

F-email

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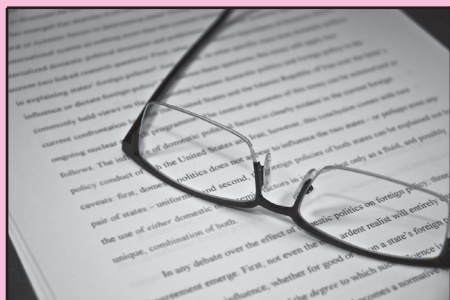


**Staffordshire
Women's Aid**

Together Against Domestic

Violence Since 1976

SWA Praised in Government Report



The role of Staffordshire Women's Aid working in rural communities has been highlighted in a recent government strategy paper. The 'Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls' strategy used the Rural Reachout project that Staffordshire Women's Aid and Staffordshire County Council piloted, as an example of good practice. The project works in rural communities where women may be more isolated or find it harder to access services.

The strategy, released in November 2009 was the result of a consultation process which was completed in May 2009 and requested input from stakeholders across the country. The consultation's purpose was to formulate a cross-government strategy to both raise awareness and create a strategy to combat violence against women and girls including domestic violence.

The strategy focussed on 3 key areas:

Prevention, Provision and Protection.

Prevention

The prevention strategy is to change prevailing attitudes about gender based violence and so prevent future occurrences. The aim is to raise awareness with high profile campaigns, including television adverts, along with a programme of education for young people.

Staffordshire Women's Aid recognises the importance of education and currently provides domestic violence training for professionals. National Women's Aid also has a central campaign called 'Expect Respect', which encourages young people to develop healthy attitudes towards their personal relationships.

Provision

While the ultimate aim is to prevent violence, the government recognises the ongoing need for frontline services while such violence still occurs. Around 1 million women suffer at least one incident of domestic abuse each year and almost 10,000 women are sexually assaulted each week.

The strategy looks at ways in which women and girls can continue with their lives and be given effective services, advice and support. This includes emergency and acute services as well as safe accommodation and refuges such as those

Protection

Finally the strategy looks at improving the efficiency of the criminal justice system for gender based violent crime. This includes the investigation process, prosecutions, victim support and protection as well as perpetrator programmes. The aim is to improve reporting and conviction rates as well managing the risk perpetrators pose to women and children. The government introduced some measures to respond to this including the introduction of IDVA's (Independent Domestic Violence Advisers), MARACs (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and specialist domestic violence courts. Staffordshire Women's Aid is involved in all of these initiatives and helps to provide these services to women in the Staffordshire area.

24 HR HELPLINE



0870 2700 123



Centre-Peace Outreach Opens

Staffordshire Women's Aid is pleased to announce the opening of Centre-Peace, our new outreach centre. The centre will operate as the headquarters and will house the staff from Staffordshire Women's Aid as well as designated space for the helpline, rooms for group activities, one to one spaces and meeting rooms.

This is a much needed resource for Staffordshire Women's Aid.

Centre-Peace is located within walking distance of Stafford town, enabling service users to access the help available without too much difficulty.

The centre will be used to house all the permanent staff as well as the volunteers. Having everyone together onsite will be an enormous advantage as it means better communication and more efficient working.

The centre will also have a designated room to house the helpline. This will allow more privacy for the callers and the staff. It will also enable Staffordshire Women's Aid to accommodate and train more volunteers on the helpline.

Much of the centre is also dedicated to providing facilities for women who may require outreach support but do not necessarily need refuge space.

Women may need to access a wide range of services and advice whether they are currently experiencing domestic violence or living with the repercussions. This may be in the form of literature or one to one meetings with staff, or one of the workshops that will be run from the centre.

Many women require advice on legal issues, benefits, housing, parenting or counselling. Staffordshire Women's Aid can now offer a central, easy to reach resource facility, so advice and support can be accessed from one location.

The one to one meeting rooms can be used for meetings about a particular issue, for example looking at housing options, through to counselling and general support.



The group workshops can be therapeutic, such as writing and creative workshops which enable women to explore and express their feelings in a safe and positive manner. Some of the work produced in these workshops has been made into a booklet called 'Goddesses', a poem from which is published on the back page of F-email. There are also workshops for self-esteem building, health and well-being, child and parenting issues amongst others.

Prior to the centre opening there was not enough room onsite for Staffordshire Women's Aid to offer these facilities at the headquarters. With the space available now we will be able to offer more groups and ultimately work with more women.

If you would like to find out more about accessing any of the services at the centre then please call the helpline and we will be happy to help.



0870 2700 123



Insight into the Helpline

Staffordshire Women's Aid have been running their 24hr helpline for many years now. We spoke to a volunteer to find out some more information about the helpline, who can use it and who is behind the phone when you ring.

The helpline is clearly an important part of the work you do, but who is it for?

The helpline is for anyone who is experiencing or has experienced domestic violence or anyone who wants to ask anything about the surrounding issues and the work that we do. It is often for service users, maybe a refuge space or emergency situations, but it can also be for people who want to talk through a related issue, who need a friendly ear, who may be asking for some practical advice on housing or benefits or their legal rights.

Is it always a service user who makes the call?

No. We receive calls from people, women and men, who may have a friend or a relative they believe to be experiencing domestic violence and they may be asking advice on their behalf or talking through a possible course of action.

We also receive calls from other professionals to discuss a case or other refugees who may be looking for a space at our refuge.

How is the helpline manned 24 hours a day?

The helpline is manned by staff and volunteers of Staffordshire Women's Aid. We do this on a rota system and also have a back up in case we need some advice or back up on a call.

How are staff and volunteers trained to work on the helpline?

There is an induction programme which take volunteers and staff through the issues and procedures which we all follow to ensure everyone is adequately trained before going on the helpline. There are also guidelines for the various types of call so staff can always refer to procedures if they are unsure of how to handle a situation and there is always back up from other staff required.



Any final words?

The helpline is a 24 hours, confidential service and acts as the first port of call in most service users experience with us. This is not only women looking for refuge but anyone who wishes to access any of our services. We log the types of calls so we can assess the need and tailor our service accordingly and it can also be used as a tool to talk to other service providers. It is an essential front line service at the heart of what we do.

With the better facilities and the designated space now available for the helpline at Centre-Peace, we are looking to recruit more volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering for the helpline or want to find out more about how you can help then please call the helpline on the number below.

0870 2700 123





Moving On

The Way To Go

I want to climb a mountain with a free heart
To climb up above with a knowing fresh start
To breathe in the air and know it's for me
Not have to share it, and know I am free

I will climb that mountain, I'm on my way
Tackle each minute and live day by day
It's a long journey and I know I will tire
I become more determined as I get higher

At the top of the mountain you will see the light
Those long-term goals are not out of sight
Take a step at a time and you will see -
The path you've chosen will set you free

*Jayne, taken from Staffordshire Women's Aid
'Goddesses' booklet*

Fundraising

As a charity we are always looking for ways to support our services to continue. Why not have a fundraising event on our behalf? Sponsored walks, runs, dress down Fridays? Please feel free to contact us to chat through any ideas you have.

Volunteers

Could you spare some time to offer your skills to Staffordshire Women's Aid? if you would like to find out more please contact us through the helpline below.

Thank You!

Thank you to the following people for their kind contributions towards the new Staffordshire Moorlands Refuge

Awards For All	Endon with Stanley PC
Biddulph Inner Wheel	Garfield Weston
Brown Edge PC	Leek Circuit Women's
Cheadle Round Table	Fellowship
Cheadle Town Council	Leek Town Council
Cheddleton PC	Leek United Building
Chris Chambers	Society
Churnet View Middle	Nationwide Foundation
School	Soroptimists
Closing the Gaps	Staffordshire Moorlands
Community Fund	Staffordshire Housing
Councillor Jebb - Staffs CC	Association
Staffordshire Moorlands	Strasser Foundation
DC	Waterhouses Parish
Councillor Mike Maryon -	Council
Staffs CC	

Thank You!

Staffordshire Women's Aid would like to thank the following people for their kind contributions

A K Waste Machinery	R Turnock Ltd
Amb Insurance Services	Rae Oldham
Angie Burns	Ron & Rosemary Grinstead
Baron Davenport's Charity	Soroptimists Stafford
Brindley Heath Junior School	St John's Methodist United
Complete Drain Clearance	Reformed Church
Dunston Church	St John the Baptist Church
Eccleshall PCC	St John's Church, Stone
Exclusive Leather Sofa's	St John's Church, Tixall
Gareth Wynne	Stafford & District Ladies
Gill Wheeler and Jayne	Circles
Sheraton	Stafford Castle Rotary
James Durkin	Club
Jan Ryles	Stafford Engineering
Jennifer Clay	Services Ltd
KV Kristall Ltd	Stafford Railway Building
Lions Club of Stafford	Society
Merlins Magic Wand Charity	Stafford Spiritualist Church
Midlands Co-Op Society Ltd	The Bunnery
Mr J Coupland	The Jewellery Workshop
Mr W Johnson	The Rowley Trust
Murray & Willis Ltd	Uxbridge Motors
Penny Reid	Village Flowers

Donations

If you feel you can support us with a donation please use the slip at the bottom of the page. If you would like to make a regular donation then please call the helpline or contact us by e-mail or at the address below. Please use the donation slip below

SWA Donation Slip

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Email Address _____

Signed _____

Please accept my donation of
£10 £20 £50 £100 Other £ _____

I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to Staffordshire Women's Aid. If you would like to make a regular donation please call us on 0870 2700 123