

Monklands Women's Aid



Annual Report
2014-2015

ANNUAL REPORT 2014 - 2015

What we do:

Monklands Women's Aid provides specialist domestic abuse welfare services to women, children and young people who are in a state of extreme distress and who have experienced domestic abuse, who are at risk of experiencing domestic abuse and who are seeking to escape. We recognise the complex issues that exacerbate their needs; LGBT, BME, No Recourse to Public Funds, Alcohol/Drug dependancies, Mental Health, Socioeconomic disadvantages, Poverty, Disability (this list is not exhaustive). Our purpose is to provide person centred responsive holistic services; underpinned by a feminist/gendered analysis of domestic abuse. Our core hours are 9am- 4pm Monday to Thursday, 9am- 1.30pm Friday. We also offer a 24/7 On-Call service.

Chair of Directors Statement:

"Can you believe that it's that time of year again! We invite you to share with us a summary of our successes and achievements in 2014–15. The need and demand for Monklands Women's Aid services are at an all-time high. Recent Freedom of Information figures reveal that in Airdrie Central ward an incident of domestic violence was recorded on average at 1 in 23 households (the worst in North Lanarkshire) and in Coatbridge North, the figure was 1 instance in every 26 households (the second worse area in North Lanarkshire.) We face emerging challenges on, what feels like, a daily basis; economic downturn, increased core costs, Welfare Reform and reduced funding. Nevertheless, we are passionate and committed to serving women, children and young people who have or are experiencing domestic abuse. We will continue to work hard to optimise and maximise our resources to ensure and sustain our excellent service provision.

As ever I would like to thank all staff and directors for their continuing hard work and commitment to Monklands Women's Aid."

Ann Ross

(Chairperson)

Care inspectorate inspection March 2015

For the second year running we are pleased to announce that we have been awarded the highest award across all inspected services:

Quality of Care & Support – Grade 6

Quality of Staffing – Grade 6

Quality of Management & Leadership – Grade 6

The report's author concluded:

"This is an excellent quality service delivered by a motivated and well engaged staff group."

"The service has continued to develop creative approaches to helping people to overcome the challenges they face, and to enhance their quality of life."

Women's Aid in Scotland National Service Standards

In 2015 we successfully completed the requirements to retain our National Service Standards award (2015-2018).

Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender Charter Mark

We are currently working towards our LGBT Charter Mark.

Monklands Women's Aid Ethos:

We believe that all women, children & young people have the right to be safe and free from fear. Monklands Women's Aid works to end violence against women, children and young people by tackling its root cause; gender inequality. We provide a range of holistic services that reduce the threat and risks posed. We do this by providing specialist services; promoting women's equality and children's rights. We work to ensure that high quality, responsive services are available to women, young people and children who have experienced, or are experiencing domestic abuse.

Our rationale is, to treat service users with dignity and respect while offering them a tailored service. Our purpose is, to ensure our service reflects each individual's right to dignity, safety and equality of service, whilst valuing their diversity and choice. These values are central to the service we offer. We provide an environment where a woman, young person or child has the opportunity to heal and empower themselves and develop a plan to increase their safeguards; whilst ultimately reducing the risk posed to them. We support them to develop their skills, thus enabling them to plan their futures and realise their potential.

Monklands Womens Aid Service Provision

Our service components:

- Advocacy
- Basic Awareness Raising
- Children & Young Persons Services
- Crisis Support
- Follow-On - Resettlement Service
- Group work
- Housing Support Services
- Refuge
- One to One support
- Outreach
- Partnership/Multi Agency working

Service Delivery Developments

We gratefully received funding from the Clothworkers Foundation, Awards for All, Children In Need and North Lanarkshire Council grants which has enabled us to upgrade all of our refuge provision. We have also attained an additional refuge to increase our refuge provision to 8 in total. A special thank you to the tutors and students at the New College Lanarkshire, Motherwell Campus, who gave up their October week holiday to assemble the furnishings for the refuges.

Across all of these service areas women, children and young people have access to a broad range of welfare services, emotional and practical support as well as direct advocacy support with other agencies and service providers. The support they receive is shaped by their individual need and ability: for one woman this may mean she needs only a leaflet describing how to access housing support services, for another it may mean that she needs someone to support her in completing a homeless application form or attend a meeting with housing, solicitors, doctor's, schools etc. Whatever the circumstances, women, children, young people can access support through face to face contact (drop in and appointment), telephone, On Call (24/7), text messaging, and the internet (email, web site).

Statistics

North Lanarkshire average – one incident of domestic abuse in every 37 households, with Airdrie and Coatbridge areas reporting the highest reported figures. We note that these figures only reflect the reported incidents and many more women, children and young people continue to suffer in silence and endure fear and pain.

Since 2014 Monklands Women's Aid has provided support to 529 women & 117 children & young people in Airdrie and Coatbridge and the surrounding areas.

Outcomes for women

- 64% of women feel less isolated
- 73% of women feel more informed
- 79% of women feel safer
- 69% of women feel their risk has significantly reduced

Outcomes for Children and Young People

- 75% feel they have healthier relationships and know how to maintain them
- 71% feel they have a better understanding of their feelings
- 75% feel safer

Operational Developments

We have continued to strengthen our infrastructure this year with the implementation of a bespoke Case Management System and SAGE financial management system.

We successfully applied for a further 12 months funding for our Children's Service and Womens Support Service. We also received part funding from the Robertson Trust for 12 months for a Learning Development Training worker that has enabled us to provide internal and external training.

We are committed to offering positive opportunities to women, children and young people that enable them to form good memories. We rely on additional funding to provide these opportunities. In the past 12 months we have been able to offer wide-ranging comprehensive Easter and Summer Programmes for both women and children. As a response to feedback received from women, children and young people our Christmas programme and pantomime, funded by Children In Need and Coatdyke Bowling Club, included both the children and their mothers. Here is just some of the feedback we received:

What I liked:

"It was good for the kids and I enjoyed meeting people too"

"The kids loved it and really enjoyed themselves and we met loads of new people"

"It was brilliant"

"I had a lovely time and the entertainment was great"

"I loved EVERYTHING!"

"It was all really good. We both had a great time thanks"

"Had a ball. the pantomime and cast were brill"

"Me and my mum and brother had a good time. we laughed loads"

What we could do better?

"Nothing"

"Everything was perfect"

"Had an absolutely fab night and the staff of Monklands Womens Aid are brilliant."

"Thank you so much for all your support and help"

Difference 'So what'?

"It allowed us to share some quality time with each other without the stress of financial limits and in a safe place with people that understand"

"It gave me and my kids a good family time and got us out the house"

"It made me feel happy and Christmassy"

"We had a good time together and enjoyed meeting other people"

"It gave the kids good memories of what family time should be like"

"Best night ever, my mum was smiling, thank you"

"Found it very enjoyable and made me and my family very happy"

We are committed to deliver weekly Support Groups and Youth Groups but, as said previously, provision continues to depend on funding.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

New premises – we are exploring options for new office premises to enable us to offer further services. The women and children we serve along with staff have highlighted the potential of having larger premises that would better meet their needs. In these times of austerity this has been somewhat of a challenge. However we continue to search for affordable premises that will allow us to improve our services further.

We actively encourage and highly value the input from the people we serve. As such last year the Women's Support Group produced our Annual Report 2013-14. This year we plan to develop our website (Monklandwomensaid.co.uk). Our plan is for the children and young people, supported by staff, to take the lead in the upgrade and development of the website.

Recruitment of New Directors. Plans have been developed, and our hope is to further strengthen the organisations foundation with additional diversity, commitment, knowledge and skills that Directors can utilise to achieve our vision.

We would like to thank everyone who continues to support our work and the women, children and young people we serve. Without your commitment and support our vision would be impossible to achieve. We are enormously grateful.

Women's experiences of using the service:

"Monklands Women's Aid has given and is still giving me great support. It has helped me understand and be able to know more about domestic abuse and how to deal with the effects of domestic abuse and how it affects a person's life.

Monklands Women's Aid has also helped put my life back on track and to look forward to a brighter and positive future for me and my daughter. Some of the services I have been using are namely:

Children's service

Support group

Immigration & Solicitors appointments

Social work

Housing

Getting a school in place for my daughter

Getting a GP

If I never came to Monklands Women's Aid my life would never have changed and I can't imagine how things would have been for me and my daughter. It has help me so much with my confidence and self-esteem. Before I was shy and very emotional when talking about my issues and not confident saying I was a victim but now coming to the groups it has changed me so much as an individual. I can understand that it wasn't my fault to have suffered and being treated the way I was by my ex-partner. I am so grateful to have come to Monklands Women's Aid and I would highly recommend anybody to not be scared or ashamed to look for support.

The staff are all very friendly, supportive and great. They are non-judgmental.

Keep up the hard and great work Monklands Women's Aid and thank you for all you have done for me and my daughter."

M.J.

"When I heard about Monklands Women's Aid I came along and made an appointment to speak to someone about all the different things I was going through. I was living in a homeless unit but came to the Monklands Women's Aid Support Group. I was very quiet, anxious, and uptight and my confidence was very low but by coming to the group and enjoying the activities my confidence has grown very much. I now have a new house that I like very much and I am not as nervous and uptight and still enjoy meeting new friends. Monklands Women's Aid has helped me find myself in all different ways. I talk a lot about feelings; sad, good and happy things every day and take an interest in other people. They are very nice people. Workers and friends at Monklands Women's Aid have helped me so much in all aspects of my new life. I still get very depressed but the Support Group and other groups help me mange it."

J.R.

"I really appreciate being involved with Monklands Women's Aid. Before I came here I was stuck in my house with no goals or ambition. I suffer from severe anxiety, panic attacks and have a long term history of abuse. I was put on a high dose of medication which I feel made my life worse. I ended up spending 4 years in my house. It came to an end when Social Workers came to visit and I had been living with no electricity for 3 months. An ex-pal and ex-boyfriend, who I thought were helping me, were actually just taking advantage of me, using and spending my money. I went through an incident and Social Workers finally had enough and I agreed to get help. I've had 2 workers while here and through them talking to me I was able to see what I had to change. I had to first look at my own view on my life and what I want to change. As this had to come from me it took me a while but I did it! My confidence grew, I started to appreciate myself, I began to put on weight and I started liking myself. My workers were always there for emotional support, good advice and the rest of the staff are always welcoming. The Support Group is the only time I get out of the house. I did start getting out more but briefly went into a relationship which I had doubts about, he ended up going away but still tried to keep in contact with me but he was insulting me and bringing me down. I'm staying in again and my confidence is at a low, what took a lot to get me there only took a few weeks to get me back down, but throughout I was supported by staff to stop him from contacting me. I have put a full stop to it all and I know I will be supported by my workers who I adore. They always welcome me and don't look down on me. The good thing about this time is my confidence and wellbeing weren't 100% shattered, just a bit bruised and I have staff to thank for that, thank you Monklands Women's Aid and my allocated worker, I owe a great deal to them. Thank you."

SMcL

"When I came here first time I was scared, lacked confidence and couldn't rely on anyone. When I spent time with these ladies they all are very helpful because my language was not good. They explained to me every single thing very friendly and organised some activity. I made some new friends I done some mental health activities. I like this service because a man done this domestic abuse. I was weak and scared from everyone. I really thankful to all them but especially my workers as they give me lifts and come to appointments and went with me and explained to me simply, slowly and I was satisfied that I understood what was happening.

Thank you all ."

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Children's quotes and recounts of their experiences being supported by the service:



"We went to lots of places, it was fun and enjoyable and it got us out the house".

"It Kinda gave us a break and time on our own" CM age 10.

"Monklands womens aid has helped me cause I can tell you about my feelings and get them out". BB age 11.

"I come to the group because my dad and my step dad wasn't very nice to us. we had to leave home and move into refuge".

E then explained what refuge meant - "it's a hoose were no one knows where you are. it's a safe place". EH age 10

"I had lots of fun over the summer. hanging about with my new friends that I only met through coming here" JL age 11

Funding Sources

Our principal funding sources are The Scottish Government and North Lanarkshire Council:

Local Authority fund Housing Support Services & Refuge provision

The Scottish Government Violence Against Women & Girls Fund the Women's Support Services 2015-16 and the Children's Service 2015-16.

The organisation actively seeks additional funding sources and applies regularly for any local, regional or national assistance available. Without it we would not be able to provide certain elements of the services that are so highly valued and reflect the worth we all place on the people we serve:

- Airdrie & Coatbridge Round Table
- Alex Neil MSP
- ASDA – Ann Binks
- BASICS Foodbank, David Shaw & Staff
- Bellshill Baptist Church
- Boots Stores
- Calderbank Foodbank
- CAMEO Ladies Group
- Cash for Kids
- Children in Need
- Coatbridge & Airdrie Advertiser
- Coatbridge District Nurses
- Coatdyke Bowling Club
- Community Mental Health Team, Buchanan Centre
- CYT Media
- David Scott & Students, New College Lanarkshire Motherwell Campus
- Girls Brigade, Airdrie
- Group of volunteers from the LDS Church, Cumbernauld
- Ipsos MORI
- Karan Sharkey & Staff, William Tracey Group
- Linus Project
- Local Authority

- Maggie Weir (Christmas Donations)
- Morrisons Airdrie
- Mr & Mrs Bob Miller & Family
- NCR, David Gibson, Angela Hassard & Team
- Neil Gray MP
- New Beginnings Christian Church
- New Wellwynd Parish Church
- Nicola Smith (Donations)
- North Lanarkshire Council Community Grants Scheme
- Pizza Hut, Airdrie
- Rotary Club of Coatbridge & Airdrie
- Scottish Government
- Spirit of Christmas
- St Augustine's Parish Church
- St Margaret's High School
- Terex Trucks, Julie Thompson & Staff
- Tesco Coatbridge
- The Clothworkers Foundation
- The Mint
- The Robertson Trust
- TOTAL Alwyn Platform Charity Committee
- Tracie Hunter



We would also like to thank every individual, who continue to support our works, whether it be financially or practically. Without your commitment and support it would be impossible to provide and we are enormously grateful for your kindness and commitment.

