



Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid

Still We Rise

Delivering change that lasts
to end violence against
women, domestic abuse
& sexual violence in Wales.

5 Year Strategy
2019 to 2024



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Still We Rise: Introducing our strategy

Violence against women and girls is not inevitable. It is entirely preventable with the necessary public and political will and resources allocated to achieve this goal. That we haven't yet made sufficient inroads into its reduction and prevention tells us something of the status of women and girls in our society.

As a movement, in recent years, we have successfully placed violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence more firmly on the political and public agenda, through laws, strategy and policy. Wales now has ground-breaking legislation which requires, amongst other statutory duties, that devolved public services have regard to preventing violence against women in all that they do.

But we still have a long way to go before agencies consistently and effectively implement laws, policies and international conventions, to benefit all survivors of abuse.

Too many survivors are on waiting lists to access specialist support.

Resources for specialist services are insecure and reducing, and there is a lack of investment into dedicated specialist support for children. Systems and services are particularly failing women from minoritised communities, with many still facing the stark choice of staying with their abuser or facing destitution. Sexual harassment is widespread in workplaces and in public spaces. Too little attention is being given to stopping perpetrators' behaviour. Even in 'high-risk' intervention programmes, services are failing to engage violent men because they're considered intractable or too dangerous.

Our strategy is a call to action

We celebrated many achievements, in 2018, which commemorated our 40th year, but we also refocussed on still rising to the challenge of ending violence and abuse in our lifetime.

Only by delivering lasting change in our communities can we make sure we aren't here in another 40 years – not through lack of resources but because we have stopped violence against women and girls from happening in the first place.

This Strategic Plan 2019-2024 sets out our ambitious vision for the future, as a national federation. It has been developed through a participatory process, building on findings from an independent review and engagement with members, policy makers, third sector services, survivors, and funders in Wales. Trustees and staff have also been involved throughout.

It is informed by our 'theory of change', our understanding of what the problem is and how we believe change happens. The Strategy outlines the positive change we want to create, and our priorities for action, and provides a blueprint for delivering change that lasts, to end violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales.



*Eleri Butler, CEO
Welsh Women's Aid*



*Paula Walters, Chair
of Board of Trustees*

Eleri Butler, CEO Welsh Women's Aid

Paula Walters, Chair of Board of Trustees

The problem

Violence against women and girls is experienced at epidemic levels globally and nationally. It has devastating effects on women and their children, on families and communities. It is a problem of pandemic proportions: more women suffer rape or attempted rape than have a stroke each year, and the level of domestic abuse in the population exceeds that of diabetes by many times. It occurs in Wales and worldwide, cutting across all generations, nationalities, communities and spheres of our societies. Yet many people lack a shared understanding of its scope and impact, and of solutions to prevent its recurrence.

Violence against women is a “violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women, and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” This includes rape, domestic violence, forced marriage and so-called ‘honour’ crimes, female genital mutilation, stalking, trafficking and sexual exploitation.

The Istanbul Convention defines **domestic violence** as “all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former and current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim”.

Sexual violence includes any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted and takes place without consent or understanding. This includes rape and sexual assault, sexual violence

and abuse, sexual harassment, child sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation, including associated with trafficking and the sex industry. The sex industry includes prostitution, pornography and other commercial sex-based activities such as lap-dancing, often but not solely associated with the ‘night time economy’. Trafficking into and within the UK is internationally recognised as linked to prostitution; facilitating movement for prostitution within and across borders constitutes trafficking.

1 in 3 women experience some form of violence and abuse in their lifetime, particularly intimate partner violence and sexual violence.

1 in 3 women experience some form of violence and abuse in their lifetime¹, particularly intimate partner violence and sexual violence. Yet there is a significant gap nationally in the collation of data on the prevalence of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales, and the extent to which survivors and perpetrators use public services.



In 2017-18 in England and Wales, an estimated 2 million adults experienced domestic abuse; 1.3 million were women.² In 2017-18, there were 140 rape prosecutions in Wales, with a conviction rate of 60.9%; there were 563 convictions for serious sexual assault.³ The recorded number of domestic abuse incidents stood at 36,529 by the Police in Wales during 2017-18.⁴

Welsh Women's Aid members' data returns⁵ indicate that 12,166 survivors were supported by specialist services last year; 431 survivors referred to refuges were unable to be supported due to resources and capacity; 292 (26% of referrals) survivors of sexual violence

were on waiting lists for support. The Live Fear Free Helpline responded to 33,642 contacts for support, 11% more than 2016/17. Women in Wales also report high levels of sexual harassment in the workplace and girls regularly face sexist bullying in schools across Wales.

We know domestic abuse, forced marriage, rape and sexual violence, 'honour-based' violence, harassment and exploitation are committed disproportionately against women and girls, and that perpetrators are usually, but not always, men. We also know women's inequality, as a result of their class, sexuality, ethnicity, ability, mental health or age, makes

them more likely to be abused and face additional barriers in accessing justice and support.

Violence against women and girls is legitimised and condoned by inequality between women and men and by attitudes towards women and girls, which prevents individuals, public agencies and others from responding adequately, listening to survivors or stopping perpetrators' behaviour. It remains hidden in plain sight because of tactics like euphemizing and not naming male violence against women, victim-blaming, hiding continuity and connections between abusive behaviours, and denial of violence and its consequences.

Decades of experience and evidence has taught us that services and partnerships struggle to support survivors who experience multiple disadvantage; that a focus on 'high-risk' and solely on domestic abuse means multiple needs are often ignored and services are delivered in silos; and a lack of gender-responsive services leads to unhelpful and unsafe practice.

This has a huge human, social and economic cost for every aspect of life and every public service: domestic abuse alone costs the state £66 billion a year in England and Wales. At the same time there remains significant under-investment into third sector specialist services.

We want an end to survivors of abuse not being believed or taken seriously. We want an end to abusers going unchallenged and unpunished. We want an end to women and girls living with the everyday violence and abuse that sustains and reproduces inequalities.

We cannot claim to be compliant with conventions and laws when services and systems still fail the most discriminated against and marginalised women impacted by abuse. We cannot claim to be a country committed to gender equality when levels of violence against women and girls are at epidemic levels in our communities.

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¹ <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>

³ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/publications/cps-vawg-report-2018.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/appendixtablesfocusonviolentcrimeandsexualoffences>

⁵ Welsh Women's Aid (2018) Annual Report: Data from specialist services in Wales, 2017/18



We expect Welsh Women's Aid to be representing us, involved in national strategy, lobbying and campaigning, assisting us to be doing what we need to be doing locally."

- Local Specialist Service

Our vision and purpose

We want a world in which women and children live free from domestic abuse, sexual violence and all forms of violence against women, and by doing so achieve independence, freedom and liberation from oppression.

Welsh Women's Aid is the national umbrella body in Wales working to end violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

For over four decades we've **provided support, leadership and representation for the national network of specialist services** in Wales. Providing a voice for specialist services and the survivors and families they work with helps us advocate to inform and transform laws, policy and practice to benefit survivors of abuse.

As the membership body for specialist services we are committed to ensuring they are equipped to meet growing demand for support in Wales whilst we also focus on preventing abuse from happening in the first place. We aim to support services to maximise their capacity to do what

they do best: deliver lifesaving, life-changing and preventative support for survivors and their families impacted by abuse in our communities.

Ending violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is everyone's business. So, we also **collaborate, inform, support and influence in communities and across governments and other organisations**. We want to hear more survivors tell us that services listen, believe and don't judge, build on their strengths and meet their needs. We want more services and systems to focus on prevention and challenge perpetrators whilst stopping their abuse. We want to see more accountability to survivors, and more knowledgeable communities, confident to respond to abuse and to help dismantle the social and cultural

norms, practices and inequalities that underpin it.

Violence against women and girls is a major obstacle to the fulfilment of women's and girls' human rights and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This Strategy targets our **work at individual, family, community and society levels**, because this is the best way to achieving our vision to end to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, for good. Everyone in Wales has the right to live free from fear and abuse. We also want to ensure women and girls in Wales achieve independence, freedom and liberation from discrimination, disadvantage and oppression, so they can flourish to fully participate in society.

Our values and approach

Welsh Women's Aid is a feminist organisation, and our values are founded on commitments to human rights, anti-discrimination and freedom from oppression. We endorse global evidence that violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is gendered, a cause and consequence of the unequal position of women and girls in society, a violation of human rights, and is entirely preventable.

“The shared values and analysis of violence against women, and being a member of a national organisation that has the same analysis of the issues, is of the greatest value to us.”

- Local Specialist Service

Our approach is founded on the following value-base:

We are feminist and value diversity of lived experiences

We amplify diverse voices, recognising that identities and life experience impact on experiences of abuse and access to support, safety and justice. We advocate ending violence against women and girls alongside the liberation of all women and girls from multiple oppressions like sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, ageism, ableism, transphobia, to attain social justice for all.

We promote integrity

We are accountable, and place survivors' voices and their lived experiences central to our work. We encourage respect, transparency and learning from experience, we challenge misuse of power and promote social responsibility in all we do.

We collaborate

We work with survivors, specialist services, other organisations, individuals and communities, to capacity-build services and to evidence and deliver what works in preventing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We empower

We advocate a rights-based approach so that all women and children can achieve their full potential, and we promote services led by and for women/minoritised groups as being vital to meeting needs and to achieving social, economic and political liberation from patriarchy, racism, and other oppressions.

We transform

We are committed to challenging inequalities and discrimination, to combining high-quality services with activism for social change, and building a movement that ends violence against women and girls and liberates women and girls from multiple and intersecting oppressions to benefit everyone.



The feminist perspective is critical to the long term vision to eradicate violence against women, nothing we do is outside that lens, and I want my national organisation to be as vocal and as steadfast in that, and we mustn't lose that."

- Local Specialist Service

Our values and approach underpin our work nationally and that of our members.

Placing these values central to our approach means we embed them into our recruitment processes, into how we work and how we collaborate with others. It means being uncompromising when faced with challenging misuse of power or oppressive practices, it means sharing expertise, accepting that we may not always get it right, but being committed to learning and moving forward for the benefit of all survivors of abuse.

Our approach is informed by evidence that women and girls, and men and boys, experience and perpetrate violence and abuse differently. The sex and gender of victim and perpetrator influences the nature of the abuse, its severity, harm, and lethality. Women and girls, in particular, experience abuse and regulation in everyday lives at higher rates, and it is men across all groups that are more likely to perpetrate abuse against women, men and children.



Violence happens in same-sex relationships and against trans people, and women also use violence. So, we are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and to achieving safety, support, protection and justice for all women and girls, men and boys, and for trans people. Our transgender policy commits to supporting the realisation of rights for trans people, and the delivery of trans inclusive services and support.

We support evidence of the importance of single-sex spaces and services that benefit women (endorsed by exemptions under the Equality Act 2010), and the need for services designed, delivered and led 'by and for' women, Black and minoritised women and other groups. Evidence shows 'by and for' services best meet support needs and also contribute to social, economic and political liberation from patriarchy, racism, and other oppressions.

These values and approach do not preclude organisations in

our federation employing men, supporting men and boys, or working with perpetrators. Providing needed services that are sensitive to sex, gender, ethnicity, culture, sexuality, age and ability is a vital component of specialist services, of effectively supporting survivors and intervening with perpetrators.

We understand the crucial importance of focussing on violence against women and girls as distinct and connected forms of abuse. Gendered norms and stereotypes, that are often the basis of violence against women and girls, reinforce and intersect with sexism, racism, homophobia and other discrimination, which harm us all, oppress women and girls as a group, and are a barrier to achieving equality. We are committed to challenging, disrupting and changing social and cultural norms and dismantling patriarchy and intersecting systems and structures that perpetuate abuse, harms and inequalities.

Some recent successes

As a national federation and movement spanning over four decades, we have much to be proud of, and our achievements and history has been collated to form a national exhibition and publicly available archive in Wales.⁶ More recently, under a new leadership at Welsh Women's Aid, we have achieved and, in many cases, exceeded what we set out to do in this previous three-year period.

We influenced and informed the development and enactment of the ground-breaking Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015, which introduced a statutory duty for devolved public services to prevent violence against women.

We also delivered a distinct programme for building sector capacity and skills, and established a National Quality Service Standards framework for domestic abuse services in Wales that aligns with sector standards for sexual violence and BME specialist services.

We developed and delivered a national Training Service Partnership with members and secured the 'train the trainer' programme for "Ask and Act" delivery in Wales. We grew our training partnerships, and supported development and the delivery of coercive controlling behaviour,

stalking and harassment training for criminal justice professionals in Wales. More recently, we acquired the College of Policing licence to deliver their 'Domestic Abuse Matters' programme for police forces across Wales and to support its roll-out in England.

We campaigned on a variety of issues, including the impact of funding cuts through our "State of the Sector" reports and the need for secure, sustainable funding for specialist services. This secured a National Strategy commitment, we led on the creation of a Commissioning Toolkit for violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales, and we now have statutory guidance from Welsh Government to reinforce this.

We contributed to an Expert Group and successfully campaigned for the mandatory inclusion of Sexualities &

Relationships Education in the new Welsh curriculum. We also produced a national Guide (published by Welsh Government) on delivering Whole Education Approaches to preventing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. This is supported by our complementary resources for teachers in schools to deliver relevant education, and we collaborated to produce AGENDA/ Primary AGENDA resources on gender equality, led by young people in local communities.

We secured commitment in the National Strategy to create a national survivor engagement framework for Wales and have placed the voices and experiences of survivors central to our policy and strategic advocacy work. Survivors work within in our movement and get involved in our delivery - through focus groups and other means - and inform our campaigns.

“

I was trapped, I couldn't learn English, or learn any skills, I don't have childcare.”

- Survivor, Focus Group

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⁶ https://www.peoplescollection.wales/discover/content_type/item/query/+forty+years%2Cforty+voices

We also piloted a ground-breaking project to train and support survivors to empower and educate services to improve their responses (SEEdS). Women in SEEdS groups now advise government, commissioners, services on training, communication campaigns and improving practice.

Our movement in Wales continues to grow. We recently welcomed new member services into our federation who share our vision, values-base and approach. We have also established a wider supporter base, through our Times Up campaign to challenge and end sexual harassment and abuse in Wales as part of a UK and global movement for change.

Most significantly, we created the foundation for a blueprint for preventing male violence against women and girls which will help shape our interventions and activities in future: Change that Lasts. This was informed by research into why current systems and interventions so strongly advocated by some agencies, governments and funders were having little long term impact.

Encouraged by the evidence for this new approach, we developed new partnerships with several leading organisations in the field, and we shared our learning across Europe and the UK. We have secured resources to help members pilot our blueprint for change, and we are committed to supporting our members to continue to build responses around survivors' needs

and the strengths and resources available to them.⁷

Our achievements⁸ would not have been possible without parallel investment into our infrastructure, to ensure we have skilled and experienced teams and attracted a more diversely skilled Board of Trustees. This led to a strengthened governance framework and processes in accordance with the new Charity

Code of Governance, and we are proud of having achieved several quality marks including the "Trusted Charity" award and Telephone Helpline Standard for delivery of the national helpline in Wales. We are grateful for the continued support for our work, by Welsh Government, individual donors and other funders, and for the funds that we generate from our activities and services.



The family court system can continue abusing you after you've left your ex, the system abuses you all over again."

-Survivor, Focus Group

Change that Lasts is a whole system approach to preventing violence against women and girls. The aim is to shift from a sole focus on risk to start with the strengths and needs of women and children, to facilitate the shortest or most effective route to meeting needs, to independence and to freedom from abuse.

Change that Lasts shifts focus too, onto those perpetrating or colluding with male violence against women. Barriers to accessing rights and entitlements are removed or reduced, agencies and employer responses are improved, and communities are supported to understand the active role they can play in preventing abuse.



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⁷ Our partnership involves Women's Aid England, Respect, Scottish Women's Aid and Northern Ireland Women's Aid

⁸ For full details of our achievements, get in touch, or refer to our Annual Reports at www.welshwomensaid.org.uk

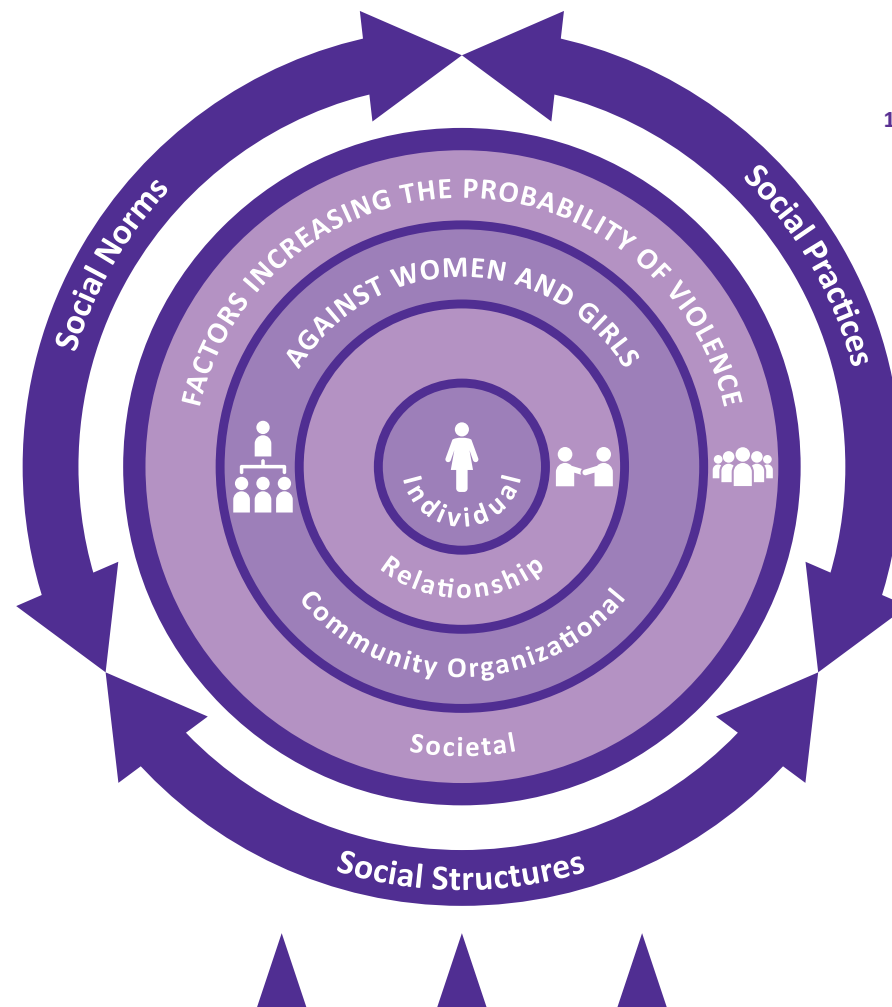
Our strategy to achieve our vision: Blueprint for change



Institutional advocacy and challenging politicians will contribute to the social change we need to eradicate violence against women.”

- Local Specialist Service

Welsh Women’s Aid aims to target our work at **individual, family, community** and **societal** levels. We know from global evidence that this approach⁹ is the best way to ensure strategies, plans and interventions address root causes, and all conditions which affect survivors’ experiences and the likelihood of perpetrators’ choice to use violence and abuse.



Root causes:

Inequality and discrimination shaped by: (1) economic, political and social factors, systems and norms, policy and legal frameworks (2) historical factors (e.g. cultural practices, colonization) and (3) structural distinctions on the basis of sex, age, class, income, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, sexuality and other characteristics.

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⁹ This model draws upon and adapts the interactive model ‘Factors at play in the perpetration of violence against women, violence against children and sexual orientation violence’, developed by Hagemann-White et al in for the European Commission. This is based on an extensive rapid research review of the current evidence on the factors contributing to violence and abuse, and is intended to inform the development of prevention work within the EU. It builds on the widely used World Health Organisation ‘ecological model’ for prevention.

¹⁰ This image is from the UN Framework to Underpin Action to prevent Violence Against Women.
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/prevention>

We know that individual behaviours, attitudes and beliefs are shaped by people's immediate environments as well as by influences at societal levels. At the same time, structures and cultures are influenced by individual

attitudes and behaviours. So it is vital that activities are supported and reinforced at a societal level, such as delivery of laws and policies that promote human rights and address violence and abuse.

To achieve any lasting change, it is therefore vital that different sectors, at different levels, are engaged to effectively prevent violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Supporting services to support individuals and families

Informed by evidence of what works, we advocate a gender-responsive and trauma informed response, which is strengths-based, needs-led and enables survivors (women, men, girls and boys) to achieve independence and freedom and perpetrators to stop their abuse.

This means, responding to the whole person and how their life experiences, identities, strengths and barriers they might face, informs how services are delivered. This requires an understanding of and response to how abuse is perpetrated and its impacts experienced within families, in peer groups or amongst friends or colleagues, and in communities.

We recognise the value and importance placed by women on being able to access services led by and for women and by and for Black and 'minority ethnic' women, and of the value of gender and culturally

responsive support, as a space to identify priorities and strengthen, model and promote leadership, autonomy and self-determination. 'By and for' services are lawful, much needed and wanted, effective in terms of value for money and social impact, and also recognised internationally as a key mechanism to achieve equality.

We also support and endorse the need to intervene early with perpetrators, to manage and reduce the risk they pose and to change their behaviour. Perpetrators' sense of entitlement is often supported by

sexist, racist, disablist, homophobic and other discriminatory attitudes, behaviours and systems that maintain and reproduce inequality. So prevention work also necessitates disrupting the systems and structures which condone or perpetuate abusers' behaviour.

This is everyone's Business. All professionals need to be equipped to better identify, respond to and prevent abuse, just as all communities need to be equipped to deliver early action and contribute towards its prevention.

“

While the legislation and strategy are strong, there is still not enough buy-in across Wales from local authorities and the powers that be.”

- External Stakeholder

“

The system is designed for women to fail. From assessment to appointment for drug use support can take 4 months or longer.”

- Survivor, Focus Group

“

The women in this service saved my life. They made me feel less isolated and helped me find myself again.”

- Survivor, Focus Group



“

Most of us have experienced child sexual abuse. Children need support at the time, what is there when it happens to us first time round?”

-Survivor, Focus Group

Communities and society

Strong legislation and state responses are vital, to afford women and girls equal access to justice, support and protection and to focus on prevention as being paramount.

We aim to promote the need for all agencies in Wales to enact their statutory duty to drive prevention of violence against women and girls, as set out in the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. Our work will be informed by the need for systems and structural change, and our continued demand that the requirements set out in international Conventions and national legislation to end violence against women are met.

State, policy and legislative powers, on their own, are not enough.

Communities need to better understand, identify and provide helpful responses and not collude with or condone the behaviour of abusers. This is critical since much support to survivors and challenges to perpetrators happens informally, not from services.

Communities might include physical locations, online spaces or communities linked by shared identities. In all, people should feel confident to identify and respond effectively, to not be a bystander, and to challenge and disrupt the attitudes

and norms that underpin violence and abuse.

We do not endorse framing some forms of violence as a custom, tradition, or ‘cultural’, which implies violence against women and girls is accepted practice within certain communities. All forms of violence against women and girls - including so-called ‘honour-based’ violence’, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, trafficking and exploitation – is a cause and consequence of the unequal position of women and

girls in society, and a violation of human rights. This perspective must be central to our community interventions.

To achieve the priorities identified in this Strategy, we will concentrate on three overarching areas of work. These will also help us achieve our vision and our charitable purpose, and make sure that we devote our resources to really making a difference in these areas over the coming years.

“

As a national federation, our members, survivors, policy makers, funders and other stakeholders have told us what they think our strengths are, and what really needs to change in Wales. This Strategy is informed by their feedback, our evidence of the state of the sector in Wales, and how agencies and systems currently identify and respond to abuse in Wales.”

-Eleri Butler, CEO Welsh Women’s Aid

Our mission: Strategic goals

To achieve our vision, we will focus on:

“It wasn’t until I spoke with women’s services that I understood what rights I had, it’s so important for everyone to know.”

-Survivor, Focus Group

Central to all our work are the voices and experiences of survivors of abuse, those who live daily surviving abuse or with the legacy of its impact, who work within our movement, use services or do not, who become community activists or work within other agencies.

1

Preventing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence from happening in the first place.

We are committed to primary prevention, which involves education to change attitudes and perceptions, to prevent abuse from happening in the first place. It can be targeted universally or at specific groups, such as children or members of a particular community. Prevention work requires a commitment to challenging and changing the social and cultural norms, systems and structures that perpetuate abuse, harms and inequalities. Prevention work also needs to address the fact that violence against women and girls is structural and one of the social mechanisms that forces the subordination of women and girls in society. For this reason, working to further women’s and girls’ liberation, to challenge and dismantle gendered social norms and expectations, and to dismantle patriarchy and other systems of oppression is a key means of achieving its prevention.

2

Ensuring provision of quality services for survivors that build on strengths, meet needs and reduce the harmful effects of abuse over time.

We are committed to providing excellent member services and support which helps specialist services deliver quality provision, as centres of excellence in their communities. Effective provision is dependent on identifying as early as possible those who are likely to experience abuse, and to provide high quality resources and support to prevent further abuse and reduce its impact (“secondary prevention”). Effective provision is also dependent on providing longer term support and advocacy to reduce the trauma and harm caused by more prolonged exposure to violence and abuse, which is often cumulative for women and girls (“tertiary prevention”).

3

Creating effective partnerships with survivors, specialist services and others to strengthen our movement to achieve change that lasts.

We are committed to amplifying the diverse experiences of survivors and to developing and collaborating in partnership in a way that upholds our values and demonstrates mutual respect, transparency, honesty and integrity, which underpins all our work. By focussing on collaboration to improve responses for those who experience multiple discrimination – Black and minoritised women, lesbians, disabled women, migrant women, young people, older women, trans women - we aim to improve access to support and justice for all survivors of abuse.

Our priorities 2019-2024

1

Preventing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence from happening in the first place.

What you'll see:

Violence against women, domestic abuse & sexual violence is better understood, challenged and prevented.

To achieve this we will:

- Raise awareness of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence as prevalent, preventable, serious, unacceptable, and a human rights violation.
- Challenge harmful gendered social and cultural norms, roles and attitudes and promote respectful, safe, equal relationships.
- Collaborate to improve knowledge and change attitudes in communities, raise awareness of the help available, and promote understanding of how we can achieve prevention within a social justice and rights-based framework.
- Continue to work with specialist services to challenge sexual harassment and abuse, and provide leadership on the 'times up' movement in Wales.
- Collaborate to improve and promote more responsible media reporting.
- Continue to strengthen our movement, and promote the valuable role services play to achieve prevention in communities across Wales.

What you'll see:

Women and children have healthy, safe and equal relationships.

To achieve this we will:

- Support specialist services to continue delivering prevention education, and promote responses and resources to prevent abuse as part of the new curriculum and in communities.
- Support services to empower and build the resources and skills of survivors and deliver effective interventions with perpetrators.
- Collaborate to prevent and mitigate the impact of adverse experiences in childhood, ensuring that systems change is accompanied by children's rights to dedicated support.
- Improve access to timely, effective and specialist support for children and young people in communities, for those impacted by abuse and/or developing harmful behaviours.
- Support services to promote the economic empowerment of women and girls and to address intersecting inequalities they experience.

“

The worse thing was my children didn't have the option of speaking to someone at school, we need to listen to the children.”

- Survivor, Focus Group

“

All agencies see is immigration status, they do not see us as human beings. If they'd helped, I could have got away sooner, I wouldn't have stayed so long with the abuse.”

- Survivor, Focus Group



One of the least stigmatising services is the refuge and services for women, going there was the best thing I've ever done, it saved my life."

-Survivor, Focus Group



It doesn't help when you can't get legal support and your ex is cross examining you in court."

-Survivor, Focus Group

2

Ensuring provision of quality services for survivors that build on strengths, meet needs and reduce the harmful effects of abuse over time.

What you'll see:

Specialist services are strengthened and supported to effectively meet diverse needs and reduce harmful effects of violence.

To achieve this we will:

- Deliver excellent bespoke support for members to strengthen and build capacity and governance, enabling services to continue delivering high quality support, be commission-ready, and achieve relevant standards.
- Campaign and support improvements in commissioning to ensure specialist services nationally and locally are sustainably and securely funded, and have capacity to meet needs and address multiple disadvantages.
- Deliver more targeted communications and utilise technologies to support services engage with regional and national events, improve national data collection mechanisms and evidence impact.
- Continue delivering relevant training programmes, improve access to national accredited qualifications, and provide practical support in delivering what works
- Support services to establish partnerships or consortiums to maximise their reach.
- Continue accreditation systems for domestic abuse member services (National Quality Service Standards) and promote other Wales sector standards, recognising there is no benefit for services and survivors in a 'one size fits all' approach.
- Deliver a strong governance, human resources, business and engagement support infrastructure to ensure we deliver on our charitable objects nationally in accordance with our values.

What you'll see:

Survivors access early support which builds on their strengths, meets needs and improves their health and well-being.

To achieve this we will:

- Continue delivering the National Helpline and ensuring Routes to Support is available for all relevant providers in Wales.
- Collaborate to improve evidence-based practice and learning in Wales and promote promoting effective evaluated practice to support survivors and challenge and change perpetrator behaviour.
- Support services to meet needs of survivors facing multiple abuse and disadvantage so that more survivors can access support where and when they need it.
- Coordinate national training services with members to improve access to high-quality training regionally and locally, in line with the National Training Framework.

3

Creating effective partnerships with survivors, specialist services & others to strengthen our movement to achieve change that lasts.

What you'll see:

The state, agencies and communities deliver more effective responses to violence against women, domestic abuse & sexual violence.

To achieve this we will:

- Advocate to ensure Wales Strategy, legislation and Istanbul Convention duties and requirements are delivered in Wales.
- Represent specialist services nationally, and continue to coordinate specialist services provider forums regionally, creating space for services to share experiences and collaborate on campaigns.
- Advocate for improvements in law and policy. This includes improving the way children and women are treated in the family justice system and addressing the inherent discrimination in the 'no recourse to public funds' system.
- Support and resource members to deliver "change that lasts" in communities.
- Promote the successes of specialist services and the work of the national federation.

What you'll see:

Governments, agencies and communities are held accountable for delivering action for change by women and children.

To achieve this we will:

- Coordinate and support survivor engagement, ensuring diverse voices are amplified and opportunities to centre the lived experiences of women and girls impacted by abuse and multiple disadvantages are maximised, so that no woman is left behind.
- Collaborate with specialist services to ensure survivor engagement specifically with survivors of sexual violence, forced marriage, so-called 'honour-based' violence.
- Research to identify the issues that matter to women and girls, and continue to advocate for delivery of the recommendations from survivor focus groups.
- Build grassroots support in communities to strengthen our movement for change.



If they listened to us more maybe things could be better for others."

- Survivor, Focus Group

[illegible]

Welsh Women's Aid as a Federation has strong competencies particularly its knowledge, access to resources, lobbying, training and communication skills."

[illegible]

Federation

Autonomous local organisations work under the leadership of a national

We have a strong foundation from which to build, to deliver our goals. We have highly skilled and expert teams and Board of Trustees, a strong governance framework and a leadership and diverse and highly skilled team who have several decades experience rooted in the violence against women and girls movement in the UK.

Our strength is founded on being a federated charity¹¹, which maximises the benefits of localism with national, UK and European scale¹² and a representative voice.

We are independent from local and regional and national member services, and our structure provides the best of 'small and local' with national influence, combining a "bottom-up" approach with a national collaborative structure that all services benefit from.

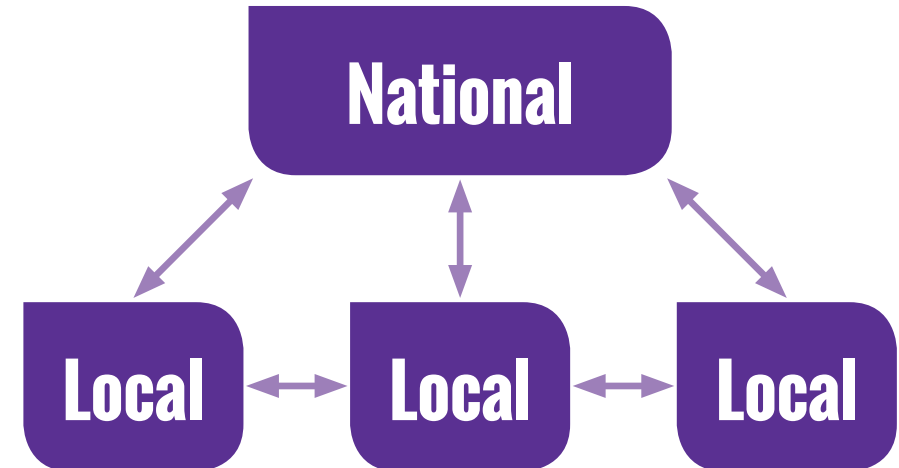
Survivors are central to our network and movement:

survivors founded our services, continue to work in and lead our federation, and survivors' experiences are at the heart of service design, delivery and review.

As the Wales umbrella body, we also collaborate with and support other providers who share our goals. We coordinate Specialist Services Provider Forums to deliver cohesive expertise to improve practice and policy, and support members to collaborate to meet survivors' diverse needs.

Our national federation has a shared vision, value-base

and approach, and investment into a federated structure provides the combined impact of individual charities with the benefit of collective impact, resilience and strength as a movement. Together, we provide a strong, well-developed and cohesive programme of local, regional and national work that benefits survivors and creates a safer, healthier, more equal and violence-free future for everyone.



It's good to contribute to prevention, to changes that are possible, to changes that last."

- Local Specialist Service

NOTES

¹¹ Federated charities are organisations with multiple semi or fully autonomous members linked to a central organisation. Local and national entities are regulated in the same way as any other charitable organisation.

¹² We work with our sister federations in the UK - Scottish Women's Aid, Women's Aid Federation England and Northern Ireland Women's Aid (all independent charities), alongside other sector umbrella bodies, and we contribute to the European WAVE Advisory Board and network that comprises the European Women's Lobby.

Our governance: How we will measure progress

This Strategy provides our top line priorities, our vision for the future and how we aim to achieve this. It sets out the values-base within which we operate, our approach and our blueprint for change.

Our Strategy and delivery align with the Well-being of Future Generations framework in Wales by adopting a long-term approach that focusses on prevention, prioritising collaboration and integration, and centring the involvement of survivors, members, services and stakeholders.

The Strategy is supported by more detailed delivery plans which are reviewed annually, in order to achieve our objectives. By 2024 we will make significant progress towards ensuring:

- Violence against women, domestic abuse & sexual violence is better understood, challenged and prevented.
- Women and children have healthy, safe and equal relationships.
- Specialist services are strengthened & supported to effectively meet diverse needs and reduce harmful effects of violence.
- Survivors access early support which builds on their strengths, meets needs and improves their health & well-being.
- The state, agencies & communities deliver more effective responses to violence against women, domestic abuse & sexual violence.
- Governments, agencies & communities held accountable for delivering action for change by women & children.

As a document, the overall direction will remain as outlined but individual outputs may be revised annually depending on the political climate, campaigning priorities or funding circumstances of our federation over the following years.

Oversight of the Strategy delivery is held by our Board of Trustees, a team of highly skilled company directors who ensure the organisation is legally compliant, financially responsible and drives and monitors delivery against our vision and charitable objects.

To inform our commitment to continuous improvement, all our governance arrangements have been reviewed, strengthened, externally audited and benchmarked against the Charity Code of Governance.

We are committed to collecting and analysing evidence of our impact, to reflect on our progress and inform annual delivery priorities. In addition to the data and feedback from our membership and wider network of specialist services in Wales, we also collect evidence of progress from survivors, from community champions and the friends, colleagues and family of survivors. Data analysis incorporates demographic information and evidence from community needs assessments, services and resources mapping across Wales.

Theory of change: priorities and intended impact to achieve lasting change

Our priorities to achieve this include

1. Raising awareness: prevalent, preventable, serious, unacceptable and a human rights violation.
2. Challenging harmful gendered social/ cultural norms, roles & attitudes, and promoting safe equal relationships.
3. Challenging sexual harassment, encouraging responsible media reporting, and strengthen/promote our movement.
4. Supporting services to deliver prevention education and empower and build skills of individuals and communities.
5. Improving access to support for children and help to address harmful behaviours.
6. Promoting economic empowerment of women and girls.
7. Delivering quality bespoke support for members, and capacity building to maximise delivery/achieve standards.
8. Achieving secure and sustainable funding for specialist services to meet needs & address multiple disadvantage.
9. Improving communications and technology, data collection and impact measurement mechanisms.
10. Researching and promoting effective evaluated practice to support survivors & on work with perpetrators.
11. Delivering /coordinating national training & qualifications.
12. Providing National Helpline for survivors/families/services.
13. Improving evidence-base, research and learning in Wales.
14. Delivering strong & sustainable governance and delivery infrastructure to achieve our objects within our values.
15. Advocating to ensure Wales Strategy, legislation and international Convention requirements are delivered.
16. Representing specialist services nationally, and advocate & campaign for priorities to improve law/policy/practice.
17. Coordinating, supporting, and resourcing members, to deliver change that lasts and promote their successes.
18. Coordinating survivor engagement and ensure diverse voices are amplified, so no woman is left behind.
19. Researching issues that matter for women and girls.
20. Building grassroots support in communities to strengthen our movement for change.

Our outcomes: What you will see

Violence against women, domestic abuse & sexual violence is better understood, challenged and prevented.

Women and children have healthy, safe and equal relationships.

Specialist services are strengthened & supported to effectively meet diverse needs and reduce harmful effects of violence.

Survivors access early support which meets their needs and improves their health & well-being.

The state, agencies & communities deliver more effective responses to violence against women, domestic abuse & sexual violence.

Governments, agencies & communities held accountable for delivering action for change by women & children.

Our mission: Strategic goals

Preventing violence against women, domestic abuse & sexual violence from happening in the first place.

Ensuring provision of quality services for survivors that build on strengths, meet needs and reduce the harmful effects of abuse over time.

Partnerships with survivors, specialist services & others and strengthening our movement to achieve change that lasts.

Our Vision

A world in which women & children live free from domestic abuse, sexual violence and all forms of violence against women and by doing so achieve independence, freedom and liberation from oppression.

Join our movement for change

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.

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.

Our movement is more than a network of service provision in local communities: survivors of abuse – whether they use services or not – have always been, and remain, central to our work. Many services were founded by inspirational women who are survivors of abuse and many

survivors also work in our network of services, and beyond. 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, and effective force for positive change to end violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence – a goal which unites us with funders, supporters and the communities we serve.

There are a number of ways you can get involved in our work to stop violence against women in Wales. Together we can make a difference.

You can take action – however big or small – to support our work throughout the year. You can become an individual supporter, an organisational supporter or fundraise to help support us achieve our vision.

Join us to raise awareness about violence against women in your communities. In doing so you can help us speak out against gender and intersecting inequalities and influence policy change to create a world where women and children live free from fear of violence.

Get in touch and join our movement for change, today!¹³

NOTES

¹³ <https://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/join-us/>





For more information:

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June 2019



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