

Annual Report

2019 - 2020

Foyle
Women's
AID



Foyle Women's Aid

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Where you can find us

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Ms Sarah Quinn

Company No: NI23041
Registered Charity No: XN 48783/BT

MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE

VISION

We will create a centre of excellence that leads in partnership working to develop and sustain non-violent, healthy communities in the North-West.

Purpose

We exist to eliminate violent behaviour by supporting all victims of abuse through support, prevention, protection and justice.

RESPECT:

We treat others with equality and fairness.

UNDERSTANDING:

We strive to understand the needs, fears and wishes of others.

SHARED LEARNING:

We are committed to exchanging knowledge, experiences and ideas.

TRUST:

We will build open and honest relationships, and act with integrity and confidentiality.

NON-JUDGEMENTAL:

We respect the right to hold opinions and the choices of others, even though they might be different from our own.

CHALLENGE:

We advocate and question to empower all to make changes and reach their goals.

Our Strategic Objectives

Based on our analysis of the internal and external environment, our priorities for the next three years fall under 8 key objectives:

1. Extend client-led services.
2. Plan, develop and maintain fundraising to meet demand and provide value-added services.
3. Maintain professional standards and practice.
4. Develop effective formal operational links with statutory bodies.
5. Awareness-raising of services and public profile.
6. Strengthening local and regional relationships to influence DV Policy.
7. Increase capacity and create opportunities for career and personal development.
8. Build on current partnerships and develop further partnerships to meet the core objectives.



Photo: Foyle Family Justice Centre Conference: *From Hurt to Hope* (June 2019)

Director's Report 2019-20

2019-20 was busy right across the projects in Foyle Women's Aid (FWA). As always, we had an increasing demand for the services, so frontline staff were busy on the ground addressing the specific needs of women, children and young people. In total, we provided accommodation for 100 women and children in our housing projects, who suffered homelessness because of domestic abuse. We provided community support through our outreach services to 777 women and 444 children. Within our services in 2019-20, we provided group work support to 195 women and homework club support to 180 children and young people, who attended onsite homework clubs.

The staff team have yet again demonstrated their commitment by over-achieving their designated targets, whilst still maintaining a high standard of services and very positive feedback from all service users across the projects. The teamwork in FWA is truly remarkable and the staff have actively contributed to and embraced the development of innovative strategic plans alongside Management and the Management Committee. There is much excitement about the development of the Foyle Family Justice Centre, which will be the first of its kind in Ireland.

Review of Activities in the Past Year & Plans for the Future

In this reporting year, we have been busy preparing for the new Family Justice Centre (FJC) service. The site has been purchased by FWA and the business preparation has been ongoing between Apex, the Departments and FWA. Planning permission has been applied for and we are working through tendering and pricing, with Apex at the helm and the expertise of Alastair Coey Architects, who have been providing design advice and helping us create a centre that will be comfortable, well planned and with a tranquil setting,

which will be appropriate for victims coming out of abuse and trauma to have a trauma-informed experience as soon as they enter the building.

Apex have helped plan the accommodation units that will be on site and are a key aspect of the project. A lot of research, thought, time and effort have gone into every detail of the plans, so that it will all come together seamlessly and provide a successful blueprint to inform others wishing to develop a Family Justice Centre. There has been a great deal of work and activities completed to meet the objectives of the Tampon Tax funding administered through the North West Development Office (NWDO). We completed our strategic plan and are progressing our operational plan.

We were delighted to welcome our key speakers from the USA and further build our links with the Alliance for Hope, who have been very generous with their knowledge and support, which culminated in a very successful conference on Ulster University's Magee Campus that received excellent feedback and evaluations. All staff contributed to the success of the week, where a range of activities were completed, such as Strangulation Training for our judiciary, hosted by the FJC Chairperson, Judge Barney McElholm. There were also meetings with the regional Trust leads in Belfast and the introduction of the Science of Hope measurement tool. The finalisation of the Hope Evaluation Tool, staff training and the strong links that have been formed by the partnership developed with the University of Oklahoma were all extremely positive.

Showings of the film that was developed in partnership with our Voices Forum were very powerful and this film will be used as a tool to train staff within the FJC. The development of our logos, the naming of our proposed café, the setting-up of websites, development of the FJC manual, leaflets and to achieve The list of the activities is endless and this funding was extremely well utilised promotional materials are all well underway.

as many outcomes as possible. We look forward to the further visits of Gael Strack and her colleagues in our planned seminar on strangulation and the establishment of a working group and research in order to influence robust and informed legislation in Northern Ireland.

We were delighted to have been successful in acquiring funding to recruit and welcome a Programme Manager for the Dress for Success project, who has key skills and experience that will take this project to the next level of development. Our children and young people's projects are all ongoing and we have now extended the number of children and young people attending all services. We have formed firm relationships with the Department of Education and Probation, and are currently building further partnerships. We are looking at development plans for the onsite young people's activities and are having consultations with the National Lottery Community Fund who have helped make this very crucial project possible.

We have engaged an architect to update the plans and submit for change of use for our Pathways building as it is now in a state of disrepair and does not meet the needs of all clients, staff and volunteers. There is a need to make this building DDA-compliant, fit for purpose and to create the support space we anticipate will be needed as a result of increasing numbers coming through the FJC building. Applications have now been prepared and submitted for this project.

We continue to collaborate regionally with our other Women's Aid groups to agree policy and contribute to consultation and development across the region, as well as lobbying and awareness of the crime of abuse and its impacts on victims in Northern Ireland.

Consultation evaluation processes are being undertaken with service users, staff and stakeholders and we will begin the process of developing a further

three-year strategic plan. We will continue to fundraise to carry out the much-needed capital investment for our current Pathways building. We will continue to work on our current fundraising success on the FJC and raise further funds to address gaps we have in some capital refurbishment for the interior of the FJC.

We will continue to meet with our interagency stakeholders in order to successfully complete the comprehensive targets and plans for an integrated service. We continue to work with Apex and the NWDO to develop the FJC and housing complex at 7-9 Bishop Street. This joined-up approach will result in a more efficient and comprehensive service. This project will be the first of its kind in Ireland and the UK.

We plan to review our own structures and enter a Change Management process to achieve a structure that will be fit for purpose and have the appropriate skills to deliver on all our key objectives, in order to build more robust and sustainable services for the future.

We will continue to work with the Alliance for Hope, the European Alliance and other international partners to research and adapt best practice models in line with feedback, research and continuous improvement plans. FWA remains committed to finding improved solutions to tackling domestic abuse.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff, volunteers and Management Committee members for their hard work and commitment to the organisation and helping us to deliver the services. As you can see from the work and feedback in this report, your contribution truly makes a difference.

Marie Brown

Support Services Report 2019/20

SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT The number of victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence looking for support from Foyle Women's Aid rose significantly this year, particularly in the Community Support and Group Work areas.

Support Workers responded to a 36% increase in the number of women coming forward for support and advocacy in the Derry/Londonderry, Strabane and Limavady areas. The service also recorded more victims of abuse with a range of complex needs receiving support, who now make up over 30% of all clients. A total of 484 children benefited indirectly from the support their parent received in 2019/20.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT experienced the biggest increase in the demand for its specialist one-to-one support work, with a total of 856 referrals received during the year from women who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse in the Derry/Londonderry, Strabane and Limavady areas.

Continuing the previous year's priority of recognising and trying to break through the barriers that exist for traumatised and frightened victims, the Support Team managed to engage 91% of all incoming referrals, an increase of 11% on 2018/19.

Evidence of complex needs experienced by women, mainly mental health, physical disability, and addictions, informed the nature of the support and advocacy provided by the Support Team this year. Collaborative working with a range of statutory and voluntary agencies was key to provide relevant and holistic support to vulnerable victims of abuse.

Protection and prevention also remained key themes this year, with

Foyle Women's Aid representatives attending all the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) throughout the year, working collaboratively to provide immediate response to high-risk victims. A total of 80 women who had to attend court for civil orders and child contact issues availed of our Court Support service provided by staff and trained volunteers.

A Community Support Service client told us: *"I looked forward so much to my Support Worker coming to see me. Every time she left, I felt a little bit stronger, things were a little bit clearer, I could see a way out of this mess. I am away from it now. My life is not perfect, but I am getting there. I could never have done this without you."*

ACCOMMODATION services continued to be busy, with 130 referrals received from families who were homeless or at risk of homelessness due to domestic and sexual violence. Foyle Women's Aid provided emergency, safe accommodation to 56 women and 44 children throughout the year, supporting them to return to life in the community, living independently and safely.

The Admissions & Safety and Maintenance Teams, based at our accommodation projects, worked to maintain a high standard of accommodation, and provide practical support to families, taking on the weekly Health and Safety checks, ensuring the security of the premises and liaising with police, social workers and other professionals working with the women.

An Accommodation client told us: *"You literally saved my life and my children's lives. I thought having to leave our home was the worst thing that could ever happen to us, but it turned out to be the best. We are about to move into our new home, a place of our own, a safe place. We were so afraid of the future, now we are looking forward to it."*

GROUP WORK experienced a 25% increase in women completing Women's Aid specialist group work programmes. A total of 122 women completed Journey to Freedom, a personal development group process, looking at what domestic abuse is and how it impacts on the individual. A further 73 women availed of the follow-on Building Healthy Relationships and The Power of Words programmes.

A Groupwork client told us: *"The courses are brilliant; they really make you think about things. The facilitators are so knowledgeable and so kind. I would urge everyone to do Journey to Freedom. I thought no-one knew what I had been through. I was so wrong. I have made friends through the group and we meet up and go for coffee afterwards. I would never have met these fabulous women if it wasn't for the course."*

WOMEN'S SAFETY SERVICE continued to operate, in partnership with the Probation Board of Northern Ireland, providing a service to the partners and ex-partners of men taking part in PBNI Perpetrator programmes. 95 percent of women referred to the service engaged, ensuring that their voice was heard, and their safety addressed. The Support Team also organised and delivered information sessions attended by student nurses, social workers, and community workers. Presentations about services were also made to a range of statutory and voluntary groups across Derry/Londonderry, Strabane and Limavady.

FUNDING from **CLEAR** enabled our Free as Bees group, facilitated by Alexis McClements, to run a twelve-week programme from October to January for the group, looking at physical and mental wellbeing, combatting stress and alternatives therapies. This support is crucial for older clients, especially those who had endured long abusive relationships.

A grant from the **NIHE Homeless Prevention Fund** allowed the Accommodation Service to develop and deliver a new group work programme for homeless clients focussing on breaking the

cycle of homelessness, achieving permanent accommodation in the community, and examining what skills are needed to sustain that tenancy. A mix of theory and practical sessions, the Tenancy Programme is now an integral part of our accommodation support service.

Funding from **Supporting People (Provider Innovation Fund)** enabled Foyle Women's Aid to focus on a new service user involvement model, i.e., the creation of a team of five Voices Champions, who have worked throughout this year to raise awareness and to promote service user involvement. The former clients made a hard-hitting video of their own experiences, which was shown to an international audience at the Hurt to Hope Conference at Ulster University (Magee) in May 2019. The women spoke to the audience about what victims need from agencies and how abuse impacts on the individual, receiving a standing ovation.

The Voices Champions worked through the year, holding a public event in December attended by over 70 women, and addressed by the Mayor of Derry City and Strabane, Cllr. Michaela Boyle. Issues that affected victims of domestic abuse and changes that are needed in service provision were discussed and recorded and form the basis of the next stage of work of the Voices Forum.

They have made many contributions to newspapers, television and radio features on Domestic Violence and continue to assist us to put the victims' experience at the heart of Foyle Women's Aid services. Irene, one of our Voices Champions told us: *"Being part of the Voices Forum is so important to me. I was silenced for almost 30 years by my abuser, I will not be silent now. I am working to help other women find their voices. And until they are free to speak out, we will do it for them."*

Jo Corcoran
Senior Support Services Manager

Number of women supported 2019-20

Women accommodated	56
Children accommodated	44
No. of women receiving floating support service	777
Children directly using the crèche	88
Court support	62



Photo: Foyle Family Justice Centre Conference: *From Hurt to Hope* (June 2019)

Total Number of Referrals to Floating Support:

857

Total Number of Children Indirectly Benefiting from Work with the Mother in Floating Support:

442

Total Number of Women Accommodated:

56

Age of Women in Accommodation	
18-25	12
26-35	19
36-45	16
46-55	5
56-59	3
60-65	1



Photo: Foyle Family Justice Centre Conference: *From Hurt to Hope* (June 2019)

Group Work 2019-20	
Journey to Freedom	122
Power of Words	32
Protective Behaviours	5
You and Me, Mum	
Building Healthy Relationships	24
50 Plus	12

MARAC 2019/20		
	Target	Actual
MARAC meetings attended	26	26
Actions completed	100%	100%

POD15 Report 2019-2020

At Foyle Women's Aid's Children & Young People's Centre, POD15, the services continue to grow alongside the needs of the service users.

We support children aged 0-17 in our unique Centre, which has the voice of the child at the centre of all the work that takes place.

We are a fully registered creche facility and have yearly inspections by WHSCT Early Years Services for children aged 0-4 years. This service operates daily for 3-hour sessions to allow children to attend a safe and high-quality educational setting, with skilled staff who have an underpinning knowledge of the effects of domestic and sexual violence on children and young people.

Stay and Play

Mothers will have opportunities to attend groupwork and attend Stay & Play sessions to engage in play and see for themselves how their child is developing. We engaged with local libraries and the Health Promotion Agency to bring a wide range of activities and services to the families.

Some of our Stay and Play topics

- Healthy Eating
- Dental Hygiene
- Let us Get Active
- Messy Play at Home
- Reading Together

Helping Hands

We offer an active learning session for school-aged children – these sessions are fun and stimulating for children, providing opportunities to play, use IT equipment and take part in our early intervention programme, Helping Hands. This programme is key to building children's self-esteem and identity. It enhances knowledge and language and gives children the knowledge of early warning signs when they are not safe.

Feedback from Helping Hands

Wish it lasted longer.

My child enjoys coming each week; no matter what else, he will not miss Helping Hands.

Love my book and all the drawing, art is my favorite.

I have made a new friend.

I spoke to my son after a session, and he told me he understood now why it's important to stay safe.

Summer 2019

We offer a busy, creative, and engaging Summer Scheme for children to try new activities and build happy memories, gain new skills, and build peer relationships. We include the children and young people in the planning and give them essential roles throughout, such as helping the younger children, making up packed lunches and set-up of sessions.

- Forest hikes
- Beach visits
- Kayaking at Creggan Country Park
- Enagh Lough
- Zip-lining
- Movie days
- Picnics in the park

COVID-19

Our direct services had to be paused in March 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic and government guidance, however we continued to support our children, young people, and families by:

How we supported families:

- Regular calls
- Zoom music classes.
- Zoom exercise classes.
- Garden gate visits
- Outdoor treasure hunts
- Regular social media updates
- At-home activity packs – plantings, messy play, story time and much more.



Photo: POD 15 Staff



Photo: Foyle Women's Aid Staff

We received support from 'Kids In' charity, who supplied toy packs for children living in our accommodation and monthly food vouchers.

Financial support received from WHSCT permitted us to provide support to families with schoolwork for printing and resources.

Families have told us:

The support was a lifeline when we needed it most.

The children loved receiving their at-home activity packs.

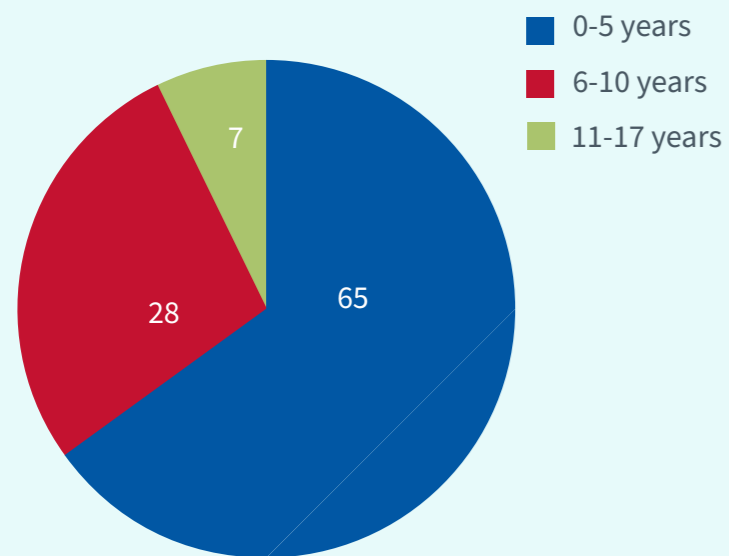
We all enjoyed the baking activities.

It made life a bit easier, knowing someone was checking in.

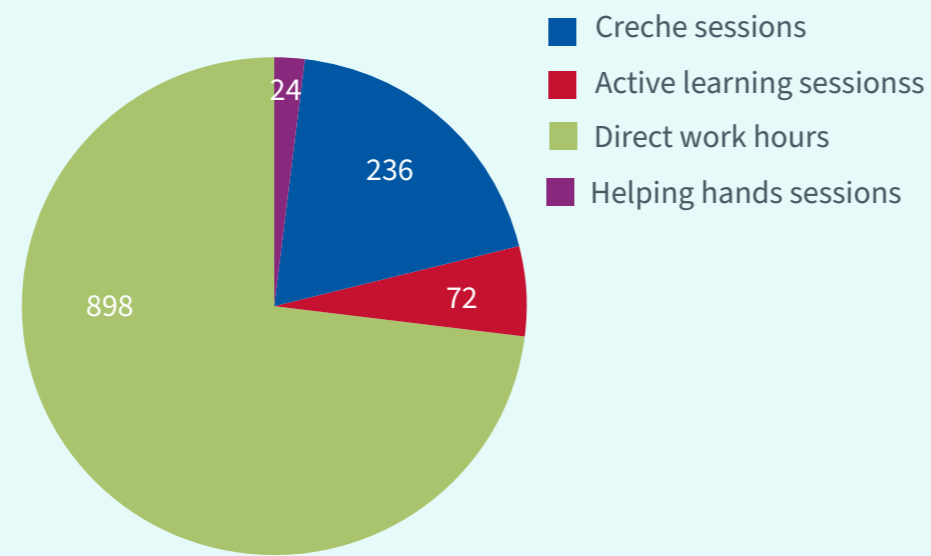
Other news throughout the year at POD15

- We welcomed students from Thornhill College, Lisneal College and NWIFHE.
- We welcomed a foreign language student for 1 month to the creche.
- Staff trained 22 teachers on the Social Guardian programme to effectively deliver the Helping Hands programme at Key Stage 2 in primary schools.
- We had our 1st annual inspection from the WHSCT Early Years Team.
- We received our registration certificate as a registered Centre.
- We had our annual events – Christmas at 1 Snowy Lane, as well as our Easter Hunt, Summer Family Fun Day, and Halloween Disco.
- We welcomed our dental nurse to work with the children and mums on a 4-week programme.
- Staff are all now trained on EpiPen use and all staff now have Basic Life Support training.

Registered children and young people 2019/2020



Sessions & Hours 2019/2020



Some photos of the great fun and memories of 2019



Some photos of the great fun and memories of 2019



Financial Review 2019-20

Foyle Women's Aid has posted a net movement in funds of - **£45,141 for the year to 31st March 2020 (2019: £113,139)**. Total funds carried forward as at **31st March 2020 now stand at £1,533,688 (2019: £1,578,829)**.

Restricted funds (including restricted capital funds) comprise **£602,589 as at 31st March 2020 (2019: £674,225)**, with unrestricted funds comprising **£931,099 as at 31st March 2020 (2019: £904,604)**.

Our principal funders are Supporting People and we have received continued funding from the Big Lottery, Western Health & Social Care Trust and Probation Board NI. The funding we received has enabled Foyle Women's Aid to provide the services, staff and resources required to meet the aims and objectives of the organisation.



Photo: Foyle Family Justice Centre Conference: *From Hurt to Hope* (June 2019)

Dress for Success Report 2019-2020

- Number of CVs developed: **21**
- Number of Interview Skills training sessions: **14**
- Number of Suiting Appointments for Interviews: **58**
- Number of Employment Suiting Appointments: **10**
- Number of Referral Agencies: **56**
- Number of Volunteers: **12**
- Number of Business Plans (self-employment): **5**
- Number of Mock Interviews: **7**
- Total Women served: **236**



Going Places. Going Strong.



All set up at Job Centre to promote Dress for Success

Highlights:

- Belfast branch approved – March 2020
- Annual Conference in Vancouver – October 2019
- Establishment of Careers Hub
- Introduction of self-employment support
- Secured clothing donations from M&S from all stores in NI and Ireland
- Secured Tampon Tax grant of £10,000
- Pop-Up Shop



Volunteers helping set up the Dress for Success Pop-Up Shop

Training April 2019 – March 2020

- Protecting the Rights of Homeless Young People
- ACEs Workshop
- Rowan SARC Best Practice Day
- Supporting & Challenging Women in Our Care
- Lone Worker Training
- ASIST Training
- Promoting Positive Relations
- Nutrition Matters
- Child Protection Refresher
- Adult Safeguarding Refresher
- Anger Management
- Safe TALK
- Children in Need: Your Difference Training
- Substance Misuse Awareness
- Social Media for Impact
- LGBTQ+ Domestic Abuse Workshop
- Early Years Leadership & Governance Conference
- Developing Resilience
- Parental Substance Misuse
- Motivational Interviewing
- Drawing & Talking Therapy
- Building Resilience, Self-Care & Compassion in Your Organisation
- Epi-Pen Training
- BSL Training
- Discretionary Support & Homelessness
- Risk Assessment Made Easy
- Food Values Tutor Training
- Signs of Safety Awareness Training
- Training Needs Analysis Workshop



Photos: Foyle Family Justice Centre Conference: *From Hurt to Hope* (June 2019)

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR FUNDERS



Supporting People NIHE, National Lottery Community Fund, Western Health & Social Care Trust, Education Authority, Probation Board NI, Derry & Strabane PCSP, Western Area Childcare Partnership, Comic Relief for Women and Girls, Community Foundation NI, Department for Communities, BBC Children in Need.

Our thanks to all the agencies listed and to all the wonderful individuals, organisations and companies who supported our work so generously during the year.

Company Registration Number:
NI 23041

Date of Incorporation
6 September 1989

Charity Number
NIC103223

Auditors
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Bank
Danske Bank

Solicitors
Caldwell & Robinson Solicitors

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