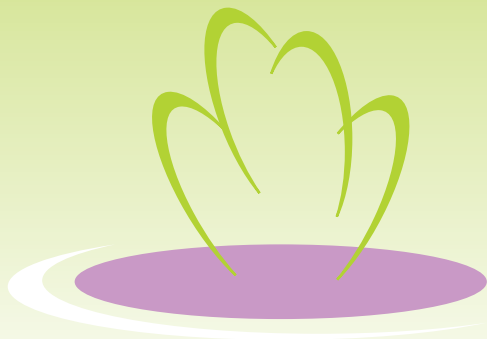


Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid

Working to end domestic abuse

Impact Report 2018/19



WELCOME

Throughout 2018/19 we have continued to deliver and develop services for and with survivors of domestic abuse and have provided a more holistic service offering than ever before. Our aim is to support women and children as early in their journey to safety as possible and prevent abuse from taking place at all. This year we have seen more women and children access our services than in any year since we started our work in 1975, a result of focussing on awareness to enable a better response to domestic abuse across Bromley & Croydon communities. Successful outcomes for survivors are rarely the result of one service or one support agency alone, but rather a combination of the right interventions by a number of agencies at the right time throughout a survivor's journey to an independent life free from abuse. In 2018/19 we worked with a range of partners including our two local authorities, the London Borough of Bromley and the London Borough of Croydon as well as statutory services, voluntary sector organisations and delivery partners including DVIP, ASHA Project, Croydon BME Forum and Bexley Women's Aid.



THE SUPPORT JOURNEY

One Stop Shop

During 2018/19 we continued to co-ordinate the Bromley Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop, which was accessed by 392 women. This is a free drop-in service where survivors can access support from the BCWA team, housing officers, the police, family law and immigration solicitors.



Helpline

Our free Domestic Abuse Helpline provided support, advice and signposting to everyone who needed it and is staffed by experienced support staff as well as trained volunteers Monday – Friday from 9am-5pm. For many women ringing our helpline, it is the first time they have spoken to anyone about the abuse they experience and providing a non-judgemental listening ear is a vital service to these clients.



SUPPORT

Outreach

This year we supported 235 women through our Outreach service. This can be in the form of telephone or face-to-face support, and can be either one-off or ongoing for as long as needed by our clients. Our aim is to offer an experienced listening ear, along with advice and guidance on specialist issues relating to the survivor's experiences.

Advocacy Service

Our IDSVA service provided advocacy services to survivors at high-risk of domestic abuse across the London Borough of Bromley. Three dedicated Advocates provided support at court, MARAC meetings, safety and support planning to over 500 clients. Particular focus of this work is on clients with additional needs and strategic co-locations with services across Bromley facilitate easy access to the service.

Support Groups

We ran Support Groups under our Keys to Freedom programme. A total of 228 women accessed this service, providing peer support, increasing self esteem and gaining a greater understanding of power and control in abusive relationships.



NRPF & EEA Support

BCWA has been able to expand on our work in the community to offer bespoke support to women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and EEA nationals fleeing domestic abuse across our communities. Thanks to continued funding from the MHCLG our service offering has included outreach support to help women to access support and refuge. With funding from the National Lottery Community Fund we were able to support a significantly increased number of women with NRPF in our refuges.

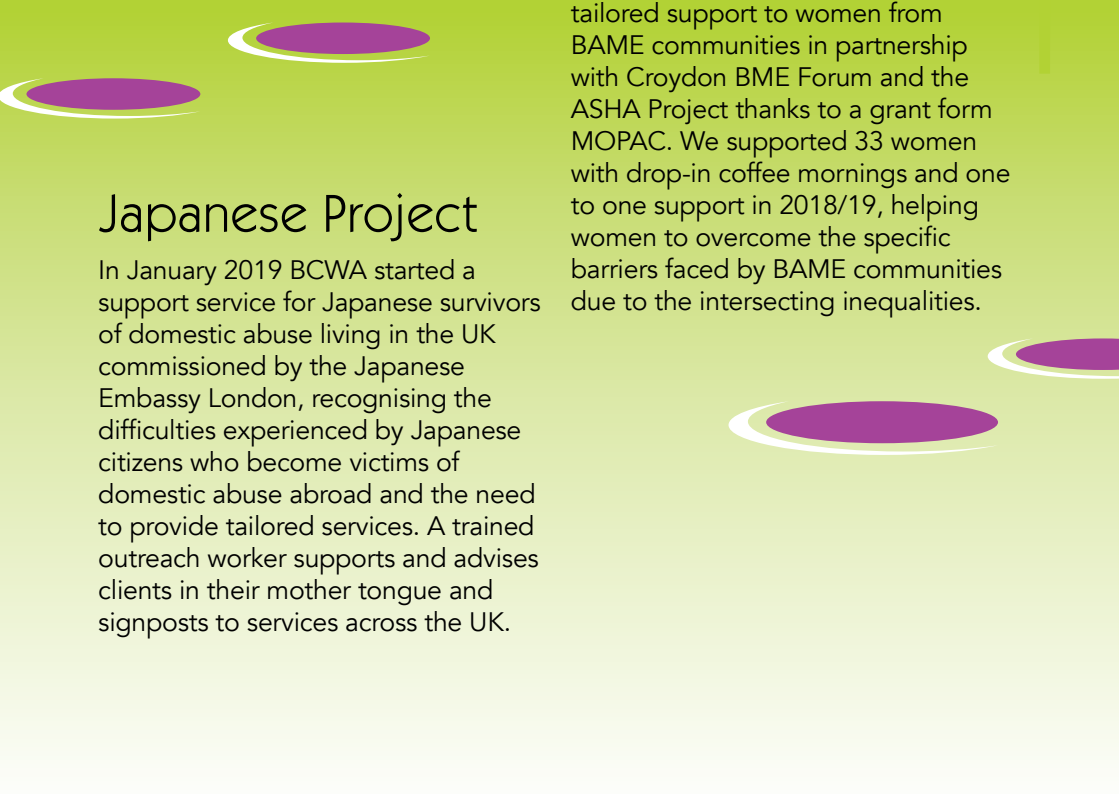


BAME Project

From July 2018 BCWA delivered tailored support to women from BAME communities in partnership with Croydon BME Forum and the ASHA Project thanks to a grant from MOPAC. We supported 33 women with drop-in coffee mornings and one to one support in 2018/19, helping women to overcome the specific barriers faced by BAME communities due to the intersecting inequalities.

Japanese Project

In January 2019 BCWA started a support service for Japanese survivors of domestic abuse living in the UK commissioned by the Japanese Embassy London, recognising the difficulties experienced by Japanese citizens who become victims of domestic abuse abroad and the need to provide tailored services. A trained outreach worker supports and advises clients in their mother tongue and signposts to services across the UK.



Complex Needs

We provide support to women with complex needs such as mental health and substance dependencies. This also includes many other complexities; disabilities, health needs of children, complex legal situations, and child safeguarding needs, to name but a few. Through this vital work we are able to offer an appropriate and holistic service for women and children with high support needs who may otherwise struggle to access specialist help. The experience of sustained abuse has a profound and long-lasting impact on survivors. Many survivors present with mental health issues including depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of the abuse. Some present health issues due to the sexual and physical abuse suffered, while others misuse drugs and alcohol as a coping mechanism.

Safebeds Scheme

We offer a temporary accommodation service to women with no recourse to public funds who are fleeing domestic abuse, are supported by social services and are funded by the local authority. A specialist support worker offers bespoke support to women with no recourse to public funds in a dedicated Safebeds refuge. We provide tailored support to women residing there, who come from BAME communities and usually meet several barriers when accessing services.



REFUGE

Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid have provided refuge accommodation in Bromley since 1975. Refuges are run by a committed, professional and experienced staff team to exceptionally high standards, with the invaluable help of volunteers.

We provide safe accommodation for women and their children (boys under the age of 12) who are experiencing domestic abuse or who are at risk of abuse. We can provide safe refuge for 54 women and up to 66 children throughout Bromley & Croydon at any one time.

Typically, a woman stays in refuge 6 months. A specialist Refuge Support Officer will provide help with independent living, life skills, emotional support, health and wellbeing, support for children, housing, education, training and employment. They will also assist in securing protective measures, provide support at court visits and sign-post to specialist mental health and drug & alcohol intervention services; along with other issues relevant to each case.

Advice and support with resettlement is an important part of the process, as well as helping women to manage their own budgets and plan their own lives. We would like to see the need for refuge diminish but sadly they are essential for many women in Bromley and Croydon and the UK. Women often arrive traumatised, with many having suffered physical violence or emotional torture for years. We provide them and their children safety and support

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES



Children in refuge are supported by Child Support Officers, funded by BBC Children in Need. This service provides one-to-one and group support to children residing in refuge, including in-house activities such as after school clubs and play sessions, outings for the families and one-to-one sessions with children. Outings included trips to Margate, V&A Museum of Childhood, Godstone Farm, Monkey Bizz, Swanley Park, The Horniman Museum and Kent Life Museum. The Play and Support workers encourage mothers to participate with their children in the activities, trips and outings, but also give mothers the much-needed space to deal with issues knowing their children are safe whilst attending key work sessions.

Our work with young people aims to raise awareness about respectful and healthy relationships and to support those who have experienced abuse. It varies depending on the needs of each young person. We can advocate on behalf of a client, support her to attend appointments, or simply provide a listening, non-judgemental ear. BCWA support young women to rebuild self-esteem, helping them to recognise that the abuse is not their fault and that there is help available if they wish to access it. #RelationshipGoals means we can deliver workshops on Gender, Unhealthy Relationships, Digital Abuse, Consent and more to 11-20 year olds, in schools or other youth settings.

CHAIR'S REPORT

This year BCWA has continued to improve and develop the scope and range of our services to great effect, including the time and range of support that individual women receive, whatever their journey or contact may be with our organisation. Their needs remain our guide to focus tailored, individual support.

BCWA has ensured that there is a range of first contact situations available, and that all local networks that come into contact with domestic abuse are increasingly enabled to access help. Our own specialist support and expertise and our ability to signpost to many networked supplementary services, and our professional risk assessments ensure we keep women safe, and respond empathetically and speedily to individual needs with our person centred approach. Our specialist support and assistance is matched by our now increased and varied accommodation options, and we have strengthened our experienced ability to advise with move on and support back into the community and independence.

Despite improved awareness of domestic abuse by society at large, there remains a continued poverty of investment in the retention and development of appropriate specialist services. This year we have consolidated our current range, and consistency of major funders which has meant real growth in terms of the access to our services, reaching out to a much wider range of women survivors, with a wider range of vulnerabilities, backgrounds, cultures and age groups.

The nature of domestic abuse has always meant that survivors are surrounded by many complex barriers to getting effective support, barriers based around fear, emotional, cultural, financial, legal, housing security, mental health issues and actual lack of access. This lack of access is something we have strived to combat with notable success this year.

At BCWA we have been fortunate in attracting staff with high level skills and commitment, to further meet the needs of providing a comprehensive specialist service that continues also to educate and inform.

BCWA continues to work hard to retain its 40 year achievement of excellence in working to combat violence against women and girls.

Jane Ward
Chair of Trustees

TRAINING & AWARENESS

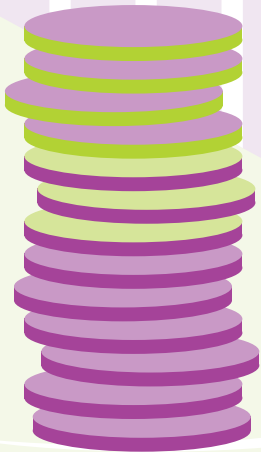
A dedicated Training & Awareness Officer delivered training sessions throughout the year, providing general domestic abuse training for a wide range of local partners and community-based organisations. With the help of Lottery funding, we are able to deliver awareness sessions free of charge which has significantly increased take up of training. We also deliver bespoke training for the London Borough of Bromley ranging from foundation to advanced levels. Thanks to this work we have seen an increase in survivors being referred by a wider range of partner agencies.



Days Out:

"The days out together have given myself and my daughter a chance to see that there are good things out there for us and have given us the chance to bond."

FUNDING



£1.26m

 Income

Statutory Funding: £377,000

Voluntary Income: £290,000

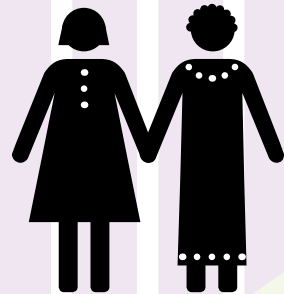
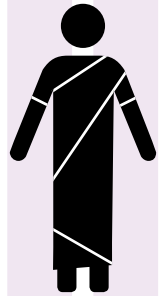
Rental Income: £595,000

OUR PEOPLE

BCWA goes from strength to strength due to the dedicated work of our staff, volunteers and Trustees.

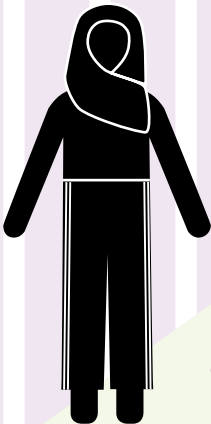
We recruit staff with a wide range of experience and together they make up a team that is greater than the sum of its individual parts because of their commitment to, and expertise in, preventing domestic abuse and helping those who experience it to survive and build a better life.

Our volunteers are crucial to the delivery of our community and refuge-based services, as well as helping with administrative work, fundraising, coordinating donations and assisting with resettlement. Throughout 2018/19 we employed a full-time volunteer manager who enabled volunteers to offer a wide range of additional services to our clients by offering valuable skills. The programme also provides opportunities for survivors of domestic abuse to give back, utilising their unique insight into domestic abuse to support others. 43 volunteers supported our service users in 2018/19.



Support Groups:

"I look forward to this group every week. It's the only place where I feel I can be me".



Refuge:

"I leave this house with pride and happiness, but a heavy heart, as this was my safe house, my time to grow, shine and become who I am, who I was meant to be".



OUR IMPACT

2,044
Clients Supported



1,970

People Attended
Training & Awareness
Sessions

Refuge

54 Bed Spaces

20 Women with Complex Needs

136 Women & 127 Children
Lived in Refuge

Clients

392 People seen at One Stop
Shop

712 Women Supported in the
Community

382 Women & Children
Attended Support Groups

Asha's Story

"I remember how frightened I was of my partner. I was 16, he controlled my clothing and makeup choices and wouldn't allow me access to contraception. He assaulted me several times, he threatened to kill me, and he would force me to have sex against my will. When I was in the relationship, I felt very alone and scared. I felt trapped.

As I started talking to my support worker at BCWA about my feelings and how stuff affected me, I didn't feel so alone. They never judged me and supported me when I went back. She was very supportive throughout my relationship and that was life changing for me, as I would still be with my boyfriend and in a really bad place if I didn't have her help throughout.

Now, coming out of the relationship, I have a close friendship circle. I can do activities that make me happy. I feel free now. I feel like my own person. BCWA has helped me to realise that I am strong, and that I am not alone. Sometimes it does get lonely and you do get upset; I still have my struggles, but I know that my support worker is there if I need to talk."

THANK YOU

We wouldn't be able to offer the range of holistic and bespoke services we delivered in 2018/19 without the help of our supporters, partners and funders. We would especially like to thank the London Borough of Bromley and the London Borough of Croydon for their ongoing collaboration and resources. We would also like to thank our grant funders: The National Lottery Community Fund, BBC Children in Need, MOPAC, The Mayor's Young Londoner's Fund, The Tracey Emin & Deutsche Bank Centenary Fund and The Japanese Embassy; as well as the countless community groups and individuals who have supported our work during the year and beyond.



CROYDON



MAYOR OF LONDON
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME



**The London
Community
Foundation**

Embassy of
Japan

Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid

Working to end domestic abuse

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Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid is a company registered in England & Wales
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