



Cardiff Women's Aid Trustee Board Report 2020

Cardiff Women's Aid: Who we are

For over 45 years, Cardiff Women's Aid has been working with and for women and children in Cardiff. We are committed to promoting equality between women and men, through providing 24/7 crisis support for women at risk of violence, offering a range of specialist support and recovery services, and undertaking preventative work. We do this through our four refuges, our 'One Stop Shop', the Women's Centre and out in the community. We are a feminist organisation, working in solidarity with local, national, and international allies to secure women's human rights and promote gender equality.



Introduction

Written by the Trustees, this report provides an overview of Cardiff Women's Aid's activity during the year 2019-20. This has been a year of continuity, growth and change for Cardiff Women's Aid. In this report, we take stock of this continuity and change and look forward to expanding and refining our services in the year ahead.

Like everybody, this year, we have had to adapt quickly to an extraordinary and changing set of circumstances stemming from the global pandemic. This led to a lockdown across the whole of the UK from March 2020 and then changing Welsh rules and regulations. The pandemic has resulted in tragedies, mental and physical health difficulties, and has significantly exacerbated the pressures faced by many people. Throughout, Cardiff Women's Aid has continued to provide 24/7 services and a wide range of on-line and telephone support and advice. The staff and volunteer teams adapted services and ways of working swiftly and

professionally under extremely challenging circumstances to ensure that women and children continued to receive the help and support they needed. There was an increased use of remote contact rather than face to face services in many instances, whilst maintaining an appropriate level of staff presence at our accommodation-based services. As international evidence of increased domestic abuse emerged, the numbers of women referred to Cardiff Women's Aid have fluctuated and the needs of these women have changed, with more women now assessed as high risk. Covid-19 and responses to it will continue to influence our work in the future. In addition to keeping a watching brief on the potential economic and social implications of Brexit, the Trustees will be sensitive both to the health and welfare challenges of the pandemic, and the potential opportunities that virtual communication provides for more flexible working practices and service delivery in the future.



Thanks to our staff and volunteers

The Board of Trustees would like to begin by extending thanks to all those who contribute to the life and work of Cardiff Women's Aid, particularly our staff and volunteers. We are immensely proud of the work that they do and the feminist values they espouse as they go about their work on the front line of service provision to some of the most vulnerable people in society. In particular, the dedication and professionalism of our staff and volunteer teams during the height of the pandemic and beyond has been remarkable.





Welcoming staff and saying goodbye

Several new staff have joined Cardiff Women's Aid this year, all of whom we welcome heartily to the Cardiff Women's Aid community. We made a particularly important strategic appointment to a newly established Director of Business Development, Women's Centre and Central Services role, with Shameem Nawaz joining us in February 2020. We have also said goodbye to several staff. Our Services Director, Amanda Seed, left Cardiff Women's Aid in August 2020 after nine years with us. More recently, our CEO Morgan Fackrell left in November 2020, after 13 years at the helm. Morgan was instrumental in building Cardiff Women's Aid to where we are today and, notably, both Morgan and Amanda were key architects of RISE (the core of our work) and played a crucial role in securing the contract with Cardiff City Council, in partnership with BAWSO and Llamau. This will be an important legacy for them both.

At the time of writing, we are on the cusp of welcoming our Interim CEO to Cardiff Women's Aid. She will be with us for six months, and will oversee the consolidation of a staffing restructure which is already under way and will make an important contribution to our service provision, ensure that we take action with our partners to strengthen our service delivery, and champion the implementation of the new Health & Well-Being Strategy.



Our services

The financial year 2019-2020 is the second year of delivering the RISE contract, which is our largest and core service. The service is funded by Cardiff City Council and is a partnership with Llamau and Bawso and involves close collaboration with many other agencies to provide a 'joined up approach' to addressing gender-based violence. RISE includes the provision of refuge and Independent Personal Advisor (IPA) support to women and children in four refuges across the city. It also comprises a 'One Stop Shop' building from where women and children can access a range of support services provided by the partnership. The location of the building will be changing shortly to a new purpose-built facility in Cardiff Royal Infirmary. This will be an exciting move for Cardiff Women's Aid.

The SafeAS team continued its vital recovery work during the year with children, both in the community and in refuge, and the ground-breaking IRIS project continued its work supporting GPs to identify and refer victims of gender-based violence. The Women's Centre has also continued to grow from strength to strength.



The women and children who access our service are the Trustees' top priority. Cardiff Women's Aid has supported 3,259 women over the year 2019/2020 and will continue to consolidate and strengthen our services into the future. We look forward to the roll-out of PATH training for all support service staff, and ongoing investment in ensuring that CWA both continues to diversify its staff and provide training and discussion in the wake of the Black Lives Matter campaign, sparked by the US killing of George Floyd. Cardiff is a multicultural city with a proud history, and CWA takes pride in doing its part to continue that work. Trustees would like extend particular thanks to Lisa Ware as our Manager of Support Services who has faced particular challenges in service provision during the pandemic and through a period of considerable change.



Our partners

Partnership working is an integral part of what we do. It is an honour for Cardiff Women's Aid to work alongside individuals and organisations who are as

committed to ending gender-based violence and promoting gender equality as we are. We extend thanks to all our partners and stakeholders, in particular Cardiff City Council (as the funders of the RISE Service), and our other funders, Welsh Government, Welsh Women's Aid, Hestia, South Wales Police Crime Commissioner, Cardiff and the Vale UHN (through The Community Foundation in Wales), Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) and the National Lottery. We also acknowledge our partners, Llamau and Bawso, and their contributions to ensuring effective services for women and children. We also work in a number of partnerships on supporting children and families, supporting male victims of domestic abuse, and with Drive on a perpetrator programme. Beyond this, we would like to thank a range of agencies and organisations for their continued partnership working, and financial, political and moral support in enabling us to deliver the services that are so essential to the safety, health and well-being of women and children in Cardiff. As ever, we particularly acknowledge the assistance of South Wales Police, Social Services, the Education Service, and General Practitioners, and the ongoing support of Welsh Women's Aid as our membership body. We stand in solidarity with all of those who believe that every human being is equally deserving of safety, security and respect.



Our volunteers

In 2018, the Board made a strategic investment to develop our capacity to host volunteers. This work has blossomed over the past year, under the leadership of Venice Fielding and, now, our dedicated Volunteer Coordinator, Alex Congreve. Following the development of our Volunteering Strategy (2019-2021), there is now a wide range of volunteering activities with the number of volunteers expanding significantly: from 10 in 2018 to 68 in November 2020 (excluding Trustees).



Some of the new areas of volunteering activity include social media, workshop facilitation, campaigning, podcast production, and an on-line wellbeing café. We were proud and delighted to achieve the national ‘Investing in Volunteers’ Standard during the year, which is a formal recognition of the strong commitment, values-based approach and support that we attach to volunteering. Our volunteers provide valuable opportunities and support for people using our services that are not covered through our formal contracts and grant funding. We are immensely proud and grateful for their contributions to Cardiff Women’s Aid.



Health & Well-Being Strategy 2020-25

Our services can only be provided through the dedicated work of our staff and volunteers. They are the beating heart of Cardiff Women’s Aid, no more so than in this challenging year of Covid-19 and the additional pressures brought about by an expansion to our service provision. In recognition, the Trustees have prioritised further investment in strengthening staff and volunteer health and well-being as a key strategic priority. The Board’s dedicated Well-Being Champions, Sam Taylor and Ron Mayers, have therefore worked hand-in-hand with them to develop our new Health and Well-being Strategy 2020-25. The strategy recognises the demanding nature of the work done by staff and volunteers aiming to create a health and well-being culture at Cardiff Women's Aid that is second to none. The Board regards the health and well-being of staff and volunteers as an essential component of a healthy organisation contributing in turn to the delivery of the very best service to the women and children who

come to us for assistance. The strategy is the platform to deliver that vision and we look forward to its implementation. The Board's thanks go to two members of the staff team, Harriet Horn and Stephanie Fitzpatrick, who facilitated and drafted the strategy. This involved full consultation with our staff and volunteers to find out what enhancements they would like to the support available. The Health & Well-Being Strategy will be discussed with staff and volunteers at the December 2020 AGM.



Governance and the Board

The Board has continued its work to strengthen the governance of Cardiff Women's Aid over the past year, drawing on the diverse sets of skills and experience of the Trustees. In addition to our work through the quarterly Trustee Board meetings, we also undertake more focused scrutiny of activity in the HR and Governance sub-group (chaired by Margherita Carucci) and the Finance and Risk sub-group (chaired by our Treasurer, Peggy Jackson), which meet quarterly. Each Trustee sits on at least one sub-group.

The Board has said goodbye to two Trustees this year. Julia Desmond left having made valuable contributions to our governance responsibilities, particularly through her membership of the Finance and Risk sub-group. More recently, Joanna Parry stood down from the Board, having made significant contributions to the development of our volunteering work. We offer our heartfelt thanks to Julia and Jo and wish them well in their next ventures.

We will begin the recruitment of new Board members before the end of the calendar year and look forward to welcoming new Trustees onto the Board, with new experiences, perspectives and expertise.



Accounts and Audit Report

The Board was pleased to approve Cardiff Women's Aid's 2019-20 accounts on 24th November, with the organisation again on a sound financial footing. The Board extends thanks to our former CEO Morgan Fackrell and our Finance Team,

Vanessa Chapman and Nyssa Toghil. We also noted the positive Audit Report, which confirmed that the organisation is in good health.

Dr Rachel Minto, Chair of CWA Board of Trustees
With the Board of Trustees
November 2020



Board of Trustees

There are eight Trustees on the Board with a range of different personal and professional experience, including in governance, housing, safeguarding, counselling, media, policy, in the public and private sector. (See <https://www.cardiffwomensaid.org.uk/who-we-are/our-trustees/> for further information.) We are volunteers, and we give our time willingly because we believe in the work and values of Cardiff Women's Aid.

Dr Rachel Minto (Chair)

Paul Bevan, Vice-Chair

Peggy Jackson, Treasurer and Chair of Finance Sub-Group

Margherita Carucci, Chair of HR & Governance Sub-Group

Dr Jennifer Donald

Ron Mayers

Deborah Perkin

Sam Taylor, Safeguarding Lead



RISE
RECOVERY INFORMATION SAFETY EMPOWERMENT



Safe AS



Cardiff
Women's
Centre



CWA
CARDIFF WOMEN'S AID