



# SWA



## Annual Report 2014-15

*we listen, we support, we care*



Sandwell Independent  
Domestic Abuse Services  
*we listen, we support, we care*



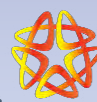
Black Country Rape &  
Sexual Violence Services  
*we listen, we support, we care*



Sandwell Women's Aid  
Refuge Services  
*we listen, we support, we care*



Sandwell Asian  
Women's Services  
*we listen, we support, we care*



SWA Women's  
Justice Services  
*we listen, we support, we care*



SWA Children &  
Young People's Service  
*we listen, we support, we care*



## Annual Report 2014-15

### Contents

#### Sandwell Women's Aid

Introduction from the Chairperson

Margaret O'Neill: p.3

Executive Director's Report: p.4

#### Community Services: p.6

Domestic Abuse: p.8

Rape & Sexual Violence: p.10

Children and Young People: p.11

#### Female Offenders Services: p.14

#### Therapeutic Services p.16

#### Accommodation Services: p.17

Specialist Services: Humdard: p.18

#### Modern Slavery Services p.19

#### Business & Finance

SWA is an Award-winner: p.20

Education & Training: p.21

Monitoring & Performance: p.21

Development & Partnerships: p.22

Financial Information p.24

Fundraisers and donors: p.25

# Sandwell Women's Aid

*"When I came here my hands were empty...now they are full of happiness."*

SWA (Sandwell Women's Aid) is an independent charity with over 25 years' experience supporting victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence in the West Midlands. We place victims' voices at the heart of our work and we constantly develop our services in response to needs in our community.

Over the years SWA has grown from a small refuge provider to a diverse organisation with a portfolio of specialised services which now includes: domestic abuse accommodation and

community support; a regional Rape and Sexual Violence service, an International Human Trafficking service; a female offenders' project; a Children's Specialist Team including a regional sexual exploitation service, and specialist therapeutic support.

*"They helped me to regain my confidence and rebuild my life."*

These closely integrated services enable us to respond quickly and take a whole-person approach to support vulnerable women and families experiencing the complex impact of interpersonal violence.

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This year we supported **6825** people:

**4724** victims of domestic abuse in the community

**535** people through our Court IDVA service

**434** victims of rape and sexual violence

**275** young victims of rape, teenage relationship abuse, and CSE

**255** women and **358** children with safe refuge away from their abusers

**72** women to resettle into the community through our floating support service

**98** victims of international human trafficking

**74** female offenders

## Introduction from the chairperson

# Karen Dowman

It is with great pleasure that I present this Annual Report for 2014/15, demonstrating the continued commitment that SWA has in supporting women and children across the region. What makes me most proud is that we continue to be innovative and dynamic creating every opportunity for women to be supported and get the help they need.

I and my fellow Trustees/Directors are very proud to be on the Board of this highly professional dynamic organisation led by women predominantly for women whose presence in the Sandwell borough remains strong but whose reach across the Black Country and with a variety of partners is strengthening.

Despite significant changes across the organisation, providing community based solutions to victims of violence, refuge remains close to our hearts and still very much in demand. We opened the first refuge in Sandwell in the mid 80's. This year we successfully opened another refuge with our excellent housing partners Black Country Housing group specifically for single women. Some early teething problems

have resulted in a high demand service supporting our local strategic partnership.

Sustainability remains key to the continued delivery of services as partners across the region recognise the significance of domestic abuse, rape and sexual violence, child sexual exploitation and human trafficking and the impact on women and children's lives and each year we see an increase in the number of people we support. Our skilled business development team continue to source funds to enable the continuation of our services. It remains a challenge to remain an independent service representing the voice of victims and developing services defined by survivor voices whilst maintaining a close working relationship with our statutory partners. At times of austerity it is essential to create local solutions.

A stable and skilled workforce is essential to deliver effective support services. We were pleased with the achievement of Gold Investors In People and positive feedback from both our staff and assessor.

SWA welcomes external



assessment and scrutiny. We remain proactive in regional and national discussions regarding service standards, much of which I am confident that we achieve and deliver best practice. We are fortunate to attract staff from a wide range of disciplines who all share our values and add talent to our growing service portfolio.

We remain committed to pursuing our vision to provide support, to raise awareness, to provide information and guidance and to be there for victims of abuse.

I would like to thank everyone associated with the organisation for their continuing support, to all staff and volunteers for their dedication and hard work supporting victims and making things happen.

# Executive Director's Report

## Sara Ward

### Celebrating a year

This Annual Report can only give you a snapshot of the successes achieved throughout the year. It cannot tell you about the heartache, the devastating impact or the lives affected by these abhorrent crimes. It is important however to see this as a celebration of the years' work, without which lives would not have been transformed, families rebuilt and children and young people made safe now and in the future. It is because of the heartache and the impact that we strive to create new ideas, new development and new opportunities.

### A developing organisation

I am proud to be part of a growing team that all are committed to making a difference to people's lives. Every day is a challenge and every day we work hard to support people in our services asking for help. Our achievement through Investors in People was the icing on the cake as the Gold Standard was achieved by meeting additional targets set out in the framework, providing apprenticeships as well as offering training and learning opportunities for staff, students and volunteers. The assessment

also challenged our business plans and strengthened us for the continued challenges ahead. I know that SWA will achieve together because the teams across all services all strive for excellence.

### Effective partnerships

New services are always exciting to develop but always emerge from gathering evidence: that the service is needed; that it will create positive outcomes and make a difference; and that partners are willing to engage or be part of the development. Mariposa, our new refuge and our integration within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) all arose from innovative partnerships with our statutory partners. With 82% of all serious case reviews finding that domestic abuse was a factor within the family, it is now recognised as a serious safeguarding matter. As the MASH model is adopted across the country, Sandwell can be proud that it has a third-sector specialist domestic abuse provider located within it; not many do.

Austerity puts further pressure on our local authority partners. Working together is more important than ever to avoid



gaps, duplication, and mismatches of funding or services. Together we can create solutions. As a service provider, we work hard to ensure that there is a consistency across services, that we input at both strategic and operational levels, and we respond constructively to scrutiny and challenges. We continue to develop services across the Black Country working with partners in Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton expanding our service portfolio.

### An Award Winner

We were very pleased this year to win two awards, the One to Watch: Most Improved Organisation award and Highly Commended overall runner-up to the Investors in People Awards and the People Development Award at the Black Country





Sara Ward at the Investors in People Awards with award presenters Hugh Dennis, Professor Chris Roebuck, and Theresa McDermott, Assistant Director of IIP

Chamber of Commerce Awards.

We were honoured even to be shortlisted alongside some high-calibre national organisations, and are absolutely delighted to have won this award.

This is a real recognition for the hard work and commitment of our staff who go the extra mile to support victims of violence and abuse. In times of adversity we have worked hard to build our small charity, survive austerity, and develop specialist services for local people. Our work is essential and the need is increasing with more people coming forward for support every year.

This recognition means so much to everyone involved with Sandwell Women's Aid, and we look forward to continuing to grow and increase the support to

victims of violence across Sandwell and the Black Country.

### Looking to the future

There are many individuals, staff, volunteers, community groups, partners and companies to thank for our success all of whom share our vision to protect victims of abuse. We need to remain united against violence and abuse as there are

tougher times ahead.

We remain committed to raising awareness of the issues, finding solutions as well as protecting women and children whose lives are or have been affected by domestic violence, rape and sexual violence. If we don't who else will?

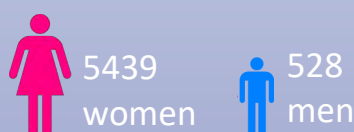


Sara Ward with the Mayor of Sandwell, Derek Rowley, and partners at the official launch of the Mariposa Project.



During 2014-15 our  
**Community Services**  
supported:

**5967** people



This is an increase of  
**40%** from last year

**What do people say about  
our service?**

**98%** said that they got what  
they wanted from the  
service

**95%** said their overall  
situation had improved

**93%** said their confidence  
had improved

**92%** said their ability to  
cope had improved

**93%** said their personal  
safety had improved

**84%** said their access to  
support networks had  
improved

# Community Services

SWA Community Services houses a range of support services for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence across the Black Country.

## SWA in Sandwell



**0121 553 0090**

Our Head Office in central West Bromwich is a one-stop shop centre for victims of abuse. The services available are:

### **Domestic Violence services:**

support for victims of domestic abuse, honour-based violence, forced marriage and FGM,



provided by Independent Domestic Violence Advisers and Domestic Abuse Advocates.

**The Black Country Rape and Sexual Violence Service:** support for victims of recent or historic rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse.

### **Children and Young People's**

**services:** support for young victims of rape and sexual violence, teenage relationship abuse, witnesses of domestic abuse, and child sexual exploitation. The service also provides education, awareness and support group in schools and youth centres.

## SWA in Dudley



**01384 455 411**

Our Dudley services are based at The Cedar Centre, a brand new space supporting victims of abuse in the borough:

### **Domestic Violence services:**

support for high- and medium-risk victims of domestic abuse, provided by Independent Domestic Violence Advisers.

**The Black Country Rape and Sexual Violence Service:** support for victims of recent or historic rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse.

### **Children and Young People's**

**services:** Support for young victims of rape and sexual violence, aged 11-18.

## SWA in Wolverhampton



**01902 554 598**

**The Black Country Rape and Sexual Violence Service:** support for victims of recent or historic

rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse in Wolverhampton.



# SWA expands services in Dudley

## Launch of Dudley Domestic Violence and Abuse Support Service

SWA is now the provider of IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Adviser) services in Dudley, having won the contract in 2014 commissioned by Dudley Safe & Sound and the West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime.

Having worked across the Black Country supporting survivors of sexual violence for a number of years, we were very proud at this chance to develop further work in Dudley, and establish a brand new centre in the borough: The Cedar Centre.

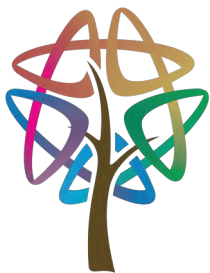


Sara Ward, Sue Hayward from Dudley Safe & Sound, Assistant Police and Crime Commissioner Judy Foster, and MP for Dudley North Ian Austin.

Over 100 professionals attended the launch of the new **Dudley Domestic Violence and Abuse Support Service** and the **Cedar**

**Centre**, demonstrating the strength of commitment across the borough to work in partnership to support victims of abuse.

## The Cedar Centre: supporting victims of abuse in Dudley



**The Cedar Centre**

The Cedar Centre, launched in October 2014, is our new space in Dudley bringing

together a range of support services for victims of abuse.

The Cedar Centre is based on values of protection and healing, offering a safe space to enable victims to rebuild their lives.

Services based at the Cedar Centre:

- **Dudley Domestic Violence and Abuse Support Service**
- **The Black Country Rape and Sexual Violence Service**
- **Young People's Services**
- **The Mariposa Project for Female Offenders**
- **Therapeutic services**

## Community Development in Dudley

In February 2015 we launched a new community development campaign in Dudley, supported by the People's Postcode Trust. The project is building links with communities to open conversations about issues which often remain hidden: domestic abuse; sexual violence; grooming; exploitation; forced marriage and honour-based

violence. By informing and empowering people to communicate about these issues within their own communities and workplaces, we hope to reach hidden victims with the message that they don't have to suffer in silence.

The project recruits Community Champions from across Dudley, people in community centres, children's centres, food banks,

libraries, shops, salons, schools, tenants' associations, faith organisations and more. Each Champion will receive specialist training in understanding and communicating about abuse, organising local campaigns, and how to refer victims to the specialist support they need.



In total, we supported  
**4724** adults in our  
domestic abuse services  
in 2014-15

Across all of these  
families, there were  
**7713** children living  
with the effects of  
domestic abuse.



Sandwell Independent  
Domestic Abuse Services  
*we listen, we support, we care*

**4309** people were  
supported in Sandwell



3889  
women



420  
men

with **7105** dependent  
children



Dudley Domestic Violence  
& Abuse Support Service  
*we listen, we support, we care*

**415** people were  
supported in Dudley



402  
women



13  
men

with **608** dependent  
children

# Domestic Abuse

SWA's **Domestic Abuse** teams in Sandwell and Dudley offer support within the community to victims of domestic abuse who are at risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members, aiming to securing their safety and that of their children.

## IDVA Service

Our trained and nationally accredited IDVAs offer a range of emotional and practical support, including:

- independent advice and advocacy;
- risk assessments and safety planning;
- support through the Criminal Justice System;
- information on legal and civil remedies;
- working with other agencies to maximise a victim's safety;
- representing victims at MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference).

*"For 10 years I was afraid to leave my life behind. I was scared what will happen... But I made the decision to change that... now I am surrounded by good people who support me and my life is In bright colours. I can see my future."*

*"I haven't been happy for a long time until I met people who I can trust and talk to. Now I am happy"*

- health & wellbeing support;
- confidence building;

The IDVA service maintains strong working links and formalised protocols with partners such as West Midlands Police, Sandwell Homes, SMBC Children's Services and Staffordshire and West Midlands Probation Trust.

## Court IDVA

Attending court can be a daunting and traumatic experience for victims of domestic abuse. SWA's Court IDVAs are based full-time in Sandwell and Dudley Magistrates Courts and provide specialist support, advice and information to enable them to feel safe to engage with the court process and stay informed about the progress of



their case.

This year we supported **535** people through the court process: **494** in Sandwell and **41** in Dudley.



## Sandwell MASH



SWA has been an integral part of Sandwell's MASH (Multi-Agency Screening

Hub) since its establishment in 2014.

The MASH is a co-located team formed to protect children and families who are at risk of harm. A specialist IDVA from SWA works alongside partners from Children's and Adult Social Care, Police, Education, Housing, Health, Probation and more to fully assess risk and take timely action to support each family and prevent abuse, neglect and serious harm.

An average of 30 domestic abuse referrals a day come into the team, and we now receive 80% of our domestic abuse referrals in Sandwell through the MASH.

## Domestic Abuse Advocates: working in localities across Sandwell

In 2014, Sandwell's the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership (DASP) committed to an investment for two years enabling specialist Domestic Abuse Advocates to work within the 6 Community Operating Groups (CoGs) newly-established across Sandwell.

Sandwell's COGs enable agencies to work together more coherently to address local community needs, and domestic abuse is a key part of this picture. In the first 14 months of MASH's development alone, SWA received 4000 referrals for support. Clearly, it is essential that we offer help, advice and support as early as possible, to reduce the risks to both adults and children.

Referrals to the new Domestic Abuse Advocates are sent not only via MASH but also local agencies and partners operating within the

*"I decided to come to support at West Brom and have not looked back since. It is helping me"*

area where they are concerned about an adult or child living with domestic abuse. This pioneering approach enables effective joint working through TAC and TAF meetings to achieve the best outcomes for children and adults.

Yvonne Davis, Cabinet Member for Adults, Mathew Sampson, Director of Children's Social Care and SWA's Executive Director, all reporting to the DASP have been instrumental in developing this work; we feel that this partnership has a bright future ahead.

## Love Shouldn't Hurt: now in 7 languages

Sandwell's acclaimed Love Shouldn't Hurt campaign, developed in partnership between SWA, Sandwell Council, West Midlands Police, and Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, continued through the year, and campaign materials are now available in 7 community languages: English, Punjabi, Urdu, Arabic, Somali, Bengali and Polish.

Developed along with women in our domestic abuse services, the campaign posters aim to raise

awareness of different forms of domestic abuse: emotional, psychological, financial and sexual as well as physical.





In 2014-15 we supported:

**434** victims of rape, sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse

**395** women **39** men

**120** people were supported in **Dudley**

**189** people were supported in **Sandwell**

**125** people were supported in **Wolverhampton**

# Rape & Sexual Violence

SWA's team of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) support both male and female survivors of rape, sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse in **Sandwell, Dudley and Wolverhampton**.

Whether or not survivors choose to report to the police, we can offer:

- one to one emotional and practical support and advocacy;
- someone to talk to in confidence;
- access to specialist counselling;
- support and advocacy through the legal process working with police, CPS, courts and witness care;
- support and information for family and friends.



The support of an ISVA is instrumental in helping survivors of abuse overcome trauma and move on with their lives. The service is an essential partner for the regional Sexual Assault Referral Centres.

## Complex needs:

**246** with mental health issues

**149** clients with suicide risk

**126** clients with self harm issues



**114** clients with health issues

**43** clients with drug misuse



**69** clients with alcohol misuse

**73** clients with housing issues



**55** child protection cases



In 2014-15 we  
supported:

**275** young victims



**248**

female



**27**

male

We support young people  
with a wide range of issues;  
they often experience  
multiple types of abuse:

- Sexual exploitation: 33%
- Teenage relationship  
abuse: 29%
- Sexual assault: 16%
- Psychological & emotional  
Abuse: 15%
- Rape: 12%
- Childhood sexual abuse:  
10%
- Physical assault: 6%
- Verbal Abuse: 4%
- Online exploitation: 3%
- Forced marriage/honour  
based violence: 3%

**1500+** young people  
took part in TRAPPED or  
VIVA sessions across  
Sandwell

# Young People's Services

Our specialist Young People's Team provides support to young victims of rape, sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE) and domestic violence. This is a growing service as we work with local, regional and national funders to develop multi-disciplinary support for some of the most vulnerable young people in our communities.

***"She didn't give up on me  
and believed me when no  
one else did"***

Our specialist Young People's Advocates build an individual support package for each client which includes:

- A non-judgemental, safe space to talk and listen;
- Emotional and practical support and advocacy;
- Risk and safety planning;
- Access to counselling;
- Support through the legal process and at court, working with the criminal justice system including police and crown prosecution service;
- Institutional advocacy with relevant professionals for example schools, youth settings, children's services, ensuring that young people get a voice in a complicated system;
- Attending case reviews and multi-agency briefings

## Domestic Violence

The Children and Young People's IDVA is fully integrated with our Domestic Abuse services for families, enabling us to offer a full family approach and work in partnership with Sandwell Children's Services. SWA can offer one to one support for any young person aged 11 – 18 in Sandwell.

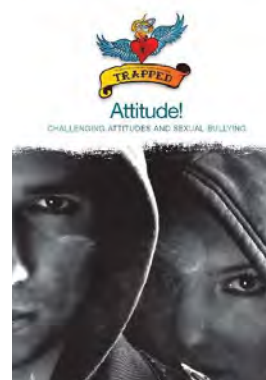
## Sexual Violence

Support for victims of rape, sexual abuse, sexual violence, and childhood sexual abuse is available for any young person aged 11-18 in Sandwell, Dudley and Wolverhampton.

## CSE Services

Support for any young person, female or male, who is at risk of or affected by sexual exploitation or gang related abuse. As part of the Home Office Tackling Gangs and Serious Youth Violence Strategy SWA were funded to deliver these services across the Black Country.

SWA is member of the national reference group for Young People's Advocates and is fully integrated with local, regional and national approaches to tackle this issue.







## Group work

SWA's pioneering group programmes TRAPPED and VIVA, have been delivered in secondary schools and youth clubs across Sandwell for a number of years, developing awareness and safety around teenage relationship abuse; sexual bullying; exploitation; domestic and sexual violence; gangs; drugs and alcohol.

Thanks to funding from SMBC's Community Safety Team, in 2014/15 we extended our TRAPPED programme to younger age groups, through pilot projects

with the Albion Foundation and several Sandwell primary schools.

This a very positive step towards TRAPPED becoming a widely-used preventative education tool, offering early education to teach about consent, to encourage young people to rethink their views on gender, acceptable violence, abuse and controlling behaviour in relationship, addressing sexual bullying and physical and sexual violence against girls in gangs, and towards actively involving boys in the fight to end violence against women and girls.

*"Having spoken to both the students and their parents I can truly state that the support [provided by SWA] and the impact of it has been immense.*

*The girls feel comfortable and at ease with yourself allowing for open and honest dialogue; this also has meant that they have felt receptive to advice and guidance on delicate issues that has been given to them.*

*Your input has been well-received by parents who appreciate the relationship that has been built with their daughters' and assisted in their safeguarding by raising their awareness of personal safety.*

*Your liaison with myself in supporting the girls has been invaluable"*

**Dianne Pinell**  
**Lordswood Academies Trust**

## Young People's Board

This year, we have been developing a Young People's Board, which includes both those who have been directly supported through our services and those who have engaged with us through TRAPPED programmes or community outreach. Our Board members have been working as a reference group and took part in staff recruitment and interviews. One of our members helped us to bring a job advertisement to life by describing what she wanted in a support worker:

*"I need you to speak to me and know me. I need someone who can relate to how I'm feeling. I need you to have experience...in dealing with touchy subjects.*

*You need to not just comfort me by helping me get through it, but also with my practical needs. I need you to help me with other organizations, such as getting me*

*counselling, understanding where I need to go to for what, if social services need to be involved if there is abuse in the house. I want you to understand why I might not want to go to school. I'm not lazy, I need you to help me fulfil my potential.*

*Systems can be difficult to understand and it's a hard fight by yourself. I need you to be on my side.*

*I need you to be strong enough not just to help me with what's happening, but to move me on to the next step.*

*I don't want help to live with it. I want help to move on from it, physically, mentally and emotionally, to the next chapter of my life."*



# Tackling CSE across the region

During 2014/15, SWA joined the forefront of some important initiatives to combat CSE across the West Midlands:

## Sandwell MASH

In 2015, SWA became part of Sandwell's new CSE co-located team.

The team is integrated within Sandwell's MASH and provides a multi-agency response to children and young people at risk of or experiencing CSE. They offer specialist support and interventions, ensuring the voices of victims are heard and that targeted support around Prevention, Protection, Pursuit and Prosecution is in place.

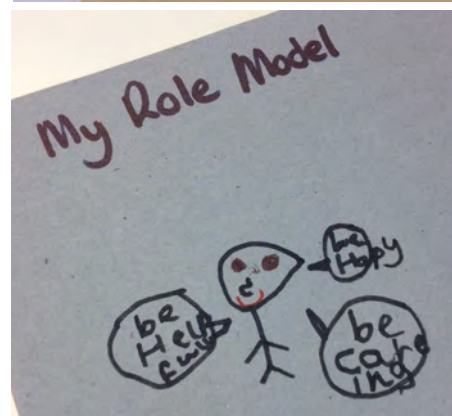
A CSE Advocate from SWA works alongside partners including a CSE social worker, police, Barnardo's and SMBC's CSE Co-ordinator.

We recognise the huge benefits of co-located working and are extremely excited to be part of this new team, helping to shape service delivery and safeguard victims.

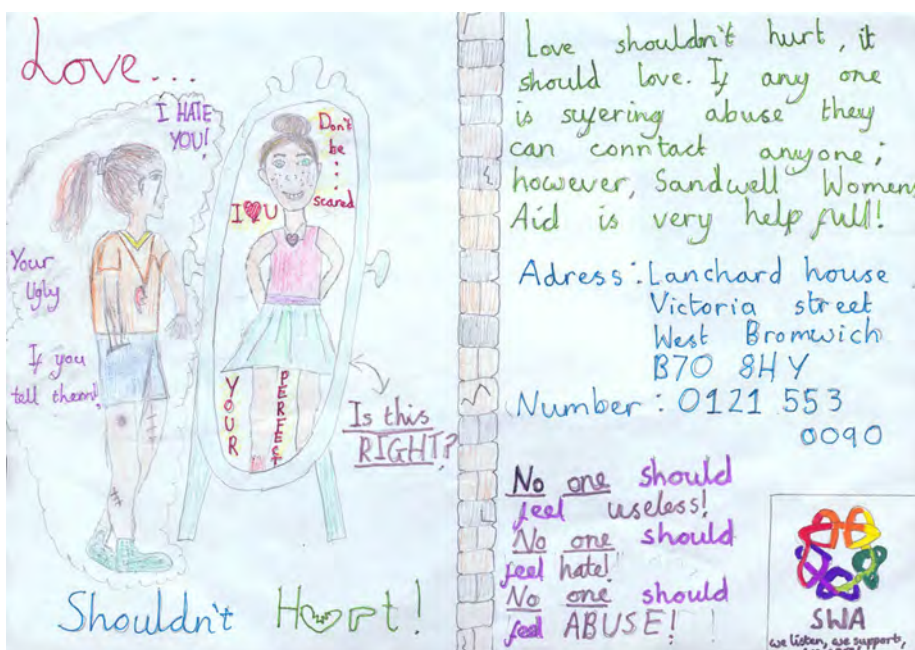
## Regional CSE Team

SWA worked closely with Stephen Rimmer, West Midlands Strategic Lead Preventing Violence Against Vulnerable People, as a key point of reference and expert consultation on the experiences of victims of abuse.

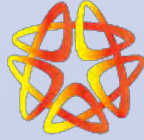
In 2015, we seconded our CSE Regional Coordinator Katie Young to the regional Preventing Violence against Vulnerable People team. Katie used her broad experience and expertise to pull together good practice, develop shared learning and training opportunities, fill the gap between regional and local work, assist in the development of CMOGs and support local arrangements to deliver an effective operational response to CSE victims, offenders and locations.



Art work made by children in support groups for children who have experienced domestic abuse at home.







In 2014-15 we  
supported:

**74** female offenders

**63** people were  
supported in  
**Sandwell**

**11** people were  
supported in **Dudley**

# Female Offenders

SWA Female Offenders' Services offer holistic, person-centred support to women involved with the criminal justice system.

## The Mariposa Project

Mariposa is a partnership initiative between Sandwell Women's Aid and Staffordshire & West Midlands CRC (formerly Probation). The project supports female offenders in Sandwell and Dudley through Specified Activity Requirements (SARs) designed to address their complex needs and provide a viable alternative to custodial sentencing.

*"Brilliant. Loved Mariposa it's been a life changing experience. Would highly recommend this service"*

Female offenders are vulnerable individuals who are much more likely than the rest of the population to have experienced domestic or sexual violence. Through Mariposa they participate in a holistic programme of group and individual support aligned with the **9 Pathways to Offending**. It focusses on identifying their context to offending and improving key aspects of their lives to empower them to live a crime free life.

*"Its learnt me how to deal with my problems without feeling angry."*



## MARIPOSA PROJECT

The programme is underpinned by person-centred planning, and case management from SWA's Women's Justice Worker.



*"Thank you for all your help and bringing out the good in myself."*

*"Taught me how actions affect people and how to be better with money."*

*"I suffer with depression never hardly ventured out the house coming here just a couple of hours a week has helped me with meeting people."*

*"It has made me more positive and motivated me more."*



*“Mariposa has really helped me in understanding about how offending can impact you're life and others around you. It gives you great support in your new directions in life. Highly recommend.”*

*“It has given me a little more confidence in myself. Since I have been coming here I don't want to offend.”*

*“This is a good course to be on. Lets you calm learnt how to deal with situation without violence.”*



## Excellence Award for Mariposa

The Mariposa team were proud to win the **Partnership Award** at the 2014 Staffordshire & West Midlands

Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)'s **Staff Excellence Awards 2014.**

Pictured are the Mariposa development and operational team from SWA and the CRC.

## Women's Justice Partnership

SWA has joined with other specialist female offenders services from across the West Midlands and Staffordshire to form the Women's Justice Partnership. The Partnership works collectively to share good practice and advocate for the importance of specialist approaches to female offenders which address the causes of their offending holistically.

Throughout the year, the Partnership engaged with the new Transforming Rehabilitation process which saw the management of offenders moved from Probation Trusts to Community Rehabilitation Companies and private providers.

As a partnership, we are working with the new Staffordshire & West Midlands Community Rehabilitation Company to support the development of a consistent approach to Female Offenders



Women's Justice Partnership representatives at **Integrated Offender Management: A Female Perspective**, an Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner Event in 2014

# Therapeutic Services

*“Quote”*

In 2014-15

**220** clients received specialist counselling with SWA



**209**

women



**11**

men

Some CORE Outcomes from JLG to add here

Therapeutic counselling is nationally recognised as an essential component of a specialist domestic and sexual violence service. Counselling can help victims of abuse to develop more effective coping strategies and overcome problems arising from these potentially devastating experiences.

At SWA, counselling underpins and supports all of our community and accommodation services. SWA is also developing specialist services such as counselling victims of torture, victims of human trafficking, working through interpreters, specialist counselling for children and young people, and new therapeutic interventions such as Mindfulness and Sensorimotor Psychotherapy.



SWA counselling room



In 2014-15 we  
supported

**255** women and **358**  
children with safe  
refuge accommodation  
away from their abusers

...plus **72** women and  
**131** children with  
resettlement support to  
establish a safe new  
home

# Refuge Services

Refuge services remain at the heart of SWA, offering secure accommodation to women and children who have fled domestic abuse and human trafficking. We provide a safe, supported environment where they can start to rebuild their lives and look forward to a life free from violence.



Over the years we have developed a diverse portfolio of accommodation which enables us to meet individual needs, including:

- A generic **refuge** where clients have access to their own self-contained flats, with 24-hour staffing
- **Humdard**, a specialist south Asian Refuge with staff with language specialism
- **A refuge** which offers supported accommodation to vulnerable single homeless women
- **Five safe houses** which have undergone the sanctuary scheme

SWA refuge services are rated as **Level A** in the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework.

*"I am very happy at the refuge. All the residents and staff are friendly. When I get settled I would like to work with people in similar situations. I want to become a support worker"*

Our staff support clients to empower them to make informed choices; we listen and offer support in a non-judgemental manner. No two women's needs are exactly the same, and refuge staff develop responsive individual support plans which include:

- personal safety information;
- support to report to the police;
- support with on-going family/ criminal and civil matters;
- support around improving the safety of child contact;
- support around safe housing options;
- referral to other services;
- support to access benefits;
- immigration support.

SWA also works in partnership with other professionals and agencies including solicitors, social workers, health professionals, children's centres, Early Years Teams, immigration services, alcohol and drug services, education, emergency services, UKBA, the National Human Trafficking Resource Centre (NHTRC), local churches and other charitable organisations to meet women's needs and ensure their rights.



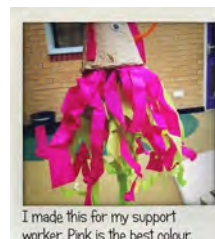
In 2014-15 we  
supported

**16** women and **15**  
children at Humdard

Plus **72** women and  
**131** children with  
floating support

## Activities in Refuge

We run regular activity sessions within the refuge, from Play and Stay with mothers and children to healthy eating workshops, exercise sessions, film nights, arts and crafts and the Freedom Programme. We are grateful to **SMBC: Play is Making a Difference** fund for supporting our Summer Play-scheme, in which we offered dance, music, den building and craft workshops which enabled children to have fun, express themselves, and grow in confidence.



I made this for my support worker. Pink is the best colour.



I made this box for me and my friends to put our thoughts in. If my friends are sad I will do something nice for them.



I made this robot with my mom.



## Specialist Services

SWA operates a number of culturally sensitive, multi-lingual services specifically for South Asian women who have suffered domestic violence.

### Humdard refuge

Safe, secure, supportive accommodation to South Asian women and their children escaping domestic abuse.

### Humdard floating support

Support to women resettling into the community after or during their escape from domestic abuse.

The support services include

- One to one emotional and practical support including safety planning
- Support for victims and those at risk of forced marriage and honour based violence
- Assistance with both criminal cases including child custody
- Immigration advocacy
- Support and advocacy with housing, benefits, education, training, employment
- All aspects of setting up a new home.



In 2014-15 we  
supported

**98** victims of modern  
slavery



**81**

female



**17**

male

...of **31** different  
nationalities

**59** were trafficked for  
sexual exploitation

**20** were trafficked for  
forced labour

**19** were trafficked for  
domestic servitude

# Modern Slavery Services

SWA have offered refuge and support to victims of modern slavery (international human trafficking) since 2011, supporting victims referred through the NRM (National Referral Mechanism).

We operate this West Midlands-wide service as a sub-contractor of the Salvation Army, which administers the national service on behalf of the Ministry of Justice.

*"When I met my support worker for the first time, that was the day that I felt I couldn't go on. Meeting her gave me hope.*

*When I came into the refuge, I learned how to live, how to communicate, learned English, got more confident. I remember everything and will never forget. Before I didn't want to live life, but now I have my baby, I want to live long.*

*Where I am is because of SWA, and I pray with thanks all the time. I feel very proud of SWA. From the Director to the support workers, all supported me and were very helpful. They all played a role in changing my life. I want to give credit to everyone because without them I wouldn't be here. Life was hell, now with the support it feels like paradise, I have a little paradise with my daughter."*

**Woman who was trafficked for domestic servitude**

*"I came to England from Nigeria. A man brought me here...I work as prostitute. I am feeling sad. I stayed there for one year and I tried to escape..."*

*Sandwell Women gave me the place to stay and find me solicitor. The first time that I came to here I am feeling scared but now it is good and I am feeling very happy. Sandwell Women helped me to find a counselling and I am going to English class. Helped me feel good.*

*I am so happy that Sandwell Women's helped me. They helped me to claim asylum in the UK. I am so happy Sandwell Women."*

Our modern slavery service includes community outreach for men and women, and refuge accommodation for women. The service supports victims over a recovery and reflection period of 45 days during which we offer:

- Continuous emotional support to help them come to terms with their traumatic experience;
- One-to-one key work and support planning;
- Support with the legal processes of the NRM and UK Border Agency;
- Assistance to ensure their rights are considered during criminal proceedings against offenders;
- Access to counselling, sexual health and GP services;
- Links to local services and educational courses, to develop confidence and independence.



## SWA is an award-winner

SWA topped off a fantastic 2014 by winning not just one but two high-profile awards.



### One to Watch for Investors In People

The first national **Investors in People Awards** celebrated the best workplaces, bosses and businesses in the UK, and the competition was tough with over 550 companies nominated from all sectors of industry.

We were very proud that SWA won the **One to Watch: Most Improved Organisation** award and **Highly Commended overall runner-up**.

IIP Award presenter Professor Chris Roebuck, Visiting Professor of Transformational Leadership at Cass Business School in London, praised SWA, saying *“they took the*

*delivery of their current services to excellence levels and then acted entrepreneurially in identifying and then delivering other services outside their original core portfolio. This inspirational entrepreneurial and excellence-driven approach sets this small organisation ahead of many global corporations in their culture, leadership and breadth of transformation. All of this they have achieved in just a few years. If leadership is about making a difference and transforming lives then this surely is an example of excellence.”*



Sara Ward with award presenters: comedian Hugh Dennis; Professor Chris Roebuck, and XXXXXX

### The Black Country Chamber of Commerce Awards

Later in the year, SWA won the **People Development Award** at the **Black Country Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards**.

Executive Director Sara Ward, who received the Award from Chamber President Ninder Johal, said *“This is a real recognition for the hard work and commitment of our staff... This means so much to*



*everyone involved with SWA, and we look forward to continuing to grow and increase the support to victims of violence across Sandwell and the Black Country.”*





*"I was really impressed at Sara & Jennifer's knowledge! It really helps to know the Sandwell picture and how it all fits together"*

*"After SWA training I'm going to write a Domestic Abuse Policy to use in our setting"*

*"I'm [now] a lot more confident in my approach to families"*

*"It was good that they talked about looking after yourself. Some disclosures are really upsetting for the professional"*

*"Talking to experts. Very professional, very supportive"*

**Feedback from participants on SWA courses**

## Education and Training

### SWA: Expert trainers now OCN Accredited

SWA has been an acclaimed training provider for many years, helping professionals to respond to domestic abuse, sexual violence, CSE and human trafficking. We are the lead trainers in Sandwell on domestic abuse and interpersonal violence, and train on behalf of the Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board and Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership, as well as delivering courses across Sandwell and Dudley.

SWA now has formal recognition as a



recognised learning centre with the Open College Network, West Midlands (OCNWMR), which will enable us to offer a range of accredited qualifications that meet national learning and skills standards – the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).



### Social work education

Over the years SWA has developed as a centre for excellence in learning, embedding social work education across all of our services. We have developed strong working partnerships with local universities and offer a large number of placements to social work students each year.

At SWA they gain invaluable insights into the issues of domestic and sexual violence and their impact on vulnerable women, which will carry into their careers in either statutory social work or the voluntary sector.

Several of our current staff began their careers with us as students: a strong testimony to the success of SWA placements.

## Monitoring and Performance

### Investors in People



In August 2014 we were very pleased to achieve the IIP Gold Standard, a prized quality standard that enables us to demonstrate our commitment to developing our staff through a culture of excellence, efficiency, and ownership. Our IIP Assessor commented:

*"There is within SWA a caring ethos with core key values and operating principles that underpin the quality of care and support provided, a genuine listening and caring attitude throughout the organisation and this emanates from the top."*



# Development & Partnerships

SWA is a dynamic charity which works hard to safeguard core services for victims of abuse, and also to grow new services in response to need. We develop services through a range of funding, commissioning, and

partnership; work carried out by our development team throughout the year. SWA also develop partnerships both locally and regionally to extend services for victims and spread good practice across the West Midlands.

## Regional partnerships

### Victims' Commission

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson launched the West Midlands Victims Commission in January 2015. The Commission is the first of its kind in the UK, and ushers in a new, inclusive and consultative approach to commissioning of victims' services. Sara Ward the commission alongside a host of other victims' experts from across

the region, to put victims at the heart of commissioning and improve services for them.

### WM Domestic Abuse Alliance

SWA have joined with all specialist Women's Aid federated services in the region to create the Alliance. The Alliance enables us to take a collective approach to improve services for victims, for example winning funds from the PCC to develop Court IDVA services across the region.

## New projects

### Children and Young People's Advocacy Service

Children are often referred to as the 'hidden victims' of domestic abuse. However there is little direct support available to help them cope with and recover from the trauma of growing up in a household where abuse, control and violence are the norm, and to break the cycle of domestic abuse for the next generation.

SWA were pleased to secure funding for three years from **Children in Need** to develop a new service for these children. A

dedicated Children and Young People's Advocate will now support children across our refuge and community services, receiving referrals from our adult Advocates who are supporting their mother, so we can help whole families to rebuild their lives.



### Government funding for refuge

In 2014-15, SWA were pleased to secure funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government's designated refuge fund, to support and extend our refuge provision.

# Domestic Abuse and Health

There are an estimated 10,000 victims of domestic abuse across Sandwell. Many of these victims are suffering in silence, unknown to any services and isolated from help and support. SWA constantly works to find new ways of reaching victims of abuse wherever they are, and working alongside partners from universal services such as health services is essential to do this.

The many emotional and physical effects of domestic abuse lead many victims to access health services. However, whilst their symptoms

may be treated, the underlying cause of their health issues or coping strategies may go unrecognised and undisclosed.

This year our development team worked in partnership with local health providers to develop two exciting projects bringing domestic awareness and support to the heart of health services in Sandwell.

These new initiatives, launching in 2015-16, offer us a important chance to 'ask the question', support clinical staff to recognise



the signs of abuse, and reach the most vulnerable victims with the support and recognition they need.

## A&E: Crisis Response

SWA secured funding from the Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals Charity to develop a new A&E Advocacy Service. This pioneering project, developed and delivered in partnership with Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals Trust, encompasses crisis support, information sharing, staff training and strategic partnership working.

IDVAs will be placed in A&E to offer crisis response to victims of abuse and violence, providing on the spot support and advice, safety planning, and referrals into on-going support. The project will also embed clinical staff training and improve the way data on victims is collected within A&E, sharing information directly with MARACs to help safeguard high-risk victims.

## GP Surgeries: IRIS

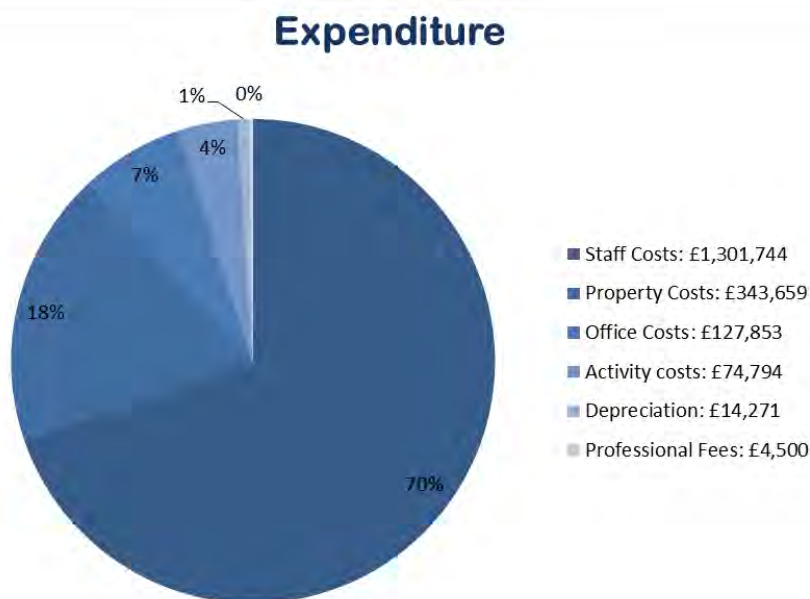
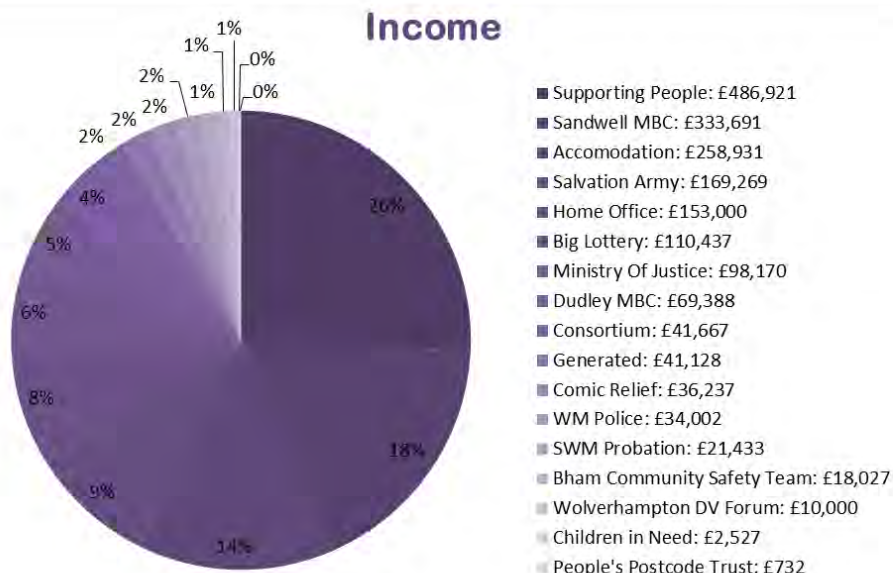
The Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) model is an evidence based training, support and referral programme for GP teams, enabling them to respond effectively to domestic abuse.

SWA is partnering with Sandwell & West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver the IRIS project in a number of local GP surgeries. The IRIS team are delivering specialist domestic violence training and supporting GP practices to be better equipped to respond to concerns and disclosures from patients. Practices will also have streamlined and simple referral pathway for their patients to a named advocate educator, reducing time required from GPs and practices to respond to disclosures and related issues.





# Financial Reports



# Funders and Partners





# Fundraisers and donors

## The Mayor of Sandwell's Charity

We were very honoured to be the Mayor of Sandwell's Charity for 2014-15. Councillor Derek Rowley, the Mayor of Sandwell, has been a valued supporter of domestic abuse services for many years, and his team ran several events for us throughout the year including a talent show, bingo nights and curry



challenges. The Mayor also supported our Christmas Appeal, and cut the ribbon at the official opening of the Mariposa Project.

## Thank you

A huge thank you to the many people who have supported us this year with donations, fundraising challenges and gifts for our refuge:

AD Goldberg  
ASDA Great Barr  
Anita Pickerden  
Association of Doctors' Wives  
Becky Hackett  
Birmingham City Mission  
Black Country Touring  
Brockmoor Foundry  
Carole Bishop and the Fleet Management Team, Sandwell MBC  
Cassie Rowland  
Children with Disabilities Team, Sandwell MBC  
Cindy Slade  
Claire Twist  
Coral Musgrave and Holy Trinity Church Foodbank  
Cradley Co of E Primary School  
CWU Union  
Dave Austin  
Elizabeth Twizell  
Em N  
Emma Mellor  
Gail Ashfield  
Gemma Riley  
Gillian Darby and the staff and students of ACE Academy  
Helen Grindulis  
IKEA  
Jade Markham

Janet Fox  
Regent Publicity  
Jenny Beardsmore  
Jessons School  
Julie Burgess  
Karen Dowman  
Kerry Stevens and the staff of Grafton Lodge  
Lauren Booker  
Leigh Pipkin  
Lisa Hickman and the staff of ThyssenKrupp Materials (UK)  
Lisa Maxfield and Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG  
Liz Amphlett  
Liz Smith  
Lloyds Community Foundation  
Londonderry Baptist Church  
Margaret Tutie  
Marguerite Lovell  
Marie Crump  
Melissa and Tony, Swing into Christmas  
Melissa Anderson  
Mr N Cartwright  
Mrs Rebecca Whitehurst  
Mrs Resham Bains  
Mt Lakhveer Bahia  
New Cross Hospital  
Nikki Russell and the Family Support Team, Sandwell MBC  
OASIS Women's Group  
Omari Clarke and the Evening Reservations Team, Jurys Inn  
Parish of the Resurrection  
Patricia Martin

Paul Tomblin  
Pauline Thorne  
Pauline Wright  
Pertemps People Development Group  
Phil Mobsby and Michelle Jeffries  
Rachael Joesbury Mills  
Rachel Baker and the staff of RSA Academy  
Raveena Johal  
Rhiannon Lockley and the staff and students of Halesowen College  
Sacred Heart Primary School  
Sally Grogan  
Sandwell MASH team  
Sarah Rowlands  
Sharon  
Simi Bassra  
Smethwick Soroptimists  
St John & St Michaels Church  
St Martins C of E Primary School  
Stuart Bathurst Catholic High School  
Sue Hulse  
Summit House  
Tammy Takkar  
The Albion Foundation  
The Birmingham Blitz Dames  
The household of 101 Poplar Avenue  
The Lichfield Festival  
The RAC, Walsall  
The Salvation Army, Oldbury  
The Sunday Club children and all at Zion United Reformed Church, Langley Green  
The Yemeni Community Association  
Vicky Boydon  
West Smethwick Methodist Church

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**0121 553 0090**

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**@SandwellWomensA**



**Sandwell Women's Aid**

**Registered in England No. 2791788 • Registered Charity No. 1032298**  
**Registered Address: 370-372 High Street, Smethwick, West Midlands, B66 3PJ**

**Supported by Sandwell MBC • Safer Sandwell Partnership**  
**Members of the Survivors Trust, Rape Crisis England & Wales, Women's Aid**  
**Federation and Women's Breakout**



**Sandwell Independent  
Domestic Abuse Services**  
*we listen, we support, we care*



**Dudley Domestic Violence  
& Abuse Support Service**  
*we listen, we support, we care*



**Black Country Rape &  
Sexual Violence Services**  
*we listen, we support, we care*



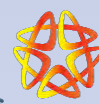
**SWA Modern Slavery  
Support Services**  
*we listen, we support, we care*



**Sandwell Women's Aid  
Refuge Services**  
*we listen, we support, we care*



**Sandwell Asian  
Women's Services**  
*we listen, we support, we care*



**SWA Women's  
Justice Services**  
*we listen, we support, we care*



**SWA Children &  
Young People's Service**  
*we listen, we support, we care*