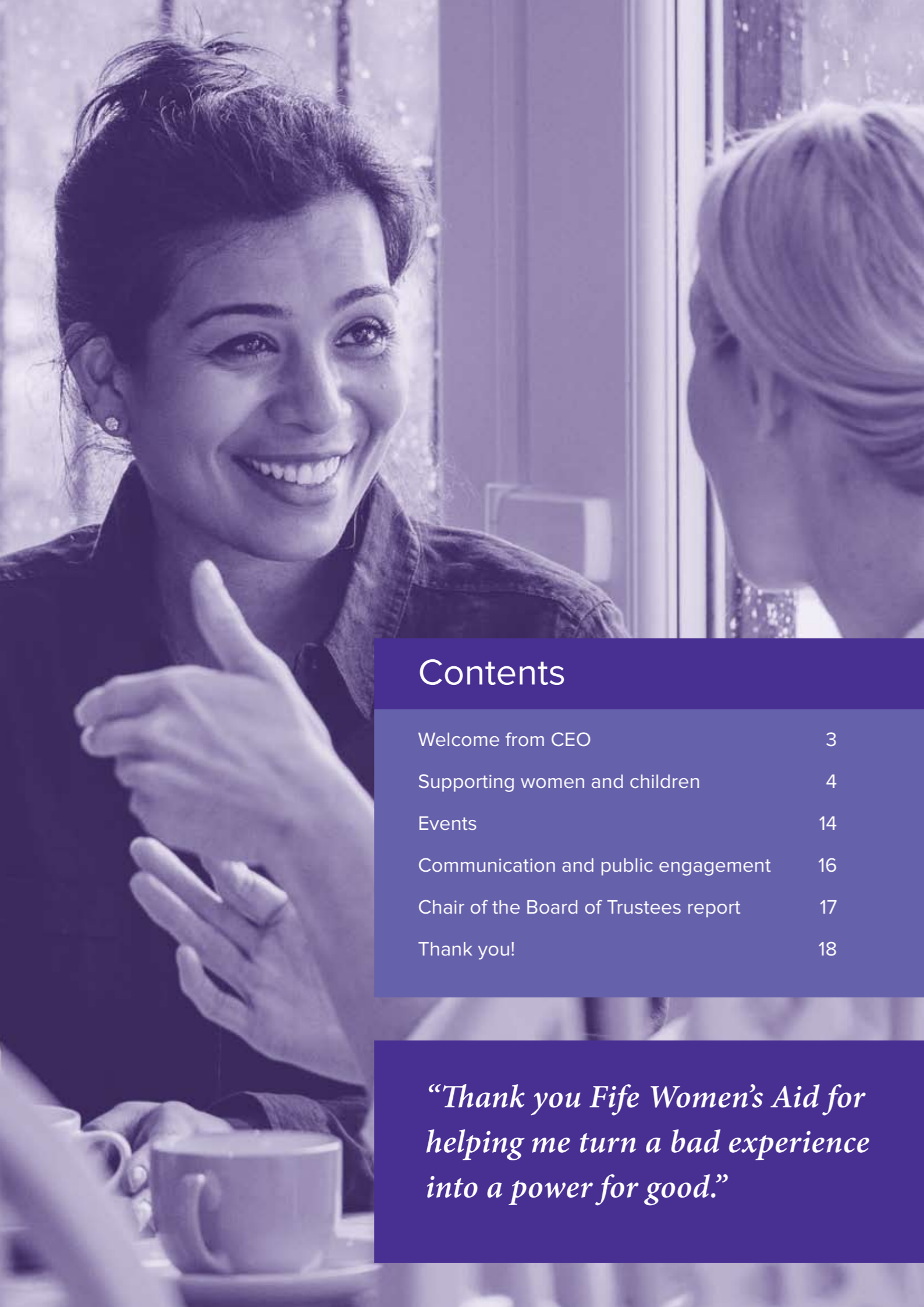


# Fife Women's Aid Annual Report

April 2022 to March 2023

Empowering women  
and children on the  
road to recovery



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*“Thank you Fife Women’s Aid for helping me turn a bad experience into a power for good.”*

## A warm welcome to Fife Women’s Aid Annual Report 2022-2023.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to tell you about the amazing work and achievements that Fife Women’s Aid has been involved in over the past year.

The purpose of our team effort is, as our strapline says, “to empower women and children on the road to recovery”. It’s an honour and a privilege to work towards this key objective and it is incredibly fulfilling and rewarding to see the positive changes taking place in women and children as they progress through our services.

Due to successful funding applications and tenders we have now enhanced our capacity to support vulnerable women and children. We are particularly grateful for this support because we are all too aware of chilling new evidence about the wide range of effects caused by violence against women and girls, and how this impacts the context in which we work.

Examples of such funding include:

- Scottish Government’s Victim Centred Approach Fund for Court Support and Advocacy
- Henry Smith Charity funding for Court Support and Advocacy
- Fife Council’s Housing First funding

Research shows that women who suffer domestic abuse are three times more likely to try to take their own life. Where sexual abuse is also involved, they are seven times more likely to do so. We are deeply concerned about this statistic and aim to be part of the solution.

Taken alongside this, the most recent domestic abuse statistics for Scotland show that police recorded 64,807 incidents of domestic abuse. At over 175 incidents every single day, this is troubling because we also know that recorded incidents are the tip of an iceberg because many go unreported.

In addition, 15,049 sexual crimes were also recorded during the year - the highest level in more than 5 decades. In each case the attendant trauma will not only affect the individual involved but also their family and wider society.

These statistics paint a bleak picture. But far from daunting us, this only bolsters our determination to work towards our vision: *“an equitable society in which women, children and young people are valued participants, able to determine their own future and are free from all forms of abuse.”*

One of the ways we are doing this is through the ‘Equally Safe’ strategy, whose objectives fit perfectly with this vision.

Our key allies in this mission are the women and children we support. Although they are victims of domestic abuse it is important to remember that they are also survivors: we witness their tenacity and resilience on a daily basis and they inspire us with their courage and commitment to recovery. As an organisation we learn everything worth knowing from the women and children we are privileged to work with.

We are incredibly grateful to the allies and partners who are working with us to achieve our vision. We would like to thank our volunteers, our trustees, our funders and donors, our lived experience ambassador and our local community. You all give back and support us in so many ways: we couldn’t continue our work without you.

**Kate McCormack**  
CEO, Fife Women’s Aid

*“I was listened to and really supported by my worker, she was really helpful”*

*“Prior to counselling my mind was so busy I was just walking through life without being part of it. Counselling helped me to clear my thoughts, begin to heal and feel part of society again”*

## Supporting Women and Children

We empower women and children affected by domestic abuse to identify their preferred route to recovery and then we help them along it. To make this possible we use the wide range of resources, strategies and experience that we have at our disposal.

### Demand for services

During 2022-23 demand for Fife Women's Aid services remained very high: we supported 554 women and 391 children and young people. It is a depressing fact that domestic abuse is so common that it results in waiting lists for our services.

A grant from the Scottish Government's Equality Budget fund “to provide additional staffing to meet the increase in demand from victims of domestic abuse” enabled us to tackle the waiting list problem. We recruited an Early Intervention worker to support our women's team and were also able to develop a new initial assessment process for our children, young people and family support service in parallel. This allowed for both short and longer term support needs to be assessed rapidly, thereby enabling us to address urgent issues and risks, complete safety planning and provide any relevant signposting for women and families.

The effectiveness of this approach has led us to mainstream the role of the Early Intervention worker beyond the duration of the grant because of the clear benefits they bring to the women and children.

### Online and face to face services

Although most of our services are face to face, we are also continuing to offer some online. This not only enables us to respond to an ongoing high level of demand, but also caters for people who prefer online communication because it makes them

feel more in control and able to switch off and leave the meeting immediately if they want to.

### Refuge accommodation

Safety is the essential foundation for any effective domestic abuse intervention. Establishing safe refuge accommodation is core to our mission.

Fife Council owns the 41 refuges that we have available for women and children affected by domestic abuse. Here, they can live free from abuse.

We work in partnership with Fife Council to address the physical, financial, psychological, sexual and emotional issues resulting from that abuse so they can begin their journey to recovery.

In our refuge accommodation women and children can live free from danger. During the past year, we supported 81 women and their families in refuge. Some of these women refer themselves directly while others are referred by agencies such as the police or social work services.

### Pet-friendly refuges

We adopted our pet-friendly refuges as an integral part of our person-centred and trauma-informed approach to recovery and well-being. Women and children who have fled domestic abuse need as much continuity and familiarity as possible in their new surroundings, so being able to take a family pet with them at a traumatic time can be a great source of solace. The women and children we accommodate have told us how much they appreciate this.

People have brought all sorts of pets with them – from the usual cats and dogs to smaller animals and birds.

### CCTV and refuges

As a result of feedback from women in our refuge accommodation we have reviewed the CCTV coverage to enhance their sense of safety and security.

### Women's Support service

One of our key resources is the Women's Support service, which is available for women affected by domestic abuse both in the community and in refuge accommodation.

This service offers women individual face to face support for the duration of their recovery. The woman and her worker create a partnership whereby they build the pathway towards the woman's desired goals and her preferred future.

They do this by undertaking an assessment to help the woman identify her goals and then plan the steps she needs to take to achieve them. In this way each action plan is unique and tailored to the wishes and needs of the woman.

Goals often include securing safe accommodation, overcoming health issues, stabilising finance and investigating opportunities for education.

Because the woman herself chooses and owns these goals, she is more likely to make the changes necessary to achieve them.

The Women's Support workers have a great deal of experience dealing with trauma and understand that behaviours such as relapse into drug use, ambivalence about contact with the perpetrator and non-attendance at appointments are inevitable results of past trauma. They therefore avoid blaming, shaming and punishment and instead recognise that - with support and compassion - such behaviours tend to taper off.

This approach means a lot to survivors. One noted *“I have never had support like this in my life”*.

As the journey to recovery progresses we hold regular reviews to assess whether the action plan is still on track or whether the goals have changed.

The 24/7 helpline is one of the strands of the Women's Support service that is used a great deal – not just by women who are seeking refuge or who have settled in the community and have experienced a crisis – but also by professionals and practitioners. They call for advice and help.

**If you are reading this and need support then please call freephone 0808 802 5555.**

*“We all know that we were not the only one. It was great to be in a group with other women that know what it's like. Women from all different walks of life. That helped me a lot mentally”*

*“My worker gave me a lot of coping strategies...but she also helped me to understand who I was - I had completely lost myself.”*

*“I have high anxiety but after the first week I actually looked forward to coming to the class. I’ve taken so much more from them than I thought I would. It has given me more confidence trusting myself and my own perception.”*

### MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

We play a vital role as a core partner in Fife’s multi agency safety approach for women and children at the highest risk of domestic abuse.

MARAC identifies high-risk victims of domestic abuse and together key partners work to reduce the risk of further victimisation. This involves:

- Sharing information across agencies
- Producing safety plans to reduce risk
- Sharing awareness of the risk posed by perpetrators

Domestic abuse is a complex crime where the victim is either currently – or was previously – in an intimate relationship with the perpetrator. There are high incidences of repeat victimisation.

MARAC routinely faces situations where victims experience high levels of repeat domestic abuse or where a single perpetrator is responsible for multiple instances of such abuse. Such single incidents are seen in the context of other factors such as coercive control, and where this is the case we consider the risk of escalation and how to mitigate this.

MARAC also deals regularly with cases of extremely serious domestic assault, rape and attempted murder. In these situations, we work to safeguard children and vulnerable adults while also addressing perpetrator behaviour.

*“The MARAC worker gave my son lots of resources including a completed family safety plan, which he has kept.”*

This year we received 467 referrals to our MARAC service.

### Court Support and Advocacy service

We competed for and won funding for our Court Support and Advocacy Service through the Scottish Government’s victim-centred approach fund (VCAF).

The Henry Smith Charity also funds this service and we were delighted to receive a further three years’ funding from them to continue the service into 2023-24 and beyond.

Women who have experienced domestic abuse can find appearing in court overwhelming, intimidating and stressful because they typically have no idea about the language and procedures used or the potential outcomes. We work on the premise that knowledge is power and help them understand exactly what is involved and what their role will be at each stage.

This reduces anxiety and stress and enables the woman to engage much more effectively with the process.

We provide support before, during and after the court case and help them to cope with the implications of the outcome.

Of the women we supported 78% said that they would not have attended court without this service.

*“My worker sat right next to me in court and reassured my nerves. She explained everything that was happening”*

We work in partnership with the Public Protection Unit, the Procurator Fiscal Service and Police Scotland Domestic Abuse Liaison Officers.

*“I feel more confident, happier and content and see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.”*

### The Befriending service

Our befriending service is run by volunteers and organised by our befriending coordinator. It is in high demand and is highly valued.

*“I feel more confident, happier and content and see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. I didn’t think that would have been possible if not for my befriender. She was inspiring and I felt that she understood how I felt even when I couldn’t express”*

The volunteers also tell us how much they enjoy befriending and what they gain from the experience.

To date 48 service users have benefited from the befriending service and we have supported 25 volunteers in total.

Volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds. They go through a robust recruitment and training process that

involves interviews, PVG checks and six hours of training before they are matched with someone who wants to use the service.

Volunteer retention is high and volunteers find it to be a rewarding role.

*“I started my befriending journey in early 2022. I wanted to give something back after one of my close family members had received so much support from FWA. It is an amazing, rewarding and fulfilling volunteer role.”*

Fife Women’s Aid receive both internal and external referrals for befriending from agencies such as the police, social work, adult education services, health, and other voluntary organisations.

Our befriending service has met the criteria for the Volunteer Charter and has now signed up to it.



*“I’m finding the groups beneficial for my mental health knowing I’m not alone. As difficult as it is. The amount of things that’s resonating to me is astounding”.*

## Women’s Group Support service

Our Group Support service continues to be very much in demand from women survivors.

Our part-time women’s group worker has hosted a range of tailored online and face-to-face groups to suit individual women’s circumstances and needs. These have included self-care, drop-in cafés (to discuss matters related to domestic abuse) What’s your story? (to use personal narrative to re-imagine their own story and future), and Recovering Me (to discuss how to recover from domestic abuse). The groups focus on how to build and maintain safe, healthy and positive relationships.

The group worker also facilitated a group to help inform how we might develop our service. They created a short film to raise awareness of the impact of domestic abuse.

During the past year we delivered ten groups: of these, ‘Recovering Me’ was held three times, ‘What’s your story?’ was held once, ‘Self-care’ was held twice and the others were drop-in cafés.

*“The group work opened my eyes to the more subtle manipulation that had happened to me.”*

The ‘drop in café’ and the ‘service user involvement’ groups were run weekly. 126 women attended our groups. Eight of the groups took place online and two were face-to-face meetings. The face-to-face groups were held in community venues, one in Glenrothes and one in St Andrews.

## Benefits of group and peer support

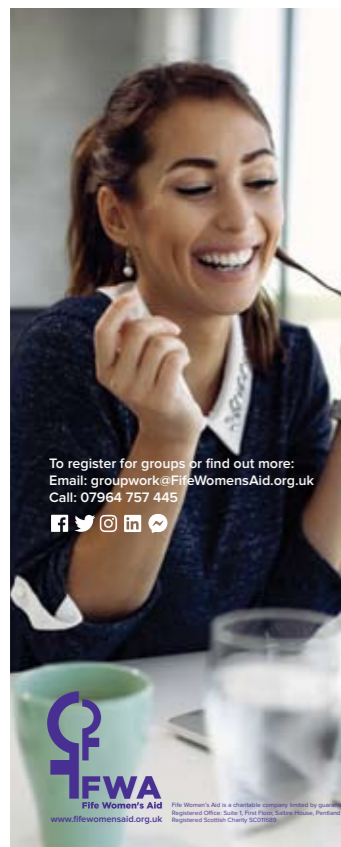
Women who have used group support describe the positive difference that informal peer support can make.

*“It was helpful to know that others feel the same ‘cos you do feel you’re alien from everyone else.”*

This support can help to break down isolation, destigmatize the experience of domestic abuse and place the shame where it belongs – with the perpetrators.

*“I don’t see people I can be open with so this has really helped to discuss with folk who have been in similar situations. It made me feel important as well and listened to”*

If you live in Fife, have experienced domestic abuse and might be interested in our group work (or if you know any other woman in the same situation) then email us at [groupwork@fifewomensaid.org.uk](mailto:groupwork@fifewomensaid.org.uk) for more information.



**Register for our groups and weekly drop-in cafés**

Get together each week on zoom to explore:

- Understanding domestic abuse - making sense of what happened
- Self - care
- What’s your story? - how you made it through
- Café drop-in - weekly chat via zoom

To register for groups or find out more:  
Email: [groupwork@FifeWomensAid.org.uk](mailto:groupwork@FifeWomensAid.org.uk)  
Call: 07964 757 445

[www.fifewomensaid.org.uk](https://www.fifewomensaid.org.uk)

Fife Women's Aid is a charitable company limited by guarantee. No. SC128552. Registered Office: Suite 2, First Floor, Station House, Portland Road, Dundee, Fife, DD1 1AA. Registered Scottish Charity No. SC128552.

**FWA**  
Fife Women's Aid  
[www.fifewomensaid.org.uk](https://www.fifewomensaid.org.uk)

**zoom**

*“[counselling] put things in perspective, built my confidence. [My counsellor] had a great way of making me think differently about situations – she made it sound simpler than I had built it up to be.”*

## Counselling services

Our Counselling service is constantly in high demand. We find this particularly distressing because the root cause of this is violence against women and girls – something that goes largely unnoticed in our communities.

The increase in the cost of living has exacerbated this issue because some people who would otherwise use the service can’t afford to travel. This in turn increases the risk of their isolation.

We currently have a significant number of people waiting for our counselling services. We try to reduce this list by carrying out an assessment for each person to establish whether they require counselling and by reminding them what is involved. We also remind them that they

have access to our 24/7 helpline. The unfortunate truth, however, is that demand far service outstrips our resource.

Our counsellors are highly valued and praised by those who access the service, and their trauma informed, strengths based practice empowers women and young people and gives them hope for the future. They use a range of approaches - including the creative arts - to facilitate recovery.

We are delighted to be able to offer counselling placements to students to enable them to gain their accreditation.

The feedback from the women and children who use this service speaks for itself.

*“To be absolutely frank, counselling saved my life. When I started my sessions, I was in a very dark place and had seriously considered whether I had the strength to carry on. I gradually saw that there was a future that could be bright and that I had the capacity of strength to carry on.”*



*“I don’t feel different to other people like in school and I feel like I belong here. It’s where my normal is normal”*

**Join the Dots**

Our Join the Dots project is funded by Fife Council through the Health and Social Care Partnership.

The project helps children and young people affected by domestic abuse to explore and resolve issues through regular one-to-one meetings with their support worker. This has been shown to improve the young person’s sense of wellbeing and also improve family relationships.

We have a 24/7 support line specifically for children and young people at freephone 0808 801 0422. When our young people told us they would prefer to message rather than call this service, we made it possible for them to message until 2am.

*“My youngest son needed the support but just for a couple of weeks and then he felt he was fine and didn’t need it. Then things changed and he felt he needed the support and they brought in the same worker...so now he has a safe place and a safe time to open up about his past.”*

Join the Dots helps families as well as children and young people. It provides intensive support where required to restore the mother and child relationship following the experience of domestic abuse.



*“Really supportive really non-judgmental group. Boosted my confidence a little bit”*

**FWA Nurture Parenting group**

During the past year we have started to deliver nurture parenting groups for the women we support. Feedback has been extremely positive.

One participant spoke about being able to set a boundary for her child and said

*“I wouldn’t have done that if it hadn’t been for the support of the others in the group.”*

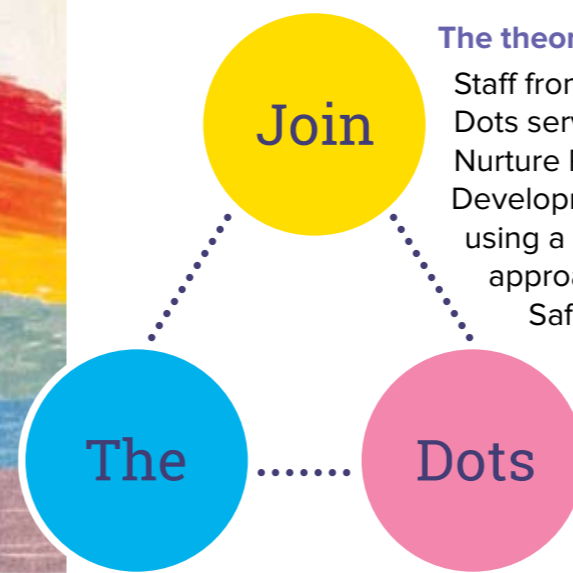
**Need**

Our family support service identified a need for this group through recognising that – as a result of domestic abuse – the mothers we support have experienced a disruption in their ability to nurture, and that this can create a barrier between them and their children. As a result it can be helpful to provide mothers with knowledge around attachment and how parenting can be affected by domestic abuse.

This group gives mothers the practical and emotional support they need to help them communicate and connect effectively with their families and so navigate their way towards recovery.

**The theory behind the practice**

Staff from FWA’s Join the Dots service are trained in Nurture Parenting and Dyadic Developmental Practice. By using a strengths-based approach and incorporating Safe and Together principles they aim to empower women - as equal partners - to steer their family through the trauma of domestic abuse.



**Course content**

The course is based on a Nurture Parenting approach. The content has been adapted to meet the specific needs of women and families who have experienced domestic abuse.

The course was initially delivered over six weeks and contains the following themes:

Week 1	Attachment and supporting theories
Week 2	Exploring shame versus guilt
Week 3	Boundaries, rhythms and routines
Week 4	Emotions and feelings
Week 5	Post-separation abuse and manipulation
Week 6	Self-care

Following feedback from participants, the course has been extended to 12 weeks so there is more time to explore each theme and to allow additional input on adverse childhood experiences, trauma-informed practice and neurobiology. Self-care is delivered as an integral part of each session rather than as a separate theme.

**Child care**

Two domestic abuse practitioners facilitate each group and two staff are available to look after children so that there are no barriers to participation.

*“I feel accepted. There’s no fear of judgement. It feels like I’m not alone anymore”*

### Family Healthy Eating groups

During the summer holidays we held sessions for mothers about how to eat healthily on a limited budget. We also provided them with ingredients and cooking utensils that they were able to keep, to ensure sustainability by allowing them to continue to cook healthy meals for their children.

To enable the mothers to concentrate on cooking, we ran sessions for children, too. As well as having fun, this gave them the opportunity to find out about and use healthy cooking ingredients themselves.

At the end of each session, families came together to share, enjoy and bond over the food they had prepared.



*“Healthy relationships – I didn’t realise how much I didn’t know”*

### Young Universe group

The teenagers who attended our Young Universe group suggested how we could improve and develop our service. They created a short film to raise awareness about the impact of domestic abuse and recently supported the development of training around healthy and unhealthy relationships to roll out to other young people.

They are also involved in the recruitment of new staff working with Join the Dots to ensure that their views play a key part of the process.

### Safe and Together

Safe and Together is a training programme and suite of tools that help practitioners to work in partnership with adult and child survivors to increase their safety, stability and self-efficacy.

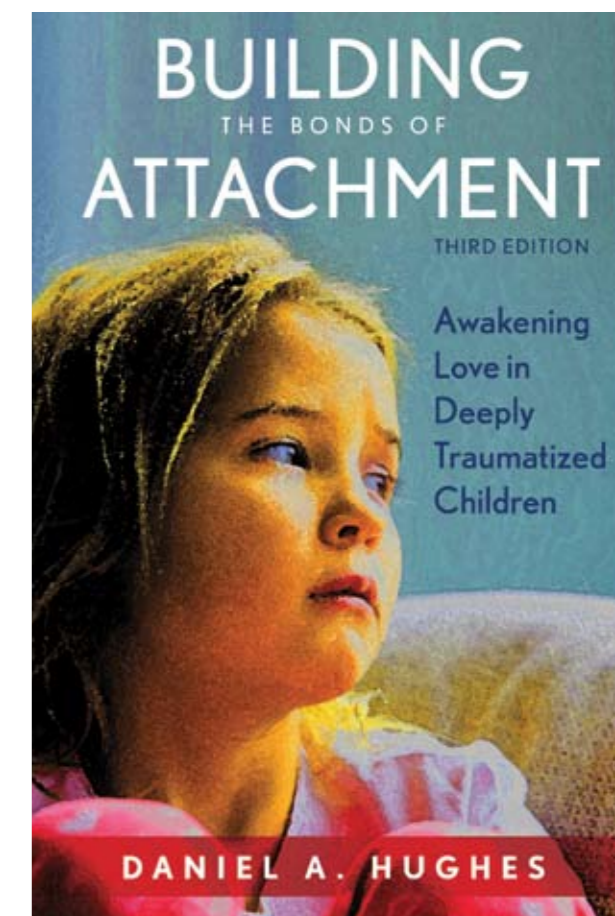
This approach is a key component of how we practice: it helps us to understand rather than judge the woman’s perspective and decision-making – particularly where the woman has been subjected to coercive control.

It also provides a shared framework for understanding and working through why a woman might, for example, decide to maintain some contact with the perpetrator after ending the relationship. She might feel – particularly where there are children involved and some contact is required - that this is the best way to manage the situation and keep the perpetrator calm.

### Dyadic Developmental Practice (DDP)

During the past year we have not only continued to train staff in DDP but expanded our knowledge base by engaging in Nurture Parenting training. Through this approach we look at the whole family unit to effect change rather than working with the mother or children in isolation.

The aim of this practice - “to awaken love in deeply traumatised children” - resonates with both families and practitioners.



*“I’m able to let out emotions now”*

*“It was so inspiring and encouraged me to reflect on my own practice.”*

*“Hearing from all the speakers was so powerful and the way you used the online tools was a great way to do it.”*

## Events

### 16 Days of Activism

A highlight in our calendar is the annual international ‘16 Days of Activism’, which runs from 25 November to 10 December and calls for the elimination of male violence against women and children. We hold our own annual event during the same period to demonstrate our solidarity with this initiative.

During 16 Days of Activism in 2022 we made extensive use of social media (including Facebook, Twitter (now X) and Instagram) to highlight the key issues that we routinely face as a result of male violence against women and children in Fife.

### Fife Women’s Aid Annual Event 2022

This is our opportunity to celebrate and honour the women and children we have been privileged to support. Through this platform, we give them the chance to share their experiences, so they in turn can inspire and encourage others affected by domestic abuse and give them hope that things can and will get better. Their positive spirit and creativity shines through - despite everything they have endured.

One of the young people we support spoke movingly about the trauma she had experienced and how, with our help, she began to name her preferred future and work towards recovery - and even happiness.

*“The young person’s speech really touched my heart.”*

Several women also described their experiences and how they were able – despite great loss and suffering - to get themselves and their families to a better place.

### Shumela Ahmed – guest speaker

We were delighted to have Shumela Ahmed – co-founder and managing director of the Resilience Learning Partnership – as one of our two guest speakers. Shumela is a teacher and educator as well as an activist. She co-authored the National Trauma Training Plan and advises the Scottish Government on the National Trauma Training Programme and the implementation of Trauma Informed Practice across Scotland.

Shumela spoke to us from the heart about her own experience of having to seek refuge as a child and about her recovery from trauma. Her honesty and authenticity were incredibly powerful and her transformation from trauma survivor to trauma educator gave participants tangible evidence and hope that their destiny didn’t have to be defined by the damaging experiences they had lived through.

### Two powerful films

Two short films were launched at the event: one created by women and one by young people.

*“I found the videos really moving and enjoyed the event”*

The first film was made by young people we support. They did this through a process of co-production where they chose and created the subject matter, content, storyline and graphics. Media Education worked in partnership with them to facilitate this process.

The second film – made in the same spirit as the first in that it valued survivor voices and choices - was co-produced but this time by the women we support.

We know that creativity in all its forms is key to recovery; writing, music, movement, performance, photography and film all generate neuroplasticity, which opens the doors to possibility and change.

Empowering survivors to create their own story in film and performance is more than just a good thing to do - it is actually one of the cornerstones of recovery and enhances wellbeing and self-management.

*“The trauma-informed stuff was brought to life. The practice became tangible and real.”*

### Lisa Cherry – guest speaker

Our final speaker was Lisa Cherry - an author, researcher and leading international trainer and consultant. She specialises in helping services and systems to create change that supports trauma-informed practice. Lisa’s mission is to provide accessible knowledge and information for all those working with and around trauma, resilience and recovery.

Lisa also spoke honestly about her personal experiences of trauma and related this to her writing and research. Participants found the story of how she overcame adversity and the challenges she faced to be highly relatable and inspiring. It also made them feel more hopeful and optimistic.

ONLINE

Annual Event  
2022

Monday  
28th November  
10.30am


**Join us for:**

The launch of two short films about domestic abuse and recovery created by women we support and Young Universe (young people in recovery).


Shumela Ahmed, co-founder and managing director of Resilience Learning Partnership - a lived experience led education and training provider.

Lisa Cherry, author, researcher and leading international trainer and consultant specialising in working with the legacy of trauma.


Email [info@fifewomensaid.org.uk](mailto:info@fifewomensaid.org.uk) to book a place.



Shumela Ahmed



Lisa Cherry



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Registered Scottish Charity SC011689

*“The support is amazing, having someone there for me, to listen and support me”*

## Communication and Public Engagement

### Social media

We use Facebook, Twitter (now X), Instagram and LinkedIn to disseminate our own content, news and views. This has a number of benefits, including the fact that survivors can remain in touch with us while maintaining anonymity through pseudonyms and avatars.

It also enables practitioners and researchers from across the field to publicise their findings and therefore gives us access to articles and blogs that analyse various aspects of domestic abuse.

Finally, this online presence enables us to respond in real time to questions and suggestions.

### Partnership with The Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort and Spa

We are delighted to have a continuing relationship with our corporate partner - the prestigious Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort and Spa in St Andrews – and are grateful as always for their generosity. They support us by making donations, providing a range of opportunities and putting significant resources into making a positive difference to the lives of survivors

because they care about violence against women and children.

This year, the Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort and Spa donated books for our children's service and counselling service as well as some lovely Christmas gifts. Amongst other things, they provided spa sessions for women who were struggling to build their sense of self-worth; they held a coffee morning for our women's service user involvement group; and also arranged a mindfulness session followed by a healthy lunch.

The families we support and our staff are hugely grateful for their compassion.

### Scottish Graduate Entry Medicine (ScotGEM)

We are pleased to support tomorrow's medical practitioners in partnership with the University of St Andrews to offer student placements to ScotGEM. This mutually beneficial arrangement helps ensure that medical students gain a greater understanding of the impact of domestic abuse and of services available within their local community. We were delighted to have a student on placement again during this year.

*“I was made to feel really valued by Fife Women's Aid”*

## Chair of the Board of Trustees' Report

It is with great pleasure that I would like to welcome you on behalf of the Board of Trustees of FWA to find out more about the amazing work of Fife Women's Aid and celebrate its achievements.

2022-2023 was an extremely significant year for the structure of Fife Women's Aid as the world was gradually recovering from the pandemic crisis. We continued to provide our core services while also developing new areas to ensure a holistic support was provided to all our service users. While we have always operated against a backdrop of challenges, this year continued to be a testing time due to the continuing impact of the pandemic crisis and its implications. One of the remaining challenges has been the importance of being able to provide support both remotely and in person, and ensure that sufficient numbers of staff members were available to provide these services.

We have to give credit to the FWA team for ensuring that our services continued to operate as effectively as possible in light of the circumstances. The safety and wellbeing of women and children in Fife remained at the heart of the FWA team's work. The support that we provided was equal both towards our existing service users and all the ones that have reached out seeking our assistance.

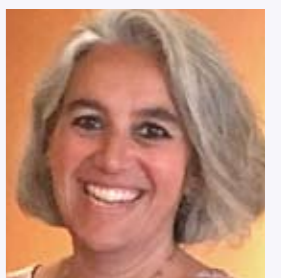
Our CEO, Kate McCormack, ensured that the FWA team continued to provide the services required despite the challenges of recruiting new staff members in the aftermath of the pandemic crisis. To that effect, Kate initiated a strong recruiting programme to make sure that all vacant positions within the organisation were filled while continuing with the restructuring of the staff teams to balance a hybrid way of working.

Therefore, I want to take this opportunity and extend a massive thank you to Kate and the management team for leading existing and new staff members through this everchanging environment. The Board continues to acknowledge the ongoing commitment and strength shown by our staff members and their tireless work in ensuring FWA provides for so many women and families across Fife.

Of equal importance is the role that all our funders have played over the course of 2022-2023. We remain eternally grateful to all the funding organisations, companies and individuals for their support in enabling FWA's services to be maintained during these challenging times. It is with the continuous support of all the funders that we were able to further develop many of our services and provide the support required for the recovery of women, children and young people.

At Board level, our priority for 2022/23 was to ensure the effectiveness of FWA as an organisation and ensure that we adopt best practice in our operations. The full review of FWA's governing documents that aimed to ensure that the organisation is operating in accordance with the Governance Code principles and current OSCR requirements, was completed the previous financial year but needed to be approved by the majority of FWA members. Following a very difficult time in trying to progress with the required revisions of FWA's Articles of Association, the Board was finally in a position to overcome the reluctance demonstrated from a number of FWA members. This was achieved by changing the structure of FWA to a one-tier structure that removed the additional membership beyond the Board members. This took place during an Extraordinary General Meeting held in April 2022.

As a final note, I wanted to highlight that FWA will continue to have a positive impact on the lives of the women, children and young people that we work with. Their wellbeing is and will always be our priority and reflecting the core of our existence as an organisation.



**Daphne Grant**

Chair of the Board of Trustees

*“I feel more confident, happier and content and see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.”*

## Thank You ...

### ... for your support

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the work of Fife Women's Aid over the past year, including our dedicated staff; trustees; volunteers and students; our lived experience ambassador; the women and children we support and all our partners and funders.

We would also like to thank members of our community and the many local and national organisations who support us.

### ... for helping to fund our service

Thank you to all our funders who have provided grants to support the recovery of women and children experiencing domestic abuse:

Fife Council Housing; Fife Council Social Work; NHS Fife; the Scottish Government

Delivering Equally Safe Fund; the Scottish Government Victim Centred Approach Fund; the National Lottery Community Fund; the Henry Smith Charity; the Robertson Trust; the Gannochy Trust; the Volant Trust; the Alexander Moncur Trust and Foundation Scotland.

We would also like to thank the Scottish Government for providing the additional financial support required to address increasing waiting lists.

### ... for your donations

Thank you also to all the individuals and groups who supported us by making donations during what has been an incredibly difficult year. Your generosity and kindness have significantly improved the situation for the families we support.



*Thank you – we couldn't do it without you!*

## Get in touch

Please ring 0808 802 5555 to talk to a support worker in confidence about your options and our services. The line is open weekdays between 9am and 5pm, and an out-of-hours service is available from 6pm until 8am Monday to Friday and 24 hours at weekends.

For the Join the Dots support line please ring 0808 801 0422 or send us a message via Facebook Messenger on [@jointhedotsfwa](https://www.facebook.com/jointhedotsfwa) to talk to a support worker in confidence. The service is available between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

Join the Dots support line is available during evenings and weekends for urgent calls and messages. Contact via phone is available from 6pm until 8am Monday to Friday and 24hrs on Saturday and Sunday and we will respond to Facebook Messenger between 6pm and 2am Monday to Friday and between 9am and 2am on Saturday and Sunday.

For more information about the services we offer and to read stories from survivors, please visit our website [www.fifewomensaid.org.uk](http://www.fifewomensaid.org.uk)

You can also find out more about what we do from our Facebook page or on Twitter (X), Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook Messenger.



Fife Women's Aid is a charitable company limited by guarantee Co. No. SC316350  
Registered Office: Suite 1, First Floor, Saltire House,  
Pentland Park, Glenrothes, KY6 2AL  
Registered Scottish Charity SC011689

