

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	N Ó'Maoláin S Henry N Basketfield M Larkin C Curran K Ervine M Golligly J Laroche C M Magookin T McAvoy G McCreevy L Campbell	(Appointed 23 January 2024) (Appointed 23 January 2024) (Appointed 23 January 2024) (Appointed 23 January 2024) (Appointed 12 March 2024) (Appointed 7 May 2024)
Secretary	M Larkin	
Charity number (Northern Ireland)	NIC106096	
Company number	NI030774	
Registered office	7 Downshire Place Newry BT34 1DZ	
Auditor	Harbinson Mulholland Centrepont 24 Ormeau Avenue Belfast Co. Antrim Northern Ireland BT2 8HS	
Bankers	Bank of Ireland 12 Trevor Hill Newry Co. Down BT34 1DT	
Solicitors	Casey & Casey Solicitors Legal House 25-27 Lower Catherine Street Newry Co Down Northern Ireland BT35 6BE	

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

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WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the Charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Women's Aid Armagh Down is a registered charity with Northern Ireland Charity Commission, NICC 106096 and a company limited by guarantee, registered in Northern Ireland, NI030774. The organisation was founded in 1983 and it was established under Memorandum of Association in 1996 which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

We are members of the Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland (WAFNI) and a representative from our management board is invited to sit on the WAFNI board. We work closely with all Women's Aid local groups across Northern Ireland and promote good governance, best practice and effective communication across the organisation consequently ensuring a regional commitment and connected partnership working to effectively and efficiently manage the strategic direction for Women's Aid Armagh Down and for the work of Women's Aid regionally.

Structure, governance and management

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee. The Directors of the company, as at year end are listed at the front of this report, are also Charity Trustees for the purpose of charity law and under the Company's Articles are known as members of the Board of Directors. The Board meet on a six-weekly basis and are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the Charity. The day-to-day management and operations of the activities are carried out and overseen by the chief executive officer and the senior management team.

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

N Ó'Maoláin	Chair
S Henry	Vice Chair
M Larkin	Secretary
C Curran	Director
N Basketfield	Director
M Gollogly	Director
G Magookin	Director (Appointed: 23 rd January 24)
Tracy McAvoy	Director (Appointed: 23 rd January 24)
G McGreevy	Director (Appointed: 23 rd January 24)
J LaRoche	Director (Appointed: 23 rd January 24)
K Ervine	Director (Appointed: 23 rd January 24)
L Campbell	Director (Appointed: 7 th May 24)
B McGuinness	Director (resigned 29 th February 24)

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Directors are elected to serve a period of three years, after which they must be re-elected at the following AGM. The Directors' liability is limited by guarantee. The chair and Vice Chair are appointed from within the board and can remain in office for three years.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Women's Aid Armagh Down have put the following in place during this reporting period:

Policy & Procedures reviewed and ratified by Board

Extensive fundraising plan rolled out

Buildings revalued to ensure fully covered

Cyber Essentials Plus awarded

Appointment of new Auditors in March 2024.

New Board members appointed

Salesforce Not for Profit CRM system with customisation implemented

In continuing with our practice of measuring our Social Return on Investment (SROI), our social impact independent audit of our services demonstrates that the work of Women's Aid Armagh Down gives a SROI return of £22 for every £1 of funding invested in our services. Our SROI distinctly validates the work of our organisation and in totality demonstrates our organisation provides a real and tangible benefit to our beneficiaries, to all our stakeholders and indeed to society as a whole.

Objectives and activities

Women's Aid is the lead voluntary organisation in Northern Ireland addressing domestic violence and providing services for women, children and young people. Women's Aid seeks to challenge attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic/sexual violence and abuse, and through its work, promote healthy and non-abusive relationships.

To relieve distress suffering and poverty by the provision of safe temporary accommodation for women and their children, young people and vulnerable adult dependants who are, or have been, experiencing domestic, sexual or gender based violence or abuse;

To relieve distress and suffering experienced by women and their children, young people and vulnerable adult dependants by providing and/or promoting a range of support services such as information, advice centres, confidential services, counselling, outreach, court support, training and advocacy;

To relieve those in need by the provision of information and advice for those affected by domestic, sexual or gender based violence or abuse and referral to relevant support agencies;

To advance education on violence against women and girls, including trafficking and exploitation, and its effects, and to relieve those in need by promoting its prevention and the protection of those affected;

To advance education on domestic, sexual and gender based violence and abuse and their effects, and to advocate for and to relieve those in need by promoting their prevention and the protection of those affected;

To advance women's and children's human rights and gender equality to relieve the suffering and distress caused by violence emanating from the violation, impairment or nullification of enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Women's Aid Armagh Down provides a wide range of support services and other appropriate service necessity in the meeting of our Charity objectives and providing public benefit. Working within a challenging funding environment, Women's Aid Armagh Down continues to meet all performance targets throughout 2023/24. We engage with staff, volunteers and with a wide range of external agencies across the Newry, Mourne & Down District Council (NMDDC) and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council (ABCBC) areas ensuring our services are not only delivering on our charitable objectives in both rural and urban areas but also that our services are responding to the urgent need of women, children and young people right at the heart of our community.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance

Measuring our social impact has become a mode of continuous improvement process, facilitating effective strategic and operational planning and enabling us to deliver a clear and strong method of communication to all.

A year of Celebrations: 40 years of delivering specialised support services to women, children and young people who experienced domestic and sexual abuse and all the associated traumatic impacts on their daily life now and ongoing.



Women's Aid Armagh Down officially launched its extremely successful 40th Anniversary Conference 'Be the Change' which took place on Wednesday 28th February 2024 in the Canal Court Hotel, Newry. The conference was aimed at anyone in business, education, sport or community life who has responsibility for people, such as HR professionals, managers, sports coaches, or community workers. With an internationally renowned speaker line-up including US based Jackson Katz, educator and author who has long been a major figure in the growing global movement of men working to promote gender equality and prevent gender-based violence. Jackson is a co-founder of the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MPV), one of the longest-running and most widely

influential gender violence prevention programme in North America. The MPV introduced the Bystander Approach and Jackson has run MVP Strategies, which provides sexual harassment and gender violence prevention/leadership training to institutions in the public and private sectors in U.S. and around the world. We are delighted that our Conference Platinum Sponsor Terex will be hosting a global Webinar for all their staff across their various venues with Jackson Katz later in the year. Jackson was joined by lifelong campaigner Sabina Higgins who is married to the current President of Ireland Michael D Higgins; Dragon's Den dragon and serial entrepreneur Norah Casey, who has lived experience, a senior legal figure - Presiding District Judge Keown; and Bernie McNally, Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board. A poignant talk was delivered by Noel McNally, whose daughter Natalie was tragically killed along with her unborn child, in her own home in Lurgan in 2022. Noel was joined by his wife Bernie and his sons. This conference represented a major event for Women's Aid Armagh Down as we brought an exceptional line up of speakers to our local community to speak to a wide range of attendees from the world of Statutory, Corporate, Private, Sport and the Voluntary & Community sectors about how we all can be part of "Being the Change" and growing our understanding of the concept of being an 'active bystander' in domestic abuse and male violence scenarios and in particular Jackson Katz's, 'Mentors in Violence Prevention' programme, the first large-scale prevention initiative in professional sports and the U.S. military. This conference was directed at tackling the scourge of domestic and sexual abuse in our communities. The conference was made possible through the generosity and support of our sponsors and partners, our platinum sponsors Terex Corporation and Murdock Building Supplies with ReGen, Rathbane Group, and Jack Murphy Jewellers who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with us to raise awareness of domestic and sexual abuse. We relied also on our statutory partners for their support with Newry Mourne Down PCSP (Police and Community Safety Partnership), Armagh Banbridge Craigavon PCSP and Southern Health and Social Care Trust partnering us on the event. The strong takeaways from the conference were the fact that domestic and sexual abuse reaches across all socio-economic groups, is a serious societal issue and if we call out behaviours and actions, we move from being active bystanders to being part of the change. This is at a time when Women's Aid Armagh Down's services have record high demand and are starved of the vital funding and resources needed to address this critical need.

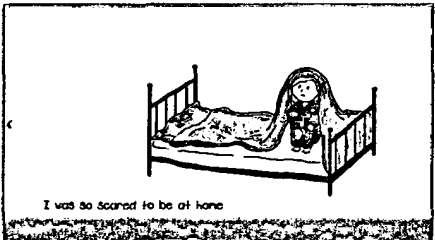
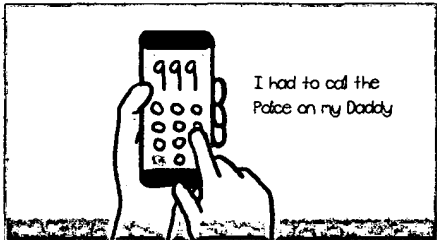
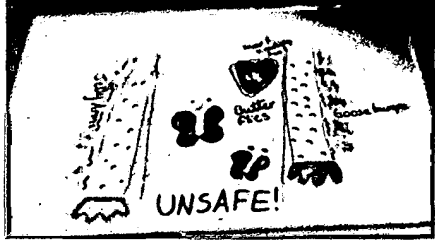
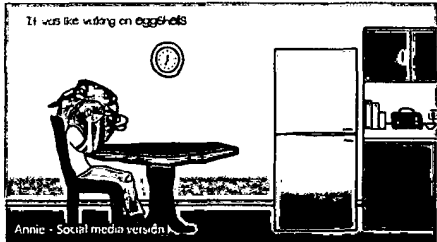
WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

We persist in ensuring that the children and young people receiving our support services continue to be heard. This was made possible with funding from Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland and the Southern Health and Social Care Trust that enabled our young people to work in partnership with our local Slackpress Studios to produce our Children's Voices video that formed a vital part of the conference and provided a perfect opportunity for the real voices of children and young people harmed by domestic abuse to be heard on an extensive level.



A massive thank you to Deborah Loughran who not only coordinated the event to perfection but has also given much of her precious time to assist us in our communications throughout the year – we owe her a huge debt of gratitude for all her efforts on our behalf. We also extend our sincere gratitude to the young women of Our Lady's Grammar School Newry who, under the supervision of Deborah, supported us throughout the day ensuring that everything flowed as it should.

Support for Women, Children & Young People

Women's Aid Armagh Down received **1,852** referrals for women during this period. Of these referrals a total of **1,373** women engaged with our service provision. **738** children and young people accessed our services in this year.

Refuge:

Our refuge occupancy was consistently operating at full or almost full, with a mean average **99%** occupancy throughout the year. There were **108** referrals to refuge but due to high level of occupancy **88** women and their children could not be accommodated in refuge. A total of **35** women with **24** children/young people were accommodated in refuge. **3** women were supported through their pregnancy bringing their new babies back home to refuge. Of the 35 women accommodated **10** women were from the BME community. During the year **14** women and their children secured stable and safe housing.

The children and young people's team held **262** supported play sessions with **60** one-to-one sessions completed in refuge and **20** children/young people took part in special outings and events made possible with funding and donations from the local community and Allstate NI.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

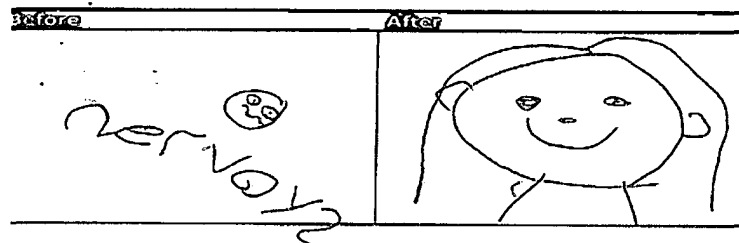
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

13 children were under the age of 5, and there were 7 young people between the ages of 11 – 15 years of age. A significant number of women had a range of additional complex support needs including impaired mental health, and physical disabilities. Of the 24 children and young people in refuge 21 were registered with a GP, 14 with a dentist and those of school age attended school. A vital part of the children and young person's team is working with mothers to help them support their children through the trauma of having to flee their home to seek safe accommodation in refuge due to the significant level of risk they live with every day. The specialised trauma informed staff in refuge work diligently with mums and young people helping them navigate the traumatic journey generated by an abuser who dominates and controls their lives through domestic abuse.

Feedback from our young people demonstrates the positive impact achieved:

Draw or write about the changes (if any) you have seen in yourself or your family since you came to Women's Aid



Changes in myself/my life since I came to Women's Aid

Before	After
Quiet hidden Didn't want to be seen	happy a little open I am ok to see them now

This vital service that our refuge provides, confirms that our work within the community at grassroots crisis level, reduces risk from homelessness and significant harm. Women's Aid Armagh Down's Refuge provision is vital resource to our community by providing a safe, secure and supported environment is an active response to preventing potential homicides.

Children & Young People in the Community

114 children and young people engaging in the service receiving support. 303 one-to-one support sessions were completed, and 19 children and young people took part in our Helping Hands Summer Groups. Feedback from our young people demonstrated the positive outcome from the support they received such as:

If I could sum up how Women's Aid has helped me in one sentence it would be...

feel safe

Safety planning is a vital aspect of our service provision, and the children and young person's team work closely with mothers and their children exploring and agreeing a safety plan for high/medium risk cases. This work enables mums to work closely with our team to help them to manage their children's constant state of fear of what might happen next.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

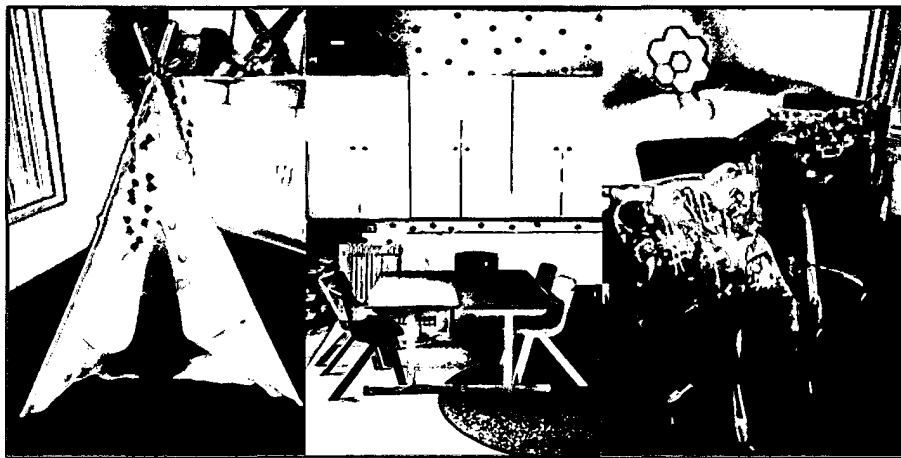
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

Providing support to children and young people is completed in venues that the young people feel safe and secure in and to do this staff provided outreach support by travelling to a range of community-based venues who worked closely with us so children could receive the support they needed. Some of this work was facilitated by schools allowing children to attend support in school's time and by providing a room. In one-to-one support children described how they struggle with what they had witnessed, worried about their mum and missing their dad even though sometimes they were afraid of him.

Children & Young People's Playrooms

Thanks to a very kind private donation to the C&YP department we were able to refurbish all our playrooms providing age-appropriate spaces for all our young people.



Because of the generosity of community, we were able to continue to provide Calming Kits to every child or young person who engaged in support with us.

48 Children & Young People participated in Focus groups and Art & Music sessions. These photos are some of the work produced within projects completed throughout the year 2023-24 enabling our Children & Young People to explore feeling safe and unsafe and allowing their thoughts and feelings to be expressed through the safe medium of art. Christmas & Summer trips and events were as usual the highlight of the year with everyone participating in lots of fun and games.



WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

WE HAVE SOMETHING TO...



A number of our young people took part of the regional Women's Aid **Social Action Youth** (SAY) Project which informed the government of the impact of Domestic & Sexual Abuse in their lives, ensuring their voices are heard in Stormont and in particular in the offices of the First and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland.



Working in Partnership with our local Schools.

19 schools with a total of **600** pupils participated in our education and support services to children and young people. 17 post primary schools completed our Heading for Healthy Relationship programme and 2 primary schools completed our Helping Hands programme. Of these a total of 399 pupils were from the Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon area and 146 in the Newry, Mourne & Down area and 1 school with 55 pupils in Dungannon. A total of 600 young people more educated in how to keep themselves and others safe from abuse and understanding they have the right to be safe from others. It is also important to receive the feedback from teachers which continues to be very positive:

Killicomaine Junior High, Portadown

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE HEADING FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS PROGRAMME?

Excellent programme & very well delivered and great to have PSNI involvement

St Joseph's High School, Newry

ANY OTHER COMMENTS:

Help to promote positive attitudes towards women based on mutual respect & understanding

We are delighted that funding was available again this year from the Department of Education that enabled our Children & Young People's staff to deliver 2-days of Social Guardian training. **24** Primary School Teachers completed this programme of training which enables teachers to deliver our Helping Hands programme within their own schools.



Because everyone can do something

SAHRA Pilot



In November 2023 we began the SAHRA (Safety and Healthy Relationships Advocate) pilot with a small pot of funding gathered from a number of stakeholders including Allstate NI, AIB, both the Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon & Newry Mourne and Down Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and private donations from local businesses and individuals. This allowed us to place a skilled CYPS (Children and Young People's Service) support worker directly into two schools for a period of five months, one morning per week.

While onsite the SAHRA worker provided up to 6 weeks of specialist one-to-one support to **16** young people referred to her via the school's designated safeguarding teacher following a notification from Operation Encompass or where domestic abuse was identified within the family home.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

Children and Young People's feedback on SAHRA:

100% of completed evaluations stated that they agree or strongly agree that:

- ✓ I have a better understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- ✓ I found the support provided helpful
- ✓ I have a better understanding of how I can keep myself safe
- ✓ I know where to go to for support

Teachers feedback on SAHRA:

St Malachy's High School, Castlewellan

'The program identified students through Operation Encompass, allowing us to offer support discreetly. The Women's Aid staff created a safe space where students could discuss their experiences and develop healthy coping mechanisms.'

St Catherine's College, Armagh

'We also felt the pupils were more open to discuss their experience with non-teaching staff, but that they were comfortable to avail of the support within the school environment.'

Community Based Services

Our floating support service received and processed **1,262** referrals for **990** women. A 13.5% increase from last year's figures. These referrals were received from multiple sources however the main pathways for referrals we received continues to be the PSNI 36% and Self-referral 28% and a very welcoming increase of 9% from Social Services. Geographically 54% of our referrals come from the Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council area and 46% Newry, Mourne & Down District Council area.

Of the 990 women for whom we received a referral **707** engaged in active support which is a 4% increase and 572 completed their support within this financial reporting period.

35 women receiving community based floating support services were pregnant.

While the numbers of women seeking support increased consistently the age profiles remain consistent. With women aged 26-45 years making up 65% of those seeking support.

The 2023-24 year saw an increase in the number of women 66-75 years reaching out to seek help with a total of 16 women in this cohort receiving support. While at the other end of the age spectrum have had a percentage increase of 57% in young women 16-18 years reaching out to seek support for both abusive and unhealthy intimate partner violence.

37% of the women we supported stated they had a disability with 61 women having more than one disability.

43% of the women supported reported having mental health vulnerabilities while 13% reported physical health vulnerabilities. 18% of women reported having more than one vulnerability.

Of the 707 women supported in 97% of cases the perpetrator of the abuse was male. With 72% being an intimate ex-partner or spouse, 25% being a current intimate partner or spouse.

41 women in this reporting period reported having more than one perpetrator at the time of support.

Some of the feedback from women we supported in this reporting period includes:

100% of feedback stated that women got the support they felt they needed from us.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

When we asked, "*What difference the service has made to your life?*" women told us:

"It saved my life. Without my support worker and Women's Aid Service, I would not have survived. I felt safe for the first time in many years."

"More confidence and understanding."

"Really helped me go through a very tough section on my life and I don't know how I would get back into a straight road without it."

"A positive impact on all kinds of relationships and life in general."

"I stand on my own two feet."

"I was open that I'm using the service and felt it was the right thing to do. I felt clearer and stronger in my life."

"Feeling a little more confident in believing in myself."

"Felt supported and not alone."

"It was a lifeline to me. I was lost, living alone in new town. I cannot and could never ever thank my support worker enough for her support and guidance. She just got me and knew what I needed. She was so gentle when my head was all over the place and kept putting me back on track. I'd never been to Newry before so even just getting there took me out of my comfort zone."

"I have more respect for myself in what I tolerate. I've learnt about types of abuse and that it was wrong & not my fault."

"Totally changed my perspective of who I am and what I can achieve in the most positive way. I have learned a lot about myself and have become a lot more comfortable delving into my past."

"It's giving me someone who listens to me and understands me."

"WA was a constant through a period when I was very confused, scared, isolated, and let down by other services. WA doesn't trivialise emotional abuse and trauma and it was a place I didn't feel I had to mask how difficult I was finding things."

"Enabled me to make positive changes in my day-to-day life but also empowered me to make life choices and changes such as pursuing higher education."

"To open up more about the abuse I experienced and to be taught that life can be free of this - this has made my life feel hopeful."

"It had made me a stronger person and able to know my worth."

"It has made a huge difference to my life. I always viewed Women's Aid as being 'man haters' but this is not the case at all. I received this service, and it was incredible, and I feel really lucky that I now have the tools to set boundaries, etc. The biggest difference is that I no longer feel ashamed or embarrassed for what I put up with from my ex-husband. I now know that he was the problem, not me."

"Massive difference. Got myself back and wouldn't have if I didn't get the help from the service."

"It has been life changing!"

"Changed my thinking, made me the stronger and more confident, feeling safe."

"I have grown stronger day by day."

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

Some additional comments given by women were:

"This is such a great service provided free to the local community, and I think not enough people are aware of the extent of the service."

"I appreciated all the practical help to move into my new flat and support during Christmas period."

"Woman's Aid helped me to secure Supported Accommodation. You have given me the confidence to be more independent."

"I can't thank the service providers enough for all their help. I've come out of this ordeal a much stronger and more confident person thanks to the help I have received."

"While going to my support worker she went above and beyond to get support for me of my issues which I was extremely grateful for. Her dedication, professionalism didn't go unnoticed."

"I will highly recommend your service and all your team. You definitely change my life and I am very grateful for this."

"Was very grateful for all the practical support, clothes/toys/school uniforms for my daughters."

"Even though there was a wait for direct support, the centre was always open and someone was always available to talk to."

"I found the support during the court process invaluable. I was tempted to give up several times but with support I was able to get through it and get the result that was good for me and my daughters."

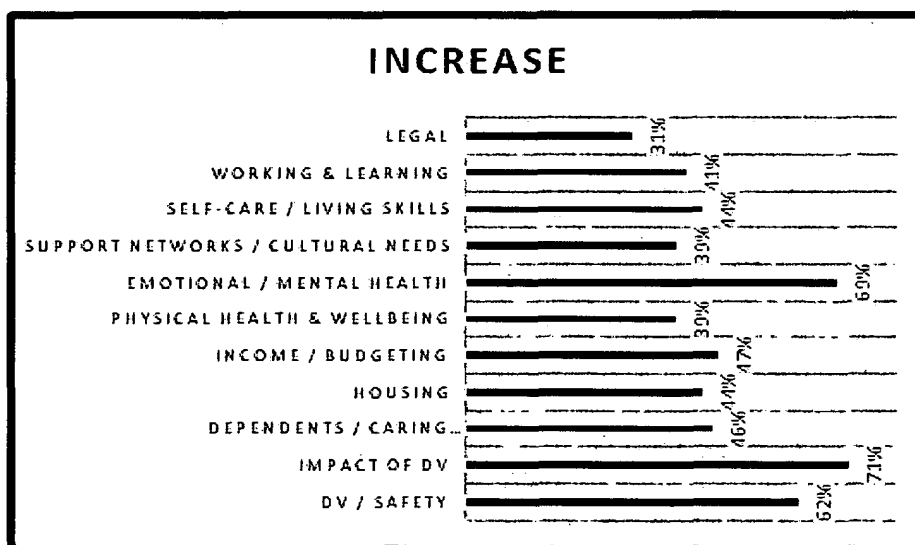
"Appreciated time staff gave me to work out my options even though I have decided to stay in relationship."

"I am looking forward to getting involved with Well Being programme as I want to improve my support group."

"It was the first time that I was able to talk about my experiences. I felt listened to and even though at times it was very difficult to express myself I am glad that I did."

"You're doing a very good job 😊"

When we review the journey travelled of women using our services in 2023-24 via the outcomes wheel monitoring tool, we see that:



WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

Projects

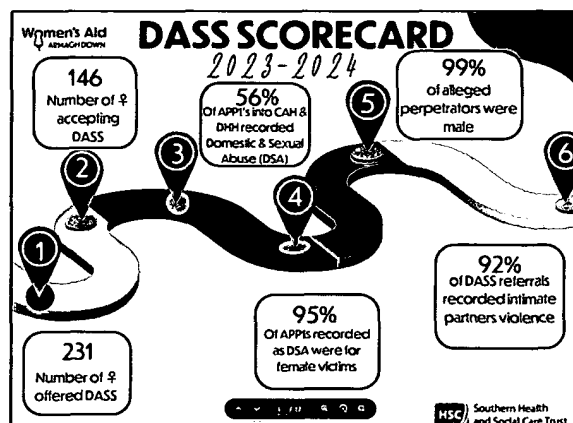
We are fortunate that we have been able to source funding to deliver much needed projects. One of which is leading the field in innovative thinking and delivering a vital service which is building upon its positive impact year on year. **DASS the Only One of its Kind** in Northern Ireland

DASS (Domestic Abuse Safety & Support)

Having completed its 4th year in operation the DASS project continues to grow and be an excellent example of collaborative working grounded in the heart of the community.

The number of women being offered DASS services has increased by **200%** in the four years of its operation. This clearly demonstrates how DASS has increased recognition of Domestic & Sexual abuse on the cutting edge of acute services.

DASS is growing the confidence of front-line support service within our acute hospital support with many more frontline staff having "Courageous Conversations" leading to more women accessing support. In this financial reporting year **231** women received referrals into our hospital based specialised domestic abuse support with **146** accepting supports from our DASS worker. A significant point here is the women who declined the DASS services, attended the Emergency Department outside of the DASS operating times or had already engaged in community-based support. There has also been a significant increase in the number of women accepting a referral into DASS resulting in more engagement and protection for women and children. The greater number of referrals came from the Emergency Department, with Maternity as the 2nd highest referral pathway.



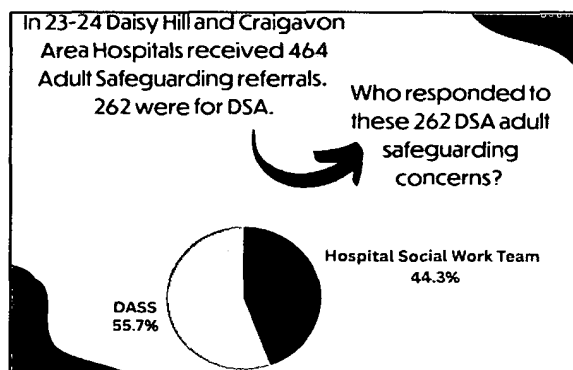
An important fact is that 9 out of the 10 women who accept a DASS referral actively engage in DASS and 6 out of 10 women go on to engage in Women's Aid support services. The DASS service provides a range of interventions such as Safety planning, Needs Assessment and Safe Accommodation. The DASS services also refers to other support required such as Adult/Children Safeguarding.

Service Users Feedback from the support they received in DASS:

"Before I didn't have the energy to ask for help, this day changed that. I want this service to always be in the hospital for other women, it's a great service and she is a good person."

"She was there with me when I had no one, she supported me with speaking to the police, she was so kind and helped me so much. I don't know what I would have done if she wasn't there."

"I was so scared to go home, I couldn't go. She helped me get refuge that day and supported me with everything I needed at that time- such a kind person."

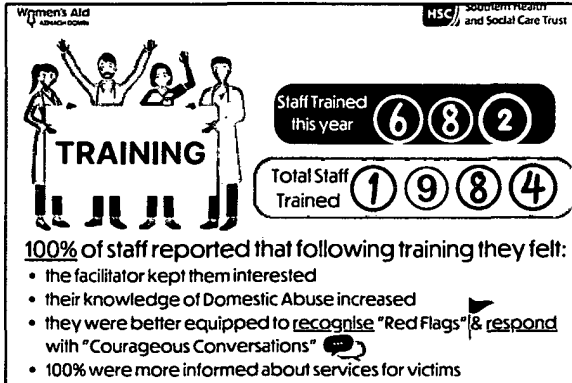


WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)



Staff Trained this year 682

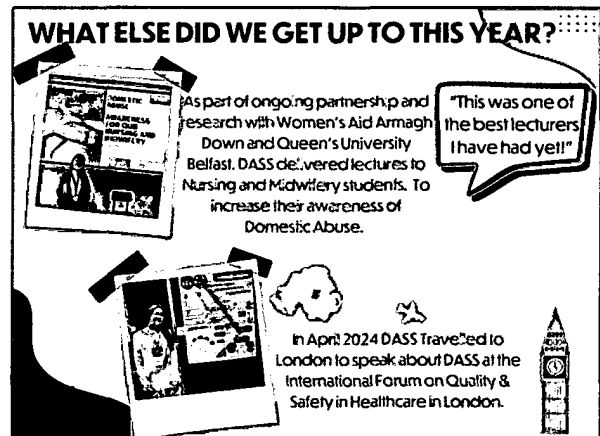
Total Staff Trained 1984

100% of staff reported that following training they felt:

- the facilitator kept them interested
- their knowledge of Domestic Abuse increased
- they were better equipped to recognise "Red Flags" & respond with "Courageous Conversations"
- 100% were more informed about services for victims

Besides providing one-to-one support to women the DASS worker also provided specialised Domestic Abuse training to 682 staff. One direct quote stated, "Absolutely fantastic session, very informative for my role as a paramedic."

The impact of DASS was felt much further afield through lectures to Nursing and Midwifery student in Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and in April 2024 our DASS worker travelled to London to speak about DASS at the International Forum on Quality & Safety in Health Care.



WHAT ELSE DID WE GET UP TO THIS YEAR?

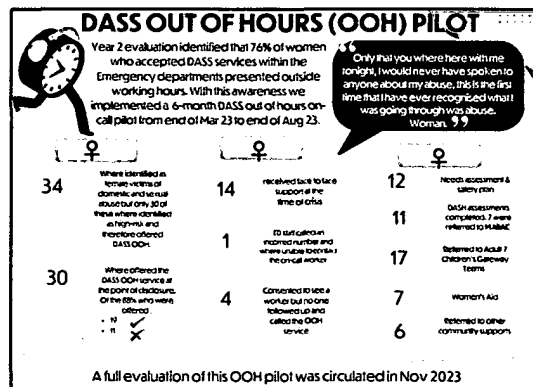
As part of ongoing partnership and research with Women's Aid Armagh Down and Queen's University Belfast, DASS delivered lectures to Nursing and Midwifery students. To increase their awareness of Domestic Abuse.

"This was one of the best lectures I have had yet!"

In April 2024 DASS Travelled to London to speak about DASS at the International Forum on Quality & Safety in Healthcare in London.

To address the number of women presenting at the Emergency Departments outside of normal DASS working hours a 6-month Out of Hours DASS pilot, financially supported by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust, was implemented from March 2023 to the end of August 2023. This pilot was evaluated in November 2023 which highlighted the benefits and limitations of an Out of Hours ('OOH') service. One of the main limitations was the lack of a generic contact number for the service and further made difficult by ongoing hospital pressures and lengthy waiting times.

One of the major benefits was providing a real time service at the point of crisis increasing the window of opportunity for engagement, safety planning and early intervention. Interaction with the DASS OOH services led to a woman having the confidence to report to the PSNI for the first time. We continue to work with our colleagues in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust and the hospital staff to build on our partnership with front-line emergency services, continuing to keep training up to date with emerging issues such as Non-Fatal Strangulation, Stalking and Financial abuse etc. We will continue to seek means of expanding the service provision by securing a second DASS worker and continue our collaboration with QUB in research into Domestic & Sexual Abuse. A **significant fact** to highlight is that both the DASS and the IRIS projects have received **regional recognition** as projects to consider for regional expansion in both Domestic & Sexual Violence and End Violence Against Women and Girls ('EVAWG') strategies.



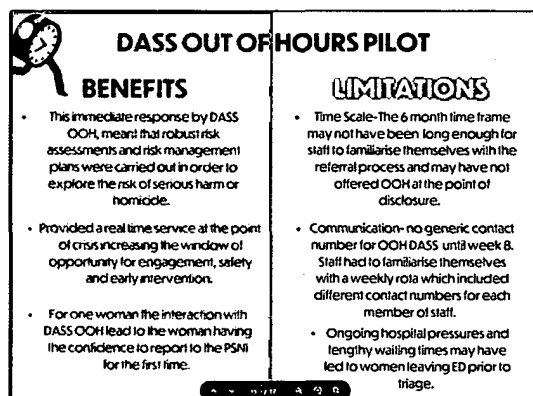
DASS OUT OF HOURS (OOH) PILOT

Year 2 evaluation identified that 76% of women who accepted DASS services within the Emergency departments presented outside working hours. With this awareness we implemented a 6-month DASS out of hours on-call pilot from end of Mar 23 to end of Aug 23.

Only that you weren't there with me tonight, I would never have spoken to anyone about my abuse, this is the first time that I have ever recognised what I was going through was abuse. Women 99

34	14	12
Where identified as victims of domestic and sexual abuse but only 30 of these were contacted as high and fracture referred DASH OOH.	received back to back support at the time of crisis	Needs assessment & safety plan
30	1	11
Where offered the DASS OOH service at the point of disclosure. Of the 18% who were referred:	Called an incorrect number and where unable to reach the person on phone	DASH assessments completed, 7 were referred to MAMC
11 ✓ 19 ✗	4	17
	Contacted to see a worker but no one followed up and called the OOH service	Referred to Adult & Children's Gateway Teams
		7 Women's Aid 6 referred to other community support

A full evaluation of this OOH pilot was circulated in Nov 2023



DASS OUT OF HOURS PILOT

BENEFITS

- This immediate response by DASS OOH meant that robust risk assessments and risk management plans were carried out in order to explore the risk of serious harm or homicide.
- Provided a real time service at the point of crisis increasing the window of opportunity for engagement, safety and early intervention.
- For one woman the interaction with DASS OOH led to the woman having the confidence to report to the PSNI for the first time.

LIMITATIONS

- Time Scale- The 6 month time frame may not have been long enough for staff to familiarise themselves with the referral process and may have not offered OOH at the point of disclosure.
- Communication- no generic contact number for OOH DASS until week 8. Staff had to familiarise themselves with a weekly rota which included different contact numbers for each member of staff.
- Ongoing hospital pressures and lengthy waiting times may have led to women leaving ED prior to triage.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

From April 2023 – March 2024 Women's Aid Armagh Down made **62 referrals to MARAC** (63% increase from previous year) and received **61 referrals from MARAC**. During this time our staff attended 24 MARAC meetings across two jurisdictions and were involved in the Decision-Making Forums for 1 Domestic Violence and Abuse Disclosure Scheme (DVAD) (1 Power to tell and 0 Right to ask)

IRIS (Identification and Referral to Improve Safety)

The Department of Health continued to fund the IRIS project in its 4th year across 2023-24. This funding allowed our IRIS advocate / educator (AE) to continue delivering specialist training to 25 of the 31 GP surgeries across the GP Federation area. Some feedback from the GPs trained includes:

"This was excellent, and I would recommend this training to any new staff coming into the GP surgery. I feel all members of the MDT should be fully appraised and up to date with same." (multi-disciplinary team)

"Following the online training I have had my attention drawn to many aspects that I would not necessarily thought of before. It has given me a much wider understanding of the service and steps that can be taken to offer a safe referral to both the women, children & men who may need to use the service." (GP)

Across the reporting period the IRIS AE received 81 referrals for both female (76) and male (5) victims of Domestic and Sexual Abuse (DSA). 25 of the women referred were able to access longer term support within Women's Aid Armagh Down. 32 women were supported full term by the IRIS AE.

The source of referrals into IRIS are coming from 52% from GP Social Workers and Mental Health Practitioners, 35% directly from GP and 13% self-referral.

IRIS discusses the needs of each patient and makes requested onward referrals to Women's Aid, Men's Advisory Project, Nexus, VSNI, MARAC, PACE, Family Support Hub, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Wave Trauma etc.

Outcomes for patients engaging in the IRIS service continue to be positive with 100% of patients providing feedback stating they were "pleased to be asked about domestic abuse by their GP/Health Clinician." 100% "felt listened to by their AE" and "found the support helpful" while 100% of patients "felt safer" and 67% "felt more optimistic about their future" as a result of the IRIS support. While finally 67% of those engaged in IRIS "visited their doctor less than before"

Patient feedback included:

"I have found this service to be so helpful & kind. I was not judged & made to feel safe & not alone. A great support so thank-you."

"I visit my doctor/nurse less than before. IRIS AE has been a rock for me. I couldn't have got this far without her. Very grateful. Thank-you."

"Thank-you so much for everything. I wouldn't have got to where I am without your support through this."

Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) advocacy

The regional funding stream between the PBNI and Women's Aid continued across 2023-24 enabling our Partner Support Worker to provide vital specialised support for women whose current or previous partners are attending the Promoting Positive Relationship programme with the PBNI. Women's Aid Armagh Down received 11 referrals from the PBNI for our area and of those, 6 women took up support. These women had 24 children whom to date received no support work in regards to this programme.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

Short Term Work

The team at Women's Aid Armagh Down also provide support to women who do not want to engage in longer term support, as well as responding to queries from other professionals, families and friends of women whom they fear are in abusive relationships. Across 2023-24 Women's Aid Armagh Down supported an additional **111** women and **39** professional / family/ friend guidance queries for women not yet known to us. Short Term Work involves addressing and supporting immediate domestic abuse concerns, safety planning for women and their children and providing information and options.

Group Support

Whilst one-to-one support is the predominant method of support for women, group and peer support is an invaluable aspect of the work of Women's Aid Armagh Down. Last year we delivered **10 Journey to Freedom programmes** and **88** women were able to complete this special 14-week programme. While evaluations from this programme are still being developed, the information available demonstrates that those who complete the programme, self-report an increase in both the Warwick and Edinburgh Mental Health scale and the Hope Scale. Indicating that completion of the course nurtures hope and has a positive impact on a woman's mental health.

Counselling

We continue to work in partnership with the local colleagues to facilitate the placement of a number of student counsellors and in 2023-24 **35** women engaged in counselling following a programme of support within Women's Aid Armagh Down.

Communities supporting us to support others at Christmas

In the winter of 2023-24 Women's Aid Armagh Down supported by our local communities helped approximately 300 families with an average value of **£288**. The cumulative total support value was **£86,450** within a 2-month period.

402 external agencies representatives received Domestic & Sexual Abuse awareness training from Women's Aid Armagh Down across the year.

Hope & Resilience Wellbeing Project

Funded through the Department of Health our two-year Wellbeing programme aims to provide a holistic 'whole life' program to inspire, build women's confidence and courage, to support them in their journey of recovery and beyond based on the building blocks of well-being: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment. Women are assisted and supported to connect with a process that inspires, motivates and supports them through their journey from disadvantage and health inequality to improved health and wellbeing, towards independence and economic success. Helping them find real Hope and Healing in their lives. A unique facet of the programme has been the continued evolution of the activities to reflect the needs of women taking part and to maximise the resources afforded within the programme. This has included new activities and ongoing collaboration and partnership working with agencies such as the Southern Heath & Social Care Trust Multidisciplinary Teams & Promoting Wellbeing Team and local councils Newry, Mourne & Down District Council and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council. The programme developed four new and innovative 'Me & My' courses as part of the 30 additional programmes or activities that was delivered in the four themes of: Creativity, Emotional & Mental Wellbeing, Health Awareness and Physically Active. A key tool developed was a bespoke 'Wellness Plan' booklet that women could use throughout their journey on the Hope & Resilience programme.

The rationale for the programme was founded on the need for additional, low intensity, non-crisis services supports for women that have accessed Women's Aid Armagh Down's crisis services previously and need continued engagement to improve their own mental health and wellbeing and support their emotional, physical and psychological health and wellbeing.

"90% of the women who use our services come from areas which are recorded as being areas of high multiple deprivation, in terms of health, income employment, education and crime."

- Women's Aid Armagh Down Strategic Review 2021

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

Northern Ireland (NI) is reported to have the highest prevalence of mental health problems in the UK. Academic studies and research articles have reported that NI has the highest prevalence of mental illness in the UK, with psychiatric morbidity in NI 25% higher than mainland UK.

¹[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366\(18\)30392-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366(18)30392-4/fulltext)

According to the Mental Health Foundation research¹ mental health problems cost the NI economy £3.4bn annually (£117.8bn across UK).

- The Lancet

The Women's Aid Armagh Down team have an innate and considered understanding that it is essential for women to be:

1. Connected
2. Be Active
3. Be Safe
4. Be Hopeful
5. Be Empowered
6. Be Supported

Only for Women's Aid I wouldn't be here today. I was deteriorating! I am now 65 and feel 55 (if not 25 😊)

The programme has achieved some considerable outputs and outcomes delivering upon ambitious targets set out within the programme letter of offer. The table below illustrates the extent to which the programme has met or exceeded each output area:

Output / Outcome	Target	Achieved	Notes
Women accessing Level 1 Wellbeing support	136	125	648 women in total have been supported through the programme
Women accessing Level 2 Wellbeing support	180	209	
Women access support in Refuge through our Life Skills worker	50	55	
1:1 support sessions	4,500	3875	12 women attending weekly to the Wool Crew which is facilitated by a Wellbeing Buddy volunteer
Programmes delivered to 288 women	36	73	Innovative new programmes were developed in response to the needs of women
Women will benefit from a range of mental health & Wellbeing supports	700	648	In addition to the Me & My series of programmes an extra 3 new programmes have been developed
New Wellbeing programmes developed	3	3	The level of engagement from buddies changed for example a volunteer buddy run's the Wool Crew group every Friday and now in turn 2 older women have become leaders within the group
Women accessing Wellbeing buddies' support	120	30	
Active Wellbeing Buddies	30	31	

Places like Women's Aid give you the tools to put yourself back together!

At the midway point of the programme, in September 2023, output deliverables were ahead of schedule with 270 women supported with six months left of the programme – 85% of the target at the ¾ stage of the programme including 35 women living in our Refuge.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

3,488 1:1 sessions had been delivered, 77% of target achieved

12 women attending weekly to the Wool Crew, facilitated by a Wellbeing Buddy volunteer

An extra 3 new programmes had been developed.

I learned how to plan ahead, safety first, how to use many tools, hand and power tools. How to fix cupboards, taps, how to fix tiles, shelves etc.

I was on autopilot for years I would put things on the shelf and have a cry, I was numb so when I finally got away... it all came out and was too much to bear. Thank God I had the refuge!

The women continue to say the Hope & Resilience project has given them a sense of identity and confidence which they had lost, and they clearly state that it has empowered them to continue to heal on their personal journey.

Overall, the success of this programme clearly demonstrated the need for an ongoing programme of this nature. The need for this programme is also grounded in the substantial waiting list of women, children and young people seeking access to Women's Aid Armagh Down's support services which is typically 200 plus at any given time. We will continue to seek funding opportunities to continue this vital and lifesaving work.

The Hope and Resilience Wellbeing Project has enabled me to find myself again and it's giving me hope that things will get better. I can't express how much this service has helped me. Personally, I want every woman who experienced domestic abuse to do this programme as there is HOPE through the storm.

Employ Me – Partnership in Action

This project consisted of a partnership with our local Southern Regional College, Community Advice at Newry, Mourne & Down District Council and Clanrye Group.

Employ Me is an employability programme providing training, employability and wraparound support for Economically Inactive people aged 16+ to reduce barriers, develop skills, achieve qualifications and enhance employability to enable progression to employment/self-employment. The programme targets economically inactive people only, with emphasis on specific cohorts to include Disability, Aged 50+, Women Returners, Justice (those in, or at risk of entering, the justice system), single parents and carers.

Over the 40 years plus we have been providing our specialised domestic abuse support services to women we are extremely aware that the physical and psychological impact of trauma experienced by women from domestic abuse presents a huge barrier to entering or indeed re-entering education and/or employment. This project was crucial in enabling us to provide the vital support required to help women combat those barriers and challenges. Our Employ Me support worker took direct internal referrals from across all our service provision and developed a holistic person-centred plan enabling her to work with women to determine their options and next steps. The work incorporated a flexible approach that assisted the women to determine the level of support they needed before, during and after any engagement with the programmes within the Employ Me project. A vital aspect of this project was that it gave women back supported options and informed choices for their future.

During the year **60** women were referred to the Employ Me project with **38** women being in a position to attend their one-to-one assessment. **32** of these women continued on and successfully engaged in Employ Me project.

The average age of women involved in the project was 38 years old with the youngest being **16** and the oldest being **64** years of age. **8** of the women engaging in the project were currently or had previously resided in our refuge and **10** women had also been referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) for high-risk victims.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Achievements and performance (continued)

An alarming fact that the project highlighted was that **84%** of the women participating have had to leave their previous employment because of the domestic abuse they experienced. Issues such as the perpetrator constantly contacting them at work or "he made me leave work because I couldn't answer the phone to him". This was due to her employer's workplace policy on phones not allowing staff to take personal calls during working hours. Her perpetrator insisted on her being able to answer the phone every time he rang so he would know where she was and who she was talking to. Asking women to put the camera on and show him where she is and who she is with is a fairly common demand from domestic abusers. Women expressed experiences such as "he wouldn't let me sleep so I wasn't able to work". The psychological traumatic impact of being a victim of domestic abuse resulted in some women losing their jobs because they were unable to concentration or experiencing brain fog due to the impact of the trauma, "I was let go in my role as I wasn't able to fulfil job requirements". Pregnancy also featured as a prominent factor in being made to give up employment, "I was pregnant and he didn't want me to work so made me leave".



Another interesting fact that was highlighted through this programme was that women were more likely to engage with the Employ Me project and progress into education or employment if they had previously engaged in our Wellbeing Hope and Resilience project. This was due to the fact that the most prominent barrier being experienced at this moment in time was the lack of confidence in herself, lack of confidence in her current skills and lack of confidence in applying for jobs and going for interviews. One of the challenges that this project identified that it became clear that while women being referred from the front-line crisis support such as Floating Support or Refuge, wanted to engage and they clearly felt the need to engage, with the project. The impact of their trauma from domestic abuse was still very much active in their lives causing a wide range of challenges and barriers such as Child Contact issues and ongoing court demands to deal with the domestic abuse experienced. While this funding stream was only for 2 years we are very hopeful that as a partnership we can find a way to ensure its continuation of the extremely valuable work of supporting and assisting individuals disengaged with education and/or employment to engage/re-engage, enhancing their lived experienced, providing hope, a sense of achievement and success.

Volunteering

Women's Aid Armagh Down are delighted to enable women to volunteer in our organisation with over 2,867 volunteer hours provided during the year. Our volunteers play a vital role in our work, and they support the work of Women's Aid Armagh Down across a wide range of functions. We conservatively calculate the economic value of the work contributed by our volunteers to be approximately £34,404.

Educate and Informing the Public

On behalf of women, children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse Women's Aid Armagh Down continue to advocate and lobby at local and regional level. The CEO and senior management team continue to work alongside the eight regional Women's Aid groups and Women's Aid Federation NI to ensure regional, collective and responsive actions in campaigning, lobbying and policy development ensuring that the voices of women, children and young people are clearly heard and firmly on the agenda for all those decision makers who are in positions of power with the moral responsibility to listen and act putting safety and protection of women, children and young people centre front of all policies and strategies. As stated elsewhere in this report we continue to deliver Domestic/Sexual Abuse awareness training to a wide range of agencies.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Strategic Planning

Our strategic plan is dedicated to placing women, children and young people experiencing domestic/sexual abuse at the heart of everything we do, ensuring they receive the help and support they deserve. We recognize the challenges ahead—adapting to changing needs, addressing barriers, and responding to increasing demand—and are committed to meeting them with innovation, resilience, and collaboration.

Our strategic plan reflects our commitment to delivering trauma-informed support services that place the safety, dignity, and empowerment of women, children, and young people at the centre of our mission. Recognizing the profound impact of domestic and sexual abuse, we strive to create an environment of trust, understanding, and respect where women, children and young people feel heard, valued, and supported.

By prioritising the voices of those we serve, embracing evidence-based practices, and fostering strong partnerships, we will not only address immediate needs but also drive meaningful, long-term change.

We are committed to meeting challenges through evidence-based, trauma-informed approaches that address the complex needs of those we serve. By fostering resilience, promoting healing, and advocating for systemic change, our plan aims to ensure every individual has the opportunity to rebuild their lives free from violence and fear."

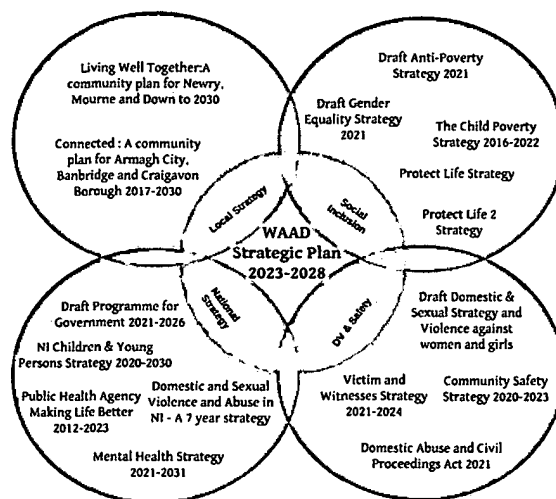
The pillars, strategic goals, and key action areas outlined in our strategy are designed to complement a broad range of local, regional, and national strategies and policies. By aligning with existing frameworks, we enhance our collective impact and ensure that our efforts are synchronized with wider initiatives. The diagram below illustrates the strategic alignment of the Women's Aid Armagh Down Strategic Plan 2023-28, highlighting the interconnectedness of our work with national and regional priorities.

Our Vision 'A world where women and children are safe and supported.'

Our Mission 'To believe in, listen to and support women and children facing domestic abuse so that they feel safe, hopeful and can thrive.'

Our work is focused over two thematic pillars and 8 strategic goals

1. Supporting women and children – To provide trauma sensitive support for women and children through high quality programmes, services and the provision of safe and secure spaces.
2. Developing a Sustainable and Resilient organisation- To operate with the highest standards of governance with robust financial management, investing in and supporting our staff and volunteers and to enhance our financial sustainability by raising our profile and diversifying our income sources.



We believe that through partnership working, we will build a future where safety, empowerment, and healing are accessible to all.

Our strategy is in place to help us amplify the voices of women, children and young people experiencing domestic/sexual abuse and to strive to deliver the services you need.

There are many people to thank for the continued success of Women's Aid Armagh Down. Our funders, our staff and volunteers, and the local businesses and individuals who remain so generous.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Public Benefit Statement

The Board of Women's Aid Armagh Down Limited confirm that they have had due regard for the guidance produced on public benefit by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and are pleased to report that during the year the charitable company has continued to provide public benefits through the charitable activities delivered.

Financial review

The net movement of funds amounted to an increase of £114,795, of which an increase of £152,518 related to unrestricted activities and a decrease of £37,723 related to restricted funds. The Charity is involved in various income generating activities to provide adequate resources to meet its objectives.

At 31 March 2024 the Charity had restricted reserves of £100,749 and unrestricted reserves of £923,200.

Reserves policy

Reserves are represented by the fund balances in the balance sheet. Restricted funds are those where the charity must spend the funds in line with a particular purpose or project, usually specified by the donor or as identified at the time of receiving the funds. Unrestricted reserves do not carry any restrictions on how they can be used as they are not restricted to, nor designated for, a particular purpose.

It is the policy of the Charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a minimum of three months' expected expenditure to cover the main risk to the organisation including redundancy and funder contracts. The aim is to provide sufficient funds to cover any unforeseen costs which may arise, recognise the volatile grant environment as well as allowing for the payment of any liabilities which would arise should the company cease to operate. Reserves are monitored as part of the review of financial reports on an on-going basis throughout the year.

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Harbinson Mulholland be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the Trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

A Word from the Directors/Trustees

Our Annual Report presents our progress against our strategic objectives over the last year and is a record of achievement and an opportunity for reflection and appreciation of our staff and volunteers. This has been a historic year for Women's Aid Armagh Down as we have marked 40 years of history in the area. This milestone year has been filled with moments of celebration and contemplation, and is evidence of the commitment and support of our staff, volunteers, and community. There is much for which to be thankful.

In this year we have had more engagement with our local business community than ever before. We are delighted that so many business leaders in our area are generous enough to give their support to the organisation, and as we look to the future we are grateful of their support. Our donations from private individuals have also been higher than we had expected, and each one is received with thanks - not just for the financial support of our work, but for the message behind them: across Armagh-Down, we know that our services are seen and valued, and we feel the support of our communities. Thank you.

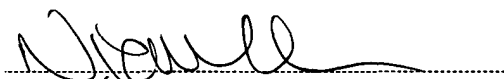
That support has been particularly needed this year. Male violence against women is on the rise, and there has been a steady, and terrifying, stream of news stories reminding us of that. Our incredible staff team have worked tirelessly in this year to achieve the numbers set out in this report, fighting against a rising tide of gender based violence to make meaningful changes to our service users, impacting one woman, one life, at a time, to make the world a better and safer place. We are privileged to work alongside such an inspirational team, and the Board would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to them.

This has been the first year for many of our new board members, who joined us shortly after our last AGM. They bring a mix of skills, and as we approach the mid-term of our Strategic Plan, it is reassuring to have financial, business, legal, and healthcare expertise on the board. Our role on the Board is made easier by the strong leadership shown by Eileen and the Senior Leadership Team – Gillian, Helen, Linda and Mairead. They continue to navigate difficult waters with the upmost professionalism and compliance.

As an organisation we are entering a new phase; our buildings are in the process of a significant upgrade, and we have ambitions to modernise and transform the delivery of services. This is an exciting time, made possible by the continued support shown to us by our donors and the efforts from key individuals including Tony Clarke, who provides Accountancy services, and Deborah Loughran of King Communication who has been invaluable in connecting us to stakeholders and amplifying our message.

Ultimately, we exist for women. We are here to do everything in our power to protect women and children from gender based violence, and we will be here for as long as it takes to build a world free from it. This report sets out the actions we have taken in the last year to move towards that goal, while we know the road ahead is long, we know we walk it with your support. Thank you.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Directors.



Niamh O'Maoláin
Chair of Board of Directors

Date: 3 December 2024

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

A WORD FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

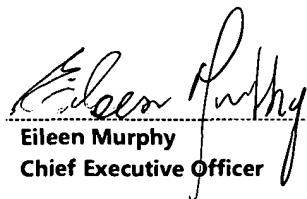
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Thank You

As the Chief Executive Officer, I wish to extend my gratitude to all the staff and volunteers whose dedication, passion and strenuous efforts are the bedrock of our success both in this year and going forward where I am confident, we will achieve even greater outcomes together. The team at Women's Aid Armagh Down are truly remarkable individuals who continue to strive to provide the much-needed collective effort in ensuring we support as many women children and young people as possible. In particular I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our Senior Management Team - Gillian, Helen, Linda and Mairead for their continuous assistance, support and, wisdom afforded to me throughout the year ensuring we deliver excellence every day. My sincere gratitude also to the voluntary members of the Women's Aid Armagh Down Board for their tireless commitment and professionalism giving up their time and energy ensuring the vital governance, strategic direction and compliance of Women's Aid Armagh Down as we deliver on our stated aims and objectives as a charity and as an employer. I consider myself truly fortunate and honoured to work alongside such extraordinary individuals.

It is also imperative for me to extend my heartfelt gratitude and thanks to our incredible local community and further afield for their steadfast and unwavering support for our work. Without your extraordinary support we would not be able to provide the wide range of support to women, children and young people whose lives depend on our services being available to them. Your combined efforts have touched countless lives and without your support our work would be so much more challenging and at times nearly impossible. A massive thank you to everyone across our community supporting our work. As I have said previously - your support is the beating heart of our community.

Above all, I want to extend a special thanks to the women, children and young people at the most difficult times in their lives trusted us to help and support them, and they work with us to rediscover their resilience, confidence, freedom and self-belief. We will listen to you, we believe you and in you, and we are here for you because you are the reason Women's Aid Armagh Down exists.



Eileen Murphy
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 3 December 2024

WOMEN'S AID ARMAGH DOWN LTD

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustees, who are also the directors of Women's Aid Armagh Down Ltd for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

By order of the Board of Trustees



N Ó'Maoláin
Trustee

3 December 2024