



West Cork Whisper

WEST CORK WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE PROJECT NEWSLETTER | ISSUE 71 | JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2018

Children's Supports

West Cork Women Against Violence is seeking to establish a panel of therapists and counsellors in West Cork who work specifically with children and adolescents.

All applicants must be **fully qualified and accredited**. Preference will be given to those with particular training and knowledge of the dynamics and impacts of domestic violence.

Email only applications please. For further information and an application form please contact admin@westcorkwomensproject.ie



in this issue	Applications sought for Child Therapist Panel.....	1
	WCWAV AGM	2-3
	Domestic Violence Bill 2017	4
	Surviving to Thriving	6
	Women of West Cork.....	7
	Steps to Freedom - Book.....	8
	Support Services	8

HELPLINE **FREEPHONE**
1800 203 136
Office: 027 53847
 MON TO FRI: 9 AM TO 5.30 PM

we're here to help

A beautiful summer's evening in the comfort of Seaview House Hotel, Ballylickey provided the backdrop to this years AGM. Almost 30 people including friends, colleagues from other agencies and some of our clients who have continued to be our strongest supporters attended our Annual General Meeting, held in Seaview's Library Room.



west cork women against violence

AGM



Marie Mulholland, Co-ordinator of West Cork Women Against Violence took the audience through the statistics assembled in the Annual Report showing the extent of client work undertaken in 2017.

The service worked with 181 clients over that year, 151 of whom were new clients who had made contact with our support service for the first time in 2017, the remainder were clients with whom we had been doing ongoing work for a period of time. Marie pointed out that in 2017 we had taken calls and provided support and information to 27 people who were ringing because of their concerns about a family member or a friend. She suggested that this rise in people who were reaching out because of someone else they knew may have been a result of the National COSC Campaign on our televisions and radios asking; *"What Would You Do?"* This media campaign is to encourage people to help those they think are living with domestic abuse. The most important thing anyone in that situation can do is to contact a DV service and get advice as to how to help and support someone else safely.

The women we dealt with directly, had a total of 109 children under 18 years old, while 60 women had adult children. It is important to note that 27 women we supported in 2017 had no children because often this group of women are invisible to statutory providers who are understandably concerned about the impact on children, **but it is women whether mothers or not who are the targets of domestic abuse.**

During 2017, a total of 26 clients with 18 children between them were made homeless as a result of domestic violence, some of these were forced to stay with friends or relatives, B&Bs and hotels while one was in a refuge outside of West Cork, one in hospital and two women were in Direct Provision.

Yet again the data showed that women will overwhelmingly experience more than one type of abuse. All of our clients told of emotional abuse to demean them and erode their confidence. Emotional abuse can then be accompanied with either/and physical, financial or sexual abuse. Many women have

experienced all four types of abuse. However, sustained emotional abuse over years can be as devastating as any physical assault in its long-term effect.

Marie also noted that the range of households and socio-economic status in which domestic violence took place was not restricted to any one class or level of income. Our statistics show that women suffering domestic abuse are as likely to come from homes in affluent areas of West Cork as well as housing estates or rural farms.

Marie had referred to the complexity of many of the cases we had dealt with in 2017 and in order to illustrate that Colette O'Riordan, DV Support Specialist with WCWAV, gave a presentation of one such case, anonymised for the occasion but as she said, *"to help put a human face on the work we do and the women who came to us"*. The case study Colette presented showed that in the course of working with 'Nora' (not her real name), a rurally- isolated disabled woman, our service had interacted with 16 other agencies on her behalf. Working closely with our colleague, Patrick Healy in NOVAS, the homeless support and tenancy sustainment NGO our two organisations were able to ensure that she was safe and ultimately rehoused.

The general business of governance was conducted on the night by our Chairperson, Kathleen Harnedy and our Treasurer, Sheila Anne O' Leary who presented our annual accounts for the year.

As always with WCWAV AGM's there were tasty refreshments and a much welcome opportunity for everyone to network and catch up with one another.

Anyone wishing to have a copy of our Annual Report 2017 and audited accounts can do so here: <https://westcorkwomensproject.ie/annual-report/> and <http://westcorkwomensproject.ie/wp-content/uploads/audited-accounts.pdf>

Our thanks to all of our staff, our Board members, the kind and friendly staff of Seaview House and all of those who attended on the night for making the evening such a success.

Nora

- 56 year old isolated woman lives with her husband 5 miles outside small West Cork village.
- First point of contact end November 2017 and over a five month period 1051 mins (17 ½ hours) were spent on this case:

Domestic Violence history

- Ongoing emotional, financial abuse and physical assaults.
- Limited access to finance, phone, medication and ability to leave room.
- Physical abuse including grabbed Nora's hair, dragging her on ground and thrown into the kitchen sick, fractured wrist, damaging ribs.
- In December, Nora scored Level 4 (Severe risk) on a Domestic Violence risk assessment undertaken.
- "I feel my husband is going kill me and feel scared due to the vulnerable nature I am in due to my extreme medical conditions".



Positive Outcome

- Husband rehoused due to Novas intervention
- Empowerment of Nora
- DVRIM now at moderate risk -medical needs
- Own income
- Homehelp and PHN package
- Housing application accepted -HAP approved
- Assistance by PHN for Assisted Living program.

What to expect from the New Domestic Violence Bill

Currently, there is no reference to controlling or psychologically abusive behaviour

IN THE NEW BILL Coercive control is to be included in the forthcoming bill. Coercive control is a pattern of emotional and psychological abuse of a partner through threats, intimidation and restrictions.

Currently, people in dating relationships can not obtain protection under Irish DV legislation

IN THE NEW BILL There has been an extension of eligibility for Safety and Protection Orders to all women in an intimate and committed relationship without a need for cohabitation.

Currently, legal orders do not include any reference to protection for a woman from an abuser following or communicating with them.

IN THE NEW BILL If a woman obtains any legal order the abuser will be prohibited from following or communicating (including electronic means) with the applicant of the legal order or any dependent persons.

Currently, in applying for a Barring Order in an emergency, women have to wait until the next day to have her case heard in court.

IN THE NEW BILL Out of hours Barring Orders are introduced where a Garda attending a domestic violence call-out can authorise communicating with an on-call judge to apply for an out of hours barring order. This change ensures that protection can be obtained out of hours in emergency situations.

Currently, to apply for a Barring Order you must have lived together in an intimate and committed relationship for six out of the previous nine months.

IN THE NEW BILL The duration of the cohabitation for Barring Orders has been removed. However, the property test still exists for cohabitant applicants whereby an applicant must have equal or greater interest in the property to obtain a Barring Order.

Currently, if you do not have equal or greater interest in the property you can not obtain a Barring Order.

IN THE NEW BILL Emergency Barring Order (EBOs) will exist which provide short term emergency protection to cohabitant partners who do not have an equal or greater interest in the property from which the abuser is being barred. EBOs provide some limited relief for cohabitant partners however they only last eight days.

Currently, a woman at her court hearing can be cross examined by her abuser if he does not have legal representation.

The Bill aims to prevent oppressive cross-examination conducted by the abusive partner. Individuals giving evidence may not be personally cross-examined by their abusive partner unless the court believes it in the best interests of justice.

Currently, Court services do not have to provide information to victims of DV.

THE NEW BILL requires courts services to provide information to victims of domestic violence about support services.

Currently, Courts do not have to give reasons as to why they do or do not grant legal orders.

IN THE NEW BILL Courts will have to give reasons for their decisions relating to applications for legal orders.

Currently, in any application for a legal order a person must be present at Court.

THE NEW BILL provides for the giving of evidence through live television link where a person is under the age of eighteen or in any other cases with the leave (permission) of the court

Currently, women can only be accompanied by their legal representative when in Court.

IN THE NEW BILL Women will be allowed to be accompanied in court by a person of their choice, in addition to any legal representative.

Currently, children's views are not sought when applying for a legal order.

IN THE NEW BILL Section 27 will enable the court to seek the views of the child where a legal order is being sought on the child's behalf. The court will have the option of appointing an expert to ascertain and convey the child's views to the court.

Currently, Forced Marriage is not referred to under domestic violence legislation.

THE NEW BILL creates a new offence of forced marriage. It will be an offence to use violence, threats, undue influence, duress or coercion to cause another person to marry. It will also be an offence to remove someone from the State with the intention that they will be forced into a marriage abroad.

Currently, there is no increased sentencing for abusers who commit physical or sexual violence against their victims.

IN THE NEW BILL Where offences involving physical or sexual violence are committed in the context of a marriage, civil partnership or an intimate and committed relationship, that fact will be an aggravating factor at sentencing. The new sentencing provision will apply to any offence that involves violence or the threat of violence to a person. What does an aggravating factor mean? Any fact or circumstance that increases the severity or culpability of a criminal act.



"I have enjoyed everything about this programme"
GROUP PARTICIPANT

"Meeting other women in similar situations has been a highlight of the group"
GROUP PARTICIPANT

Surviving to Thriving

"Without proactive strength-based work with mothers and their children in the aftermath of violence, it is all too easy for women to be left struggling with the absent presence of the perpetrator that can continue to undermine the relationship between women and their children"

THIARA, R.K & HUMPHREYS, C. 2014
ABSENT PRESENCE

Surviving to Thriving is a parenting support group that emerged in answer to continuing challenges for our clients in parenting once they had left their abusive partner. Women named the numerous difficulties they still endured after separating and the continuing impact their abuser had on them as individual, as a mother and on their children.

While most parenting programs have an emphasis on co-parenting, there is no focus on how to co-parent with an abusive ex-partner, which presents a unique set of impacts and stresses on a mother. Through *Surviving to Thriving* we hoped to create a safe space for women to explore these impacts and have their voice heard. In our first module we looked at various themes relating to both the mother and child's experience of domestic violence. A senior clinical psychologist also provided a session exploring the impact of trauma on children.

All the women who attended the group shared their stories of resiliency and strength in the face of continuing abusive behaviour from their ex-partners. Everyone is looking forward to the second module of the program which begins again in September for another five weeks.

"In September I look forward to learning more ways and tactics to help me to deal with my children and also to the group experience as a whole"
GROUP PARTICIPANT

"A brave well presented, practical course supporting families transform the trauma of domestic violence into safe healthy family relationships and homes"
GROUP PARTICIPANT

"I'm looking forward to learning more about the support and tools that help manage difficult situations/ongoing difficulty/challenge"
GROUP PARTICIPANT

"Well informed facilitators, unity with mothers, affirmation of experience and most important - solutions"
GROUP PARTICIPANT

"If I could describe the group in one word it is "hopeful"
GROUP PARTICIPANT



wonder women of west cork

Continuing our series **Women of West Cork**. We are delighted to present our second guest, Anne O'Donovan



Where are you from? I am from Kilcrohane, which is near Bantry on the Sheeps Head Peninsula. I feel very fortunate to have grown up there as it is one of the most beautiful places in Ireland. Following a number of years spent in London and Dublin, I am delighted to be back living there again.

Job Title: Development Manager of Citizens Information in West Cork

What does your work entail? I am the Manager of the Citizens Information Service in West Cork. Our main office is Bantry, where I am based and we also have an office in Macroom. In addition, we provide outreach services to Bandon, Castletownbere, Clonakilty and Dunmanway. We deliver a free, independent and confidential information, advice and advocacy service to the public. We deal with a wide range of issues including social welfare entitlements, employment rights, consumer issues, housing, health entitlements and family matters. My role involves managing and supporting staff and volunteers who provide the front-line service, raising awareness of the service, delivering information talks to groups around West Cork, looking at gaps in service and ways of filling them. Overall we work to provide a high quality service to the people of West Cork.

Why and how did you get involved in West Cork Women Against Violence?

I first became involved with West Cork Women Against Violence Project in September 2003. I worked with the service full-time for a year until October 2004 in the dual role of Part-time Administrator and Part-time Support & Development Worker. I then took up my current position with Citizens Information and in 2006 was invited to join the Board of Management. I was very pleased to become a Board Member as I have always felt that WCWAVP is a fantastic project which makes a real difference to the lives of women in West Cork. I believe in the ethos of the service and feel privileged to be part of it and to

be in a position to contribute to the overall governance and strategic development of the service. In addition, WCWAVP and Citizens Information work very closely to provide a seamless service to women where we combine our skills and knowledge to ensure that those contacting us get as complete and seamless service as possible.

Since your first involvement with WCWAV do you feel things have improved for women experiencing DV? I think there is increased awareness of the issue of Domestic Violence which is a result of more media coverage and campaigns such as #me too all help to place a spot light on the abuse of women. In addition there has been increasing awareness of the work of WCWAV and the profile of the organisation has grown. This is positive in that it may make it easier for women in abusive relationships to come forward and seek help. In addition, through the work of the organisation building links with health professionals, the Gardai, social workers and other agencies there have been improvements in the way women who disclose DV are treated

However the barriers of poor public transport, lack of refuge places and rural isolation still exist. In addition the need for the establishment of a protective Service Unit in West Cork is still an outstanding issue

How do you relax? I enjoy spending time with family and friends. I love hill-walking and particularly enjoy walking on the Sheeps Head Way. Reading, cinema and visiting Art Galleries all give me great pleasure and I enjoy going out to eat with friends and having a nice glass of wine.

What changes would you most like to see for women? I would like to live in a world where women are treated with respect everywhere and where there is no inequality. It is crazy that in the twenty first century there is still a lack of women in leadership roles and there is still wide spread pay inequality.

Ideally I would like to live in a world where there was no need for DV services. However in the absence of this, I would like to see accessible safe houses for women available locally so that women experiencing DV are not forced to travel long distances to a refuge which is already over-crowded.

I would like to see the necessary arrangements being made to allow the Protective Services Unit to become an operational reality in the West Cork Garda Division.

I would like to see the establishment and availability of affordable high quality childcare to enable women to achieve their full potential. This is needed especially for women living in direct provision, who have no family networks to support them.

we're here to help

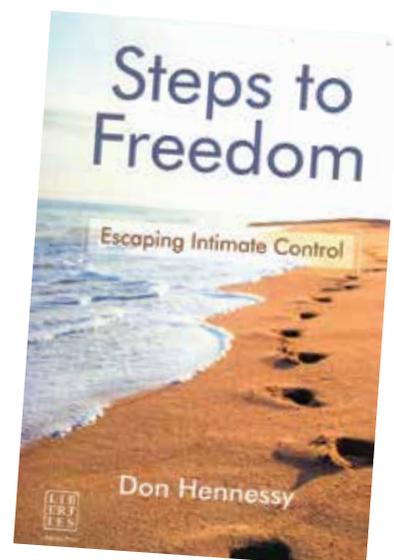
If you - or someone you know - think we could help we're offering you this card to cut out and keep in your wallet for when you get the chance or courage to ring us. We've purposely made it discreet so only you will know what it is about. Trust us, Trust yourself



Steps to Freedom

Controlling behaviour, particularly of men towards women, is far more common, in all walks of life, than we have been led to believe. In this easy-to-read guide, best-selling author Don Hennessy offers advice to all those dealing with violent or controlling behaviour in their own lives, based on his experience of dealing with hundreds of such people in a therapeutic setting. Most important, he explains to the reader how they can throw off the shackles and live lives free from fear and intimidation.

Don Hennessy is the director of National Domestic Violence Intervention Agency and the author of the best-selling *How He Gets Into Her Head*. He is a relationship counsellor who has worked for many years with women who are experiencing difficulties with abusive or controlling partners. Don has been interviewed in the Irish Independent, Irish Examiner and Irish Times, and is a regular contributor on the subject of intimate control in the broadcast media in Ireland and internationally.



cork

West Cork Women Against Violence
Freephone 1800 203 136

Cuanlee Refuge, Cork
021 427 7698

Free Legal Aid Clinic
Locall 1890 350 259
Information and referral

IRD Duhallow Domestic Violence Support
Helpline 087 7733 337
from Monday to Saturday 10am - 10 pm or
office at 029 60633

Legal Aid Board, Cork
021 455 1686 / 021 427 5998

Mná Feasa (Domestic Violence Project)
021 421 1757

OSS, Cork Freephone 1800 497 497
(Domestic Violence Resource Centre for men
and women)

S.A.T.U. 021 492 6100

Sexual Violence Centre
Freephone 1800 496 496

Domestic Violence Social Work
021 492 1728

Y.A.N.A. North Cork
022 53915

kerry

**Kerry's Women's refuge and Support
Services (Adapt)** 066 712 9100

Kerry Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre
Freephone 1800 633 333

Legal Aid Board 066 712 6900

Tralee Women's Resource Centre
066 712 0622

national

Women's Aid Freephone 1800 341 900

West Cork Citizens' Information Service

West Cork Citizens' Information Service can provide you with information, advocacy and advice on all your rights and entitlements. The service is free, confidential and independent. Open daily, please call for times.

Bantry The Square, 076 107 8390
Daily from 10am - 5pm
(Fridays until 4pm, closed 1pm-2pm Mon,
Tues & Thurs)

Macroom South Square Macroom,
0761 078 430
Mon, Tues, Weds, Thursday (Closed Friday)

Bandon, c/o St Michael Centre,
South Main Street, Bandon
Every Thursday from
10am - 1pm & 2pm- 4pm

Dunmanway, Ross House, The Square,
Dunmanway Every Monday 10am-1pm

Clonakilty, c/o Employability Service,
16 Rossa Street, Clonakilty
Every Wednesday from
10am - 1pm & 2pm- 4pm

Free Legal Aid Clinic Monthly
on 1st Tuesday 6pm - 7pm
For an appointment please contact West
Cork Citizens' Information Service by either
dropping in or phoning 076 107 8390.

HELPLINE

FREEPHONE:
1800 203 136
Office: 027 53847

Mon to Fri: 9 am to 5 pm

If you'd like to find out about making a donation, you can visit our website www.westcorkwomensproject.ie or call or visit our office in Bantry on 02753847

Published by West Cork Women Against Violence Project
at Harbour View, Bantry, Co. Cork www.westcorkwomensproject.ie

email: admin@westcorkwomensproject.ie

TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency