



Cymorth i Ferched Cymru
Welsh Women's Aid

Impact Report 2019/20

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

Welsh Women's Aid (WWA) is the national umbrella body for third sector violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) specialist services in Wales.

Our federation

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

We are working as a federation so that:

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

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

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

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

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

Women and children have healthy, safe and equal relationships.

The prevalence of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence remains largely hidden. The extent of femicide, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, sexual harassment, female genital mutilation and other forms of abuse are often invisible in official statistics nationally and locally, and there is a lack of consensus about how such violence should be defined and measured and how this can best be achieved.

2019-20: Our year in action

A primary role of Welsh Women's Aid is to take steps to prevent Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. The 'Blueprint for the Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls in Wales' and the 'Change that Lasts' model are two crucial methods that we utilize to reduce the prevalence of violence and abuse in Wales.

A Blueprint for the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls in Wales

The Welsh Women's Aid Blueprint for Prevention aims to achieve "a Wales in which all women and children live free from domestic abuse, sexual violence and all forms of violence against women, and by doing so, achieve independence, freedom, and liberation from oppression".

We are taking action through a 'whole-system' response, which places equal emphasis on primary prevention; early intervention and support; protection; and accountability. With this work Welsh Women's Aid aim to ensure multi-sector investment in the whole system.

We aim to ensure Primary Prevention is concerned with changing attitudes, norms, practices, and structures which perpetuate gender inequality and condone, or fail to condemn, VAWDASV.

PRIORITY

01

OUR 3 KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

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

Our aspirations through the Blueprint for Prevention are to achieve the following:



All forms of gender-based violence against women are better understood, challenged, and prevented.



Relationships between women, men, and children are healthy, safe, and equal; underpinned by respect for each other's human rights and dignity.



All survivors of gender-based violence against women are able to access early support, which builds on their strengths, meets their needs, and improves their health and well-being.

A few examples of targeted primary prevention carried out by Welsh Women's Aid in 2019/20:

Children and Young People (3-16 years old)

Welsh Women's Aid supports and works to advance Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in schools. The Safety, Trust and Respect (STAR) is Welsh Women's Aid's prominent Train the Trainer programme specifically designed for those teaching children and young people about safe and healthy relationships. Once trained, STAR practitioners undergo regular evaluation to ensure that a high standard is maintained, and children are supported to the fullest extent.

In 2019/20, 96 professionals were trained in the preventative programmes; and 22 staff from our member groups in the recovery STAR programmes. We also partnered with Calan DVS to deliver the STAR training for Additional Learning Needs education to a total of 37 teachers.

Bespoke VAWDASV and RSE resources were developed and circulated to 15 schools across Wales. We met with the regional coordinators and chairs of SRE committees in Gwent, Neath and Port Talbot and Bridgend and worked with them to implement the WEA good practice guide.



Young People (16+ years old)

Welsh Women's Aid also sought to ensure that further education colleges and universities introduce a compulsory 'Bystander Intervention' training, delivered by a specialist VAWDASV service so that there is a clear link to support if needed.

In 2019/20, we delivered Bystander Initiative training to a total of 47 staff in 3 universities covering 6 campuses in this year (including University of South Wales and University of Wales Trinity Saint David at their campuses in Swansea and Carmarthen).



47 staff in 3 universities

Influencing the National Agenda

WWA understands that both mainstream and social media have a significant influence over people's understanding of gender 'norms' and of VAWDASV.

As a part of our prevention work we seek to challenge misrepresentation in the media, strive to improve how VAWDASV is reported and influence the way in which VAWDASV survivors are portrayed in the media.

Example

To address the misrepresentation by the media we partnered with the National Union of Journalists Wales and BBC Wales to hold a seminar for journalists on media reporting of VAWDASV. The event included a panel of survivor experts by experience who outlined what they would like to see from the media.



Example

We hosted a seminar on 'trauma informed reporting' with expert journalist Jo Healey looking at what changes can be made to the narrative to accurately report the epidemic of VAWDASV both in Wales and globally.

WWA continued to attend the Welsh Government communications panel meetings and provide feedback on the latest campaign concepts.



The Justice System

The Welsh Women's Aid Blueprint for Prevention states that the Justice System "must do its utmost to hold perpetrators to account" and provide "protective measures for victims (or potential victims) of VAWDASV".

To ensure our members are supported to meet the needs of women and girls in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) who have experienced abuse we continued our work with Police Crime Commissioners, specialist services that support women in the CJS, Wales Women in the CJS Board and the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Cymru Women's Pathfinder Programme.

Our National Training Service partnership with specialist services continued and remains the only Wales-based accredited provider of Domestic Abuse Matters training for the CJS in Wales.

We delivered specialist training for the CJS on working with perpetrators, on coercive controlling behaviour and on other aspects of VAWDASV.

Member Support

1,443

survivors received support from dedicated sexual violence services. At the year-end, 251 survivors were on waiting lists for rape crisis support at 4 WWA member services.

17,223

survivors were supported by domestic abuse community-based services. At the year-end, 533 survivors were on waiting lists for community support.

2,522

survivors (adults and children) benefited from refuge-based support.

54

women without 'recourse to public funds' were supported in refuge who would have otherwise faced destitution.

574

survivors were unable to be supported in refuges because of a lack of service space, capacity or resources. 289 children and young people were living in emergency refuges each quarter of last year.

Key Awareness Raising Events

'We Believe Her' Seminar

WWA delivered a seminar raising awareness of national campaigns for justice for survivors of sexual violence awareness seminar featuring:

- 'End Violence Against Women' (EVAW) and their campaign for Rape Justice which looked at the failure of Police and courts to provide justice after sexual violence, and to ensure that women's human rights to safety and justice are being fulfilled.
- The 'We Can't Consent to This' campaign, created as a response to the increasing use of "rough sex" defences to the killing or violent injury of women and girls.



Business Breakfast

WWA presented to local business leaders to raise awareness of the role that companies and employers have in preventing VAWDASV, supporting survivors and holding perpetrators to account.

A survivor shared her story of the role her employer played in supporting her in recognising the abuse she was experiencing, supporting her in reporting to the police and attending therapeutic support.

Cheques and Balances Seminar

WWA partnered with Surviving Economic Abuse to coordinate a seminar exploring economic abuse as a form of coercive and controlling behaviour.

- No Recourse to Public Funds facilitated by Southall Black Sisters and BAWSO.
- Women's exploitation enabled by gender inequality and poverty facilitated by Swansea Women's Aid.
- Addressing gender-based violence, gender inequality and poverty facilitated by the Head of the VAWDASV Team in the Welsh Government.
- Supporting survivors with financial and economic issues facilitated by Carmarthen Domestic Abuse Service.

Survivors engagement: experts through lived experience

Survivors Empowering and Educating Services (SEEdS)

Coordinated by WWA, our SEEdS survivor participation project brought together women from across South Wales and provided training, support, resources and a safe space where survivors could meet, share their knowledge and lived experiences, and learn from one another.

The project provided platforms where survivors were able to meaningfully inform the planning, development and delivery of violence against women services by both statutory and voluntary organisation.

After three years of funding from the SWPCC and the Pilgrim's Trust, the current SEEdS project came to an end early in 2020. Despite this, we were resolute in our actions to ensure that the project had longevity past this date and worked in collaboration with survivors to develop a survivor engagement good practice toolkit for organisations that are not VAWDASV specialist service providers, but who work or engage with survivors including local authorities and journalists.

We also supported our established SEEdS members to transition to an independent group following the end of the programme in March 2020. The survivor engagement framework covers all aspects of survivor engagement across our federation and how this will support survivor engagement with national and local government decision makers and other stakeholders.

Since the establishment of the independent SEEdS social enterprise, the group has appointed its new directors and has launched its informative website with a collection of helpful resources and information.

WWA continued to facilitate an online forum of 90+ survivors, delivering on our commitment to continue engaging with survivors and placing their experiences and voices at the core of our work.



Visit our website for access to the survivor engagement good practice toolkit outlining the key principles needed to ensure work with survivors is survivor-centred:

www.welshomensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/SEEdS-Toolkit.pdf



www.seedswales.org



info@seedswales.com



As a SEEd, we aim to empower and educate others, in doing so we also empower ourselves. From having experienced being silenced by my perpetrator, it is so powerful to be listened to by those in the industry who are supposed to help those who suffer from VAWDASV.”



From a 'victim' to a survivor: “I could not have made this transition without the peer support I have found within SEEdS. In SEEdS I have found a group of wonderful women leading to friendships we have found through domestic violence. Along with these women and the support of Welsh Women’s Aid, they have carried me from those dark days into the light.”



Being part of SEEdS, the training and opportunities to build my skills and knowledge, the women I have met, have all been instrumental in the confidence I gained to apply for a new job in the health service. I’ve been told by friends and family that I’m a different person to who I was three years ago, SEEdS has given me a chance to have a voice and to tell my own and my children’s story.”



Provision, protection and support



17,174 survivors

were supported by the Helpline service through direct contact and via professionals calling on their behalf.



52 callers

were identified as being in a life-threatening situation, and the Helpline ensured their safety through accessing the appropriate emergency services.



630 family/friends

were supported by the Helpline service.



1,354 women

and their children were directly and indirectly referred to emergency refuge accommodation.

Live Fear Free Helpline

WWA continued to manage the Welsh Government Live Fear Free Helpline, open to anyone who has experienced domestic abuse, sexual violence and/or violence against women, or to friends, relatives, professionals and agencies who have concerns or queries about any form of violence or abuse.

Our experienced support team can discuss concerns and provide help, support and information without judgement, blame or pressure. The team are equipped to provide support and information on a range of options and services throughout Wales, including emergency accommodation and access to refuge-based support, access to rape crisis/sexual violence support, counselling, and access to local support services for support with welfare and benefits rights, legal issues, homelessness and health-related support.

Our Live Fear Free Helpline team ensured that 97% of incoming Helpline calls were answered within 30 seconds.



**97%
30 SECS**



Live Fear Free Helpline

Llinell Gymorth Byw Heb Ofn

You can talk to one of our specialist workers confidentially and for free 24/7

Call our 24/7 helpline on **0808 80 10 800**

Contact our direct email service via **info@livefearfreehelpline.wales**

Text us on **078600 77 333**

Text phone users can contact us via Type Talk on **1800108088010800**

We can support you in Welsh, English and any other languages using LanguageLine.



Live Fear Free Helpline

Llinell Gymorth Byw Heb Ofn



0808 80 10 800

Domestic abuse, sexual violence and/or other forms of violence against women can affect us all. If you need help, support or are concerned about someone, we are here to talk over the phone, online or via email any time of the day or night.

Gall cam-drin domestig, trais rhywiol a/neu ffurfiau eraill o drais yn erbyn merched effeithio ar bawb ohonom. Os ydych angen help, cymorth neu'n bryderus am rywun, rydym yma i siarad dros y ffôn, ar-lein neu drwy e-bost ar unrhyw adeg o'r dydd neu'r nos.



info@livefearfreehelpline.wales

gwybodaeth@llinellgymorthbywhebofn.cymru

Webchat

livefearfree.gov.wales

Gwe-sgwrs

bywhebofn.llyw.cymru



@LiveFearFree @BywHebOfn



Supporting Specialist Services

Welsh Women's Aid is a federation of specialist services, survivors, campaigners and allies across Wales.

Some of our members' services are small local specialist providers and others are regional or national in their scope.

The support provided by these organisations is diverse and includes delivery of refuge-based support, rape crisis support, community and outreach support for women, children and young people, and men across Wales.

Last year our member services supported 21,188 survivors. The value of their work cannot be quantified by numbers alone

but rather by the significance and impact of their work. The flexibility of their provision that is tailored to the individual's needs, builds on their strengths and aids their recovery from trauma is critical in transforming survivors' lives and delivering A Change That Lasts.

Despite their vital importance, many of our services operate in an uncertain

environment having to compete for funding that is often delivered in short-term yearly cycles. WWA provided bespoke assistance to each of our 20 members to ensure that their vital work continues uninterrupted.

This includes providing members with advice, consultancy, support and training to deliver policy and service improvements for the benefit of survivors. In addition, we provide national quarterly and annual reports on the state of the sector, to provide a national picture of the demand for and impact of our network of specialist services.

As the year drew to a close, it became increasingly obvious that the Coronavirus pandemic would affect specialist VAWDASV services. In response we rapidly reconfigured both delivery and frequency of our support so that in these uncertain

times, there was a shared space to rapidly escalate frontline workers' experience to a regional and governmental level.

Specialist VAWDASV seminars included a focus group with sexual violence survivors exploited through prostitution, organised in partnership with one of our specialist members. As a result of this work, we produced a list of recommendations for policy makers and service providers, and a position paper outlining key priorities to address prostitution and sexual exploitation under VAWDASV.

PRIORITY

02

OUR 3 KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

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

10

regional meetings held with members, providing members with opportunities to access support and guidance

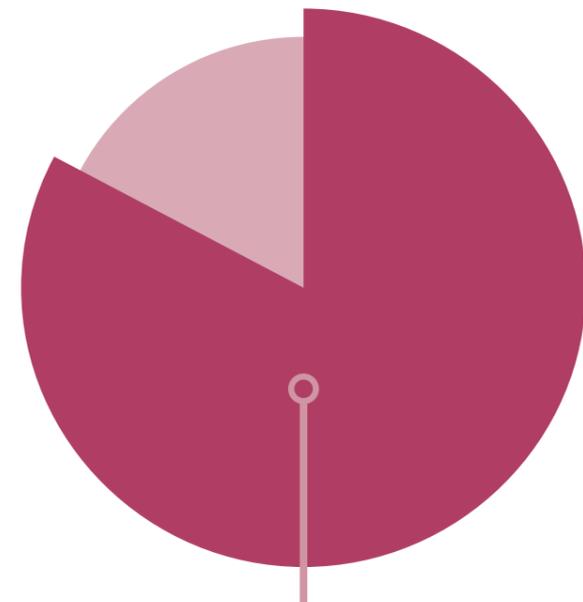


Sustainable Funding Support

WWA coordinated 4 national working groups for our members to explore sustainable funding options for specialist provision in Wales, supporting a move towards greater collaboration and enabling members to contribute their views.

WWA coordinated 4 funding task and finish group meetings in the year, and continued to campaign for a sustainable funding model in Wales that ensures no survivor is turned away or has to wait to receive support.

We know that black and minoritised women, women with no recourse to public funds, disabled women, women who face multiple disadvantage or are sexually exploited are often missed out from strategic planning and commissioning plans. WWA continued to put their experiences front and centre in our work to make sure that their needs are prioritised and that specialist services are appropriately supported and resourced to bring about change for all survivors in Wales.



83% of our member services are engaged in the NQSS Quality Mark (15 out of the eligible 18 services)

WWA National Quality Service Standards (NQSS)

The NQSS Quality Mark scheme continues to be rolled out to our members to help services evidence their quality and promote consistent delivery of high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services.



71% increase in level of knowledge

81% increase in level of skill

81% increase in confidence acting

96% rated the overall course positively

89% rated the pace of the course positively

97% answered positively to the course meeting the objectives

71% either strongly agree or agree that their knowledge on the subject had increased

81% either strongly agree or agree that their skill on the subject had increased

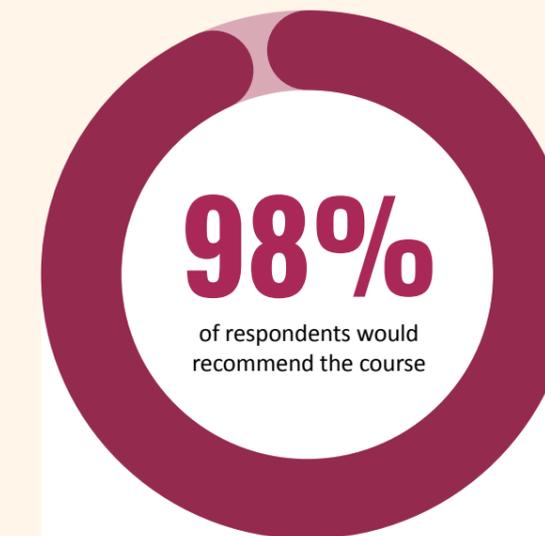
81% either strongly agree or agree that their confidence in acting on the subject had increased

98% of respondents recommended the course

National Training Partnership

WWA coordinates the National Training service, a partnership of specialist VAWDASV agencies delivering training and ensuring we are offering the best expertise and experience on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The partnership delivered training on topics from sexual harassment to offender management. The following statistics are based on the 758 feedback forms we received.



1,481

total number of learners trained

Supporting Public Services

An integral facet of Welsh Women's Aid's work is to raise awareness of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence as prevalent, preventable, serious, unacceptable, and human rights violations.

Partnerships

We continue to amplify the voices of survivors to keep the spotlight on an issue that has often remained hidden from the public eye. In order to achieve our vision of a world in which women and children live free from all forms of violence against women, we need to prevent abuse and violence from happening in the first place.

We work in partnership with survivors, specialist services and communities to strengthen our movement to challenge harmful attitudes and hold perpetrators to account.

We continued to work collaboratively with our members and the wider VAWDASV third sector, including collaborating with WEN Wales, Disability Wales, Shelter Cymru and Chwarae Teg to jointly advocate for VAWDASV prevention and address the issue of intersecting and multiple disadvantage.

- We delivered workshops on sexual harassment.

- We contributed to the Gender Equality Review.
- We promoted joint briefings and reports to meet the needs of disabled survivors, and housing needs of sexual violence survivors.

We continued our work with Police Crime Commissioners, specialist services that support women in the CJS, Wales Women in the CJS Board and the IOM Cymru Women's Pathfinder Programme to ensure members are supported to meet the needs of women and girls in the criminal justice system who have experienced abuse.

WWA sustained our partnership with Wales Arts Review, providing a piece for St Dwynwen's day linking her history as a survivor of forced marriage, rape and Her Message of Love to the promotion of healthy relationship education and prevention of VAWDASV today.

PRIORITY

03

OUR 3 KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

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

VAWDASV Partnerships

WWA also worked in partnership with VAWG organisations across the UK.

We have provided representation for the Welsh specialist sector at meetings led by DA Commissioner, VAWG sector coalition meetings, and National Policing Domestic Abuse advisory meetings, led by the College of Policing.

This year we focused on giving a voice to the sector in communicating their needs to the UK and Welsh Government as well as other public and third sector bodies such as Community Housing Cymru.

We progressed work on our UK Training Academy, community prevention work, and on joint work to cost specialist services models and how we may achieve secure and sustainable funding.

We continued to engage in meetings at UK level, with our sister federations. This includes creation of a 'Research Integrity Framework for VAWG research, and

scoping and contributing to the completion of the Women's Aid federations' centre of excellence in the UK, on data, standards, research and training. The framework engages with noted academics in the field of VAWG prevention as well as the experts in the field. Following on from this work, academics met in the European conference in Oslo to review progress and next steps, and further work by the Four Federations is underway to progress this in 2020/21.



Campaigns

In 2019/20 WWA responded to 100% of VAWDASV relevant consultations, and priority was given to those consultations that were most relevant and where influence from survivors and services were most required including:

- Children, Young People and Education Committee: Follow-up on the Mind over Matter report on the emotional and mental health of children and young people.
- Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee: VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015 post legislative review evidence.
- Submission of further information to Justice Commission for Wales.



DOMESTIC ABUSE BILL

The Domestic Abuse Bill was re-introduced post general election with the first reading taking place on 3rd March 2020. Welsh Women's Aid collaborated with sister organisations in England to respond to the reintroduction of the Domestic Abuse Bill and provide supporting evidence for the first reading.

We informed a joint briefing from the sector outlining the priorities of the Bill, reviewed and informed amendments on family courts and provided guidance to the Victims Commissioner on a new offence regarding strangulation. We continue to work alongside End Violence Against Women (EVAW), Rape Crisis and Imkaan.



VAWDASV HEALTH TOOLKIT

We finalised our VAWDASV Health Toolkit which includes 8 different briefings including a paper on healthcare approaches to prevent VAWDASV, and presented this to safeguarding leads in an event organised by Public Health Wales.



FAMILY COURTS

At the end of the year we held a panel event on Family Courts at our national conference including presentations by 2 survivors including CourtSaid survivor-led campaign on family courts, and academic input from Dr Jess Mant. We continued to investigate joint working opportunities to develop this work and engaged in the Family Court project in Cardiff looking at improving responses.



I have been told by my friend who is a police officer he also sees things very differently now because of me, whereby he may attend a domestic situation and feel here we go again... Why doesn't she leave... Block him. He feels that he has more understanding about the complexities of domestic abuse and shares this with his own colleagues.”

- Change That Lasts Feedback

Prevention

Providing Expertise to Commissioners

We delivered a seminar for 24 commissioners and other professional covering topics including advice on commissioning:

- Trauma-informed services and the Change that Lasts model
- Services for LGBT+ survivors
- Services for survivors with No Recourse to Public Funds
- Regional commissioning

In the Autumn of 2019, we collaborated to deliver the Women in the Criminal Justice System Summit with Safer Wales, Clinks and Prison Rating System.

The Summit included contributions from the Deputy Minister, Police and Crime Commissioners, expert specialist providers and experts by lived experience.

It focused on how we can collaborate across devolved and non-devolved areas to support women away from the criminal justice system.

A commissioning briefing, created as a part of the Lloyds toolkit 'Tackling Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence: A Collaborative Commissioning Toolkit for Services In Wales', was shared with the Supporting People network through the SPIN meeting.

The Lloyds toolkit aims to help agencies in Wales to work together to provide an effective commissioning approach to ensure the future well-being of all those affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

WWA continued to partner with Cymorth Cymru and CIH Cymru to inform the Welsh Government budget to ensure that it appropriately resources commissioners to enable adequate housing related support to all survivors.

Change that Lasts: Ask Me Ambassadors

Our Change that Lasts approach underpins the entirety of the work we carry out.

The Change that Lasts model is a strengths-based, needs-led approach that supports survivors of all forms of violence against women, and their children, to build resilience, and leads to independence.

It aims to put a stop to domestic abuse and sexual violence at the earliest stage; to listen to survivors and support them to access the assistance they need when they need it.

A key aspect of the Change that Lasts approach is the 'Ask Me' scheme, which aims to improve the community's response to survivors of abuse by training members of the community to become Ask Me 'ambassadors'.

Ambassadors are trained through the scheme to raise awareness of VAWDASV and to provide immediate support and signposting to survivors in their communities. They also provide support for concerned others such as friends or family members of survivors, providing information on specific help and advice available to them. In addition, ambassadors provide guidance to and signpost those

To further the work of the Change that Lasts in 2020/21 we will be continuing our ongoing work on 'Trusted Professionals' and further support of specialist services with the Change that Lasts model. 'Trusted professionals' is a fully integrated, one day training course for professionals, which was developed and is delivered in partnership with Respect.

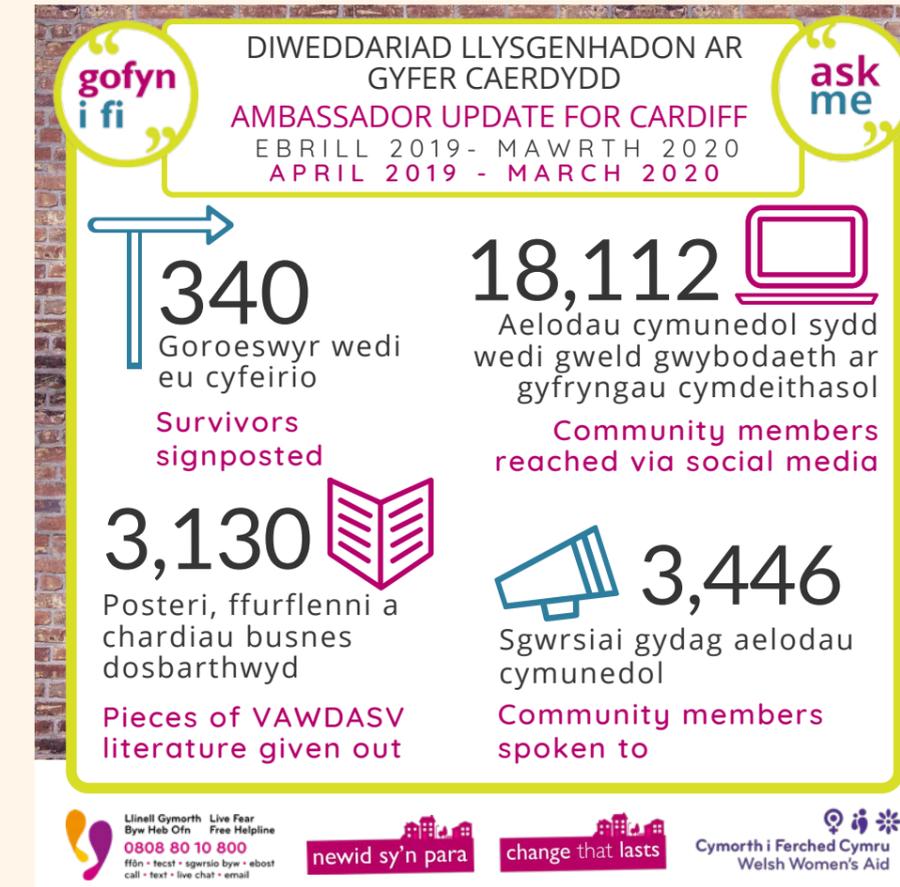
The course is designed to upskill professionals who have contact with potential survivors and/or perpetrators of violence against women, domestic abuse and/or sexual violence to recognise the signs, respond to disclosures and refer to specialist support services.

In 2019/20, we trained a total of 170 ambassadors across Wales.

identifying as perpetrators of abuse so that they can take steps to overcome their abusive behaviour. More information about our Ask Me ambassador scheme can be found at <https://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/change-that-lasts/ask-me-project/>

The work of our Ask Me Ambassadors has been incredibly important and has already shown valuable benefits to the communities they represent.

This strand of the Change that Lasts model aims to maximise the specialist support services response to women impacted by violence and abuse, by allocating resource to services to introduce, develop, and review tools to support survivors. Our future goal is for widespread uptake of the Trusted Professional training across Wales, as well as deliver to all those in public-facing roles who do not receive training under the National Training Framework.



Feedback



I'm loving all the opportunities to be involved in stuff that you're posting! I've done two research projects now and applied for the Welsh assembly panel! It's awesome to be part of the voice that survivors need and stand up for the positive change. It feels like a flip side to my situation and really trying to make sure that no one's journey replicates mine."



The information you shared about training related to FGM on Facebook was really helpful for me to be able to pass on to a friend who gets asked a lot about the subject and had been looking for something just like it to share with community members she works with."



Knowing about my association with Welsh Women's Aid, one of my acquaintances came up to me to speak about her abusive relationship. It was the first such conversation as an Ambassador. I listened, believed, held her hand throughout and in the weeks after this conversation. I was happy to see that within 2 months, she prepared herself and left the abusive partner."



Provided information about the WWA business breakfast to a contact in transport for Wales. They attended and are looking at their policies."



Our strategic advocacy and influence

Looking Forward

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic began at the end of the 2019/20 financial year, which posed a number of challenges and obstacles to the VAWDASV sector, especially to those delivering front-line services.

As of the 23rd March 2020, Wales underwent a national lockdown, which included restrictions on travel, limitations on socialising, and restrictions in accessing services.

These unprecedented changes have impacted all lives but have had even graver and disproportionate effects on those already experiencing VAWDASV. As such, we anticipated the increased demand on services, and foresaw additional uncertainty and pressure on services which were already hard pressed prior to the pandemic. Our commitment, therefore, was to ensure that specialist support services did not become an unanticipated casualty of the pandemic response.

To react to the exceptional circumstances, Welsh Women's Aid has been taking a number of steps to adapt our services and provide additional support wherever possible. Full details of which will be available in the upcoming Welsh Women's Aid 2020/21 Impact Report.



Members

Welsh Women's Aid member services have always been on the frontline responding to survivors in crisis; making sure that they have a place of safety and are supported to rebuild their lives to achieve independence and autonomy. However, never was the importance of their work more evident than at the end of financial year 2019/20 when the government imposed a lockdown restricting the population's movement and many survivors' already reduced space for action. Our network of specialist services responded swiftly to this new reality by adapting their provision and offering a much-needed lifeline to survivors. We have also adapted our support services to maintain and further our support to members during this turbulent time.

Influencing the National Agenda

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we produced two briefings for Welsh Government regarding the initial impact assessment of COVID-19 on survivors and specialist services, which outlined clear solutions to mitigate the impact and enable services to maintain and increase support. These briefings were informed by direct consultation with specialist services.

We wrote to the First Minister, key portfolio ministers, Police Crime Commissioners and Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to outline the focus needed from all stakeholders and to offer to work with them to maintain and increase provision. We participated in the weekly Welsh Government COVID-19 strategic VAWDASV meetings and communications meetings. We also produced a public statement on the use of hotels and B&Bs to inform government and media discussions regarding this.

Partnership

At the end of 2019/20 and progressing into 2020/21, we collaborated with the three other Women's Aid National Federations to raise the profile of VAWG services and the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on survivors and specialist services, and to influence the ring-fencing of funding for specialist support services across the UK.

Similarly, we maintained our partnership work with VAWG organisations across the UK, including writing to the Prime Minister and informing a joint sector briefing outlining the COVID-19 impacts for the sector and the need for coordinated support to be provided across non-devolved areas.

Campaigns

During the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic we developed a 3-pronged communications and campaigns plan aimed at:

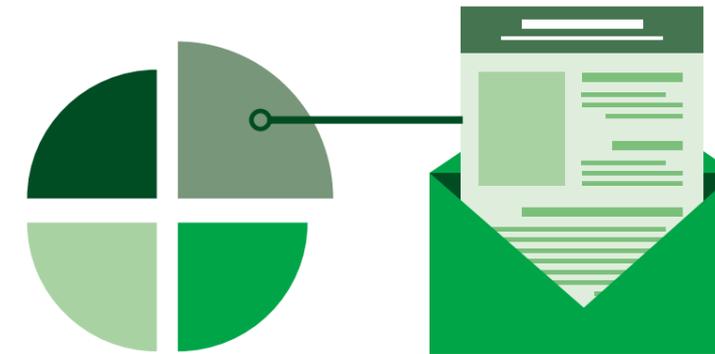
- Promoting the Live Free Fear Helpline and local support services
- Bystander action and support
- Survivor safety and self-care information

This approach has allowed us to continue to promote support for survivors and their families, as well as providing additional support for those in the community and how to respond to VAWDASV during the pandemic.



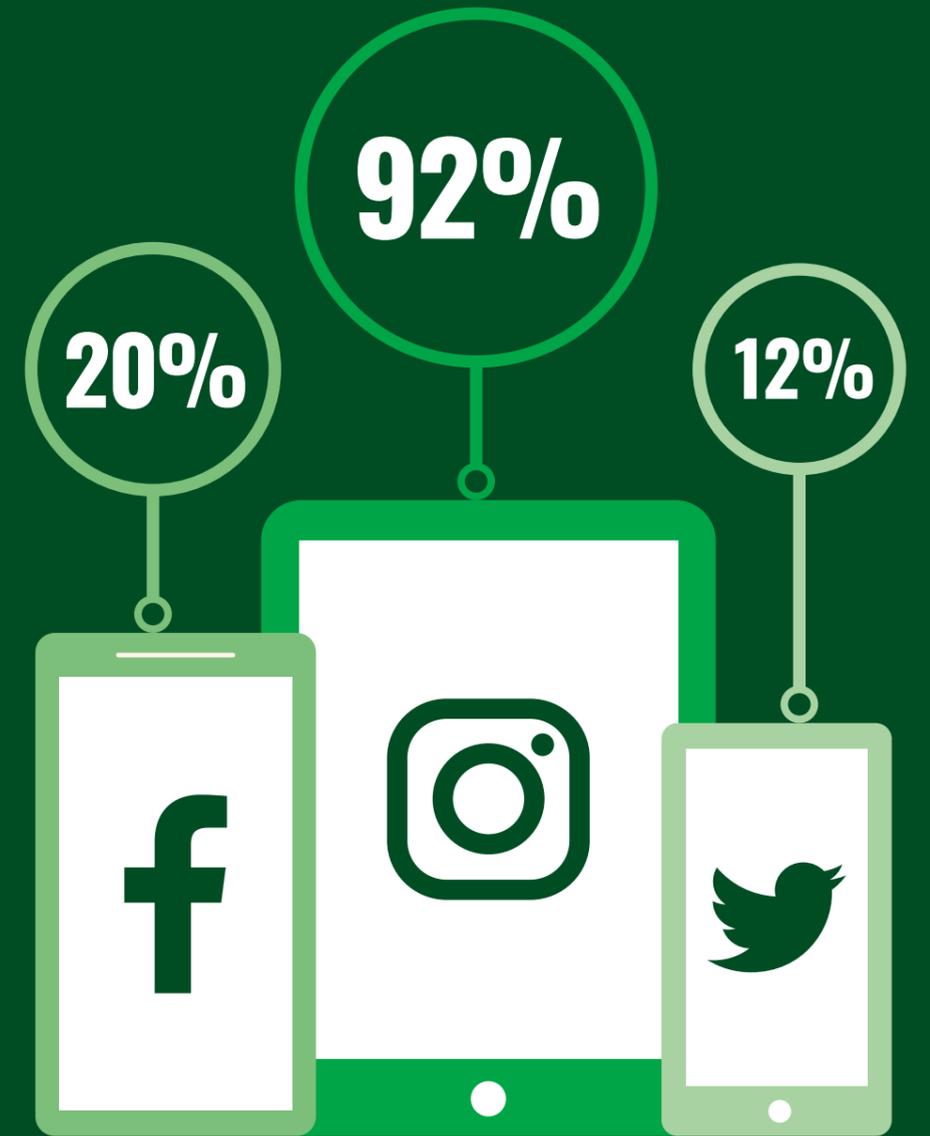
Website

There has been an increase in traffic to the website year on year, with an 11.79% increase in new users since the previous year.



Newsletters

WWA circulate e-newsletters to subscribers each quarter. 12.33% increase in subscribers (275 subscribers) in 2019/20.



Increase in Social Media Followers

Finance and resources: help us raise funds

Each year, Welsh Women's Aid publishes an annual report and financial statements. Copies of our financial information can be found and downloaded from our website.

In 2019/20 our amazing supporters from across Wales and beyond made donations to Welsh Women's Aid to a value of £26,603. In addition to making direct donations, our supporters participated in a range of fundraising activities including the Cardiff Half Marathon and other sporting activities, the Welsh Cakes for Welsh Women's Aid campaign, crafting events and the proceeds of sales. We were also delighted to be chosen as one of two charities to be supported by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff's Charity Appeal during 2019-20; an endeavour that continued into the first part of 2021.

New funding during 2019-20 was received via the following grants:

- ROSA, enabling a strategic communications project focused on sexual harassment.
- Welsh Government, enabling a much-needed refurbishment of the Live Fear Free Helpline premises.
- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, providing an unrestricted grant to support our core delivery work.

If you would like to support our national work, please visit:

<https://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/support-us/> for a range of ideas and opportunities.

Join Us

You can also get directly involved in our work to stop violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales. Whether you want to become a supporter, a volunteer, a member, or want to work with us; together we can make a difference.

To find out more please visit our website: www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/join-us/



Members



Funders



Thank you to all our funders

For more information:

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August 2021



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