

**NOEP**

**Outcome Evaluation of  
Women's Aid Support Services  
in Scotland**

# National Outcome Evaluation Project

To better understand how well Women's Aid services in Scotland respond to the needs of women who experience domestic abuse.

To explore the differences Women's Aid support makes to women's lives.

# Methodology

- 31 Women's Aid groups across Scotland
- Standardized approach
  - Questionnaire (four sections)
  - Recruitment and support protocols
  - Collecting and submitting questionnaires

# Questionnaire

- Self-assessment tool originally developed to assess refugee-based service outcomes
- Four Sections
  - Section 1: Help and support received
  - Section 2: How life has changed
  - Section 3: Relationship with Women's Aid workers
  - Section 4: Personal circumstances, demographics, recommendations
- Translated into six other languages: Arabic, Cantonese, Polish, Punjabi and Urdu

A glowing orange and yellow sphere is centered on a solid green background. The sphere has a bright yellow center that fades into orange and then into a soft green at its edges. The text "388 women" is written in a dark purple font across the middle of the sphere.

388 women



**Section 1:**  
**Women's Support Needs**

Figure 8. Women's Safety Needs

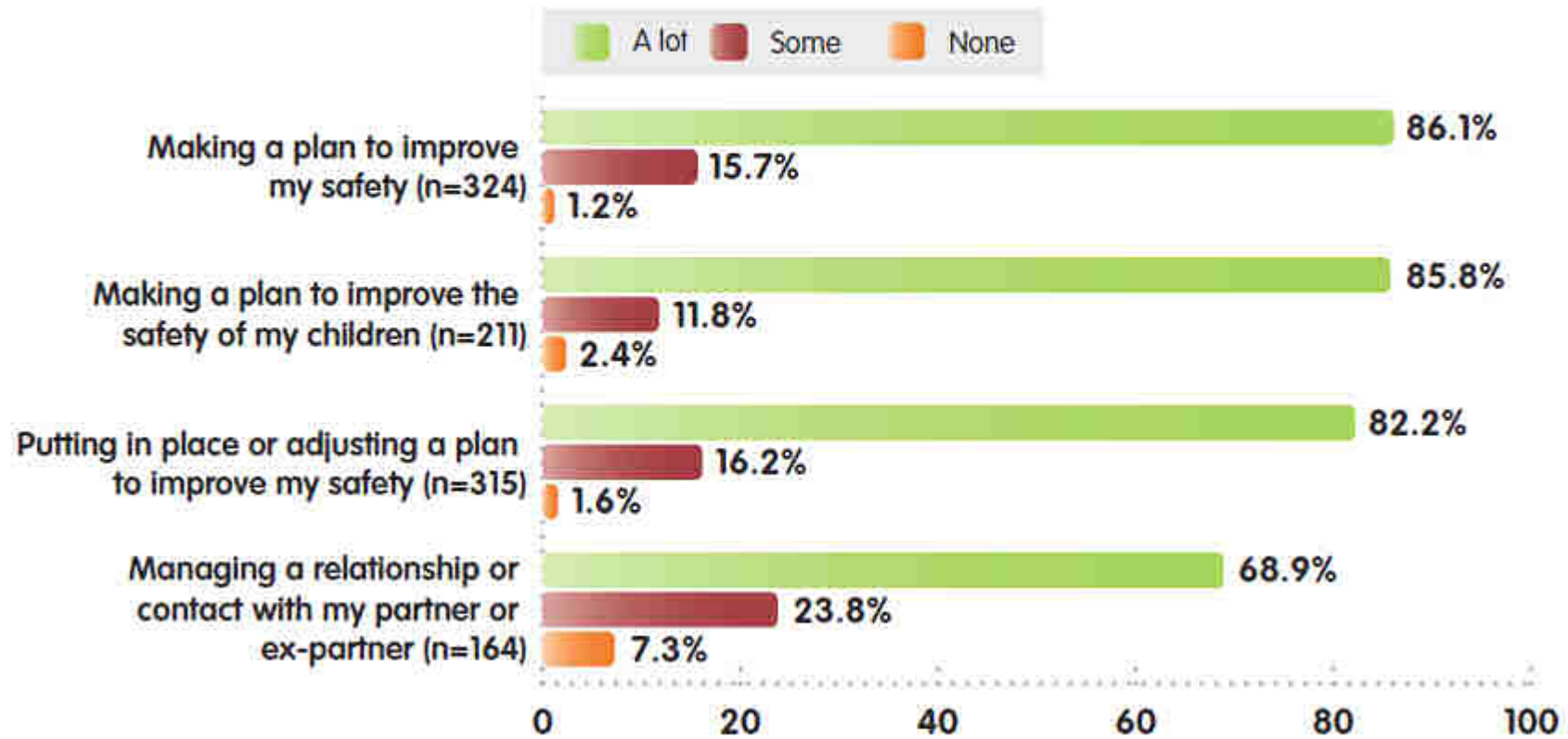


Figure 9. Practical Support Needs

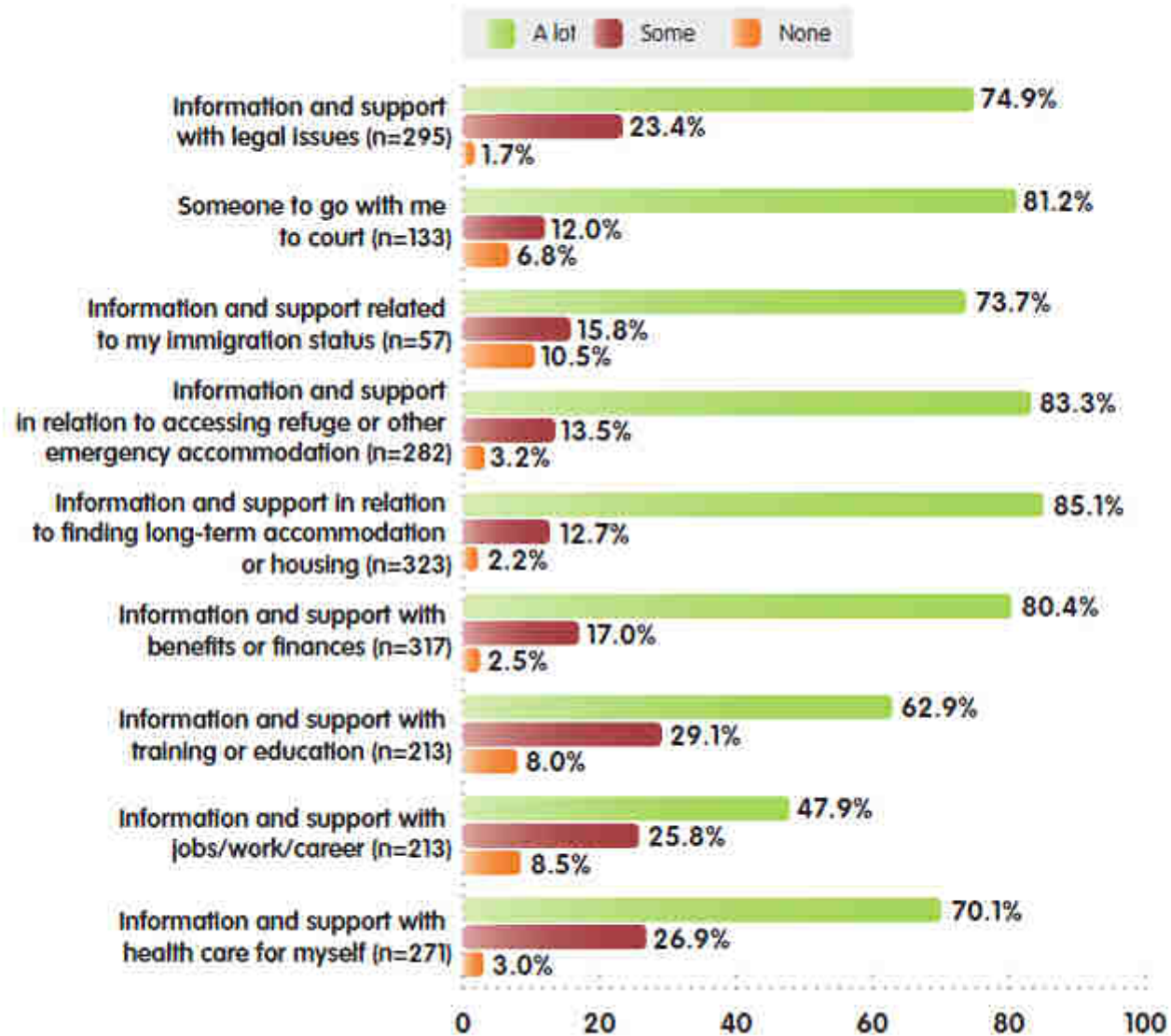


Figure 10. Emotional Support Needs

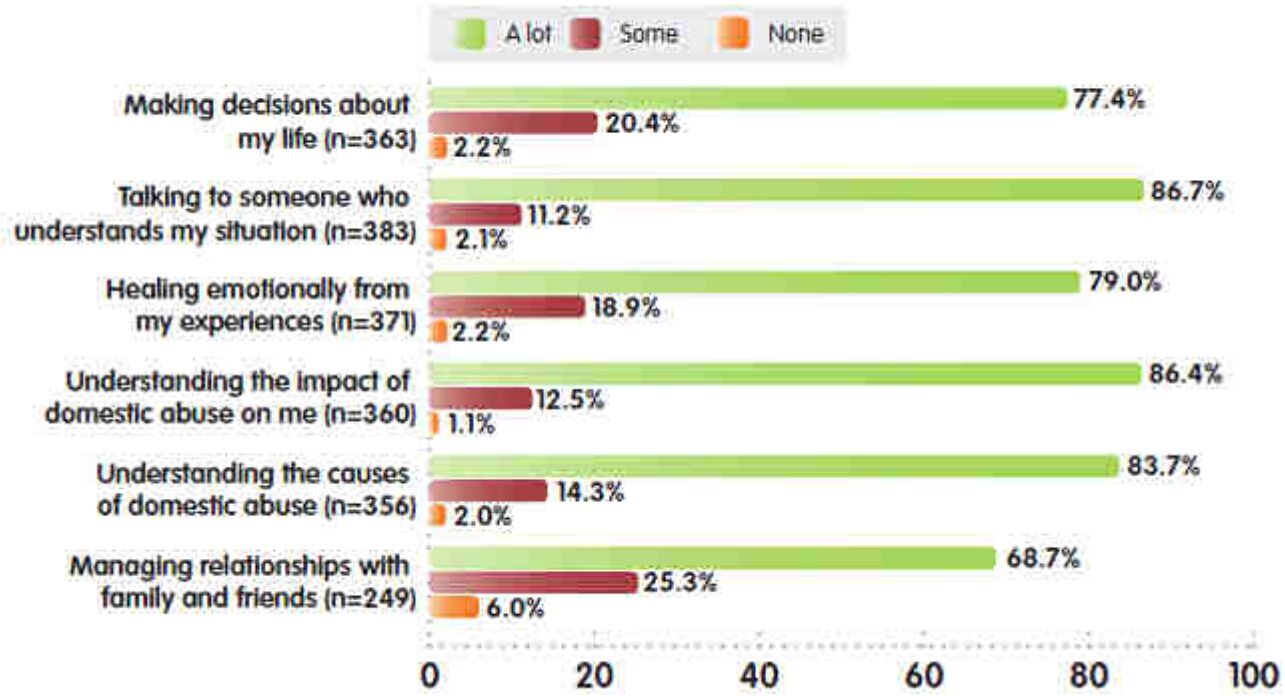
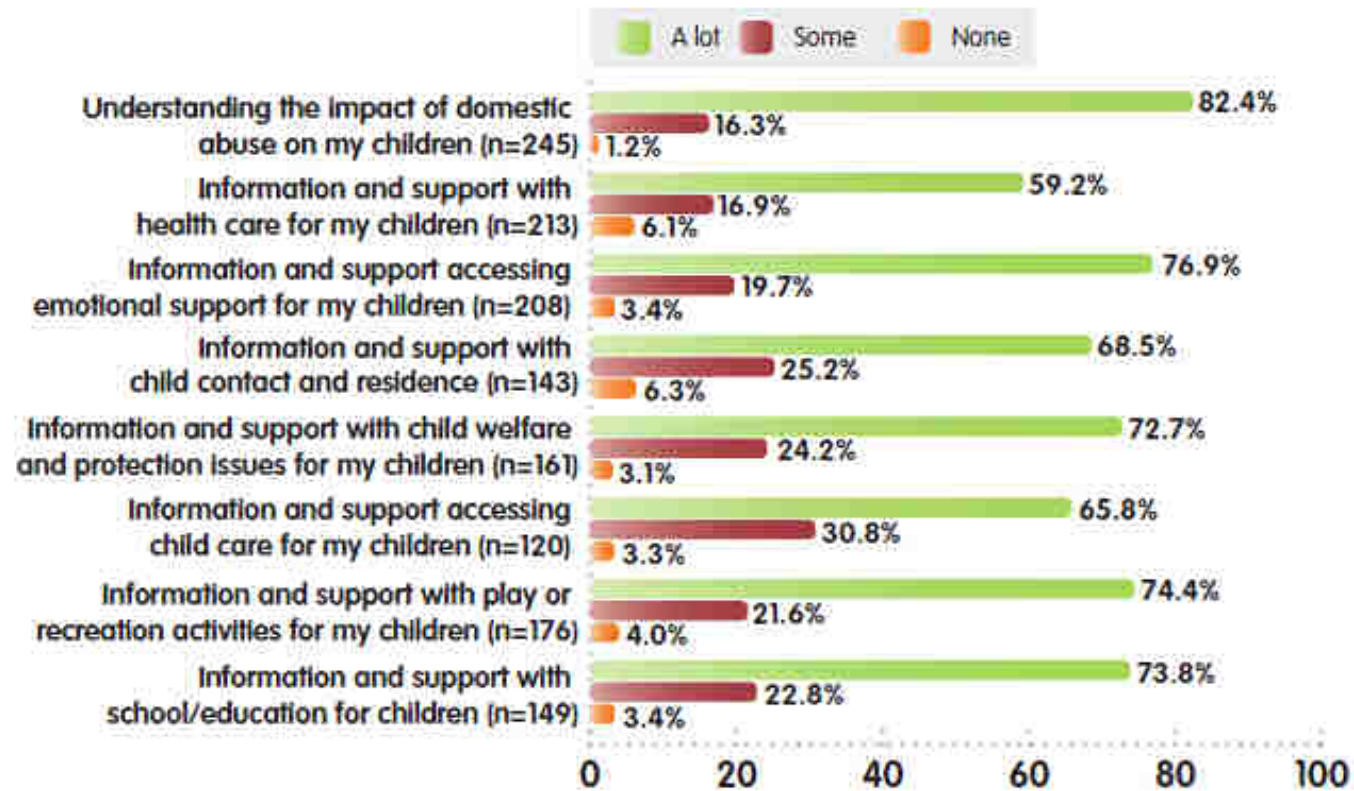


Figure 11. Child-related Needs



# Support Needs Summary

- Women who experience domestic abuse need support with a broad range of complex issues
- Each woman's support needs are unique to her personal circumstances
- Most women received the support they needed to address their complex issues



**Section 2:**  
**Outcomes for Women**

Figure 12. Outcomes for Women, excluding child-related items

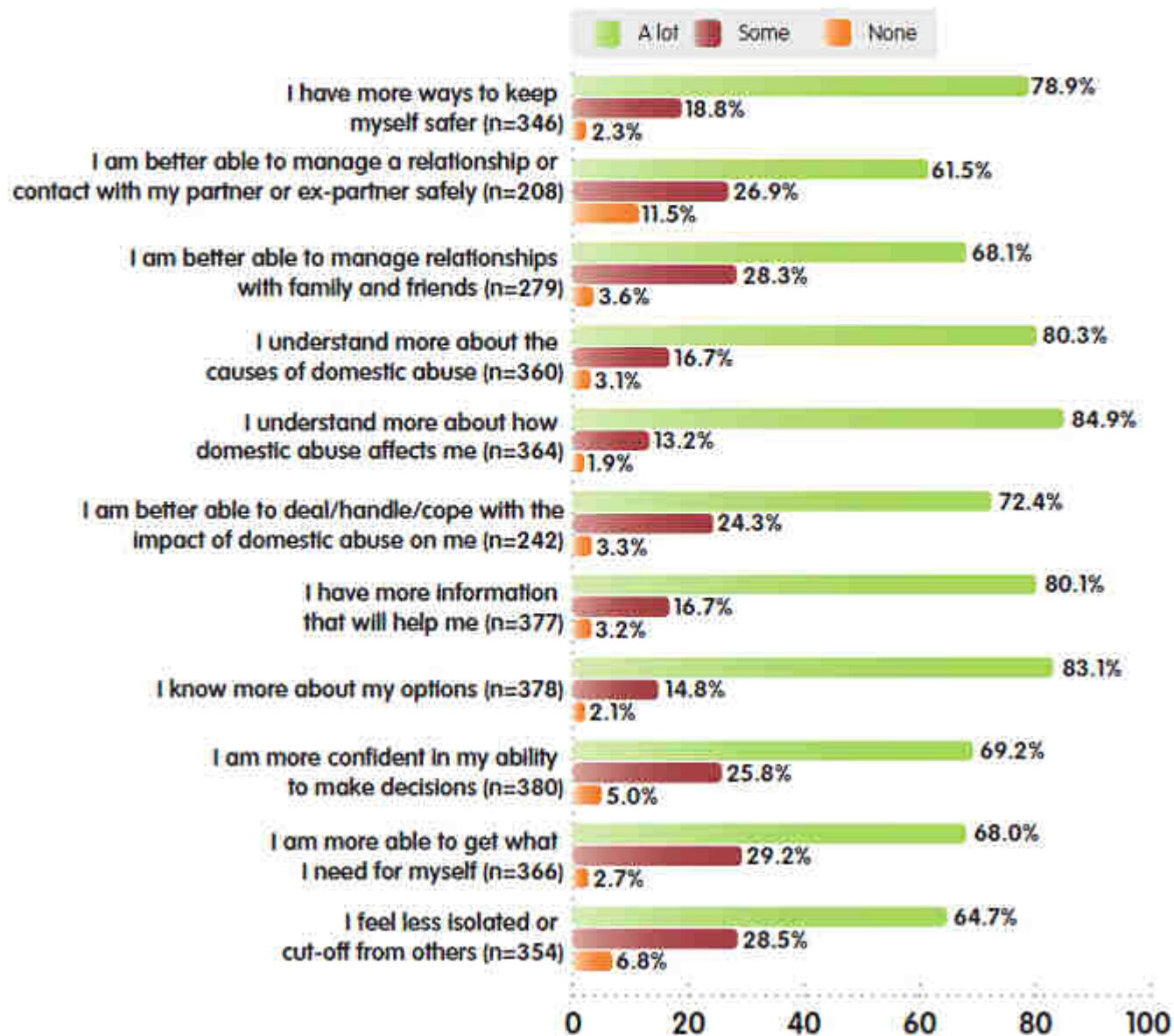
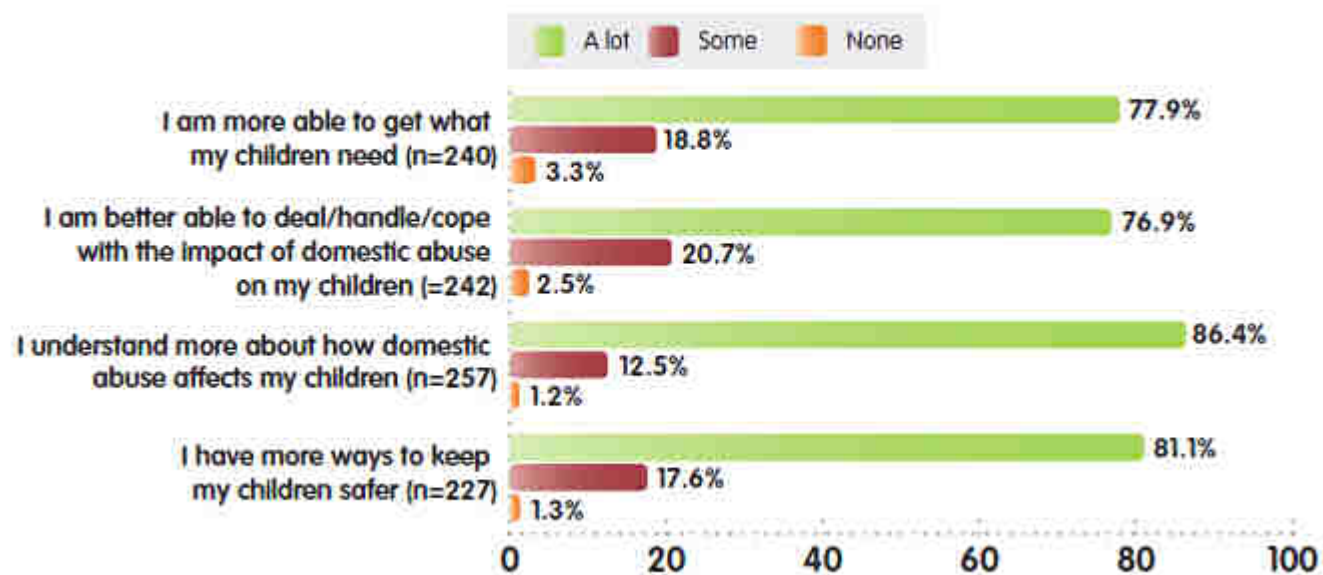


Figure 13. Outcomes for women in relation to their children



# Outcomes Summary

Women's lives changed in several different ways

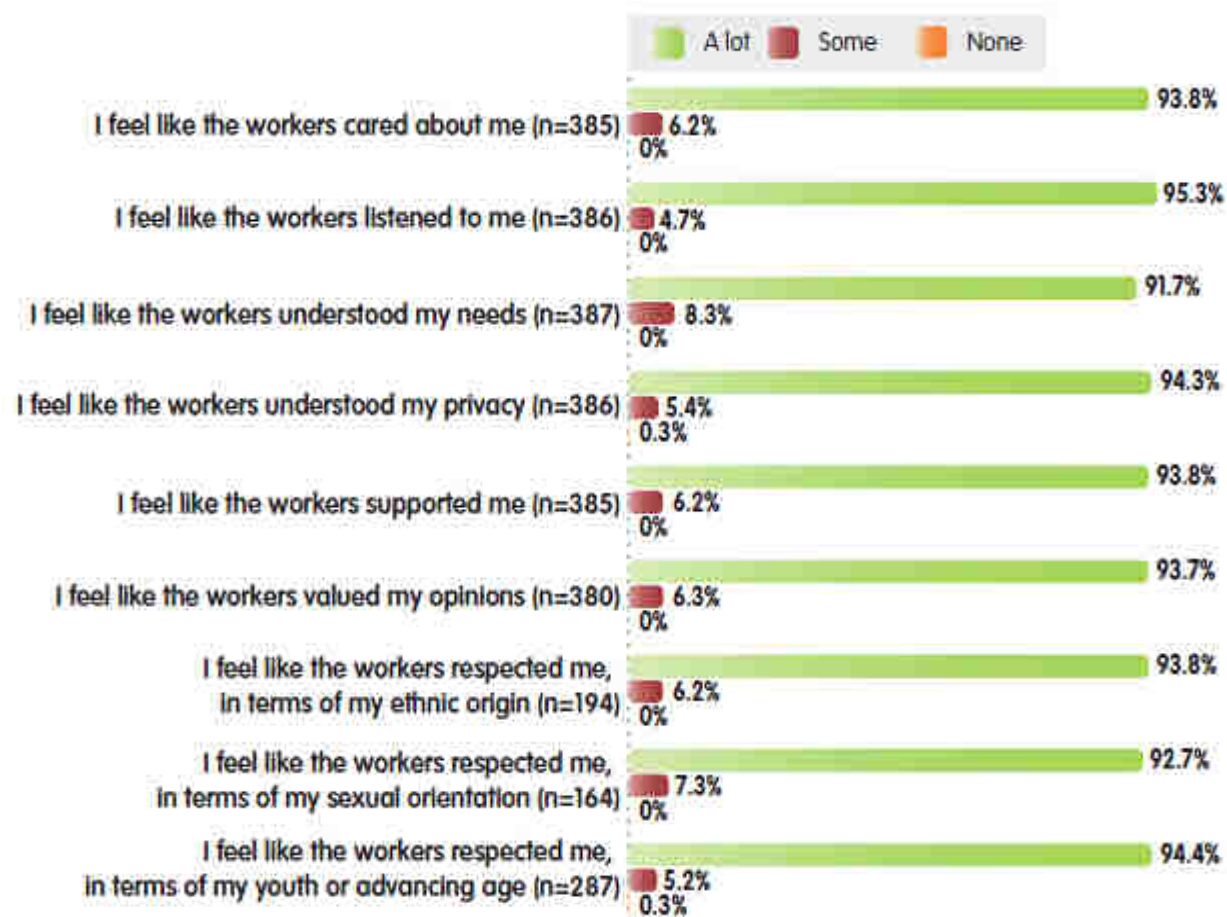
Women attributed the changes to the help and support they received from Women's Aid



**Section 3:**  
**Relationship with Workers**

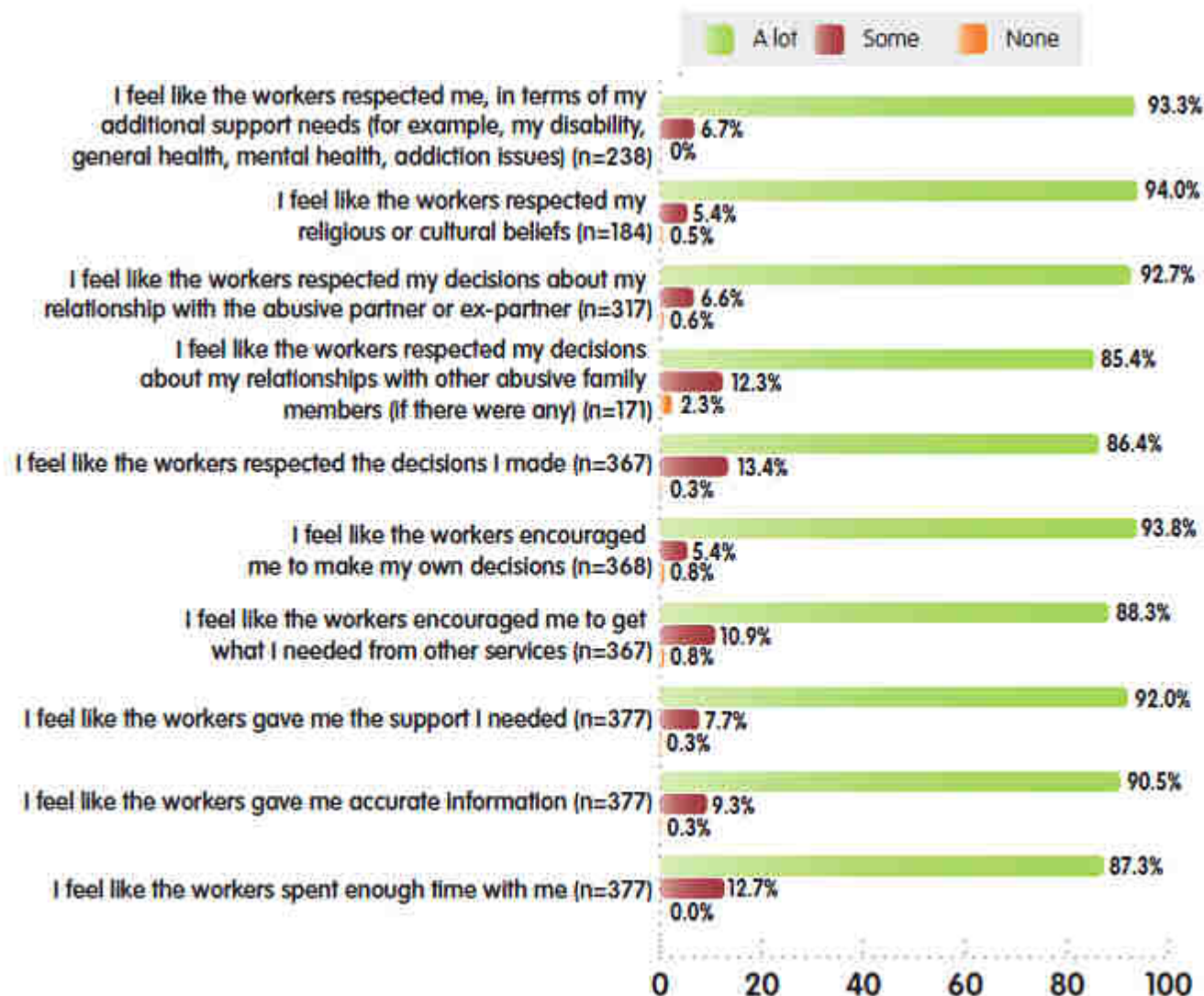
## Relationship with Women's Aid Workers

Figure 14. Opinions about the way they were treated by workers



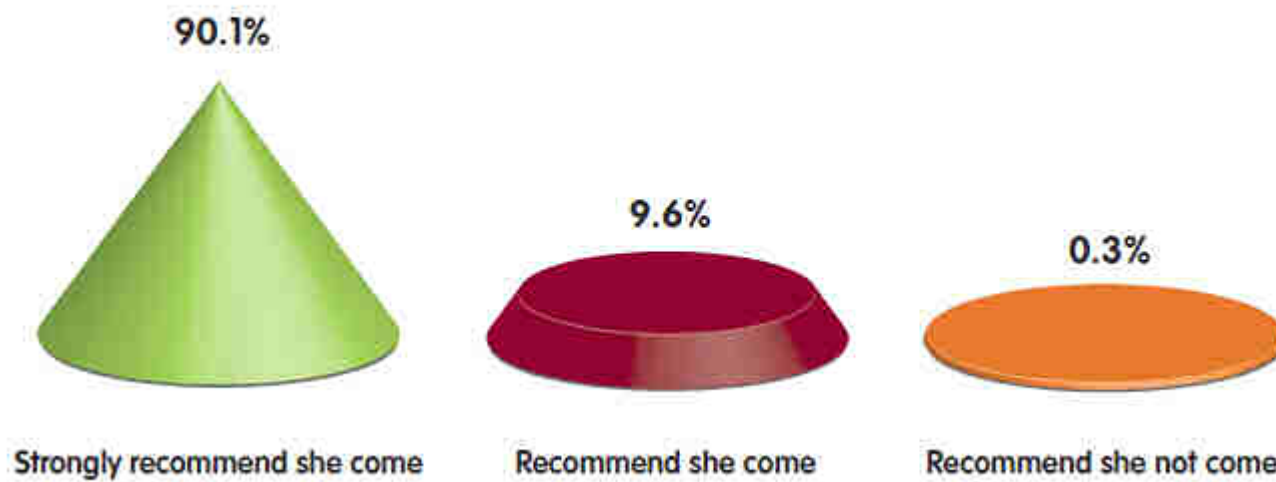
## Relationship with Women's Aid Workers

Figure 14. Opinions about the way they were treated by workers



“The staff are brilliant and the support is excellent”

Figure 15. Percentage of women willing to recommend Women's Aid to a friend



# Why Recommend WA?

- Women valued workers approach
- Workers understood
- Women felt safe and secure for the first time
- Range and flexibility of support on offer
- Women felt normal and able to rebuild their lives

**Section 4:**  
**Personal Circumstances,  
Demographics,  
Recommendations**

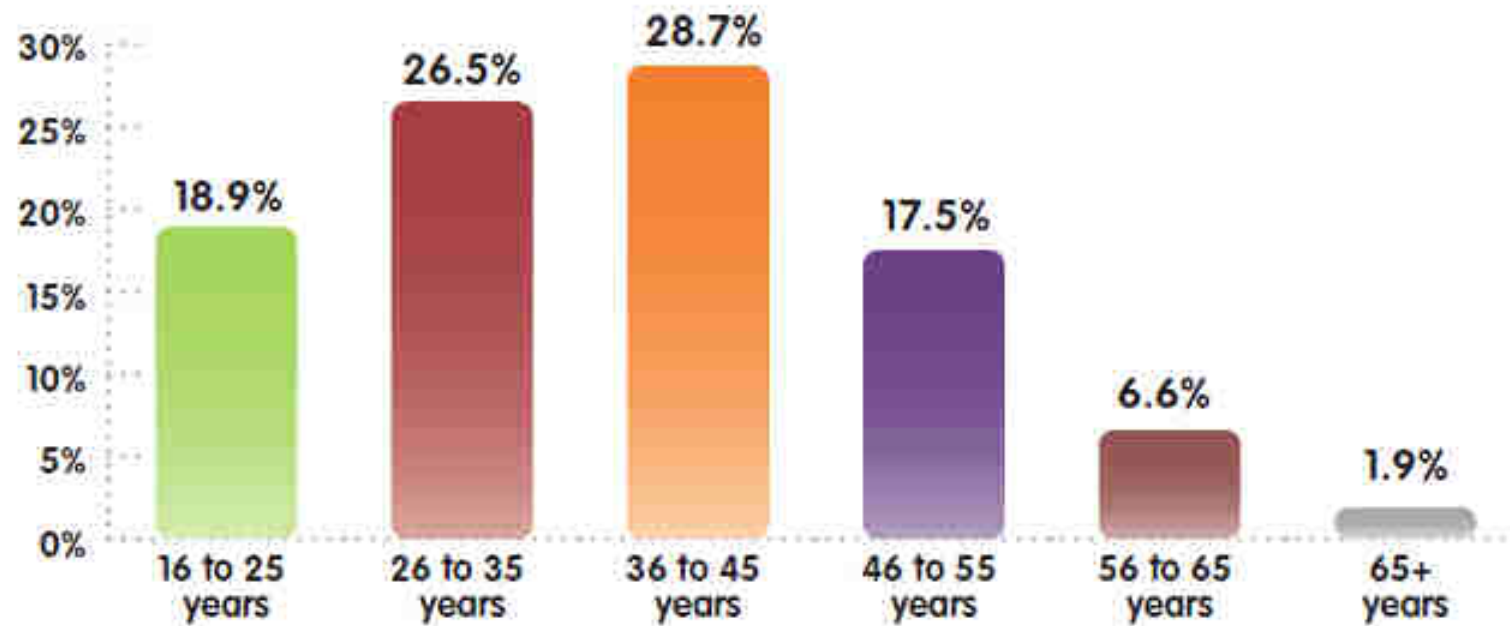
Figure 2. Women's Nationality

Nationality	n=355	%
Scottish	178	50.1
British	143	40.3
English	8	2.3
Polish	4	1.1
Indian	3	0.8
Pakistani	3	0.8
Congolese	2	0.6
Latvian	2	0.6
British Pakistani	2	0.6
French	1	0.3
Kenyan	1	0.3
European	1	0.3
Turkish	1	0.3
Irish	1	0.3
Peruvian/Croatian	1	0.3
Chinese	1	0.3
Thai	1	0.3
South African	1	0.3
Asian-Filipino	1	0.3

Figure 3. Women's Ethnic Identity

Ethnicity	n=328	%
White	298	90.9
Asian	17	5.2
Mixed	4	1.2
Pakistani	3	0.9
Black	3	0.9
Traveller	2	0.6
South American	1	0.3

Figure 4. Women's Age Range



233 women were responsible for children under 18 years old

Figure 5. Number of children living with women

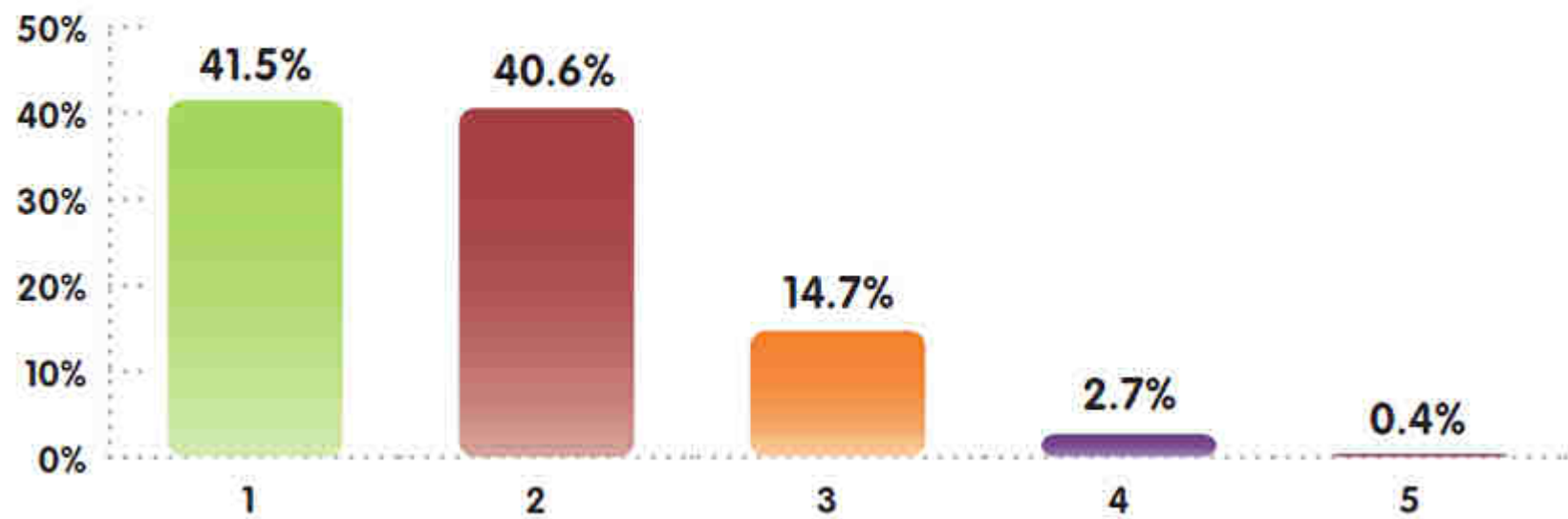
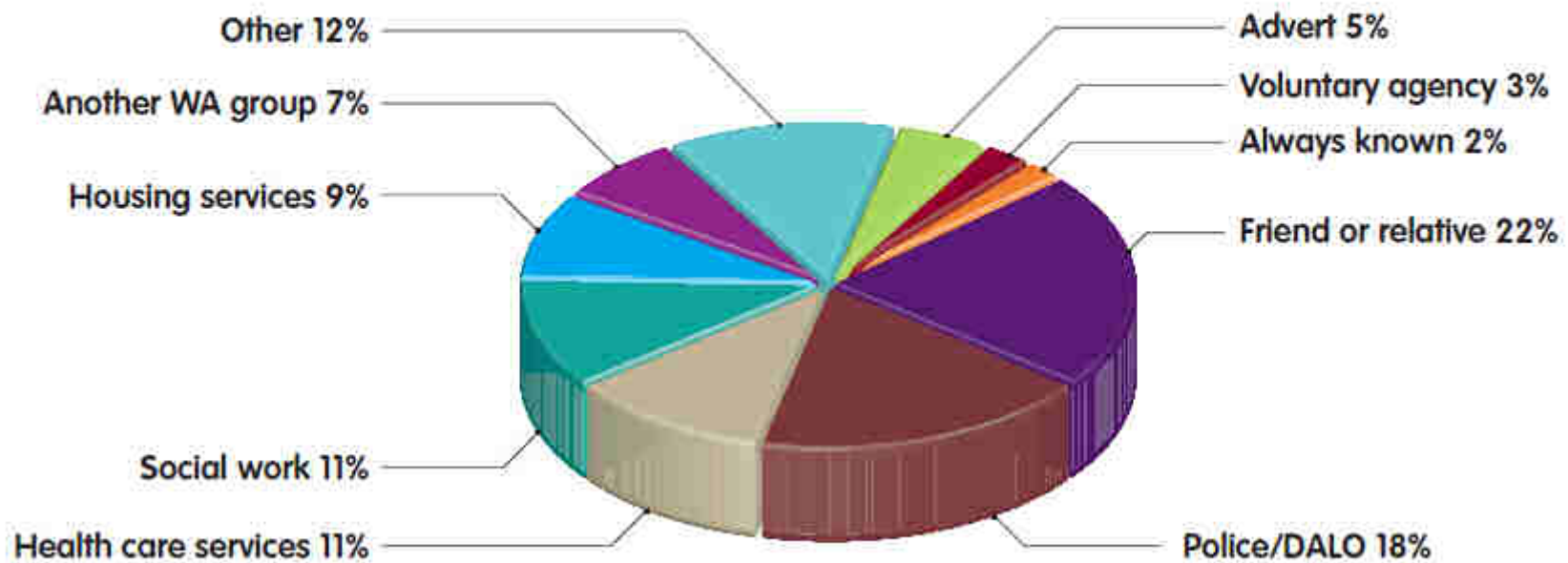


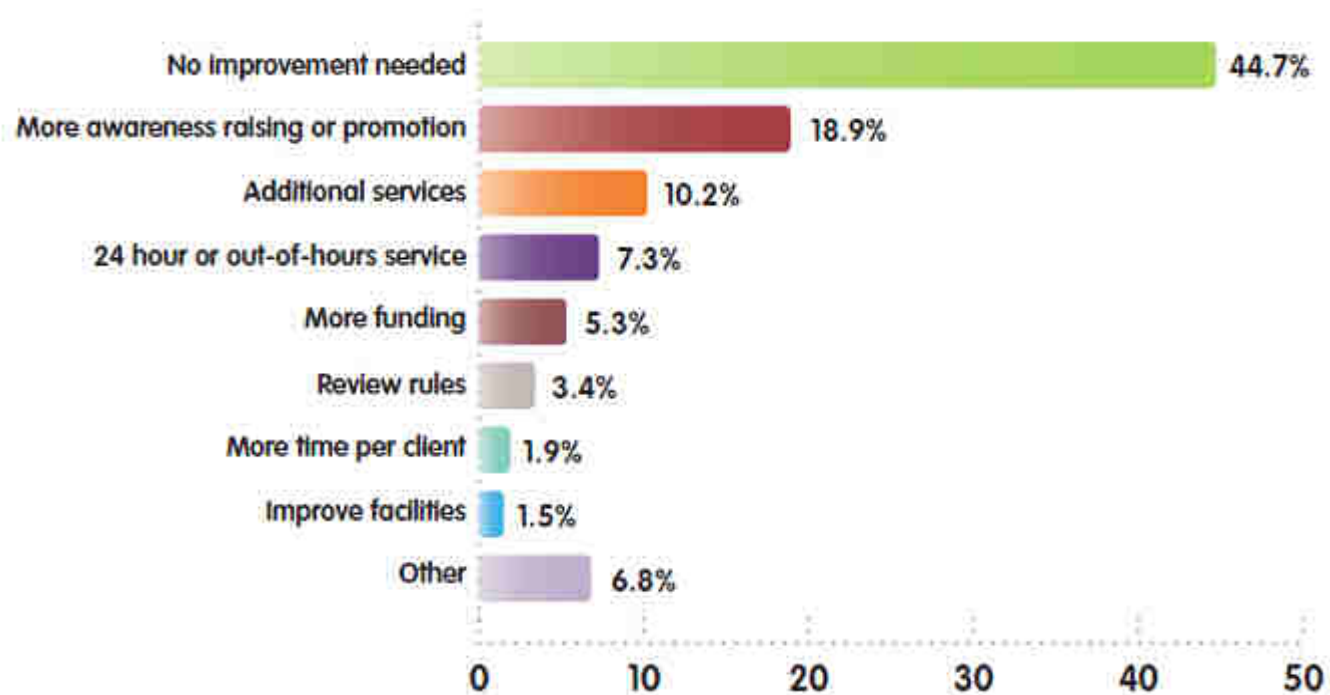
Figure 6. Where women heard about Women's Aid



# If they had not been able to use Women's Aid services:

- **36%** would have returned to or stayed with the abusive partner
- **26%** said they didn't know or couldn't imagine what would have happened to them
- **12%** said they would have been dead
- **10%** would have tried to find help someplace else
- **7%** would have ended up with severe depression or other mental health problem

Figure 16. Recommended improvements to access and quality of services



# Conclusions

- Women have wide range of support needs in relation to the domestic abuse they've experienced
- Women's Aid support has a positive impact on women's lives
- Women felt cared for, listened to, and respected by workers regardless of their age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religious or cultural beliefs
- Improvements can be made to better support women with complex issues such as managing contact with an ex-partner or getting information and support with immigration status

# Conclusions

- 9 out of 10 women would strongly recommend Women's Aid to a friend because they felt she would receive non-judgemental support on a broad range of issues tailored to meet her individual needs and abilities
- Rather than recommend improvements, most women wanted more of the same services available to more women for more hours in the day
- Women were concerned about the impact funding shortages and spending cutbacks would have on services

# Recommendations

1. Women's Aid groups must continue providing a multi-faceted service that is responsive to a woman's need for emotional support as *well as* her need for help with safety and practical issues.
2. Women's Aid services must remain flexible, non-judgemental, respectful, and personalised so that they can continue to respond to women's requests for support when and how they need it.
3. Public service providers need to be more proactive. Seeing the posters and leaflets is a start, but hearing about Women's Aid from a trusted source encourages women to make contact.

# Recommendations (cont'd)

4. Public services need to consider how their procedures for gathering evidence and documentation and for making final decisions regarding housing, welfare benefits ,immigration and child contact affect a woman's ability to keep herself and her children safe.
5. A secure funding source is needed to ensure Women's Aid can continue to provide good quality support services.