

Impact Report 2024-25

Women's Aid
BELFAST & LISBURN

50 YEARS

Contents

1 Leadership Statement

2 Who We Are

3 What We Do

4–8 Statistics

9–10 Statement of Accounts

11 Summary of Balance Sheet

12 Thank You

13 General Information

Women's Aid BELFAST & LISBURN



Leadership Statement (1st April 2024 - 31st March 2025)

Violence against women and girls in Northern Ireland continues to plague our society. Our femicide rates are shocking, with 28 women murdered since 2020 in Northern Ireland. For many of those murdered, it started with domestic violence and abuse, whether that be physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, financial abuse, or online abuse. This needs to stop, attitudes that perpetuate misogyny and gender inequality need to change. According to the latest PSNI statistics, there were 29,740 domestic abuse incidents in Northern Ireland in the 12 months from 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025. We need to see real action.

During the year, Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid continued to deliver high quality frontline services. Our refuge accommodation housed 188 women and 154 children. Our community based Floating Support service supported 1,371 women who had 1,145 children linked to them. Our partnership with the Housing Executive has proved highly successful in enabling women and children to get safe and secure accommodation. We particularly want to thank the Belfast Housing Solutions Team and the local Lisburn Office who we work with daily. Our Trafficking Project supported 340 women with 207 children linked to them.

We continue to deliver the ASSIST NI services with our consortium partners, Foyle Family Justice Centre and Men's Advisory Project. We would like to thank the staff team of ASSIST for the committed and tremendous efforts, and I want to extend my thanks to the staff of BLWA who support the delivery of ASSIST. We would also like to thank our project partners and funders (DoJ/PSNI).

Some highlights from the year included our annual conference in Titanic Belfast 'Redefining Domestic Violence' in 2024, with a fabulous line up of speakers and interesting conversations. In September, Northern Ireland's first ever Ending Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy was launched at Stormont Estate. We had a successful Christmas Appeal 'Tis the Season to Survive', with very special thanks to everyone who donated. We took part in community activism and raised our voices; with Rosa NI at QUB, with Reclaim the Night, and with hundreds on International Women's Day at City Hall. We met HM Queen Camilla at Hillsborough Castle with other Women's Aid NI groups. We were interviewed and filmed for a UTV exclusive series, which showed the various projects/service work within BLWA, and raised the voices of women within our service. We also would like to highlight our annual conference to mark 50 years of our organisation, 'Hope for the Future', held in Titanic Belfast in May 2025.

Partnership working between statutory and voluntary agencies is key to us tackling domestic violence. Our staff continue to play an active role in several key partnerships including the Belfast Area Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence and Abuse Partnership, and the South-Eastern Area Domestic Violence and Abuse Partnership. Our team share their expertise and knowledge through attendance at meetings, developing strategic and operational action plans, training and awareness events, seminars, and conferences. Through the local partnerships we were involved in delivering several awareness raising events.

This collaborative partnership working continues into the field of safeguarding through the Belfast Safeguarding Panel and South-Eastern Safeguarding Panel that both feed into the Safeguarding Board NI. Staff participate in the MARAC process and provide support to women assessed as high risk. We continue our work with the PSNI in Lisburn, Belfast and the PSNI Human Trafficking Team.

We work alongside Women's Aid Federation NI and our sister local Women's Aid groups to ensure a regional, joined-up response across Northern Ireland. Best-practice information sharing, regional campaigning, lobbying and policy development have ensured that the voices of women and children affected by domestic abuse are echoed and remain high on the agenda for politicians and decision makers.

We would like to thank our dedicated and passionate staff and volunteers who underpin the ethos of the organisation in their daily roles and who make a difference to the lives of women and children in our services, both directly and indirectly. Our Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team provide the governance, strategic, risk and financial oversight that the organisation requires and are vital attributes to the organisation. It is the individual and collective skillsets, experience and expertise within the organisation which truly makes a difference to the quality and impact of our work.

We would like to thank our funders, the Supporting People Programme (NIHE), the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast PCSPs, the Department of Justice and the Department of Education, Pathways Fund, Belfast City Council, RTE, Allstate NI, Balmoral Golf Club, Lisburn Golf Club, Belfast MET, Natwest, Lisburn PCSP, the Irish Department of Foreign Affair, and many others for their support, and all those who kindly donate to us.

Kelly Andrews, Chief Executive
Jill Downing, Chair of Trustee Board

2

Who We Are

Our Mission

- To provide safety and support for women and children who experience domestic abuse.
- To work for and with women and children to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met.
- To challenge attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic abuse as a form of violence against women.

Our Ethos

Self-help and mutual support for women, by women, with women.

Our Vision

To end domestic abuse in society, and establish a future where domestic abuse is unacceptable, and women and children are safe in their homes.

Our Core Aims

- To provide temporary refuge for women and their children suffering mental, physical, financial, or sexual abuse in the home.
- To offer support and advice to any woman who asks for it, whether or not she is living in a refuge.
- To offer supportive aftercare to women leaving the refuge.
- To encourage the woman to take control of her own future, whether this involves returning home or beginning an independent life.
- To meet the needs of children and young people affected by domestic abuse.
- To educate and inform the public, the media, the courts and statutory and voluntary agencies; always mindful of the the fact that abused women are a direct result of the general position of women in our society.

What We Do

What is domestic abuse?

It will affect an average of 1 in 4 women in their lifetime.

The intentional and persistent abuse of a woman and her children.

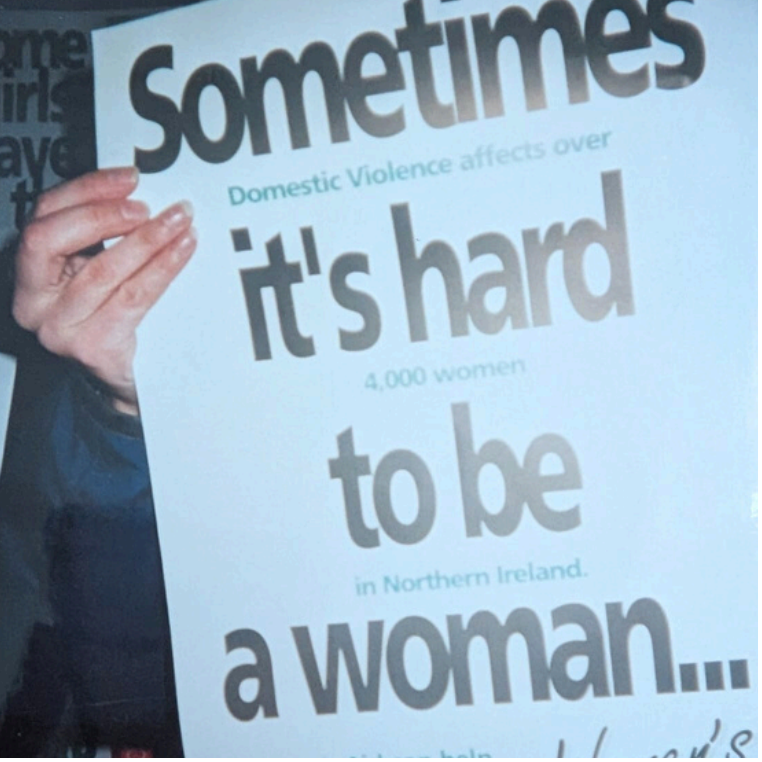
It is a violation of women and children's human rights.

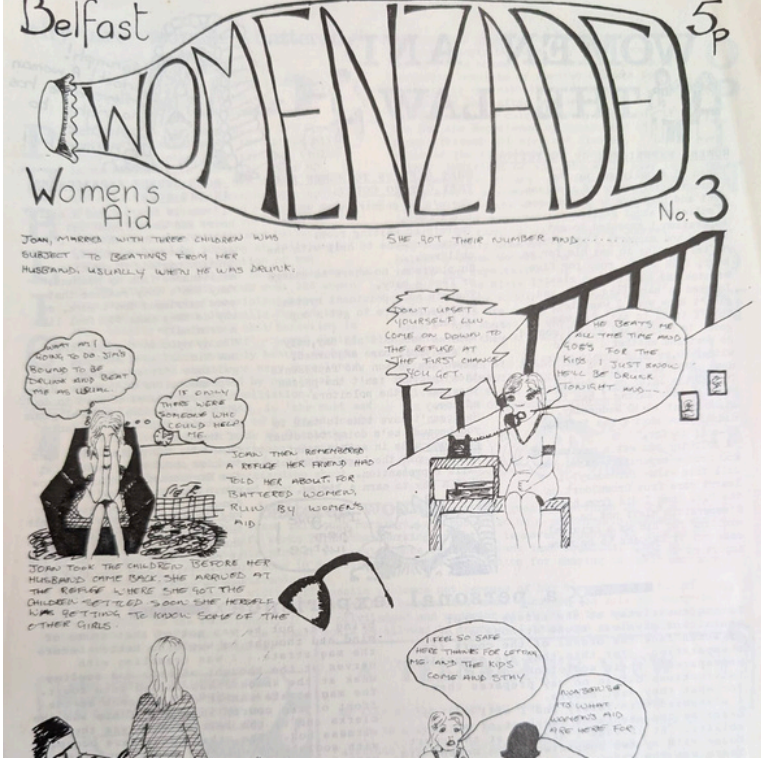
Domestic abuse is the use of coercive control, and includes physical, emotional, financial, and/or sexual abuse.
It also includes rape and murder.

It affects women of all ages and backgrounds; there is no typical victim.

Our Services

- Emotional & Practical Support
- Awareness Raising
- Housing support & refuge
- Training & Education
- Counselling
- Court Support
- Support for children & young people
- Partnership working
- Community Support


Sometimes
Domestic Violence affects over
it's hard
4,000 women
to be
in Northern Ireland.
a woman...


Belfast
WOMENZADE
5p
Women's Aid
No. 3
JOAN, MARRIED WITH THREE CHILDREN WHO SUBJECT TO BEATINGS FROM HER HUSBAND USUALLY WHEN HE WAS DRUNK.
SHE GOT THEIR NUMBER AND.....
WHY AM I GOING TO DO THIS AGAIN TO BE THROWN AND BEAT ME AS USUAL.
IF ONLY THERE WERE SOMEBODY WHO COULD HELP ME.
JOAN THEN REMEMBERED A REFUGE HER FRIEND HAD TOLD HER ABOUT FOR BATTERED WOMEN RUN BY WOMENS AID.
JOAN TOOK THE CHILDREN BEFORE HER HUSBAND CAME BACK SHE ARRIVED AT THE REFUGE WHERE SHE GOT THE CHILDREN SETTLED SOON SHE HERSELF WAS GETTING TO KNOW SOME OF THE OTHER GIRLS.
DON'T UPSET YOURSELF LUV COME ON DOWN TO THE REFUGE AT THE FIRST CHANCE YOU GET.
HE BEATS ME ALL THE TIME AND DOES FOR THE KIDS I JUST KNOW HE'LL BE DRUNK TONIGHT AND....
I FEEL SO SAFE HERE THANKS FOR LETTING ME AND THE KIDS COME AND STAY
NOW BELIEVE IN WHAT WOMENS AID ARE HERE FOR


FIST
Sometimes it's hard to be a woman
FIST

Statistics

Outreach/Floating Support Services

We received 2,536 referrals.

- Regarding the three outreach projects (North and West Outreach / South and East Outreach and Lisburn and Down Outreach), within the 26-54 age range approx., there were 732 service engagements made up of 686 women.
- 622 children benefited from their mothers being in this floating support service.

- Regarding the three outreach projects, within the 18-25 age range approx., there were 76 service engagements made up of 73 women.
- 58 children benefited from their mothers being in this floating support service.

- There were 1,786 service engagements made up of 1,371 women who were supported through our floating support services.
- 1,145 children benefited from their mothers being in a floating support service.

- In our counselling services, there were 196 service engagements made up of 188 women.
- 177 children benefitted from their mothers being in the counselling project.

5 Statistics

Outreach/Floating Support Services

- Our PPRP project supported 10 women.
- 11 children benefited from their mothers being in this service.

- In our PSNI projects, there were 96 service engagements made up of 93 women.
- 96 children benefited from their mothers being in one of our PSNI Projects.

- Our counselling Mental Health & Addictions Project helped 18 women.
- 25 children benefited from their mothers being in this service.

- In our IRIS project, there were 60 service engagements made up of 60 women.
- 35 children benefited from their mothers being in this service.

- Our Criminal Justice project supported 36 women.
- 35 children benefited from their mothers being in this service.

- Our Trafficking & NRM Projects had 357 service engagements made up of 340 women.
- 207 children benefited from their mothers being in the service.

Statistics

Accommodation Services

Our refuges received 355 referrals.

- 188 women lived in our refuges. (Some lived there on more than one occasion which made up 207 service engagements).
- 154 children lived in our refuges. (Some lived there on more than one occasion which made up 176 service engagements).
- 65 women and their children were unable to be accommodated in refuge due to full capacity.

Group Work Programmes

- 199 women were supported in the Journey to Freedom programme (203 service engagements) and 224 children benefited from their mothers participation in the programme.

Outreach/Floating Support Services

- We provided 1,044 instances of short-term work to women (one off advice) with the majority being dealt with by the referral desk (via e-mail, webchat, face to face, telephone or text).

7 C&YP Statistics

Children & Young People

There were 190 children supported in the community:

- 76 were aged 0-7 years old
- 93 were aged 8-11 years old
- 48 were teenagers

There were 154 children living in refuge:

- 47 were aged 0-4 years old
- 82 were aged 5-12 years old
- 32 were aged 13-18 years old

> The way you've supported and listened to [child's name] especially at a time when I've felt so stretched, means more than I can ever express. You are a constant source of support for him and truly priceless.

C&YP Statistics

Children & Young People / Wise Up

- 248 shared play sessions.
- 430 engagements with professionals as part of support for the child.
- 1,209 one-to-one support sessions.
- 554 Play & Art Therapy focused sessions.
- 1,063 sessions building relationships, developing social skills, behaviour management and offering emotional support.
- 543 sessions developing emotional literacy and (co)regulation tools and strategies (self esteem, regulation and feelings work).

Regarding the Wise Up project - 155 workshops were delivered to 3,088 young people exploring themes of gender, relationships, cultural influences and digital literacy and resilience as part of our Wise Up campaign and workshops.

> One thing I have learnt is how valuable the relationship with yourself is, before committing to a relationship with anyone else.
> (Wise Up workshop participant)


Women's AID
BELFAST
THRIFT
Women's AID WHEN HOME IS WHERE THE HURT IS


domestic violence...
help is at hand.
(01232) 33 18 18
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
(01232) 666049
Some girls have all the luck...
Volunteer With AID
Some girls have all the luck...


Women's Aid
NORTHERN IRELAND
...UNTIL WOMEN & CHILDREN ARE SAFE...

Statement of Accounts

Income from	£	%
Supporting People - Refuge	923,474	24%
Supporting People - Floating Support	541,911	14%
Supporting People - Restricted Fund Repaid	-111,793	-3%
Housing Management	527,422	14%
Health & Social Care Trusts	243,595	6%
Grants	1,367,014	36%
Donations	159,113	4%
Investment Income	55,635	1%
Rental Income	27,964	1%
Utilities / Miscellaneous Income	59,851	2%
Training	25,189	1%
TOTAL	3,819,375	100%

10 Statement of Accounts

Resources Expended	£	%
Supported Housing	1,664,370	43%
Outreach Support	2,052,127	54%
Other	94,350	2%
Voluntary Income/Raising Funds	30,907	1%
TOTAL	3,841,754	100%

Summary Balance Sheet

At 31 March 2025, Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid held the following assets:	£
Fixed Assets	4,165,981
Net Current Asset after pension liability	871,360
TOTAL	5,037,341

And the following funds:	£
Unrestricted	2,321,598
Designated	1,444,915
Restricted	1,270,828
TOTAL	5,037,341

Copies of accounts can be obtained from 30 Adelaide Park, Belfast, BT9 6FY, or at www.belfastwomensaid.org.uk.

Thank You

With thanks to our funders, partner agencies, and to all the dedicated individuals, organisations and companies who have supported our work against domestic abuse so generously this year.

- Allstate via WAFNI
- Belfast City Council
- Belfast PCSP
- BHSCT
- Celtic FC Foundation
- Department of Education Pathways Fund
- Department of Justice
- Department of Foreign Affairs (ROI)
- DSA Small Grants Scheme
- Eaton Trust
- Homeless Connect (Dept of Communities)
- Lisburn & Castlereagh PCSP
- NIHE
- Probation Board for NI
- PSNI
- SEHSCT
- Supporting People – Refuge & Floating Support
- The Community Foundation via Bank of Ireland
- The Department of Health via WAFNI
- The Sisters of Mercy
- Training For Women Network

General Information

Directors

C. Conway
J. Downing (Chair)
J. Ferguson
R. Harrison
T. McBride
M. McGreevy
K. Mooney
C. Sheridan
R. Smyth
J. Wilson

Contact Details

028 9066 6049
admin@belfastwomensaid.org.uk
www.belfastwomensaid.org.uk

@belfastwomensaid
@belfastwomensaid
@womensaidbellis
Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid

Date of Incorporation

11 August 1987

Charity Number

NIC106099

Auditors

Harbinson Mulholland

Solicitors

Flynn and McGettrick

Bankers

Ulster Bank Limited

Registered Office

30 Adelaide Park
Belfast, BT9 6FY

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland: NIC106099

Company Number: NI020807

HMRC Reference Number: XT3255



Women's Aid
BELFAST & LISBURN