1980:

- Domestic Violence Proceedings (NI) Order Implemented.
- The Order put in place provisions which allowed victims of domestic violence to apply for personal protection orders and exclusion orders.

## 1982:

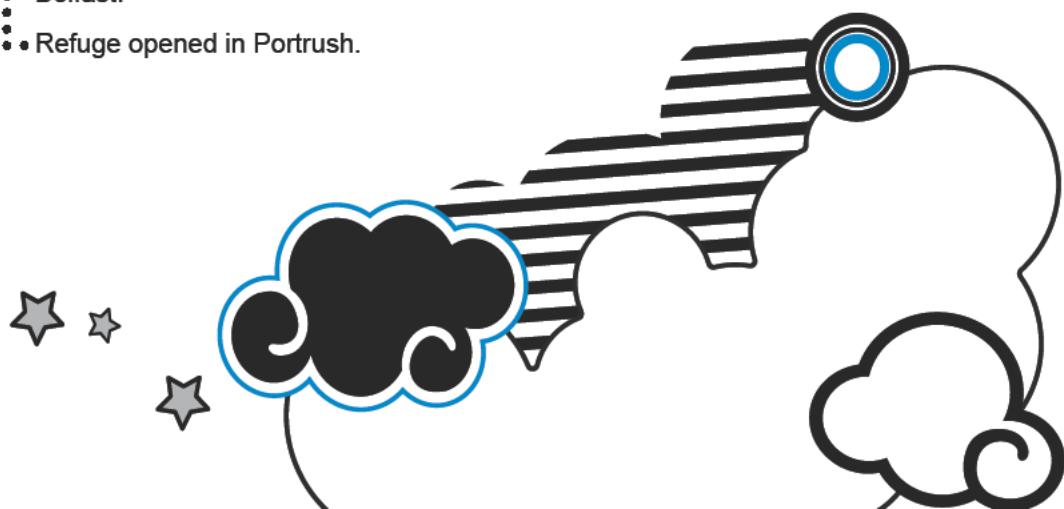
- Omagh Women's Aid & North Down Women's Aid are established.
- Hidden Violence – Battered Women in Northern Ireland, Eileen Eason, Farset Co-op Press, published.

## 1981:

- Derry Women's Advice Centre set up.
- Belfast Women's Aid opens a second refuge in the north of the city.

## 1983:

Newry Women's Aid established.



- **1985:**
  - Omagh Women's Aid moves to Market Street premises.
  - Belfast Women's Aid opens a third refuge.

- **1986:**
  - Newry Women's Aid opens a refuge in the area.
  - P. Montgomery and V. Bell, 'Police Response to Wife Assault', published by Women's Aid Federation NI.

- **1987:**
  - Craigavon Women's Aid established.
  - Omagh Women's Aid opens a refuge.
  - Women's Resource Centre opened in Coleraine.

- **1993:**
  - Cookstown and Dungannon Women's Aid established.
  - "Bringing It Out in the Open," Monica McWilliams and Joan McKiernan; HMSO 1993, published.
  - Women's Aid Federation NI publish "The Foam Sprite," a book of poetry by the survivors of domestic violence in Northern Ireland and those involved with Women's Aid.

- **1992:**
  - Fermanagh Women's Aid established.
  - Belfast Women's Aid open Malone Road Centre.

- **1995:**
  - 24 Hour Women's Aid Regional Telephone Helpline set up by Women's Aid Federation.
  - First group of Helpline Volunteers trained.
  - Ballymena Women's Aid established.
  - Fermanagh Women's Aid opens a refuge in Enniskillen.
  - Tackling Domestic Violence – A Policy for Northern Ireland, is issued by the NIO/DHSSPS.

**During the last 10 years Women's Aid across Northern Ireland gave refuge to 12,579 women and 12,748 children & young people**

# 1975 - 1997

## 1995/96:

North Down & Ards Women's Aid receives funding for a new centre in Bangor.

## 1996:

- Taking Domestic Violence Seriously, Monica McWilliams and Lynda Spence, HMSO 1996 published.
- PBNI introduces programme with perpetrators of domestic violence.
- Inter-Agency groups established in each H&SST area.
- Coleraine Women's Aid opens new purpose built refuge in Coleraine.
- Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid open Resource Centre in Cookstown.



- Regional Forum on Domestic Violence established representing Government departments and statutory and voluntary agencies in Northern Ireland.
- 'Children Under Stress Education and Training Programme' was launched by Women's Aid Federation NI. This was designed to support all those involved in the care and protection of children who may be affected by domestic violence.

## 1997:

- Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid opens new purpose built refuge in Cookstown.
- Women's Aid Cross-border Conference 'Effective Interventions in Domestic Violence' held in Slieve Russell Hotel, Co Cavan organised by Women's Aid Federation NI.

- 'No Fear' – Heading for Healthy Relationships preventative education programme launched by Women's Aid Federation NI.
- The Protection from Harassment (NI) Order. Provides that a person must not pursue a course of conduct which amounts to harassment of another and which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of another.

# WOMEN'S AID HISTORICAL TIMELINE

## • 1998:

- Omagh bomb causes destruction and disruption to Omagh Women's Aid Market Street Centre.
- 'Violence on the Edge' Research and Training pack for working with ethnic minority communities officially launched by Women's Aid Federation NI.
- Paths to Prevention Conference organised by Regional Forum on Domestic Violence.
- Newry Women's Aid open Resource Centre in Newry.

## • 2000:

- Craigavon Women's Aid becomes Craigavon and Banbridge Women's Aid.
- Women's Aid Federation NI launches their website.
- Fermanagh Women's Aid opens Resource Centre in Enniskillen.
- New purpose built refuge opened by Omagh Women's Aid.

## • 2002:

- Ballymena Women's Aid open two resource centres one located in Ballymena and the other in Antrim.
- Lisburn Women's Aid officially incorporated into the structure of Belfast Women's Aid, to become Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid.

## • 1998/99:

- Refuges in Ballymena, Lisburn and Craigavon opened.

## • 1999:

- North Down and Ards Women's Aid opens a Resource Centre in Newtownards.
- Family Homes and Domestic Violence (NI) Order passed and implemented. This Order allows victims of domestic violence to obtain protective orders from the court. The order created Non-Molestation and Occupation Orders.
- "Ending the Pain and Healing the Hurt - A Practical Guide for Faith Communities Responding to Domestic Violence," is published by Regional Forum on Domestic Violence.

## • 2001:

- New purpose built refuge opened by Newry Women's Aid.
- Women's Aid Federation NI launch multi-lingual information leaflets.
- Women's Aid Federation NI release a new training video, "Hurting, Coping, Growing – Children and Domestic Violence."

### **2003:**

- NIHE Supporting People funding arrangements are introduced for refuge accommodation provision.
- Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid opens Adelaide Park Resource, Support and Outreach Centre.

### **2005:**

- Government publishes joint NIO/DHSSPS strategy, "Tackling Violence at Home – A Strategy for Addressing Domestic Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland."
- The Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order. The legislation gives added protection to victims of domestic violence, takes account of human rights issues and increases the criminal penalties for breaching the protective civil orders.

- Coleraine Women's Aid is renamed Causeway Women's Aid.
- Service Level Agreement established with Women's Aid Federation NI to manage the freephone 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline, which is funded by the Domestic & Sexual Violence Unit, DHSS&PS; Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Community Safety Unit, Northern Ireland Office.

### **2002/03:**

- Helping Hands Activity Pack launched by Women's Aid Federation NI.

### **2004:**

- Foyle Women's Aid open Rose House, seven self contained flats for Women and their families.

### **2006:**

- Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid rebuild their South Belfast refuge.
- 'Crossing Borders: preliminary research on human trafficking in Northern Ireland' was launched by Women's Aid Federation NI.

**During the last 14 years Women's Aid Federation managed 212,215 calls to the 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline**

# 1998 - 2009

## • 2007:

'Women with no or limited resource to public funds', A report of findings was launched by Women's Aid Federation NI.

## • 2006/07:

"You and Me Mum" a ten week programme for mothers supporting children and young people who have lived with Domestic Violence, is developed by Women's Aid Federation NI and showcased at the Raising the Standards Conference in Guernsey.

## • 2008:

- Women's Aid Federation receive a Volunteer Development Agency award at Stormont, for creating a 'Garden of Oasis' for Helpline volunteers.
- Women's Aid Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne & Newtownabbey open their newly refurbished resource centre, called the "Naomi Centre".
- Craigavon and Banbridge move to a new Resource Centre.

## • 2009:

- Foyle Women's Aid open their new "Secret Garden," in the grounds of their refuge.
- Pilot project with Women's Aid established to support women victims of sexual exploitation and human trafficking in Northern Ireland.

Reach out. Help is at hand.

**24 Hour  
Domestic Violence Helpline**

**0800 917 1414**

Freephone number. Language line and minicom available.

Open to anyone affected by domestic violence.

Managed by Women's Aid.

women's aid

*Federation Northern Ireland*