

# Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire Housing Support Service

East Kilbride

**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

4 April 2019

**Service provided by:**

Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and  
East Renfrewshire

**Service provider number:**

SP2011011578

**Service no:**

CS2011289574

## About the service

Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire provides a support service for women aged 16 years and over and their children, who have or are suffering from domestic abuse.

The service is a charity and provides refuge and dispersed accommodation across South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire with support provided by the refuge team. Women in the broader community are supported by the outreach team. In addition there is a Children and Young People team supporting young people affected by domestic violence. At the time of inspection there were 22 women in refuge accommodation.

The times of operation are from Monday to Friday 09:00 to 17:00 with an on call service outwith these times.

The stated aims and objectives of the service are:

"To support and empower women, children and young people who are experiencing, or have experienced domestic abuse. We provide a range of needs led services including refuge accommodation, support and information, which ensures improved outcome"

This service has been registered since 2012.

## What people told us

We spoke with 12 women who were receiving a service both from the outreach team and the refuge service. Women told us that the service they received was outstanding and some women described the impact as being lifesaving. Some of the comments made by women include:

"It was like winning the lottery finding this place"

"I can't fault them and I wouldn't be here without them"

"Staff support me to attend meetings"

"I have completed the Freedom program and it was so helpful for me"

"Staff were able to look at my individual needs and support me the way I needed"

"I wouldn't have got through things without all the support from the staff"

"I have a keyworker and we agree a plan of what and how much support I get"

"They understood"

"The Freedom program helped me understand and stopped me going back"

"Staff were able to review the refuge rules and make amendments which meant that my son then felt able to come to live with me and I now know we are both safe"

"This is a good service. I feel safe and never feel judged"

"The staff go out of their way to help and always ask for and listen to feedback"

"The support I got helped me to carry on caring for my own children"

"All my feedback is positive. They have been amazing and supportive"

"I have been invited to groups and activities and feel safe and supported to attend them"

"I feel 100% safe which is something I have not felt for many years"

## Self assessment

There was no self-assessment requested for this inspection year. We met with the manager who provided us with an overview of developments within the service.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	6 - Excellent

## What the service does well

During this inspection we considered the quality themes relating to care and support and management and leadership and concluded that the service had achieved a grade of excellent for both themes.

Staff had built extremely effective relationships with women who told us they felt cared for, safe and respected. Staff were knowledgeable, highly skilled and confident within their role and women were supported in a sensitive manner.

Staff were very well-informed and established in the local communities and were therefore able to signpost women to appropriate specialist support services. The service has supported a new social enterprise which is helping domestic abuse survivors by providing them with good quality clothing to help them rebuild their lives.

The service evidenced an exceptionally high level of multi-disciplinary collaborative working across a range of external agencies. They play a vital role on the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (which is a victim focused meeting which takes place on a monthly basis to discuss cases of domestic abuse where the victim is at high risk of serious harm or homicide), MATAC and Violence Against Women group. The East Renfrewshire team have been active participants in the formation of the MARAC in this local authority.

The service have been integral in a number of local and national awareness raising opportunities which have increased the knowledge of professionals and residents in the area. At the time of inspection they were involved in a campaign through NHS Lanarkshire which was raising awareness and collecting donations which will provide starter packs for women and children using the service. In addition, the service have collaborated with East Renfrewshire local authority to create the "Love Doesn't Hurt" poster campaign.

Comprehensive care plans, risk assessments and safety plans were all up to date and were outcomes focused. Women reported consistently high levels of support which influenced a range of improved outcomes. The use of the empowerment star tool provided clear evidence of significantly improved outcomes for women.

The service have been sector leading in being part of the Partnership Change programme by providing support to the partners of men attending the Caledonian System (a specialist, court-mandated scheme to combat domestic abuse through the rehabilitation of male perpetrators).

The manager of the service was improvement focused. To enhance this she had developed good links with local and national agencies which has helped to inform and develop the service.

An equality impact assessment report was recently completed by the service. A number of policies were scrutinised and amended as a result. The manager was seen to be innovative in embracing this method of audit and review.

Women's Aid South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire (WASLER) is one of just three organisations in Scotland piloting the Building Equality Project, which aims to help women who have experienced domestic abuse move back towards the labour market. An extremely successful group work programme has been implemented as part of this project and women reported that this group was crucial to the development of their well-being and confidence.

A number of weekly support groups are well attended and women presented as passionate about how they can support other women. Overwhelmingly, women using these groups told us they felt safe, respected and valued.

The 'Freedom' group work programme and its follow-up, developed by the service, 'Empowerment', was regarded highly by women and several women stated the support and knowledge they had gained had stopped them returning to abusive partners. The service are furthering their innovative development of these courses by creating two new 'Freedom' based courses. One allows trained keyworkers to facilitate the course on an individual one-to-one basis and the other focuses on supporting women with learning differences therefore increasing the numbers of women who can be supported.

Regular supervision and appraisal of staff and was seen. Staff receive regular training and there was evidence of professional development which helps support women and children. Over the last year the service have undertaken a project to review the organisational culture within the staff group. Evidence of full staff participation was seen and an improvement in the organisational culture is supporting better outcomes for women and children.

Over the course of our inspection, we looked at child protection practice and were satisfied with the procedures and practice in place to ensure service users were being protected.

## What the service could do better

We found that risk assessments and safety plans are in place, however, we asked the service to ensure these are being regularly reviewed and evidence provided of women's participation.

The service are at the early stages of setting up a Young Person ambassador group. The outcomes of this will be followed up in our next inspection.

The service have created a Reach Out sub group which they hope will target hard to reach women for example

the travelling community, black and minority ethnic women. The outcomes of this will be followed up in our next inspection.

The service are aware of the need for regular team and management meetings and in order to support this we welcomed their plans to undertake staff training on note taking as we feel this will strengthen the evidence of these meetings and the work undertaken.

We discussed with the service the need for the draft corporate business plan to be progressed and finalised. The service were aware of this and seeking participation with staff and women to inform the completion of this.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

## Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

## What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

### Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
3 Feb 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
11 Mar 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
17 Mar 2014	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
1 Feb 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good

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