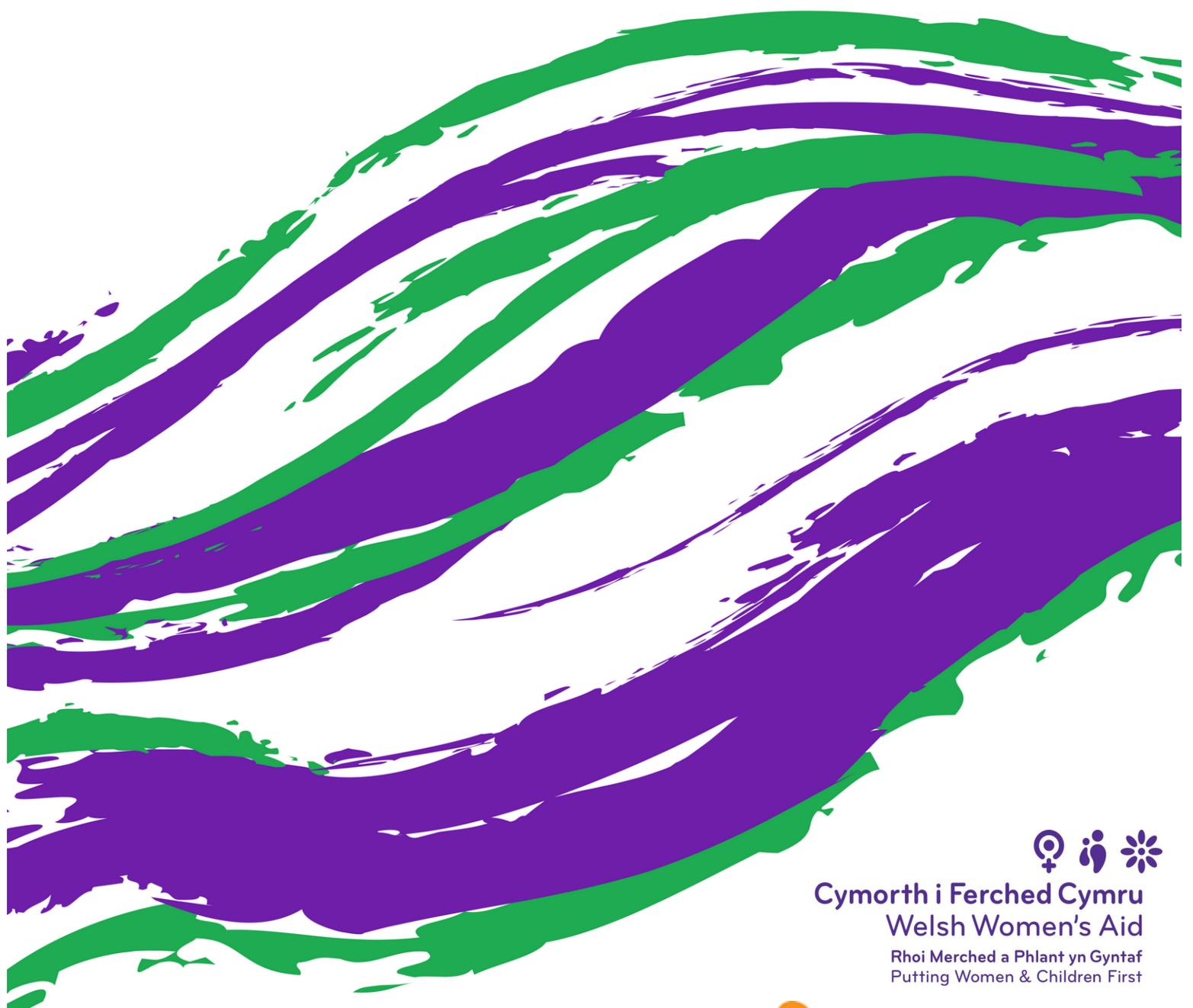


# Welsh Women's Aid Annual Impact Report 2016-2017



Cymorth i Ferched Cymru  
Welsh Women's Aid

Rhoi Merched a Phlant yn Gyntaf  
Putting Women & Children First



Live Fear  
Free Helpline

Llinell Gymorth  
Byw Heb Ofn

Providing confidential support  
and information on domestic  
abuse, sexual violence and  
violence against women in Wales

Darparu gwybodaeth a chefnogaeth  
cynorthwyl ynghyd â'r domestic  
abuse a ffurfi a ffurfi yn erbyn merched  
yn Nghymru

0808 80 10 800

Visit <http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/annual-reports/2016-17/>  
for more information

# Welsh Women's Aid members



## Introduction by Chair and CEO

Our movement in Wales spans four decades of delivering specialist services that provide life-saving and life changing support every day for survivors of abuse. Specialist services stand alongside survivors to meet their needs, advocate for their rights and entitlements, and provide a voice for those who are most marginalised or face multiple disadvantages, so that they can better access services or get help in local communities.

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, sexual violence, prostitution, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, 'honour' based violence, stalking and sexual harassment. Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights and rooted in inequality between women and men which intersects with discrimination based on ethnicity, age, class, sexuality and disability to impact on experiences of abuse and routes to support.

Which is why many services are specifically led by and for women, and by and for Black and 'minority ethnic' women. Being women-led provides space to share experiences and address the unequal distribution of power across political, social and economic spheres, and deliver woman-centred support informed by values of empowerment, rights and self-determination. The importance of services by and for Black and 'minority ethnic' women is equally vital, to offer gender and culturally responsive support, and a space to identify priorities and strengthen and promote the leadership, autonomy and self-determination of BME women.

Our movement is more than a network of service provision in local communities, and survivors of abuse have always been, and remain, central to our work. Many refuges and sexual violence services were founded by inspirational women who were survivors of abuse. It's this strong focus on placing survivors at the heart of all we do which makes the Welsh Women's Aid movement a necessary, energetic and effective force for positive change within Wales.

In 2016/17, we collaborated nationally and locally to achieve a great deal, some of which is set out in this annual review of our work. Those who make the change we deliver possible include our members and survivors who inform and lead the direction of our work, and Welsh Women's Aid is governed by a dedicated team of highly skilled charitable Trustees, led this year by our new Chair of the Board. Our relentless determination to promote the social and cultural change needed to end violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence unites us with our funders, supporters, and the communities we serve.

**Eleri Butler, CEO and**

**Charlie Arthur, Chair of the Board of Trustees**

*If you, like us, are committed to achieving change that lasts for survivors, to create a society which no longer tolerates violence against women and girls, and to achieve a world in which women and girls can reach their full potential, join our movement in Wales.*

Welsh Women's Aid had a very successful year in 2016/17. As the umbrella organisation in Wales representing specialist violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence services, we have successfully extended our influence in Wales, UK and internationally by engaging with local government, Welsh Government, Westminster and European Union to talk about the importance of addressing violence against women and our approach through the Change that Lasts model. This has resulted in changes and introduction (and in some cases) retraction of legislation.

Our standing as a leading light on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence has increased and we have started to further develop and pilot the Change that Lasts model which originally related to domestic abuse only. Future pilots will test wider violence against women issues, perpetrators and children and young people. We secured funding to set up survivor participation groups in South Wales and Gwent to increase engagement between representative survivors and commissioners in Wales.

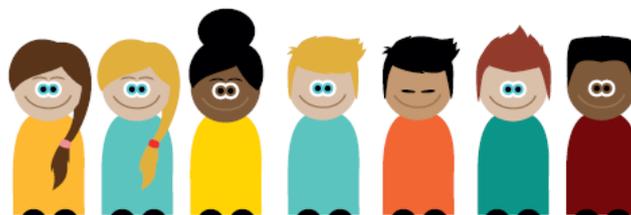
We secured a 2-year funding stream to provide domestic abuse services in Wales with capacity building support to develop their ability to respond to commissioners and demonstrate their impact to funders and the wider public.

We recruited a fundraising manager in 2016 to increase our capacity, and the capacity of our members, to successfully access available funding streams and support the delivery of our objectives.

## Financial review

In 2016/17 the organisation had an in year deficit of £71,532 primarily covered by restricted reserves brought forward from the previous year. As a result, restricted funds decreased by £89,995. As at 31 March 2017 the charity reported retained funds of £1,171,429 represented by £589,495 of unrestricted funds and £581,934 of restricted funds.

The majority of the organisation's income is grant funded. The Welsh Government is the principal funder providing 59% of the charity's income. Wrexham County Borough Council and Conwy Council provide funding for direct services in Wrexham and Colwyn Bay amounting to 16% of the charity's income. The remaining income is from a variety of sources including donations, member subscriptions, foundations and other public sector bodies.



## Prevention

### Media

We have increased our reach and influence using online communication and social media. Welsh Women's Aid's new website was launched at the beginning of February 2017. Since the launch of the updated website, page views have increase by 471% to over 22000 views in the final quarter of the year.

Welsh Women's Aid social media presence has also increased, which has caused a higher footfall on all social media pages (a 19% increase of followers on Twitter and 19% increase of Facebook 'likers').

In 2016/17 we produced 91 traditional media releases through press releases, television and radio interviews and other requests from media outlets.

### Events

This year, Welsh Women's Aid organised numerous events, including the Children Matter Too event and "Still We Rise" for St Dwynwen's Day. Both events were widely attended and received positive feedback.

Danny Evans, the owner of Coast Café provided the venue for free and told us:

*"It's an extremely important cause. We need to focus on the strength of women and this cause needs as much promotion as possible."*

*"It was absolutely outstanding, inspiring, I cried my eyes out, look! No mascara left"*

*Still We Rise attendee*



Illustration created by Phillipa Brown for the event.

## Campaigns

This year Welsh Women's Aid ran a successful campaign, 'Save Refuge Services to Save Lives' regarding the impact of UK government plans to reduce the rate of housing benefit available to those in refuge and other supported housing to local housing allowance rates (see case study below).

Welsh Women's Aid also played a key role in the Istanbul Convention Change campaign which successfully campaigned for The Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Ratification of Convention) Bill. This bill has now become law and will help the sector hold the UK government to account for violence against women services provision in the UK.

### Children Matter

This year, Welsh Women's Aid continued to champion the voices of children and young people by supporting specialist services to deliver the S.T.A.R programme. This year, Welsh Women's Aid held focus groups to conduct quality assurance and evaluate the impact of the S.T.A.R programmes. Children and young people who attended gave positive feedback and described positive impact on their lives, including being more knowledgeable about VAWDASV, feeling more confident in themselves and improving their attitudes towards school.

*'you know what to look out for in the relationship, so you know if this is happening, it's not going to be good'* Focus Group contributor

*'I definitely feel more confident... and less uncomfortable in situations'* Focus Group contributor

- In 2016/17 **4,500** children and young people benefitted from Children Matter S.T.A.R programmes in community settings.
- **350** professionals were trained to deliver S.T.A.R programmes to children

Welsh Women's Aid began working in partnership with the National Union of Students and Welsh university campuses to develop a preventative approach to violence against women in further education establishments, including the Bystander Initiative, to students and staff. Interest in the initiative has been high, and training has begun to challenge abuse in universities and the 'lad culture'.

## National Training Partnership

Considerable work has been conducted this year to improve the profile of Welsh Women's Aid National Training Partnership which is resourced by the Welsh Women's Aid Training team and Welsh Women's Aid members. This has included ensuring that the Welsh Government Ask and Act training contract was developed and piloted and implementing the Welsh Women's Aid training strategy.

We delivered **114 training sessions** to approximately 1,578 professionals and survivors across all areas in Wales. This represents a significant increase in activity compared to 2015/16

(8 training sessions delivered to 114 people).

Feedback from the training delivered is overwhelmingly positive with the results from 336 evaluation forms across all the training delivered showing that:

83%

said that they would be interested in further training

95%

agreed that their levels of skill, confidence and knowledge related to the training delivered had increased

95%

described their experience of the training as "good" or "excellent"



## Provisions, protection and support

### In 2016/17:

- 14,129 women, men, children and young people were provided with refuge and community based advocacy and support by Welsh Women's Aid and its member services
- 249 survivors of domestic abuse could not be accommodated by refuges in Wales because there was no space available in the service contacted when they needed help.

### Influencing the National Agenda

Welsh Women's Aid played an integral role in ensuring the sector influenced the development of the National VAWDASV Strategy 2016-2021. Welsh Women's Aid consulted member organisations to inform a robust written response to the Welsh Government as well as providing evidence to the post legislative review. Our influence ensured that the National Strategy recognised the government's responsibilities under the Istanbul Convention, included survivor recommendations, recognised the Change that Lasts model and prioritised developing a model for sustainable funding for the specialist sector.

In total Welsh Women's Aid produced 19 consultation responses to national issues and 9 policy briefings informed by the views of our members.

### Providing expertise and support

*Commissioners* - Welsh Women's Aid worked with a number of commissioners to provide expertise to inform commissioning of specialist services. Welsh Women's Aid supported the development of local VAWDASV strategies and commissioning frameworks in Powys, Neath and Port Talbot, Cardiff and Gwent. We supported strategic commissioning by researching and providing data for needs assessments, advise on effective service models and approaches and help to develop service specifications and facilitate engagement of the specialist sector and survivors voices.

We worked with specialist services to support the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner to apply for Home Office funding to pilot the Change that Lasts model, widening the scope of the model to include violence against women issues and perpetrators in addition to domestic abuse. This application was successful and is due to commence in 2017/18.

### Specialist services and member support

Under the terms of our membership agreement, members receive regular communication, updates and consultation, access to individual support from the Welsh Women's Aid team, application to the National Quality Service Standards and discounted access to seminars, webinars and training. We also provide bespoke capacity building support to member organisations to enable them to engage with commissioning/funding processes and ensure they are 'commission ready'.

Delivering support for member services is a priority, and in 2016/17, the engagement team carried out in excess of 500 support visits and contacts to specialist services through the year. This included by 24 electronic member update bulletins being circulated, to provide fortnightly policy, practice, research and events updates relating to domestic abuse, sexual violence and violence against women in addition to themed updates related to emerging issues and 13 regional workshops.

## National data gathering and reporting

This year WWA engaged with members to update and improve the data collection method for gathering information on demand for services in Wales. The methodology, return and timeliness of data submissions has improved, so that Welsh statistics are more reliable and robust.

Data gathered by specialist services in Wales is collated and analysed to inform Welsh Government to assist with the development of national strategy and national outcome measures. The information was also used to inform regional plans, needs assessments, national and international campaigns and research.

Support was provided for members with specific data analysis requests to enable their funding applications to be more robust and to improve reports to funders on outcomes and impact of the services they provide.

## National Quality Service Standards

The NQSS form a set of accredited criteria against which dedicated specialist domestic abuse services can evidence their quality of provision. The NQSS support the aims of the Violence against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 in its duty to ensure services commissioned by the public sector in Wales are of a high quality. The principles underpinning the NQSS reflect the contribution of survivors to the development of gender responsive, needs led, specialist services.

## Capacity Building support for specialist Services

Enhanced consultancy support was provided for specialist domestic abuse services across all areas of Wales to access a range of bespoke and partnership support to help them engage in commissioning processes, maximise funding opportunities, improve strategic planning and develop partnership working arrangements. Following an initial phase of capacity building support further funding was secured in 2016/17 for a 2 year programme of bespoke support to coincide with the implementation of regional commissioning.



## Welsh Women's Aid Direct Services

### Colwyn Bay and Wrexham

During 2016/17, 837 adult survivors were supported directly and indirectly through our services in Wrexham and Colwyn Bay. Of these, 704 survivors were supported through refuges, community support, one stop shop, IDVA service and several programmes. Additionally, 133 survivors were supported indirectly while helping them to reach the right service e.g. access to refuges in other areas.

**105** children were supported in Colwyn Bay through specialist support programmes.

**121** survivors (54 women and 67 children) were accommodated in refuges.

This year, both services achieved the NQSS, demonstrating high quality service and commitment to survivors.

In Colwyn Bay, **100%** of the survivors who accessed refuge said they felt safe.

In Wrexham, **100%** of survivors who were supported through drop in/community services reported having improved feelings of safety and confidence.

### Live Fear Free Helpline (funded by Welsh Government)

The LFF Helpline managed 30,036 contacts through phone, email and webchat during this period. We introduced a new service of accessibility for the helpline, the webchat service. Since August 2016, we have received 151 webchat contacts.

The LFF Helpline launched its new services in November 2016 at the Millennium Centre in Cardiff, which gave survivors the opportunity to speak about their experiences and the impact of the service on their lives, in which a survivor said that contacting the LFF Helpline when she needed specialist information and support was a 'life line'. A variety of speakers and visitors attended the event including the Cabinet Secretary.

The numbers achieved this year at the LFF Helpline represent a 7% increase in telephone contact and a 62% increase in contacts via a combination of emails and webchat from 2015/16.

The LFF Helpline won an award from The Helpline Partnership on 'Helpline Impact' in November 2016. This award recognised the contribution that was made to the helpline sector over the longer term and being an example of good practice to others.

The LFF Helpline received 100% positive feedback from all of our agency feedback forms that were evaluated by professionals during this period (216 forms in total).

During 2016/17, a sample of 2,831 outcomes forms were completed of which 92 % of survivors had increased their confidence and had been provided with several empowering options after speaking to a helpline support worker.

## Partnership Working

### Survivor Participation

This year, survivors have been increasingly placed at the centre of Welsh Women's Aid processes and policies. Survivors now sit on recruitment panels for our direct services and speak at events organised both by Welsh Women's Aid and external agencies. This year, survivors accessing the Friendship Forum in Wrexham produced their own book of poetry in association with the Welsh Poet Laureate.

The Survivors Empowering and Educating Services (SEEdS) project is piloting a model of participation which provides female victims of violence and abuse in Cardiff and the Vale and Gwent opportunities to acquire accredited training and skills to enable them to deliver a Survivor Participation Project.

The project is harnessing survivors existing skills, knowledge and local experience to enable them to participate in a variety of roles with the ultimate aim of empowering and educating services to improve their responses to violence and abuse. 12 participants were recruited and trained and have engaged widely with commissioners, service providers, policy-makers and survivors to influence improvements in accessibility, availability and effectiveness of services.

### Multi-Agency Working

This year, Welsh Women's Aid worked in partnership with many different organisations, including sister federations across the UK. Working with Women's Aid Federation England, we were able to pilot the "Ask Me" project in Wales, recruiting and training local ambassadors in Powys to raise awareness of domestic abuse and access to local specialist services and the Live Fear Free Helpline in their community.

After being heavily involved with the creation and scrutiny of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act), we continued to scrutinise the secondary legislation and guidance to be issued, including significant contribution to the Welsh Government VAWDASV Strategic Delivery Plan.

Several contributions were made to national consultation responses including guidance on the commissioning of services; guidance on multi-agency collaboration; guidance on working with perpetrators; Ask and Act and the National Training Framework guidance; and Information and Guidance on domestic abuse and sexual violence: Safeguarding older people in Wales.

In Wales, evidence from specialist services was also provided to inform: the Renting Homes Bill, the refreshed Equality Objectives, the Transgender Action Plan, the guidance on raising the ambitions and educational attainment of children who are looked after in Wales, the green paper "Our Health – Our Health Service", statutory guidance and indicators for the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Delivery Plan, guidance on Managing The Night-Time Economy, the 2015-17 Welsh Government Budget, the Wales Audit Office review of council funding of third sector services, and the Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan: 2016-19.

At a UK level, evidence from specialist services was provided to inform: the Westminster All Party Parliamentary Group on Domestic Violence Hearing on Family Courts, the Home Affairs Select Committee Prostitution Inquiry, and the Home Office consultation on introducing a Stalking Protection Order. We continue to raise issues such as the impact of cuts to Legal Aid, and the impact of welfare reform on survivors and specialist services.

With thanks to our funders:



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