

In 2017/18, we supported over 1,500 survivors of domestic abuse and their children, in a country where domestic abuse kills two women every week and 1 in 4 women are abused by their (ex) partners.

BCWA recognises that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to domestic abuse and delivers services that are holistic, person-centred and needs-led. We listen to the women we support and focus on strengthening and expanding our provision across the key strands of refuge, support and prevention services.

133 women lived at BCWA's 8 refuges, safe havens where women could start a life free from abuse. In refuge, women were listened to, could access children's services and resettlement support as well as a service for women with multiple disadvantages. We have been running two independent refuges in Bromley and Croydon that accommodate women with no recourse to public funds.

In 2017 we started providing advocacy services for survivors at high risk in Bromley and continued to support low-to-medium risk survivors through a range of community services, such as a dedicated helpline, outreach support, a bespoke young people's service, a One Stop Shop and support groups.

We reached out to over 600 people in the local community who attended training sessions and awareness talks. We offered new services for women with No Recourse to Public Funds and EEA nationals in Bromley, Croydon and Bexley, in partnership with local councils and Bexley Women's Aid.

Finally, we implemented a new volunteer scheme that engaged over 40 volunteers working to support survivors. Our staff and volunteers worked tirelessly and went the extra mile to support our service users and provide survivor-focussed and holistic services.

Refuge

2017/18 saw some developments in the provision of refuge services, a core service provided for over 40 years. Women were able to access an increased range of support thanks to the increased provision of volunteer services. Over 40 volunteers supported the women and children by providing additional activities in refuge, including yoga and cooking classes, or practical support in attending appointments with GPs or at job centres.

We continued to break down barriers to access of refuge services for women with multiple disadvantage. Women with no access to public funds and additional needs were able to access specialist support tailored to their needs.

Resettlement officers supported women with advice and practical help when moving on from refuge ensuring successful resettlement in the community, including orientation in the new area, meetings with housing teams and referral to our volunteer-run donation programme which provides household items for women when resettling in the community.



Bridging the Borders

In 2017/18 "Bridging the Borders" project increased turnover in refuges and improved access to services for women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and EEA nationals across Bromley, Croydon and Bexley. In partnership with Croydon Council and Bexley Women's Aid, we maximised refuge spaces by increasing resettlement support, provided bespoke support and increased the safety of marginalised women. The project supported 187 women in total.

67

Women with NRPF

27

EEA nationals

45

Clients with resettlement needs



Children's Services

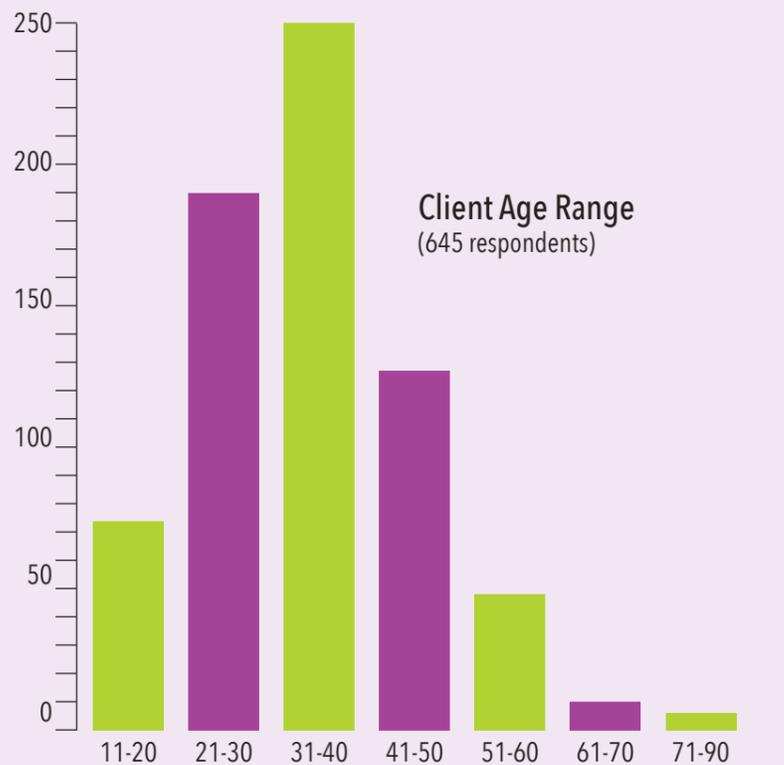
Children are victims of domestic abuse too, and this has long-lasting impact on their development and wellbeing. Since 2010, BCWA have worked to provide specialist services to child survivors of domestic abuse who move to local refuges with their mums. Child Support officers offered 1:1 support to children, art & craft activities in the refuge playrooms and after-school activities to the 138 children who resided at BCWA. During school holidays, we organised trips and outings to the seaside, museums and local farms to give children the opportunity to build new memories with their mums, siblings and new friends in refuge.



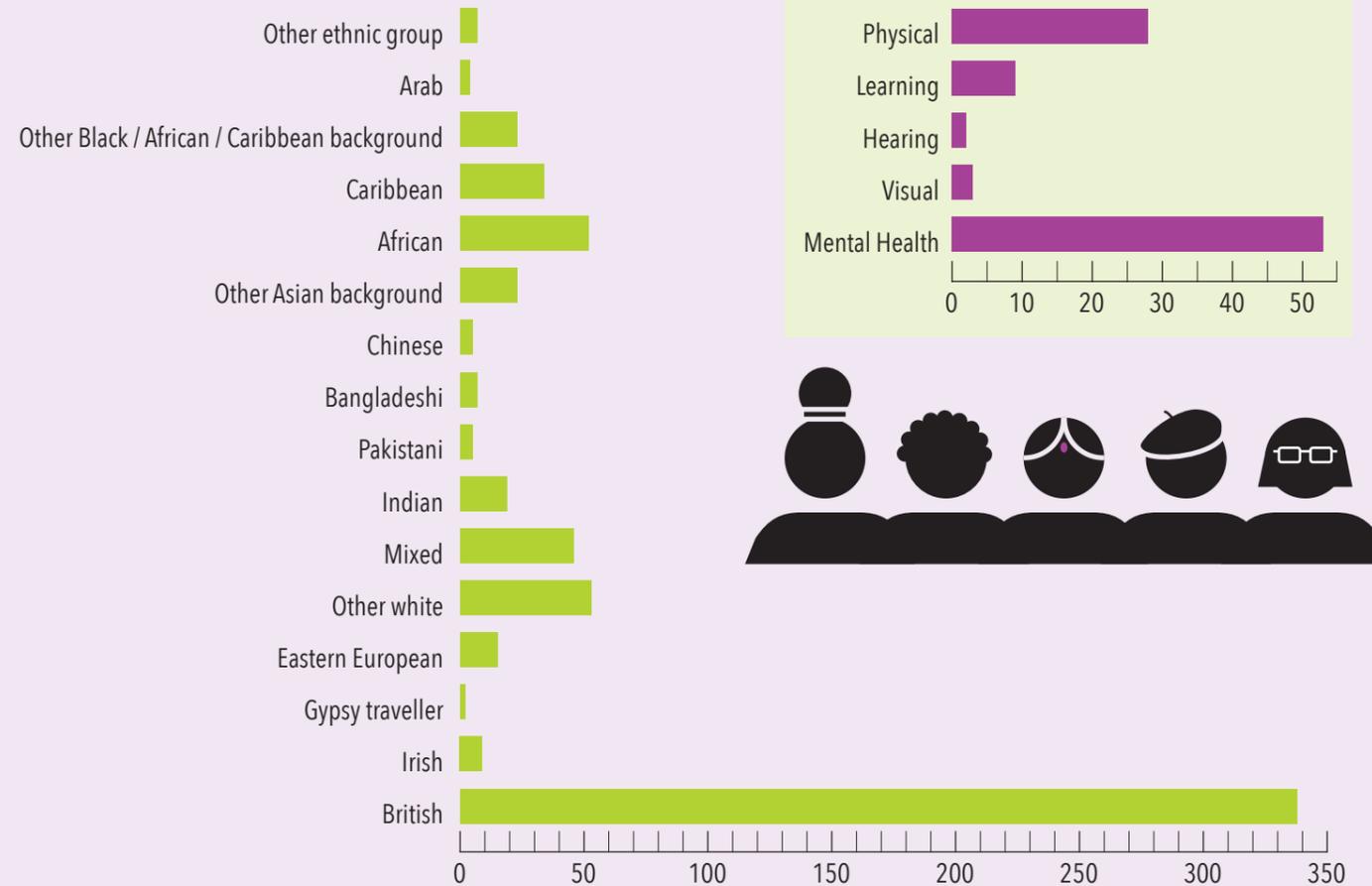
Demographics

Average number of children per client

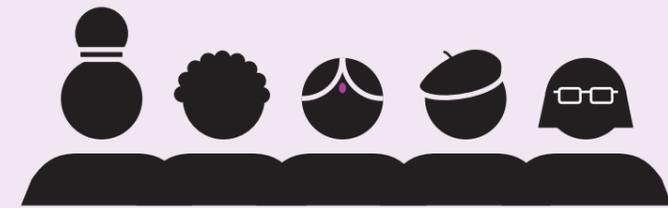
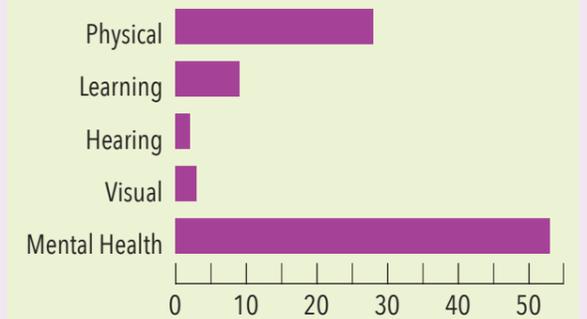
1.85



Client Ethnicity (645 respondents)



Additional Needs and Disabilities



Community-based Services

BCWA supported 277 women through its outreach services; telephone support can either be one-off or ongoing and aims to offer a listening ear to survivors of abuse, give advice and offer signposting. We also ran domestic abuse support groups. A total of 166 women accessed this service and provided peer support, gained self-esteem and a greater understanding of power and control in abusive relationships. During 2017/18, we continued to co-ordinate the Bromley Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop, a free drop-in service where survivors can seek support from BCWA, housing officers, the police and family law solicitors, a service accessed by 427 people. In 2017, BCWA started to provide advocacy services to survivors at high risk of domestic abuse in the London Borough of Bromley. The IDSVA service supported over 200 clients at court and MARAC meetings through 2017/18.

Data Outreach Services

208 IDSVA clients

277 outreach clients

166 attended support groups

427 people attended the OSS



Training & Awareness

Since the start of 2017 BCWA has employed a part-time Training and Awareness Officer. The aim is to increase knowledge of domestic abuse across Bromley and Croydon by offering awareness talks or training sessions to a range of stakeholders in the community. Over 80 sessions were provided during the year and we reached out to over 600 people. We saw an increased number of agencies referring to our services and a better understanding of domestic abuse amongst referring agencies. Many community groups accessed awareness talks with the aim to improve the community-based response to domestic abuse and an increased chance that survivors are signposted to the right service as early as possible.

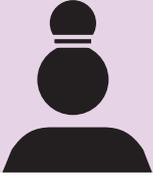
Our People

30 paid staff

6 trustees

16 languages spoken by staff

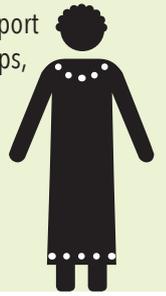
42 years of experience in the community



"Just having someone with you and not feeling alone and anxious is the best support that my volunteer gave me at court hearings".

Volunteers

BCWA was funded by a group of volunteers in 1975 and would not be here without the tireless support of people who offer their time and skills to support survivors. Thanks to a grant from MOPAC, we improved our volunteer programme. We recruited 49 volunteers to support the helpline service, refuge & outreach services, support groups, the Bromley One Stop Shop and resettlement services.



Lizzie'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.

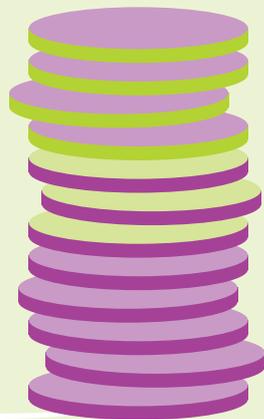
As I started talking to my support worker Julie at BCWA about my feelings and how stuff affected me, I didn't feel so alone. They never judged me, and supported me when I went back. Julie was very supportive throughout my relationship and that was life changing for me, as I would still be with my boyfriend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

Now, coming out of the relationship, I have a close friendship circle. I am able to 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 Julie is there if I need to talk.

Funding

£1.2m

Income



Statutory funding

Voluntary income

Rental income



In 2018 we were awarded the Women's Aid National Quality Mark, demonstrating that BCWA provides a high quality of service to women and children around their safety, security and dignity. BCWA was commended for the promotion of equality and diversity and for operating within a human rights framework.

Thank You!

We could not support women and children without the invaluable support of individuals, companies, schools, community and faith groups that regularly donate to improve the lives of survivors of domestic abuse.

We also want to thank funders, local and national commissioners who work with us to tackle domestic abuse in Bromley and Croydon.



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