

North Ayrshire Women's Aid

Looking Back  
Looking Back

Leaping Forward  
Leaping Forward

Annual Report 2017

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## **Chairperson's Report**

### **Chairperson's Report**

At last year's AGM, Irene Campbell demitted her position as Chair of NAWA. Despite strenuous efforts to replace Irene as Chair, it was not possible to identify a suitable replacement from out with the current group of Trustees and consequently, Irene's departure left a considerable vacuum. As a result of that vacuum, the normal expression of thanks for the departing Chair was overlooked as Irene stepped down at the AGM. I want now to formally and publicly correct that omission and recognise all that Irene has done for NAWA in her years as Chair. Irene was Chair at one of the most challenging periods in the life of the organisation. With the support of the other Trustees, Irene steered NAWA through some exceptionally difficult waters and gave much more of her time and talent than could reasonably be expected of someone who is a volunteer. It is not an overstatement to say that without Irene, along with some key NAWA Trustees, the survival of the organisation may well have been in jeopardy. NAWA owes Irene a great debt of thanks for her determination and considerable efforts in driving the organisation through some very turbulent times and, on behalf of the members and the Trustees, I offer Irene our grateful thanks for all that she did as Chair. We are also lucky to have Irene continue as a Trustee, bringing all her expertise, experience and "corporate memory" to the table.

Following Irene's departure as Chair, and in the absence of a permanent chair, three Trustees offered to act as Chair for three months each, until the end of September 2017: Gillian Croan, Justina Murray and Yvonne Orr. Each of the three has made a short contribution to this report and I am grateful to each of them for stepping into the breach. I became Chair of NAWA only on 1<sup>st</sup> October having been a NAWA Trustee for many years and am looking forward to the further development of the organisation. This has been a year of transition for NAWA and each of the interim Chairs has made comment below about the period of their interim Chairmanship.

Before going on to the comments made by the three Interim Chairs I want to take a moment to reflect on the considerable change that has taken place in this organisation since last year's AGM. At this point in time, NAWA has in place a strong leader, who is committed to – and passionate about – delivering first class services to women who are living with or fleeing from abusive situations. Mary Beglan has brought vision, drive and energy to NAWA and Mary wants to support the staff of NAWA to be able to give their best each day they come to work.

The staff are to be commended. They have embraced the new leadership and there is general enthusiasm for making changes to the service that will result in improved outcomes for women who access NAWA. The process of change and development continues and the Trustees are appreciative of the commitment shown by all employees of NAWA.

Anne Clarke

Chair, NAWA (from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017)

**Gillian Croan:** Interim Chair (1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017)

As Interim Chair I was mainly focused on supporting our new CEO as she settled into her new role with NAWA. We were delighted to appoint Mary Beglan from a very strong fleet of candidates and Mary took up her appointment with NAWA in January 2017. Mary's clear commitment to providing a modern and relevant service to our service users has meant that this year has been a year of considerable change for us. Mary has more than ably led that programme of change and while there is always more that we can do, we are working from a position of strong leadership, both at CEO and Board level, and can be confident that the organisation's efforts will continue to be channelled in the right direction.

**Justina Murray:** Interim Chair (1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> June)

Thankfully, my period as Interim Chair was quiet and uneventful; my role was to provide support to our new Chief Officer as she sought to bring about changes and developments in the service NAWA provides. This remains an ongoing process.

**Yvonne Orr:** interim Chair (1<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September)

During my short time as chair I was very aware of the time commitment required and thankfully Mary was there to make it easy for me - I even had a week's holiday during my stint! I had a very straightforward three months, and it did make me realise how much time and effort Irene gave at a particularly difficult time in our history. I reiterate what Anne has said and we are all extremely grateful to Irene.

I think the organisation is in a fantastic position at the moment; we have a very strong and committed Board

with Anne as Chair, a strong and enthusiastic CO in Mary and a pool of experienced and committed staff. I think jointly we can all ensure the organisation continues to grow and develop positively.

#### **Chief Officer's Report**

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The theme of this year's report, "Looking Back Leaping Forward" reflects the work undertaken in 2017. Since joining the organization in January 2017 I have been struck by the richness of the experience and history of NAWA. There is a total 232 years of work experience held within the team. This is not a figure to be ignored but to be celebrated as the amazing resource that it is.

While the focus of our work remains the same since our inception in 1980, to provide practical and emotional support to women and children affected by domestic abuse, the way in which we have delivered the service has changed over the years. From the early years of Collective to being part of the Council's tendered services, NAWA has had to adapt to changing circumstances. What has not changed is the need for the service within North Ayrshire. When looking at police incidents recorded, North Ayrshire remains amongst the highest of the council areas.

We have used this year to reflect on our journey to date and to identify the qualities that make NAWA unique. 2017 is the year of the rooster in Chinese New year terms.

The attributes of the rooster include resourcefulness, courageousness, hardworking, talented and confident. These are some of the qualities that can be found in NAWA. This is evidenced in the way in which staff have engaged with women and children, built relationships with professionals and the wider community, and embraced the challenges encountered by third sector organisations in modern day social care.

Some of the projects to highlight include:

- Collaboration with Funky Films that saw the production of a Domestic Abuse Awareness raising DVD
- Partnership with Ayrshire College resulting in NAWA providing placements to 8 Alternative Therapy students and the women receiving therapeutic massage

- The development of a Service User group
- Collaboration with Digital Story Telling Project and Young Voices to tell their story.
- A Women Only Recovery Group
- Working with Glasgow University to record the history of NAWA as part of Scottish Women's Aid Speaking Out Project
- Positive Care Inspectorate Report
- Updated Database to give more accurate and in depth information about the service

In addition to this we have invested in the refurbishment of our main office in Saltcoats and in our accommodation service. We have undertaken a training program to ensure that our staff are trained to the highest standard and are registered with the SSSC over the coming year. We have committed to becoming a Trauma Informed Service.

**Mary Beglan**

**Chief Officer**

**Data – What it tells us**

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The data provided in this report is limited due to the transfer of data from the old system to the new database. Going forward we will benefit from more in depth analysis of information gathered and able to use this information to guide the direction of service delivery.

In the reporting period March 16- April 17 NAWA received 554 referrals. The age of the women varied from 16yrs to 70yrs of age.

**Graph1**

98% of women referred moved through the service with only 2% recorded as being an inappropriate referral.

Of the 554 women involved with NAWA there were 439 children registered along with their mother.

When we look at the issues that women report as being relevant to them at the point of entry into the service we see that women experience a range of issues

**Graph 2**

**Refuge**

**Refuge**

NAWA can accommodate a total of 25 women and 46 children in accommodation throughout North Ayrshire. Throughout 2016/17 our accommodation continued to be in high demand with occupancy rates averaging 90%. Within this year we accommodated 155 women.

**“I couldn’t believe how quickly everything happened it took one day, from our health visitor realising our situation, to us getting moved in”**

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*“A safe place – somewhere I know I have support”*

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*“Safety for myself and my children”*

**“Safety for myself and my children”**

During this time, we accommodated 61 children.

Our accommodation continues to be a necessary resource for women and children who require a safe place to live while fleeing domestic abuse. In the coming year NAWA must meet the challenge to ensure that our accommodation is fit for purpose offering safe, comfortable accommodation to meet the needs of women and children.

#### **Outreach – a bit of what we do**

#### **Outreach – a bit of what we do**

Whilst working in outreach support, I started working with a woman who had recently moved into her own tenancy. Whilst at her home and in conversation, we identified the need for a 3 piece suite for the woman. She currently had a small 2 piece that she received from the Welfare fund; however, this was giving the woman back trouble and was uncomfortable. I explained that this is an area that NAWA could help her with and explained the options available.

- Cunningham Recycling Company; this is excellent condition furniture that is second hand at affordable prices. This can be bought outright or through a loan from 1<sup>st</sup> Alliance at a low rate.
- West Coast Furniture second hand furniture; however, furniture can be in a variety of conditions. Their furniture is at no cost, other than a donation to the cost of delivery.

Another option was to buy from the shops; however, the woman wanted to go with Cunningham Recycling due to high street prices not being suitable for her budget.

Once we decided that this would be the best option, I put in a referral to Cunningham Recycling. I met the woman at her home address to go to the showroom. Once there we were met by a member of staff who discussed the options of a loan or cash payment. We then had a look around the showroom and the woman found a 3-piece couch that she liked and was surprised at how reasonable the price was able to pay cash instead of the loan option.

The couch was then put on hold for the woman to ensure that the measurement of the couch would fit in the living room. We arranged to come back two days later to pay. I asked the

women if she needed any help to measure, however said she would be okay in doing this. Two days later we again went to the showroom and the payment was made and they arranged a date for the couch to be delivered. The woman was delighted.

On the day that the couch was being delivered I received a call from the woman to let me know that the couch looked great - she thanked me and was very delighted to have managed to get the couch with my support.

Although in itself a small piece of work, it was very important in relation to the woman's feelings of safety and security within her own home and contributed to the likelihood of her sustaining her tenancy.

Outreach Worker

## **Counselling and Support**

### **Counselling and Support**

Counselling and Support Services provide the first point of contact for women coming into the service and are responsible for ensuring that the correct information is obtained and provided to ensure a safe environment for all. The initial discussion will help support the woman to decide which part of the service would best suit her needs.

**The point at which physical violence is first experienced can be when a woman decides to leave their partner and this is when they might seek support from Women's Aid. The woman might phone or drop into the office for information and support.**

**Many women stay in the relationship because they find, or accept an explanation for the incident. The blame for the violence is placed somewhere else other than with the perpetrator. Women find, or accept an explanation for the incident which allows for a future. They might say that it was a one off, or he was stressed it was the drink, or it was because she provoked him. Women develop a strategy to manage the situation. Once the relationship is understood a re-evaluation process begins. Then at this stage, she may consider leaving permanently or temporarily.**

#### **Counselling and support worker**

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#### **Counselling and support worker**

Once a woman has been assessed she can move into any of the three parts of the service; Refuge, Outreach or Counselling/ Support Service.

To date we have introduced a number of new assessment tools including the DASH Assessment tool - a presenting issues tool.

Going forward into the coming year we will be introducing a trauma informed assessment and care plan.

### **Children's Services**

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#### **The Children said:**

*"I don't feel as lonely because I have someone to talk to"*

*"I don't have to worry about what's going to happen to my mum as much"*

*"I don't worry as much as I feel safer knowing that I can talk to somebody that I can trust"*

*"People never used to listen to what I had to say but now everyone listen's to what I want to say"*

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In the reporting period the Children’s Service had 1 full time worker and an additional part time worker for the second part of the year. Within that time, they worked with 47 individual children. Of these, 22 were males and 25 females.

## **Young Voices**

### **Young Voices**

The Young Voices group are continuing to raise awareness about Healthy Relationships for Outside Agencies, Education, Colleges, and Youth Groups throughout their community in North Ayrshire. This includes:

- Being invited back to St Matthews Secondary School to deliver a total of two 7 week sessions, workshop/presentations and Daisy DVD. The Young Voices are the facilitators of their own educational materials which were developed by the group to raise awareness and promote Healthy Relationships for young people. The 14 week sessions were delivered to all 5<sup>th</sup> year pupils at St Matthews Academy School in Saltcoats.
- Being invited back again this year to Essentials Plus Childcare Training & Recruitment organisation in Saltcoats. The Young Voices facilitated and delivered several presentations/workshops for this organisation, promoting and raising awareness about domestic abuse and healthy relationships which was delivered to their new graduates.
- Being involved in an 8-week programme called, The Story Bird Project by North Ayrshire libraries.

The Young Voices participated and contributed throughout this digital story telling project and successfully wrote and produced another educational DVD to raise awareness about domestic abuse. The Young Voices will use this DVD as an educational tool to promote healthy relationships awareness to all agencies, colleges and schools they are currently involved with in North Ayrshire.

- Being invited to attend Child Protection Training at the Teacher Training Conference Centre at Greenwood to deliver their presentation /workshop and Daisy DVD.
- Being invited to attend and take part in an event hosted by the Through Care Team Social Work for “Celebrating Success for Care Experience Young People” at Ayrshire Kilwinning College.

#### **Advocacy Service**

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*The significant advantage we see is that we can tell women we are referring with confidence, that they will have that consistent contact with you through the challenges ahead, that you will tailor support to their needs and will make first contact to visit within a day of us referring.*

#### **MADART SW**

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#### **MADART SW**

The majority of the women referred were within the 26 – 40-year-old age group. 83% of women referred had children. 86% of women were referred for domestic abuse with 14% of women being referred as a result of being a victim of stalking

*“I felt able to trust you from word go. You saw right away how badly I needed help and you did go above and beyond to do that. Now after 30 years of abuse we finally have peace. I have an NHO and it works”*

Woman

*“I felt able to trust you from word go. You saw right away how badly I needed help and you did go above and beyond to do that. Now after 30 years of abuse we finally have peace. I have an NHO and it works”*

Woman

## **Group work Experience**

### **Group work Experience**

NAWA has been running a number of groups over the last year including

- 12 week recovery group –Domestic Abuse
- 12 week recovery group ( young women) – Domestic Abuse
- Women only recovery Group – Addiction
- Young Voices.

All group work has a recovery focus with a mixture of education and practical skills focusing on managing emotions and self-esteem.

*“This group is a safe friendly place. Women’s Aid are great at supporting me with practical things, money, home etc. This group assists me with understanding my emotions and feelings. It is also helping me to take care of myself, which in turn will help me with my daughter. Every week we explore different aspects of recovery and I look forward to coming. I have learned so much”*

*“I look forward to Wednesdays. I have built new friendships; have a sense of control in my life and a positive outlook”*

*“At these groups, I am benefitting from meeting new people. It is good to get me out the house. It is also good to keep my mind active. I am learning new methods and strategies to improve my life”*

*“Starting in the group was a scary thing, but as the weeks go by it is getting easier. I am meeting new people, getting out of the house, doing new projects and getting my confidence back”*

*“I am getting out the house, meeting new people and learning how to understand situations”*

### ***Service User Involvement Group***

#### **Service User Involvement Group**

The Service User Involvement Group has been meeting for the last 3 months. The group met for the first time on the 18th August, and have met every 4 weeks since then. The group have been involved in a number of activities including-

- Recruitment of new staff members.
- Discussing ways of staff getting feedback, whether this is good or bad. Refuge staff

have since trialled a feedback form for women in refuge.

- The group took part in a Creative Writing workshop. This led to the group writing one woman's story of domestic abuse by using some of their own experiences. The group were then involved in the production of the story being made into a short film. The group members who were involved in this process enjoyed taking part and are delighted that the film will be shown around Ayrshire.
- Members of the group are taking part in the 16 Days of Action by taking part in pledge signing with members of staff.
- Designing a poster/advertisement to get other service users involved.

Going forward, the group hope to be involved in a number of activities with NAWA. These include -

- attending staff team meetings
- mystery shopper phone calls
- getting involved in research/ evaluations/ surveys
- attending events
- board meetings
- a mentor/buddy service

**Financial Statement Summary**  
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**A Big Thank you**  
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Allison Cavin & Family	<b>Lynne Pearson</b>
Anonymous Donators	<b>Marnie Hodge &amp; Family</b>
Ardrossan Rotary	<b>Melloney Nolan</b>
Asda Ardrossan	<b>Moira Anderson</b>
Asda Irvine	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs Hannah</b>
Aviva	<b>Mr &amp; Mrs McDowall</b>
Ayrshire College	<b>Mrs Hill &amp; Family</b>
Bar One / Miriam Wyllie	<b>Mrs Makers Family &amp; Friends</b>
Beith Parish Church	<b>Ms L Dorman</b>
Bridge Church	<b>Ms N Greenlee</b>
Cash For Kids	<b>Munro Partnership</b>
Celtic FC	<b>NAWA workers</b>
Charities Aid Foundation	<b>Nercon</b>
Charles Alexander	<b>NHS Ayrshire &amp; Arran employees</b>
Church of the Nazarene Ardrossan / Foodbank	<b>North Ayrshire Health &amp; Social Care Partnership</b>
Clydesdale Bank	<b>Park Church Ardrossan</b>

Cunningham Housing Association	<b>Pauline Brady of With Love</b>
EDF Energy	<b>Prioriteyes</b>
Eilidh MacDonald	<b>Ruth Maguire</b>
Elliot & Family	<b>Sainsbury's Saltcoats</b>
Ex-service users & Families	<b>Santander</b>
Freedom Fighters Support Group	<b>Specsavers Irvine</b>
Glasgow Spirit of Christmas	<b>St Bridget's Primary</b>
Glen Family	<b>St Clair OES</b>
Greenleaf	<b>St Marys Guild _ Irvine</b>
Heather Spiers	<b>STV Appeal</b>
Ipsos Mori	<b>SVDP Ardrossan</b>
Irvine Incorporated Trades	<b>SVDP Irvine</b>
Isobel Archibald	<b>SVDP Saltcoats</b>
James Boyle	<b>SWC</b>
Kandy Bar Saltcoats	<b>Tanya Webster</b>
Karen McNeillie	<b>Taylor Henderson</b>
Karen Strang	<b>Vari Edwards</b>
Largs Utd Free Church	<b>Warden Motors</b>
Lindsay Edison	<b>West Sound</b>
Linsey Fulton	<b>Wood Foundation</b>
Lorraine Findlay	

**Board of Trustees**

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Gillian Croan	Trustee
Margaret Burgess	Trustee

Leaping Forward – 2018

Leaping Forward – 2018

Borrowing from the Chinese Community again, 2018 is the year of the Earth Dog.

If we Google this we find that for the Chinese community the Earth Dog represents:

**Communicative, serious, and responsible in work**

This could not be more apt for NAWA in the year to come. With our new Branding launched at the AGM on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December we will enter 2018 by *Communicating* with all our partners, communities and businesses to ensure that women know who we are and where we are when they need us most.

We will be *Responsible* in our work, treating all whom we come into contact with respectfully, promoting equality and diversity and empowerment as our core values.