



**Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum**

**Working in partnership to tackle domestic violence**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2008-2009**

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**Wolverhampton  
Domestic Violence Forum**





2008—2009

## Directors, Executive and Staff Members

### Trustees

Margaret McAndrew (Chair)  
(resigned 11.03.09)

Hilary Williams (Vice-Chair)  
(Chair from 12.03.09)  
Wolverhampton Primary Care Trust

Anne Kavanagh (Treasurer)  
Soroptomists International of Wolverhampton

Helen Kilgallon  
Aquarius (joined 16.01.09)

Lesley Roberts  
Wolverhampton Homes (joined 15.01.08)

Gerald Thorne  
Thornes Solicitors

### Executive

Bal Bisla  
AWAAZ

Karen Esson  
WCC Healthy Schools

Julian Harper  
West Midlands Police

Jin Jowett  
Wolverhampton Homes

Mike Murdoch  
Probation Service

Michaila Tope  
The Haven Wolverhampton

Anthony Walker  
WCC Homelessness Service

Cllr Peter Wilson  
Observer

Chris Woodrow  
HM Courts Service

### Staff Members

Kathy Cole-Evans  
Strategy Co-ordinator

Jeannine Bradley  
Criminal Justice Support Services Co-ordinator

Dawn Jagdev  
Administrator (joined May 08)

Saghir Karim  
Domestic Violence Link Worker (joined Aug 08)

## Structure, Governance & Management

Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Strategy Co-ordinator is responsible for the day-to-day running of WDFV, and line management of staff. Trustees meet bi-monthly throughout the year.

### Appointment of Directors

At the AGM, one-third of the longest serving board members are subject to resignation and re-election/re-appointment. Nominations for board members must be received at least 7 days before the date of the AGM.

### Trustee Induction & Training

Prior to appointment, prospective Trustees are invited to attend a quarterly Forum meeting. On appointment, Trustees receive the Trustees Handbook detailing their responsibilities, the Forum's strategy, objectives and policies. During the year, Trustees attend 'Away Day' events, to update them on developments and identify and manage risks.

### Risk Management

The major risks to which WDFV might be exposed have been identified, and are reviewed regularly.

**Statement of Funds**

	Balance 01.04.2008	Movements in year		Transfers	Balance 31.03.2009
		Incoming	Outgoing		
Unrestricted funds	14986	3456	3516	13074	28000
General fund					
	14986	3456	3516	13074	28000
Restricted Funds					
Asian Violence	1320				1320
CJSSC 07/08	29913		1643		28270
CJSSC 08/09		38369	34469		3900
Home Office 2008/09		20000	20000		-
HORDS cap deprec	14346	0	6642		7704
Mainline	1476	76933	73019		5390
CJSSC Funding	131	0	0		131
DV Link Worker		9125	9124		-
MARAC Admin		4382	4380		2
Sanctuary 07/08 & 08/09	1021	12000	10282		2739
Co-Location Project	26106	0		(13074)	13032
West Midlands Police		5000			5000
	74313	165809	159559	(13074)	67489
	89299	169264	163075	-	95489

**Bankers**

National Westminster Bank  
Queen Square  
Wolverhampton  
V1 1TR

**Reserves Policy**

The level of reserves is set to provide up to 6 months salary for the Co-ordinator plus admin, removal, furniture and office costs. Also included are costs for replacing IT and other equipment, and premises costs.



2008—2009

## VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum (WDVF) is to work towards stopping domestic violence and abuse in the city of Wolverhampton.

## MISSION STATEMENT

WDVF aims to work together to stop domestic violence and abuse, to ensure the safety and empowerment of victims and their children, and to bring perpetrators to account.

## Objectives

The objectives of Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum, as detailed in the Articles, are:

- *'the relief of poverty and mental and physical sickness and the furtherance of education of people of all ages as to the problems arising from domestic violence in all its forms*
- *the promotion of co-operation between agencies in a co-coordinated effort to address domestic violence as a serious social issue*
- *to share information, raise awareness and develop a corporate understanding of domestic violence and agency practice*
- *to encourage the development of agency policies that establish "good practice" when working with either the casualties or perpetrators of domestic violence"*

## REPORT FROM THE TRUSTEES

### Local Area Agreement (LAA)

2008/09 marks the end of the 3-year LAA stretch targets for domestic violence.

Reducing domestic violence continues to be a priority for the Local Criminal Justice Group and the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership. Performance against the domestic violence LAA targets for 2008/09 was as follows:

- increase the number of incidents recorded by West Midlands Police - annual target exceeded by 25%.

- Increase the number of offenders brought to justice - annual target exceeded by 88%.
- Reduce the number of repeat domestic violence incidents - target not achieved.

From the baseline year, the number of domestic violence incidents recorded by the police has increased by 37%, representing growing confidence in reporting domestic violence incidents to the police. 25% of this increased total number of incidents were repeat incidents. This represents a decrease of 3% of repeat incidents.

The repeat victimisation targets continues to be a significant challenge for the city. Research demonstrates that domestic violence has the highest repeat rate of any violent crime. WDVF and its partners are developing plans to improve multi agency working to better manage repeat victimisation.

### Staff & Management Team

In particular, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to our retiring Chair, Maggie McAndrew. Maggie's invaluable support, contributions and commitment to the work and direction of the Forum in her capacities of Director, Chair, fellow Trustee, and line manager for the Strategy Coordinator have enabled WDVF to move from strength to strength over the last 17 years. Sincere thanks & good wishes from all colleagues.

We would also like to thank DI Graeme Squire for his consistent support to our Executive Board in moving forward the domestic violence agenda in Wolverhampton and delivering the criminal justice elements of our multi-agency strategy work. Graeme is now focused on leading the Police child protection team in the Public Protection Unit. We are very pleased to welcome DCI Julian Harper to our Executive Board.

We would also like to formally welcome Lesley Roberts, Chief Executive of Wolverhampton Homes and Helen Kilgallon, Manager of Aquarius, as new WDVF Trustees. Congratulations also to Hilary Williams, Health Practitioner at Wolverhampton PCT on taking over the Chair.

Changes to our staff team within the year include a welcome to Dawn Jagdev who joined us as Administrator in May 2008 and Saghir Karim who took up the post of Domestic Violence Link Worker in August 2008.



### STATISTICS 2008/09

#### West Midlands Police

- 4385 domestic violence incidents were reported to the Police
- 1109 repeat incidents were reported to the Police

#### The Haven Wolverhampton

- 1056 total referrals to refuge accommodation
- 246 women and 245 children admitted to accommodation services
- 280 women supported by the Floating Support Team (541 children involved)
- 310 women supported by Advocacy Services
- 2 women with no recourse to public funds supported

#### Wolverhampton City Council Homeless Acceptances

- 90 homeless acceptances as a result of domestic violence

#### Criminal Justice Support Services (CJSSC) - WDVf

- 167 domestic violence clients received support from WDVf's CJSSC through the criminal justice process.

#### Domestic Violence Link Worker, WDVf

- 1786 victims received personal contact and signposting opportunities

#### Specialist Domestic Violence Court

- 394 domestic violence perpetrators were brought to justice

### STRATEGY COORDINATOR

Domestic violence remains prominent on the national agenda, with a number of government led initiatives having taken place during the year. In 2008/09 the government published statistics demonstrating that nationally domestic violence accounts for 31% of all reported violence against women and 5% of all violence against men. Last year DV accounted for 30% of violent crime in Wolverhampton & remains a key priority for the city. We will need to continuously improve our multi-agency response to DV to enable us to meet our new National Indicator (reducing repeat incidents at MARAC) as part of our Local Area Agreement to 2011.

A cross government department national public consultation on tackling violence against women was undertaken during the year. As part of this consultation, in March Home Office representatives visited Wolverhampton. WDVf coordinated local discussions, support leaflets and briefings to support the HO visit.

In support of the 16 days of international action against violence against women, the Home Secretary called on men to make personal pledges never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women. Locally, on 25 November, men wore white ribbons to support this campaign. WDVf & The Haven raised public awareness of the White Ribbon campaign in a local shopping centre, highlighting domestic violence issues and local services, handing out thousands of white ribbons to local men. A local tyre & exhaust centre raised awareness of the issues with customers and the community through local press.

The 3 year multi-agency domestic violence strategy for the city fell due for renewal during the year. The refreshed strategy to 2011 is in line with the national delivery plan & includes a multi-agency action plan that outlines the actions and areas of development to which partner agencies have committed in order to improve domestic violence service delivery. Key areas of delivery include prevention, service provision, protection and justice and cross cutting multi-agency working.

The Forum was central in gaining endorsement from the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board to develop a co-located multi-agency 'one-stop-shop' service for victims of domestic violence. A multi-agency task and finish group will plan and deliver our new unit in line with internationally recognised best practice. It is anticipated that this initiative will attract considerable public sector cost savings in Wolverhampton as elsewhere.

**Kathy Cole-Evans**  
Strategy Coordinator



2008—2009

## **Criminal Justice Support Services (CJSSC)**

From April 2008 to March 2009, 167 clients have been supported through the court process. The majority of referrals come through the Police and Witness Care Service. The earlier the intervention from the time of arrest is proven to result in improved outcome for victims.

With this in mind, although the post-holder's primary base is at WDVF, the CJSSC is also based at the Police Public Protection Unit and at Wolverhampton Magistrates' Courts. Through the Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) Steering Group, there is now a dedicated court day for domestic violence trials, which the CJSSC attends, in addition to the long-standing specialist DV court held every Tuesday.

The main emphasis of this role is to provide hands on support to victims through the criminal justice process, developing victim safety plans, attending court, tracking and assisting the court in progressing cases, liaising with the court, Probation Service, Police and Prosecutors on behalf of the victim, attending solicitor appointments if required and signposting and referring to other relevant support services.

The CJSSC plays a key role in the delivery of the Local Area Agreement targets. Multi agency working is beneficial in providing a holistic service for victims. The CJSSC participates in the multi agency risk assessment conference (MARAC), representing the victims' views and participating in risk reduction of the highest risk victims and their children in the city.

**Jeannine Bradley**  
CJSSC, WDVF

## **Domestic Violence Link Worker**

The Domestic Violence Link Worker provides support and signposting opportunities to victims of domestic violence whose cases are not being pursued through the criminal justice system. The post is part-time, independent as it is managed by WDVF, but based at the Police Public Protection Unit. This intervention is designed to provide short term support and signposting opportunities to those victims who previously would have received little or no personal contact.

Between April 2008 and March 2009, a total of 1786 victims received personal contact with the Domestic Violence Link Worker. The majority of these cases were classified standard and medium risk, with some high risk cases.

The DV Link Worker has been trained by the Police to provide the Visual Evidence for Victims project (VEV) for survivors of domestic violence who want to record their injuries but are not ready to report to the police. This gives victims the option to use their evidence in the future.

**Saghir Karim**  
Domestic Violence Link Worker, WDVF

## **West Midlands Police**

West Midlands Police continues to deliver training to specialist domestic abuse officers. In turn the domestic abuse officers cascade this training to other police officers, Court staff and other related forums.

We have continued to refine Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) in order to reduce the time from victim referral to presentation at MARAC. This speedier process and the inclusion of relevant MARAC cases within our routine tasking process are two examples of the work being undertaken towards meeting the National Indicator (32) target that has been adopted as part of our Local Area Agreement until 2011.

Police have also driven the information gathering process to assist a review of the Wolverhampton MARAC that is being conducted nationally by CAADA (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse). We are keen to maximise the feedback from this review to assist us in continuous improvement of the service we deliver to the community.

In the coming year the implementation of a new screening tool to assess the risk to children living in domestic abuse households will trigger even closer working arrangements between Police and Social Care. This will be further complimented with our longer-term goal of being co-located with key partner agencies, to more effectively deal with domestic violence.

**DCI Julian Harper**  
West Midlands Police



2008—2009

## The Haven

Throughout 2008/09 The Haven Wolverhampton was actively involved in a number of strategic meetings to keep domestic violence and homelessness high on the agenda. These include the British Crime Survey extension to cover under 16's; Home Affairs Enquiry into the effectiveness of government action following the Crime and Victims Act 2004; National Survey on Third Sector Organisations, National Benchmarking, Supporting People Consultation; Children & Women's Abuse Studies Unit Violence Against Women Strategic Consultation and Contact Point: Violence against Women and Girls (VAW) National Government Consultation.

V-Involved project was launched to encourage volunteers aged between 16 and 25 years to provide support within The Haven's refuges and administration offices. The project was designed to promote volunteering and thus raise awareness of The Haven amongst a younger audience.

A number of Haven staff received training on how to effectively record photographic evidence of domestic abuse as part of the VEV Project (Visual Evidence for Victims). Such evidence can be used for reporting crime to the Police, and in any criminal proceedings, should the victim wish to do so in the future.

The Haven was invited to attend and present at the First World Conference for Women's Shelters in Alberta, Canada. Residential Services Director, Michaila Tope, attended and delivered a workshop on Haven services. There were over 800 delegates from across the world.

Delegates from the National Family Safety Programme (NFSP) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia visited the Haven to receive training on domestic violence approaches in the UK. The delegates approached The Haven to assist in the development of Domestic Violence legislation in Saudi Arabia.

In January the Haven launched the Crisis Intervention Service in Wolverhampton in conjunction with West Midlands Police, Wolverhampton PCT and Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum. The aim of the service is to encourage women to seek help immediately, or soon after a domestic violence incident.

In March 2009, The Haven hosted its largest conference to date; 'Improving Futures: Working Together to End Domestic Violence - New Solutions for a New World'. This was attended by speakers from across the globe including Casey Gwinn, President and Gael Strack, Co-Founder of the Family Justice Centre Alliance, San Diego, USA.

In April, the Haven launched the first Domestic Violence helpline in the City of Wolverhampton. The Haven expanded its referral line to a helpline so that it can receive six calls at any one time. The helpline is funded by Wolverhampton PCT.

## Michaila Tope

Director of Residential Services

## Wolverhampton Primary Care Trust

2008/9 has been a year in which we have seen substantial changes in staff, with colleagues moving on to new roles. However, the Primary Care Trust (PCT) remains committed to working in partnership to reduce levels of domestic violence in the city of Wolverhampton.

The PCT continues to work towards improving the health outcomes for families affected by domestic violence.

We have been actively involved in the development of a '*co-located team*' along with partners within the statutory and voluntary sectors, with the aim of developing improved service provision and reducing the impact on those experiencing domestic abuse through appropriate advice and support.

## Hilary Williams

Wolverhampton Primary Care Trust



### **Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)**

The CPS is the principal independent prosecuting authority in England & Wales. In Wolverhampton, the service has forged close working relations with the Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum, Police, Courts, voluntary sector agencies & offender management services in order to ensure the rights of victims & witnesses in DV cases are upheld.

Through this effective partnership working, we have seen the following benefits:

- The use of specialist domestic violence courts with specially trained Prosecutors and Legal Advisors, who receive invaluable input from Independent Domestic Violence Advisors in the decision-making process;
- Witness Care Units run by CPS and the Police who work very closely with the volunteer sector - Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and Victim Support to ensure victims of domestic violence automatically access great
- greater care to ensure that the stress of attending court is kept to a minimum and that their updates and queries are addressed every step of the way.
- A concerted effort by all partner agencies to encourage victims and witnesses to support the case to its conclusion.
- Where the victim requires special safety treatment in the court room, the CPS can apply for special measures. Likewise if they have children and attending court is difficult, the units can try and arrange child minding services.
- The creation of Hate Crime Scrutiny Panels which bring together members of the public who, through their experience of working with victims of domestic violence, jointly analyse finalised cases prosecuted in the West Midlands with the CPS. The aim is for the CPS to become more transparent in demonstrating the way in which domestic violence cases are prosecuted and listen to the views of all panel members about whether or not a prosecution should have taken place, or whether the right kind of support was provided to the victim or witness.
- Increased number of successful prosecutions.

The CPS remains committed to the effective partnership working which continues to champion the rights of victims and witnesses.

### **Marcia Edwards**

Unit Head - Crown Prosecution Service

### **Specialist Domestic Violence Court**

The Specialist Domestic Violence Court has now been in operation for more than 6 years. With each year of operation there is an increase in the number of perpetrators brought to account. In the 2008/09 year, a total of 395 perpetrators were brought to account through the court, representing an increase of 17% from the previous year and a 105% increase on the baseline year in 2004/05.

The multi-agency Specialist DV Court Steering Group continues to focus on improving the criminal justice processes and data sharing enables continuous performance management. The group is chaired by a Magistrate and its membership includes the Crown Prosecution Service, West Midlands Police, Her Majesty's Court Service, the Probation Service, Witness Care, Victim Support, The Haven Wolverhampton and Wolverhampton DV Forum.

The group learns lessons from the West Midlands Scrutiny Panel reviews of domestic violence cases. It also conducts reviews of local domestic violence cases to identify good practice or incidences where improvements could be made to inter-agency working. The group reports into the Local Criminal Justice Group.

### **Magistrate Chair**

Specialist DV Court Steering Group

### **Wolverhampton Homes**

Since the introduction of Wolverhampton Homes' Domestic Abuse Policy in 2006/07, training has been delivered across the organisation. Training has been carried out with key agencies, Chartered Institute of Housing, The Haven, City Council Safeguarding Children and Adults Services, on dealing with cases of domestic abuse, leading to improved support for victims of domestic abuse to remain in their homes.



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During the period April 2008 to March 2009, 54 of our tenants reported domestic abuse. These cases were dealt with in the following ways:

- 34 received security measures, such as window/door locks, London and Birmingham bars fitted to front and rear doors and re-glazing windows/panels where necessary.
- 8 received new front doors, brought forward from the decent homes programme;
- 5 were re-housed through the homeless unit;
- 2 refused any support
- 5 received very high level of security measures, as a result of child protection concerns.

These figures only reflect cases which have had direct involvement from our Community and Partnership Team. The figures do not take into consideration incidences which are reported to out of hours and other sources of information, all of which are also dealt with appropriately.

Wolverhampton Homes will continue to support the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and plays a fundamental role in safeguarding victims and their children. Collectively, we formulate action plans for both the victims and perpetrators, which include actions to prevent and deter violence, to sustain tenancies where appropriate, to ensure legal intervention and, as such, out of the 54 case reported, 30 received support to have legal interventions in place.

We have contributed to the Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Strategy 2008/2011 and will continue to work in partnership on the projects highlighted within the action plan, such as through the Sanctuary Scheme and the Homeless Strategy.

We contribute towards the wider objective of building strong, safe and cohesive communities. Last year we began an innovative project - the PIING (Promoting Inclusion and Integration among the Next Generation). PIING, which has already won a major award, works in schools to tackle domestic abuse, hate crime and extremism. PIING was voted the finalist for the best community initiative in the National Federation of Arms Length

Management Organisations (NFA) Awards for its far-reaching and forward-thinking work.

The Project has been delivered alongside Safer Wolverhampton Partnership in three high schools in areas with mixed communities, high deprivation, problems with gangs; racism, unemployment and low self esteem are common. Over 200 young people between the ages of 11 and 16 have attended the training programme, with many going on to make significant changes to their lives.

This project has also featured in an NFA good practice guide, so other Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMO) and housing associations across the country can learn from us and our achievements.

In April 2009, a revised council tenancy agreement was introduced, which makes clear reference to Wolverhampton Homes taking enforcement action against perpetrators of domestic abuse. This put in place the final element of the domestic violence Best Value Performance Indicators (225) for Wolverhampton.

During the next 12 months, we will continue to improve services to victims and ensure our practices are robust. We will continue to work in partnership with key agencies and attend MARAC, continue to deliver a rolling programme of the PIING project within schools across the city and target at least 2 further schools this year.

We will continue to monitor our performance on individual cases and publish our results within the ethnic monitoring report which complies with the Commission for Racial Equality revised code of practice in Rented Housing.

In 2009 I was delighted to join the Board of Trustees of Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum, thus ensuring that Wolverhampton Homes plays a significant part in the development and co-ordination of domestic violence services in the City.

**Lesley Roberts**

Chief Executive Officer - Wolverhampton Homes



2008—2009

## Safeguarding Children

The Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children's Board recognises the negative impact that domestic violence has on all five outcomes for children, i.e. staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

Domestic violence is a priority outcome for the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board and for the Children and Young People Strategic Plan. The target is "to address the impact of domestic violence on children and young people."

The strategic plan "signals the beginning of a new way of planning our services which ensures that we take a holistic view of children's lives in all we do, to ensure our services really meet their needs". The plan also recognises that "more must be done to support children and young people in situations of domestic violence."

In 2008/09, the multi-agency Safeguarding Domestic Violence Sub Group has been developing a number of areas of work. In particular it has been analysing best practice with a view to establishing a multi-agency co-located team, focusing on domestic violence victims and children.

The Safeguarding Children's DV Sub Group has undertaken consultations with staff from various models of multi-agency working, including the Cardiff Women's Safety Unit, the Croydon Family Justice Centre, the Sandwell multi-agency team and the multi-agency arrangements in Walsall.

The Safeguarding Children's Board has endorsed such a multi-agency approach as the best way to serve domestic violence victims and their children in the city. Proposals have been taken forward to the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership Board and a multi-agency task and finish group is to look at the proposals in the coming months.

### Jan Toplis

Head of Service Safeguarding Children and Young People

&

Co-ordinator Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board

## Wolverhampton Sanctuary Scheme

The Wolverhampton Sanctuary Scheme is a multi-agency project that enables victims of domestic violence and abuse, regardless of their gender and the tenure of their home, to remain in their own homes. The scheme is provided in conjunction with other multi-agency support mechanisms through the criminal and civil justice systems plus additional support as required. Many of the referrals for the scheme emanate from the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences that assess the highest risk victims in the city and jointly deliver the appropriate package of multi-agency responses.

The 2008/09 year marks the second consecutive year for this scheme and once more it has proved to be a success. More than 90 victims of domestic violence received target hardening security measures at their properties. These measures, together with a range of multi-agency support, enabled all victims and their children to remain in their own homes.

The 92 scheme beneficiaries have returned a 100% satisfaction rate for the work undertaken on their homes and for their increased level of feeling secure, all of which all enabled them to remain in their homes. The interventions delivered include target hardening security measures ranging from new window locks and security lighting, to new doors and fire-proof letter boxes.

The city-wide project has an average spend of just under £1000 per scheme and has attracted cost savings of almost £75,000 this year based on what would have been the cost of re-housing. With further funding being negotiated for 2009/10, it is anticipated that the project will be a continued success in the future in terms of assisting victims of domestic abuse whilst delivering significant cost savings for Wolverhampton.

### Anthony Walker

Homelessness Service,  
Wolverhampton City Council



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## **Soroptomist International of Wolverhampton**

Soroptomists worldwide have human rights as one of its focus areas with work against domestic violence being high on the agenda. To this end Soroptomist International of Wolverhampton has had membership of the Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum for many years. This supports local efforts to help victims of domestic abuse and to further awareness that domestic violence is not acceptable. One of our members represents Soroptomists at Forum meetings.

This year, the Forum's Strategy Co-ordinator, Kathy Cole-Evans, visited Soroptomists and brought them up to date with the work of the Domestic Violence Forum and how its targets are decided. We have also collected signatures for a petition organised by another club against female genital mutilation, which will be presented to Government. Soroptomists also donated Christmas presents to the Haven Wolverhampton.

### **Dr Anne E Kavanagh**

Soroptomists International of Wolverhampton Representative

## **Aquarius Wolverhampton**

Aquarius is a Midlands-based charity with a national reputation in providing advice, support and counselling to adults experiencing addiction problems, including alcohol, drugs and gambling.

For the past 30 years Aquarius has been the lead agency in Wolverhampton for people who are drinking problematically. Over the past 2 years, we have also extended the service into the areas of stimulant drugs and gambling.

The staff team of 10 are experienced and highly trained in dealing with clients presenting with a variety of complex needs and offer an adaptable, holistic service comprising group-work, individual support, counselling and auricular acupuncture. We offer regular service talks to other agencies and bespoke training to professionals. We also take part in local and national publicity campaigns, including the Safer Drinking campaigns run over Christmas and New Year.

Last year we received 846 referrals to the service, 568 males and 278 females. Approximately 55% of referrals came for an initial assessment, of which 67% engaged with the service.

As an agency we are particularly aware of the issues surrounding domestic abuse, from the perspectives of both victim and perpetrator. Part of our work with all clients is to routinely ask about personal safety, child protection, and domestic violence. We build safety planning into our sessions and will refer women to the local women's refuge if they request it. We work as part of a multi-agency team, liaising closely with the Police Domestic Abuse Unit and attending and contributing to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences. We offer appointments to both victims and perpetrators on different days of the week with different counsellors, to ensure safety.

In 2008, we saw approximately 30 victims of domestic abuse and 11 perpetrators of domestic violence. This figure is based on clients who engaged with the service for a period of time. We have many more clients who may only attend for brief assessments and for advice and information.

### **Helen Killgallon**

Service Manager and Trustee, WDVF

# ANNUAL REPORT

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2008—2009



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Wolverhampton  
**Domestic Violence Forum**

Company Reg No: 3452414  
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Wolverhampton  
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Charity No: 1071013