

The Haven Wolverhampton E Bulletin

Raising awareness of the needs of women and children affected by violence and abuse

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Domestic violence occurs across all of society regardless of age, class, ethnicity, gender or race. Domestic Violence is a range of controlling behaviours which include emotional, financial, physical and sexual abuse. Domestic Violence can occur between intimate partners as well as in the extended family. Domestic violence is a violation of human rights.

Welcome from Kath Rees
Chief Executive Officer



The backdrop under which The Haven operates at the moment makes life difficult for us all in these economic uncertain times. With forecast cuts to our sector of £2.8 billion between now and 2016 essential scenario planning is taking place to ensure Haven services are around for another 40 years. Consortia, mergers, partnership working and downsizing are on the tips of all our tongues. However, Empowerment, dignity, respect, valuing contributions of all, support for those less fortunate, is getting lost! We must get back to basics and remember the meaning of the word 'charity'. While we look for innovative ways to mitigate the impact of decreased resources there will be some who fall through the net.

Sadly on 29th December 2011 a woman was murdered by her husband after suffering years of abuse in the City of Wolverhampton. Unfortunately The Haven did not know of this woman's plight. We should be aware that the cost to our City and the state as a result of this murder will be in the region of £1,000,000 – yes - One Million! We know there are many other women and children in our City who need access to confidential, gender specific services who are suffering.

The Haven does not sit still. The expression "get on your bike" has literally been taken up by a team of budding cyclists, who will cycle from London to Paris on the 18th July in order to raise funds for our counselling service. This service has been operating for 14 years and is now sadly due to close on the 31st March as we have been unable to find the grants or funds to support at this stage. This service offers a life line for women and children to build towards a life free from abuse. The closure of this service will mark a sad day for us all and The City of Wolverhampton. We call for your support to be able to help save this service by making a [donation](#) to our ['Cycle to end the Cycle' campaign](#). On behalf of the board, staff, volunteers and service users at The Haven I thank you for your continued support.

NEWS

Victim of domestic violence sent to jail when she felt too traumatised to give evidence against her ex partner

Sacha Williams-Rowe had already testified against her ex-partner over two days but his trial on a charge of attempted murder collapsed when the judge fell ill. The judge then ordered a retrial meaning Sacha, 31, faced a second court ordeal. Unable to endure the stress, she asked authorities to rely on medical evidence, her statements to police and a video of her in hospital after a horrendous knife attack. His Hon Judge The Lord Parmoor issued an arrest warrant when she failed to appear at Aylesbury Crown Court, Bucks. The mother of four, who was close to a breakdown, was then held in contempt and sent to prison for a week after she failed to turn up for a second time. To read the story in full click [here](#)

Report warns cuts to Legal Aid will put domestic violence victims at risk

Many victims of domestic violence will be unable to obtain legal help in future to help them escape from abusive relationships, according to a report by women's groups. Research conducted by Rights of Women and Welsh Women's Aid suggests that nearly half of domestic violence victims will not be eligible under cuts in legal aid proposed by the Ministry of Justice.



The report is published as the House of Lords examines a further section of the legal aid, sentencing and punishment of offenders bill which will consider plans to restrict legal aid in family cases. To read the story in full click [here](#)

"Abolishing the social fund will hit women and children hardest"

The social fund is absolutely essential to women fleeing domestic violence. It can take many weeks for a claim for benefits to be processed and during this time women often have no money at all for themselves and their children. They are destitute until they receive their benefits. This is where the social fund comes in. To read the story in full click [here](#)

Financial Abuse and Financial Inclusion —Year 2

The Haven Wolverhampton's innovative [Financial Inclusion Project](#) has been providing specialist financial advice and support to women experiencing financial difficulty as a result of domestic violence since 2010.

Having recently completed the second year of The Nationwide Foundation funded project The Haven has achieved a number of stand out successes including the development of a 'Financial Inclusion Toolkit', delivered financial abuse training to professionals working and studying in the finance and media sectors, and held a conference in order to raise awareness of financial abuse and financial inclusion in Wolverhampton.



Between January and December 2011 The Haven Specialist Financial Inclusion Advisor supported a total of 46 women with complex debt advice. During the same period 27 clients were supported with benefits advice after it was found that these clients were either on the wrong benefit or not claiming what they were entitled to.

Many women affected by financial abuse find themselves in situations where they have very little to no control over their own finances. Some women have access to their funds restricted, some are not given any financial support by their partners and others are forced to take out credit cards and loans thus building up large amounts of debt. The Financial Inclusion Project Fundraising Support Officer supported a total of 76 women with applications for small grants to help women purchase essential items including clothing and household items as well as support with the cost of travel expenses, applications to utility trusts to clear arrears and support with the cost of applying for a debt relief order or bankruptcy order.



The Financial Inclusion Project has continued to work with financial agencies including banks and credit unions to raise awareness of the needs of those affected by domestic violence and financial abuse as well as develop best practice guidelines. Plans are currently underway to train 11 members of NatWest Bank Staff with the aim of having a domestic violence champion in each Wolverhampton branch.

The Haven Wolverhampton Financial Inclusion toolkit was developed in November 2011 entitled '*Surviving Financial Abuse: A Guide to Achieving Financial Independence.*' This guide provides a concise account of the steps that individuals affected by financial abuse can take towards achieving financial independence as well as details of relevant organisations in Wolverhampton that can provide support to achieve a life free from violence. Copies of the toolkit are available to order by calling [01902 572145](tel:01902572145) or emailing FIC@havenrefuge.org.uk

On Monday 27th February Haven delegates will attend the 56th Commission on the Status of Women in New York where they will deliver a seminar on Financial Abuse and Financial Inclusion in the UK to an International audience. For more information on the event please click [here](#)

A follow up seminar to the successful 2011 "*Promoting Financial Inclusion: A Collaborative Approach to Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence & Financial Abuse*" conference will also take place on Wednesday 16th May 2012 at Light House Media Centre, details of which will be available very soon.

Feedback from Clients

'The Project has been a massive help, I didn't think I'd be able to cope before. I now feel like a normal person, before I would spend money on one thing and find I couldn't buy another thing. My situation is now getting better and clearer.'

'I was very worried before and was fretting about my debts.' When my support worker gave me your details, I was glad. 'I am happy now, you have helped me a lot, thank you.'

For more information on The Haven Wolverhampton Financial Inclusion Project please visit www.havenrefuge.org.uk/FI or contact Tracy Groom, Financial Inclusion Project Coordinator, on [01902 572145](tel:01902572145) or email FIC@havenrefuge.org.uk

Haven launches Wolverhampton Privilege Card Scheme

The Haven is delighted to be working in partnership with a number of local businesses to be able to offer shoppers and diners the opportunity to make savings on a wide range of purchases in the City.

The Wolverhampton Privilege Card Scheme will help shoppers save 10% on purchases in over 50 stores and businesses in the City Centre as well as gain exclusive access to a range of bespoke promotions and loyalty offers. Businesses signed up to the scheme so far include Commando, Diffusion, Café Maxism, McDonalds, The Sony Centre, Francesco Group Wolverhampton, Toni & Guy, Leisure Lakes Bikes and many more.

Privilege cards will cost just £5 (£3 for concessions) and are valid for 30 days from the date of purchase. Alternatively annual cards valid for 12 months can be purchased for £15 (£10 for concessions). At least 50% from every card purchased will go to The Haven.

The Privilege Card will be officially launched on Tuesday 14th February at The Mander Shopping Centre. The first 100 people to sign up will get a free eco cotton bag worth £5. The card will also be available to purchase online as well as from selected stores in the City Centre. For details on how to purchase a card visit www.ilovewlv.co.uk or call **01902 572123** or **01902 551077**.



Empurple Day - 9 / 3 / 2012

Purple is the internationally recognised colour for campaigns which aim to raise awareness of Domestic Violence.



In order to raise awareness and funds to support the women and children who access our services The Haven will be holding its second annual 'Empurple Day'. Taking place on Friday 9th March, 'Empurple Day' also celebrates [International Women's Week](#) (5th to 11th March 2012).

In embracing 'Empurple Day' you will be helping to support vulnerable women and children in the City. Encourage your friends, family and work colleagues to become purple for the day. Perhaps you could hold a sponsored wear purple to school / work day, have a purple cake sale or have a purple party with purple party games? We have plenty of purple fundraising ideas for you to take inspiration from. Any event, whether big or small, will go a long way to improving the lives of women and children affected by domestic violence.

To request your free **Empurple Day** fundraising pack with hints and tips on how to generate sponsorship and unique event ideas simply [email us](#) or call **01902 572123**.

The Major Challenge

If you're looking for a new challenge and want to fundraise for The Haven we guarantee you'll love this! The Major Challenge is a 5K or 10K run that involves mud, water, hills and obstacles.

Date: Saturday 10th March 2012. **Start Time:** 10.00hrs. **Venue:** Weston Park, near Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8LE

Registration fee applies, full details can be found at <http://www.majorseries.com>
Contact The Haven for more information by [email](#) or call **01902 572123**



Feedback

If you have any comments or feedback about this or any previous issues of The Haven E-Bulletin please call **01902 572173** or email publicity@havenrefuge.org.uk

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