

colchester
& tendring



women's refuge

annual review 2008–2009



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge Ltd

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Essex CO1 2XJ

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fax 01206 500 325

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www.colchester-refuge.org.uk

Big House

Main line 01206 761 276

Refuge Manager direct line 01206 761 352

Welfare Office 01206 761 365

Fax 01206 761 375

Old House

Main Line 01206 500 585

Welfare Manager direct line 01206 500 584

Admin Office direct line 01206 500 587

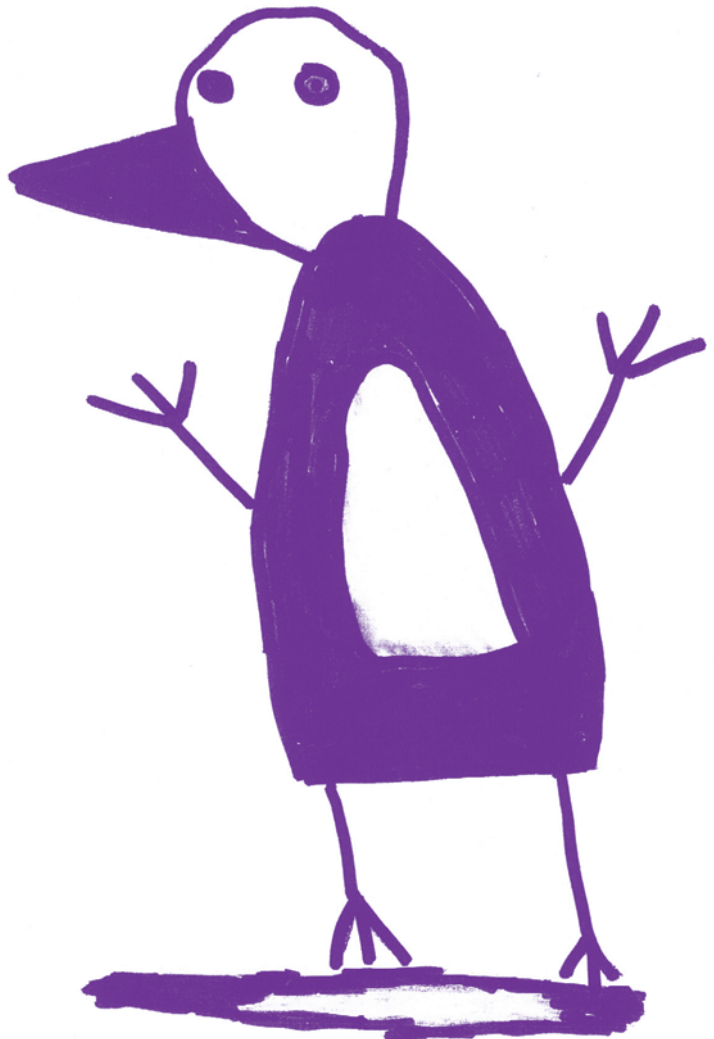
Fax 01206 500 325

For Women centre

Main line 01206 867 120

Fax 01206 867 235

Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge exists to provide crisis accommodation for women, together with their accompanying children, who have been made homeless as a result of abuse at the hands of their partner. We offer these women the support they require to make independent decisions about their futures.



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Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge totally rejects all forms of domestic abuse and any attempts to justify it.

Domestic abuse is not a marginal social issue and we believe in the importance of campaigning against domestic abuse as part of asserting the dignity of women and helping them to act autonomously and independently. We believe we owe this to all the women who continue to experience such abuse.

We believe that every woman has the right to make free and informed decisions about her future and her right to choose the structure of her family.

We acknowledge that children are also damaged by domestic violence.

We believe in equality of opportunity.



Officers

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Natasha Brailey | <i>Chair</i> |
| June Freeman | <i>Vice chair</i> |
| Nancy McNichols | <i>Treasurer</i> |
| Julie Powell | <i>Secretary</i> |
| Tina Elliott | <i>Trustee</i> |
| Anne Golyria | <i>Trustee</i> |
| Brenda Burton | <i>Trustee</i> |
| Pamela Linsey | <i>Member</i> |
| Clare Rhatigan | <i>Member</i> |
| Agnes Skamballis | <i>Member</i> |

Bankers

National Westminster Bank plc
25 High Street
Colchester
Essex CO1 1DG

Solicitors

Bates, Wells & Braithwaite
London LLP
2-6 Cannon Street
London EC4M 6YH



| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Refuge manager</i> | Ann Taylor |
| <i>Administration manager</i> | Linda Anderson |
| <i>Administrators</i> | Eleanor Burgoyne Joann Hester |
| <i>Clerical assistant</i> | Marian Hopkins |
| <i>Welfare manager</i> | Angie O'Toole |
| <i>Family support workers</i> | Chris Beckett name not supplied Margaret Harkin name not supplied |
| <i>Outreach development manager</i> | Julie Clifford |
| <i>Outreach workers</i> | Ana Dellow Megan Saliu |
| <i>Floating support worker</i> | Mandy Saunders |
| <i>Children's services manager</i> | Kathy Lee |
| <i>Senior children's support worker</i> | Val Haynes |
| <i>Children's support workers</i> | Ruth Cherry-Galal Karen Lewis |
| <i>Pre-school group leader</i> | Alex Turner |
| <i>Volunteer co-ordinator</i> | Annie Lewis |
| <i>WISP facilitator</i> | Moyna Barnham MBE |
| <i>Counselling co-ordinator</i> | Maria Haydon |
| <i>On-call staff</i> | Donna Bristow Lorna King Alice Naish |
| <i>Housing management supervisor</i> | position vacant |
| <i>Assistant housekeepers</i> | Donna Bristow Nicole Devaux Position vacant |
| <i>Drop-in support group co-ordinator</i> | Jane North |

Not for a long, long time have I felt so safe and respected, people actually ASK me and not TELL me, my thoughts and views are actually wanted. I feel HUMAN! I know I have a long way to go but at least I am not doing it alone. When I was at home I was really alone

It has been another busy but exciting year, which has seen real development in the growth of the services available for the women and children at the Refuge, including a large increase in the number of volunteers. The Staff and Trustees should be proud of their achievements, and I am always impressed at their professionalism. They have continued to work extremely hard to ensure that the facilities remain excellent for the women and children who pass through the three sites.

Our Children's Department has continued to thrive and recently applied for and obtained Ofsted accreditation. It is a real testament to the dedication and hard work of the Children's Services Manager and her staff that this has been possible. This will considerably enhance the services we are able to offer the children. The Children's Department staff are also focusing on supporting families by promoting strategies to improve parenting skills.

This year we have seen the opening of our new Outreach Centre **For Women**, which has already proved popular among the women and staff alike. The Outreach Development Manager and her staff have worked extremely hard to ensure that it looks amazing, and that the services it offers prove a success. The facilities include a Wii Fit and the use of sports equipment, as well as a treatment room which will offer Reiki and other alternative therapies. I am confident that establishing **For Women** was a wise decision, highlighting the ongoing need for women who have experienced domestic violence to be supported, sometimes for several years.

I am looking forward to a further year as Chair, although it will be my final one, and am confident that, even in these unsettled times, the Refuge will continue to grow and develop.

Moving with the times

As a refuge service provider, we are continually re-evaluating opportunities to develop service delivery to families experiencing domestic abuse. Changes in the law, new research findings, funding streams and the current recession all influence decision-making and operations.

This year saw the realisation of a project that CTWR has been working towards for a number of years. Having already secured further crisis accommodation, we set our sights on increasing our presence in the community by providing a women's resource centre to expand and develop our outreach services. After many months searching for suitable premises, we purchased a building in Colchester ripe for conversion and we are now ready to open the resource centre, which has been named **For Women**. The hard work and decorative flair of our Outreach Services Manager has resulted in a bright, welcoming environment in which women can access outreach support and a variety of other activities, including those designed to support the mother and child relationship. Leaflets to promote the new service are being distributed in the community.

Colchester Borough Council gave generously towards the refurbishment of the building and we received very welcome donations from The Peter de Haan Trust, Fowler, Smith and Jones, Fisher Jones Greenwood, Sparling Benham and Brough and Awards for All. North East Essex NHS Trust has supported the outreach services over a number of years and recently awarded an additional three-year grant for another outreach worker to cope with the rapidly growing number of women accessing the service. Colchester Borough Council and Tendring District Council are also regular and generous supporters of the project. That we are now able to offer this new service owes much to the steadfast determination of June Freeman, a founder member of CTWR, who worked tirelessly to achieve the final outcome.

CTWR has always valued our overnight sleep-in warden service for refuge residents. This ensured that support was on hand 24 hours a day, prevented resident disputes escalating and preserved the fabric of the building. However, this was a high cost service and we were the only refuge in Essex to operate a

warden system. We knew we had to demonstrate best practice and value for money to our major funder, Supporting People. This year, therefore, we reluctantly decided to undertake a radical revision of the night warden structure, which involved moving to an emergency on-call system at night. Unfortunately, this has resulted in some redundancies, but we were able to place most wardens in the new on-call service or in other posts. Our Welfare Manager will monitor the new system over the coming months to ensure the quality of the service is maintained.

CTWR is fully committed to providing a high standard of care and education for the resident children. The way we deliver our children's services in the future will change as a result of the refuge becoming an Ofsted registered setting. We have already been working to National Standards, but will now be implementing the full Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Registering with Ofsted has meant a huge amount of extra work for the children's department in developing the curriculum and making the changes required, but we can look forward to the benefits it will bring.

Another change will come into force from 12th October 2009. All individuals working in regulated or controlled activities with children or vulnerable adults, paid or unpaid, will have to apply to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) before they can start work. There will be a one-off fee to the Criminal Records Bureau and one for the ISA registration. Volunteers will not be required to pay. Staff who are already working in the field can continue and their registration will be phased in over a five-year period. It will be an offence with a fine of up to £5,000 for an employer to appoint anyone who works with children or vulnerable adults and is not registered with the ISA, or who fails to check the system for information. The ISA will monitor criminal records and review registrations if information becomes available.

Finally, one thing that doesn't change is the continued hard work and dedication of CTWR staff, volunteers and the management committee, who crystallise the refuge services, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of them.

Related effects of abuse

Abused women may be coping with other issues alongside the abuse itself. Sometimes, outside agencies may not link problems such as drug and alcohol misuse or depression with the fact that a woman is being abused. She may have damaging mental health issues, such as self-harm, memory loss, nightmares, anxiety or panic attacks, suicidal thoughts, low self-esteem and inability to bond.

Many abused women turn to drugs and alcohol due to stress and to avoid confronting their abusive situations. This can lead to dependency, and add to already complex problems. Abused women who try to deal with their dependency at the same time as the abusive situation can feel overwhelmed.

Cheaper versions of wine and other alcohol are readily available and can be lost in the weekly budget, requiring no explanation of where the extra money has been spent. Women can drink in private at home, sometimes without being seen. This can lead to a feeling of shame. Many women would not naturally drink in this way. The alcohol can be a last resort to block out their feelings of pain and worthlessness.

Abuse of prescription drugs may also be an issue. Sleeping pills and painkillers are the most commonly abused drugs, and are often easy to acquire by repeat prescription.

We have external resources to deal with these issues and will make the relevant referrals when necessary, although accommodating women in-house who have a high dependency on drugs or alcohol is not always an option. Trying to help women with drug or alcohol problems or mental health issues takes a lot of time, patience and dedication. Their trust has to be gained before any progress can be made. Only then can we help the family progress to a more fulfilling life.

I felt respected for who I am ... not ashamed that if I talked about what has happened with the abuse and everything, that people will think it was my fault and people look down on me. (After counselling)

This has been an eventful and challenging year and as a team we have many achievements we can be proud of. Outstanding among them is the preparation for our new Outreach Centre, **For Women**. In January 2009 we received the keys for 35 East Street, Colchester. Due to be formally opened in September, it was up and running earlier in the summer.

We were successful in applying for funding for refurbishing the premises to provide the facilities needed to promote women's health and well-being. With our enthusiasm, team effort and careful buying, we have created a stylish centre that values women, encourages them to achieve, recognises their success and nurtures their futures.

We understand the devastating effect that domestic violence has on women and their children. Women accessing our services have often been afraid, controlled, undermined and criticised by their abuser, and may be unaware of our services and how we can help them. They may be suspicious of us, especially if abusive partners have used outside agencies such as social services as a threat against them. Our team recognises this. We explain sensitively to each woman the support we can offer and reassure her that she is free to decide whether or not she wishes to receive our help.

Women require individual support according to their circumstances, and we offer a range of services designed to meet a variety of needs. In the past, our different departments have operated independently of one another, and one aim of the **For Women** Centre is to implement a seamless service that women can access easily. In the run-up to acquiring the Centre,

If I leave our last WISP session and simply say thank you, it really won't convey the deep gratitude I feel. I can't pinpoint exactly when or what WISP did to change my outlook, but what I do know is I feel so much more confident, optimistic and positive about the future. I hope as you wind up this course you too feel satisfied because you really have made a difference with the WISP programme.



we encouraged communication between the team by organising quarterly meetings for the Counsellor, WISP Facilitator, Drop-in Support Group Co-ordinator, Floating Support Worker and Outreach Worker. These meetings have proved vital in developing the Outreach team and building successful working relationships.

The services available at **For Women** include:

Coffee mornings. These are a gentle introduction to the Centre for women who are feeling isolated and lonely. The Co-ordinator aims to provide a relaxed and warm environment where women can meet and chat to other women with similar experiences.

Helping children. Children often witness their mothers being abused and may need support themselves. Our staff discuss with women what they want for their children and support them in finding that help.

Counselling. The Centre provides a confidential counselling service to help women deal with the long-lasting and painful effects of abuse.

The WISP Support Programme. This is a 12-week group work programme provided in a supportive environment for women who feel ready to think about their past and begin to change the patterns of their lives.

Among our other achievements this year:

- A 30% increase in the number of women supported – more than ever before.
- Delivery of a 6-week training programme for 16 volunteers at the new Outreach Centre. We have plans for future training.
- Writing and implementing a new Access database to accurately report the support we have provided, enabling us to demonstrate to prospective funders the need for continued funding.

Our primary aim remains to enable women to challenge their fears and begin the process of building their future. The success we have enjoyed this year has been achieved due to the hard work, dedication and commitment involved in acquiring **For Women**. As manager, I would like to say a big thank you to all involved.

A multi-agency approach

I started work in the Outreach Department in August 2008 after transferring from the Welfare Department where I had an enjoyable and fulfilling year as a Family Support Worker, gaining invaluable knowledge about a wide variety of issues relating to domestic violence. I was pleased to have the opportunity to extend this knowledge out into the community.

Outreach work has provided new challenges and learning opportunities. It has enabled me to establish mutually supportive relationships with a wide range of agencies. With the assistance of volunteers we endeavour to respond within 24 hours to all referrals. In turn, other agencies respond promptly when we seek their support. This multi-agency approach helps the women in their recovery process and makes it less likely that they will return to the abuser.

It is a privilege to work with courageous women who, after finally deciding to seek information and support to remove themselves and their children from an abusive environment, become proactive in achieving their aims. In the process they begin to regain their self-esteem, while rebuilding confidence in themselves and their parenting abilities. Their levels of stress diminish considerably. There is an improvement in the physical, emotional and mental well-being of the whole family. They gradually start re-integrating into society with a positive attitude and optimism for the future. Their efforts and resilience are worthy of respect and admiration.

However, I continue to be surprised at how little the wider community understands about the more subtle forms of abuse, besides physical violence, which potentially have even more long-term and detrimental effects both on women and on children. Central to our work is providing information about the true nature of abuse and making women aware of their options and the support available to them. Our new centre **For Women** will enable us to provide ongoing support through all the stages in the recovery process and to continue to raise awareness about domestic violence in the community.

This year I have moved to the new Outreach Centre, where the idea of a drop-in has been well received by all my clients. As I am no longer based at the Refuge, I do not meet the women before they leave, so I have started holding informal coffee evenings at both Refuges once a month. I can tell them about the services I provide and they can express any concerns about their resettlement. This greatly assists our working relationship. I am pleased with how this new project is working.

This year has been busier than the last two years, with 42 women and 75 children being supported. Their needs vary, so that support can range from a few weeks to two years, but the average time is about six months. They may need help with benefits, schools, playschools, budgeting, further education, court appearances or practical issues such as putting up curtains.

The biggest part of my job is being able to listen. Often, the women don't know anyone locally and feel isolated, so they are able to offload all their problems, feelings and concerns. They frequently say that having someone to turn to enables them to keep going. This year I have been greatly involved in signposting: referring women for parenting courses and children and young adults to the Junction and Youth Enquiry Service, mainly for counselling and coping strategies. This has had a positive impact on the whole family.

Attending court is often traumatic. It could be the first time the women have seen the perpetrator since leaving him. They find themselves revisiting the negative emotions they had in the abusive relationship. They are often stressed, and it takes a lot of reassurance and encouragement for them to remain calm and focused on providing the relevant information for the court. Afterwards, they often say they that having made a stand, they feel stronger and empowered. They acknowledge that without the emotional support I give them, they would be unable to cope with court proceedings.

I continue to find my job satisfying and rewarding and I love sitting next to Ana!

Positive parenting strategies

One reason a woman may return to her abusive partner is that she finds it difficult to manage her children's behaviour on her own. Suddenly she has become a single parent, often relying on benefits and leaving behind her social support network. In the Refuge, the family may have to cope with living in a confined space for several months in close proximity to other families from different backgrounds with different values.

Children are usually unhappy about leaving behind their homes, friends, school and personal belongings. They are often emotionally scarred as a result of witnessing abuse and this may lead to challenging behaviour. The abuser may have undermined or criticised a mother's parenting in front of the children, or used them to make derogatory remarks. Some children learn to 'play off' one parent against the other. It can be difficult for women to set and maintain boundaries. Abused women are often depressed and preoccupied and may have difficulty coping with their children's needs.

Supporting mothers with their parenting is important and we try to identify and address problems before they escalate. Practical support includes securing school places and liaising with healthcare professionals, social workers and other agencies. We also promote positive parenting strategies and create opportunities for families to relax and have fun. A secure, loving relationship with their mother is crucial to children's resilience. Feedback indicates that families have felt well supported during their stay and we hope that we have made a positive difference to their lives.

This year, our Children's Room became an Ofsted registered setting. This means that resident children will have access to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum without leaving the security of the Refuge. We can also provide sessions lasting longer than two hours a day, and mothers will be able to attend outside appointments knowing that their children are well cared for. We can keep a child's place open when a family leaves until an alternative placement is found, enabling us to maintain contact with them. Registration and the requirements of the EYFS have generated a huge amount of paperwork for our staff, but have considerably enhanced our services to children.



When I started as a part-time children's worker ten years ago, the Refuge accommodated eight women and their children. I worked in the mornings with the pre-school children and another children's worker did the after-school club. Our role was to organise and run play sessions, which we did almost single-handed. Our playroom consisted of two small adjoining rooms, now an office and a store-room. Looking at this space now, I wonder how we ever coped. Thank goodness there was a large outdoor area!

There was never enough time to develop the service we offered. Family support workers used to help by arranging school places, and we would supply the mums with information about what to do in the area. When we acquired the minibus we were able to take families out.

The Refuge has now expanded and we have a purpose-built Children's Room in The Big House, where a further twelve families are accommodated. The Children's department now consists of a manager and four part-time qualified children's workers. Policies and procedures have been developed. We work to statutory standards, and staff undertake ongoing training. We have regular volunteers, including a man, who work alongside us. We carry out a full assessment of each child's needs when they arrive and work closely with other organisations to offer support for children to come to terms with their experiences.

In August 2009 new play equipment was installed at The Old House, thanks to funding from North East Essex NHS Trust.

Project Linus UK: We would like to thank everyone who has contributed the beautiful quilts donated to the Refuge by Project Linus. Twenty children have already received a quilt as a parting gift. The quilts symbolise the comfort and security that we hope they experienced during their stay and will be a lasting reminder of happier times they shared with others with similar experiences. The children feel appreciated and valued when receiving a gift made by hand with such loving care.

Q's story: finding a safe home

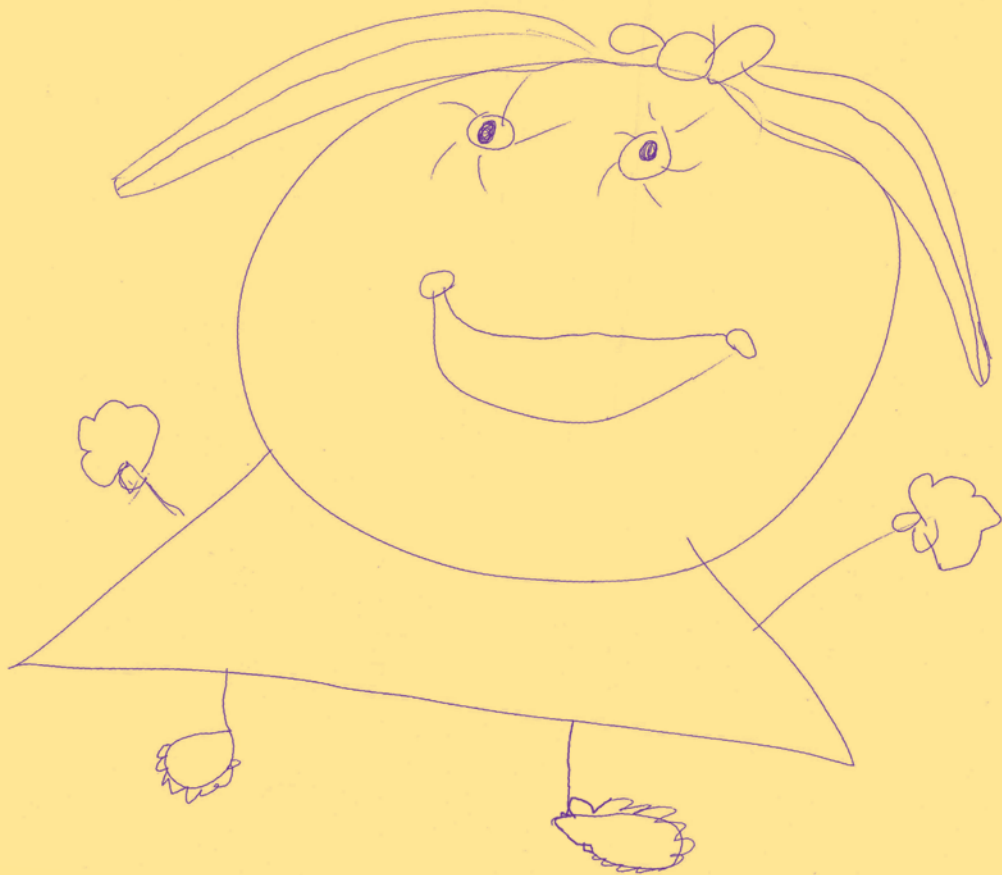
Q accessed Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge Outreach services after being subjected to a violent physical attack from her ex-partner. She was referred by the police Domestic Abuse Liaison Officers after he was arrested for breach of a non-molestation order. She was still suffering emotional abuse from her ex-partner and she was frightened of repercussions from him and other family members because she had reported the incident to the police.

When the Outreach Worker met Q, it was apparent that she was extremely distressed and frightened for her own and her children's safety. The Outreach Worker provided a safe and supportive environment in which Q was able to talk about her situation and begin to identify her main areas of concern and what steps she could take to address those concerns. The Outreach Worker helped Q to explore options such as a further non-molestation order, the sanctuary scheme and Refuge accommodation.

At this meeting, it became apparent that Q and her children were unlikely to remain safe at their home. It was therefore necessary to find them alternative accommodation. This was not likely to happen in the near future because of her low 'bidding band' with the Housing Department at Colchester Borough Council. The Outreach Services were able to work closely with the Domestic Violence Liaison Officers, in order to provide written evidence of her situation to the Housing Department. Together with a supporting letter from CTWR, and liaison with Shelter and the Housing Department, the client's bidding band for a council property was upgraded. This would enable Q to move to more suitable accommodation in a whereabouts unknown to her ex-partner. Additionally, the police provided her with a special code to quote in case her ex-partner came to her property, where a panic button would also be installed once she moved in.

The effects of this on Q's emotional and physical well-being were extremely positive. Trust was established, and she began a series of counselling sessions and attended the WISP programme.

While Q was searching for a suitable property she was subjected to further emotional abuse and threats of violence from her ex-partner. To secure her safety, she and her children came to the Refuge. Once there, the support she received enabled her to identify that moving out of the area was her safest option. Family Support Workers helped her find safe accommodation outside the Colchester area. After her move, the



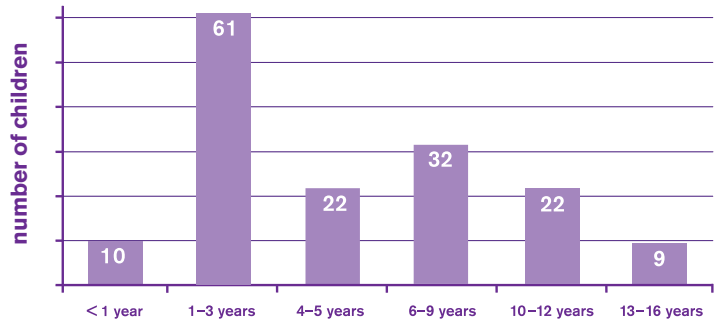
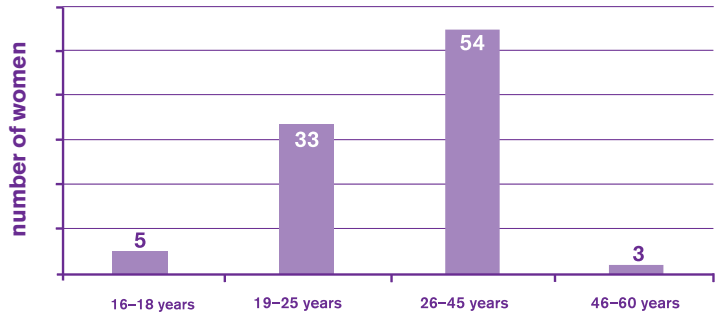
Family Support Workers contacted Outreach Workers in the new area to ensure that she received ongoing resettlement support.

Dealing with situations like Q's can involve liaising with a number of different institutions and agencies. These can include social care services, the health visitor service, educational staff, Colchester Borough Council's housing staff, Shelter, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, the police and other bodies. The work includes making telephone calls, writing supporting letters, visiting various agencies and escorting clients to meetings. Liaison with the police through the new referral forms has effected a closer mutually supportive relationship with the Domestic Violence Unit, and this is having a beneficial effect on other support.

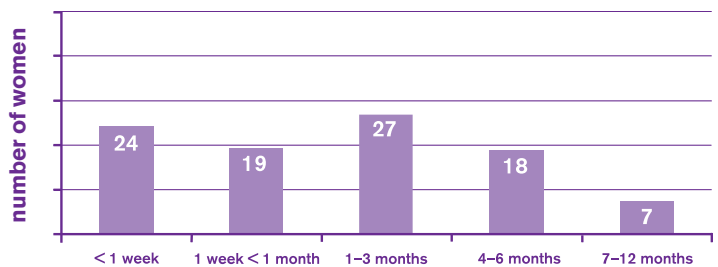
This year the number of women and children accommodated by Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge was 95 and 156 respectively.

Age profile of residents

The age profile of the women has remained constant over the last two years, with 89% of the women aged between 19 and 45. However there was a 12 % increase in the number of children from new born to the age of 9.



Length of stay at the refuge

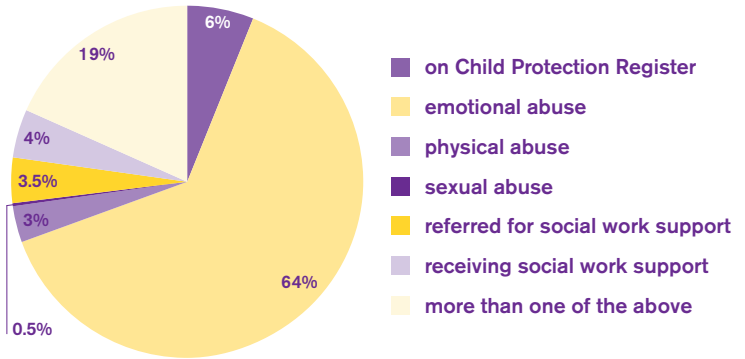


CTWR would like to thank Agnes Skamballis for preparing these figures.

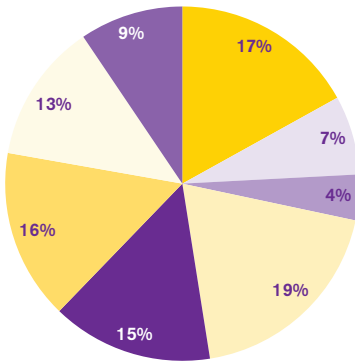
Extra support needs

This year of the 95 women 33 required specialist support, 27 of those for substance abuse and mental health issues and 6 for some form of disability.

Increasingly, the damage done to children involved in abusive relationships has been recognised, and the Children's Department has expanded considerably to help with the many problems that the children face.



Action on Leaving the Refuge

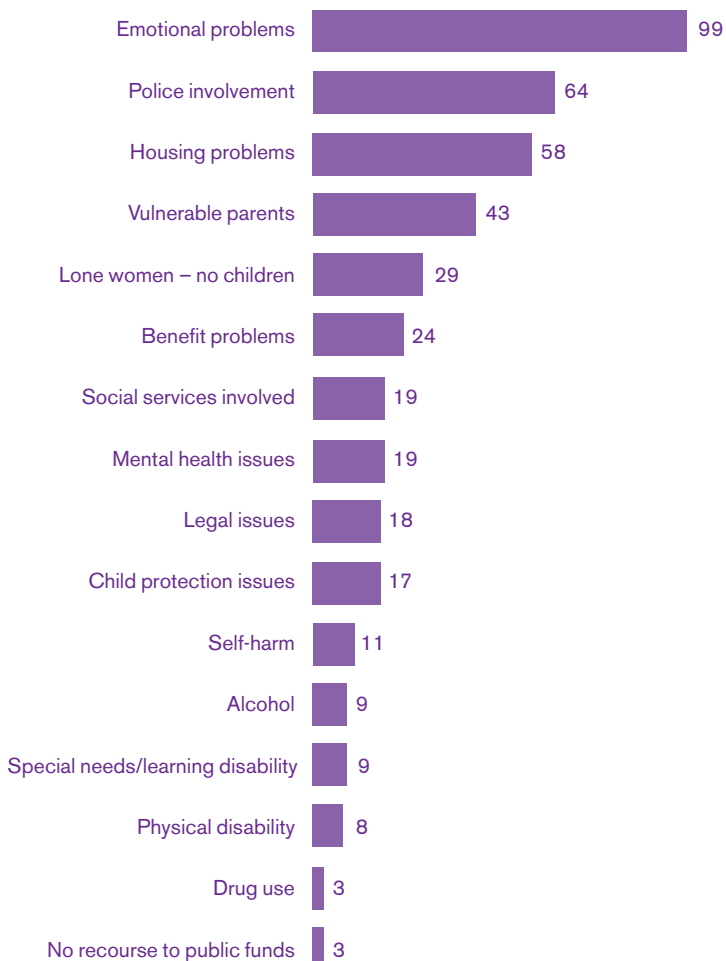


- re-housed (Colchester Borough Council)
- re-housed (Tendring District Council)
- re-housed (Housing Association)
- rented private accommodation
- re-housed (other local authority)
- moved to another refuge
- went to family / friends
- unknown

For Women Outreach Centre

With the opening of the **For Women** Outreach Centre we have increased the number of women contacted from 261 last year to 332 in 2008–9. Of these, 58% were women from Colchester and 42% women from Tendring. 230 women received advice or more structured support, either from visits or telephone calls over a number of weeks. 44 were provided with Floating Support. After initial contact some women did not wish to pursue the help offered.

Outreach Client Specific Support Needs



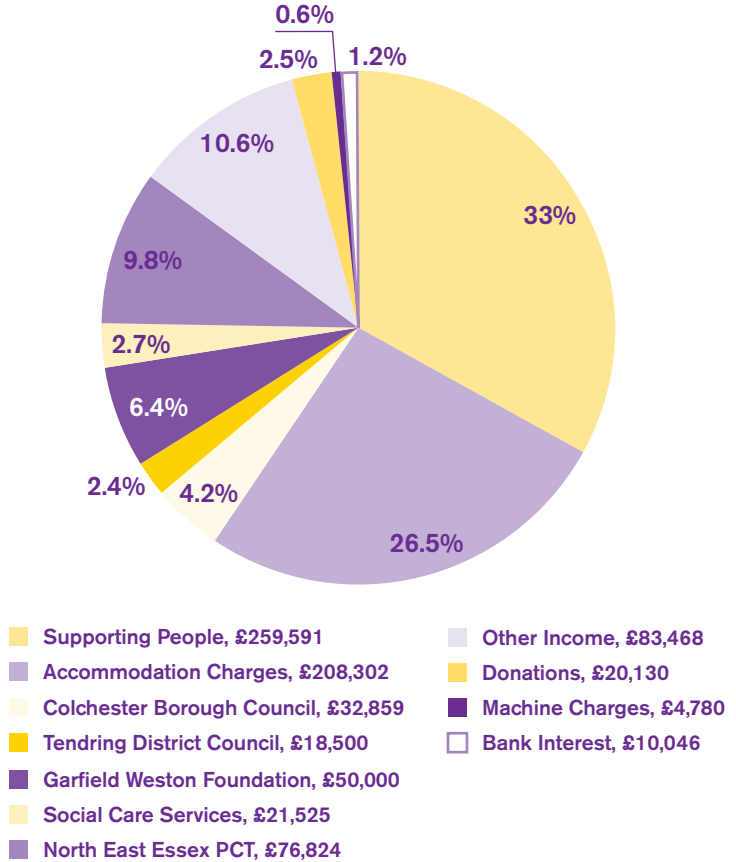
Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge has had quite a year from the financial perspective! In the previous two years we recorded significant deficits totalling nearly £100,000. This year, due to the efforts of the Refuge Manager, the Trustees and key members of staff we have reversed that trend and have succeeded in replacing those funds. This was made possible through significant grants received from Garfield Weston and Supporting People. We are very grateful, as they have increased our security, but each year the challenges persist of finding funding to provide the services that we deem essential for our clients who have experienced domestic violence.

Our funders are generous and make the range of services offered by the Refuge possible. We recognise that they have requirements for reporting designed to ensure that their funds are used in ways compatible with their remits. Over time their reporting requirements have increased, as has the time required to service those needs.

We are a significant employer with an annual payroll in excess of £425,000. The work is labour-intensive and the clients have increasingly complex issues requiring direct and sophisticated attention. We are prudent employers and have clear and transparent salary structures that are in keeping with those operating in the statutory and third sector. The Trustees and key department managers have participated in a detailed review of services required, as well as the procedures and practices designed to deliver them. We were looking to ensure that we were efficient and responsive to our clients and residents as well as preserving our ability to offer essential services. We had to eliminate some staff roles and vary our way of working in order to secure the future viability of the Refuge. Service reviews are not easy, nor are they a comfortable process for the participants. Undertaking such a process increases uncertainty for all. The Trustees are grateful to the staff for their responsiveness during this process and believe that the decisions made were the right ones.

Incoming resources

Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge total income for 2008/09 was £786,025. This compares with £609,524 for the previous year. The pie chart below shows where that money came from.

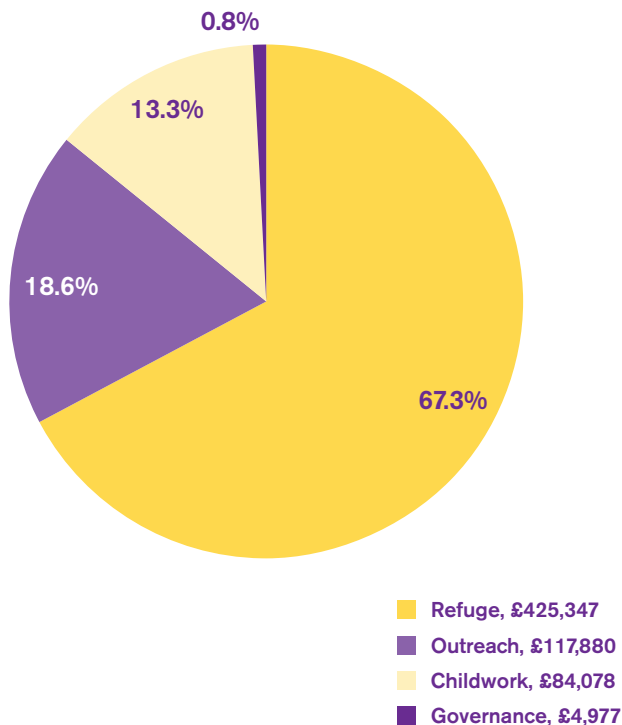


This summarised information has been extracted from the full audited accounts of Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge, for the year ended 31st March 2009 and they may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity.

Further information and copies of the full audited accounts can be obtained from Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge, PO Box 40, Colchester, Essex CO1 2XJ. Telephone number: 01206 500585. The full audited accounts were approved by the Trustees on 6 July 2009 and have been submitted to the Charity Commission and Registrar of Companies. The audit report thereon was unqualified.

Resources expended

The Refuge spent £632,282 in 2008/09. This compares with £641,605 in the previous year. Where that money went is illustrated in the pie chart below. 99% was Direct Charitable Expenditure.



Auditor's report to the members of Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge

We have examined the summarised information, which has been extracted from the full audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2009. In our opinion, this summarised information is consistent with the full audited accounts.

Ramon Lee & Partners *registered auditors, chartered accountants*
Kemp House, 152-160 City Road, London EC1V 2DW

Continuing operations None of the company's activities were acquired or discontinued during the above two financial periods.

Total recognised gains and losses The company has no recognised gains or losses other than the above movement in funds for the above two financial periods.

CTWR would like to thank most warmly all those who have given grants and made voluntary donations this year. Our apologies to anyone accidentally missed off the list.

Funders

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| BBC Children in Need | Lloyds TSB |
| Colchester Borough Council | Martin & Su Essex Kids Game |
| EDF Energy Trust | North East Essex PCT |
| Essex County Council <i>'Every Child Matters'</i> | Saffron Building Society |
| Fowler, Smith & Jones Charitable Trusts | Social Care Services |
| Garfield Weston | Sparling Benham & Brough |
| Heart FM | Supporting People |
| Henry Smith Charitable Trust | Tendring District Council |
| LankellyChase | The Peter de Haan Charitable Trust |
| | Tudor Trust |

Donors

| | |
|---|--|
| Alstons Upholstery Ltd (Philip Grindrod) | Mr C Lines |
| Beacon House | Mr and Mrs Moat |
| Mr and Mrs Birdseye | Lexden Methodist Church |
| Mrs P Briggs | Lion Walk United Reformed Church |
| Alison and Steve Buttery | Angie Mack |
| Castle Methodist Church | Marks Tey Methodist Church |
| Colchester & Stanway Townswomen's Guild | Mile End Methodist Church |
| Church of St Mary the Virgin | Mothers Union Essex |
| Colchester Sixth Form College (Clarissa Ford) | Mothers Union Diocese of Chelmsford |
| East Mersea Parish Church | Mothers Union Little Easton |
| Mr ID Ellis | Mothers Union Walton-on-Naze |
| Fisher Jones Greenwood Garrison Church | Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) |
| Mr MF Gouldin OBE | St John's School |
| St Helena School | St Peter & St Paul Church |
| King & Co | Miss Hilda Taylor |
| Project Linus | Mrs G Walker |
| Mersea Island Lions | |

It is almost three years since I was asked to be the Volunteer Co-ordinator and the comments offered then are still true today. 'It will be challenging, frustrating, but rewarding.' 'No two days are the same.' 'Expect the unexpected.' But one thing has not changed. I still love my job.

The new Outreach Centre **For Women** means I now have to provide volunteers for three sites. I am recruiting for administrative roles and trying to utilise other varied skills that volunteers possess. Over the last year the number of volunteers has doubled, and is growing weekly. This is probably the only good thing to have come out of the present economic situation, as women would rather 'do something' than nothing. Volunteering offers them the opportunity to keep up their skills, learn new skills and above all to help a very worthwhile cause.

The downside of my job is working part-time. Time is often wasted by prospective volunteers not bothering to cancel appointments, so that I have to chase them and find out why. In a charitable organisation, time and money are precious. But this is heavily outweighed by the upside. I meet interesting and diverse people and there is great pleasure in knowing that when one of 'my' ladies becomes a staff member, I have played a small part in welcoming them into our organisation.

So this year the job, the number of volunteers and my figure have expanded considerably; my figure, because there are too many talented cooks among our staff and volunteers and a lack of willpower!

To volunteer: Please contact Annie Lewis on 01206 500 585 or a.lewis@colchester-refuge.org.uk or download an application form from www.colchester-refuge.org.uk.

To make a donation: Cheques should be made payable to Colchester & Tendring Women's Refuge Ltd and addressed to CTWR, PO Box 40, Colchester CO1 2XJ. To pay by credit or debit card, please use the Paypal system on our website. If you are a UK taxpayer, the value of your gift can be increased by 28% under the Gift Aid Scheme.

An empathetic environment

This year CTWR raised sufficient funding to enable me to increase the number of individual counselling sessions and to include the option of therapeutic group work. There continues to be a steady demand for counselling. Over 70 clients attended group work or received counselling in the year to April 2009.

Individual counselling offers a confidential holding environment in which the client can safely explore her thoughts and feelings, allowing her to work through the painful effects of an abusive relationship and achieve positive change. Therapeutic group work offers clients the space to share experiences in an empathetic environment and to build on their achievements in individual therapy.

A pilot group of six women was established with the hope that members would gain further individual growth. Group work requires them to take responsibility for their own actions. I was very heartened that members took responsibility for such issues as confidentiality, and also developed and agreed the rules within which they would work. It took about three sessions for the necessary mutual trust to be developed, but in later sessions they all worked well together and each of them said they found the process challenging, but beneficial. The group worked collectively, but also worked with individual issues in the group space.

A second group was formed after this success, and although the dynamics were different, the outcomes were encouragingly similar. Members felt they had made progress as individuals and had also benefited from working with, and listening to, the experience of others.

From comments received, it is evident that counselling has proved beneficial to most women who have used the service and, with the opening of the **For Women**, it is likely that the demand for counselling will increase.

I felt that I belonged. People understood and didn't throw it back in my face. (After counselling)

Leaving

The sun won't shine brightly tomorrow
Surely the church bells will toll
This place for me will feel less homely
When you leave, this house loses its soul.

The cheery face that greets us in the morning
Your positive and kindly hello
It will surely be the saddest day
For tomorrow's the day you go.

For us, you were the one that helped us
When we were all coming undone
You made me steadfast and stop crying
When all I wanted to do was run.

You said this was 'a new beginning'
So with fresh chapters I did proceed
We will truly miss you Sarah
For us no-one can ever supersede.

You were always the light in the darkness
However tall the mountain I faced
This place won't be the same without you,
The Refuge and you interface.

Be rest assured we will still sit awaiting
The regular tick of the clock,
For at 8 pm we still get a snippet
Of such the great person we lost.

*from a Refuge resident
to a Family Support Worker*

A collaborative approach

Jan Dalrymple Chief Executive of Harlow and Broxbourne Women's Aid and Refuge Essex representative on the Essex Domestic Abuse Strategy Group

During summer 2008, Safer Essex commissioned a review of the Strategic Co-ordination of Domestic Violence Services, and Refuge Essex undertook a detailed description of our services, mapping this against police crime and other data, and highlighting the nature of demand not evident in other statistics. This new collated information was shared with our partners to enable our users' needs to be more effectively catered for in the Local Strategic Plan.

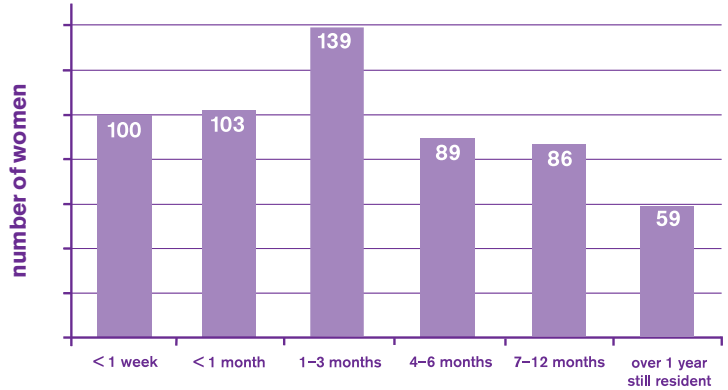
The resulting report identified the need for a strategic group to drive forward a multi-agency approach to tackle domestic violence. Essex Domestic Abuse Strategy Group was established under the chairmanship of Assistant Chief Constable Peter Lowton. The group's programme includes: implementing the strategy for 2008–11 of the Essex Against Domestic Violence Group, which has been replaced by the new strategic group; implementing the Local Area Authority Priority Number 7 'Essex is a safe place to live' through reducing repeat incidents of domestic violence; advising the Safer Essex Partnership and the LAA target owner about domestic violence; providing two-way communication between agencies and across county and local structures; promoting a robust approach to performance management in delivering Domestic Violence Targets.

Membership of the group includes: Essex Police, the voluntary sector (Women's Aid and Victim Support), Essex County Council including Crime and Disorder Reduction Unit, Children's Services and Children's Safeguarding, Adult services, Supporting People, the Probation Service, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, District and Borough Housing, Essex Criminal Justice Board, Primary Care Trusts, Mental Health and General Hospital Services, representatives from the unitary authorities and the County Domestic Violence Co-ordinator. The work is delivered through sub-groups which cover the following areas: children, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, Information Sharing, Criminal Justice and Resources and Training. The Training sub-group is chaired by Lyn Headley, chief executive of Basildon Women's Aid. We welcome this collaborative approach and plan to build on it.

Refuge Essex statistics 2008 – 2009

This year we have statistics for all seven Essex Refuges although some statistics were not available regarding the children. The number of women and children accommodated across Essex were 576 and 647 respectively. These figures do not take into account the number of women and children that Essex refuges had to redirect because they were full.

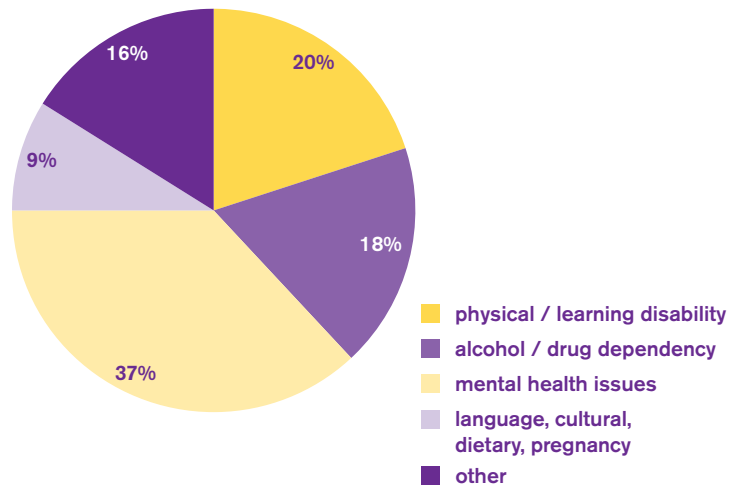
Length of stay in a refuge



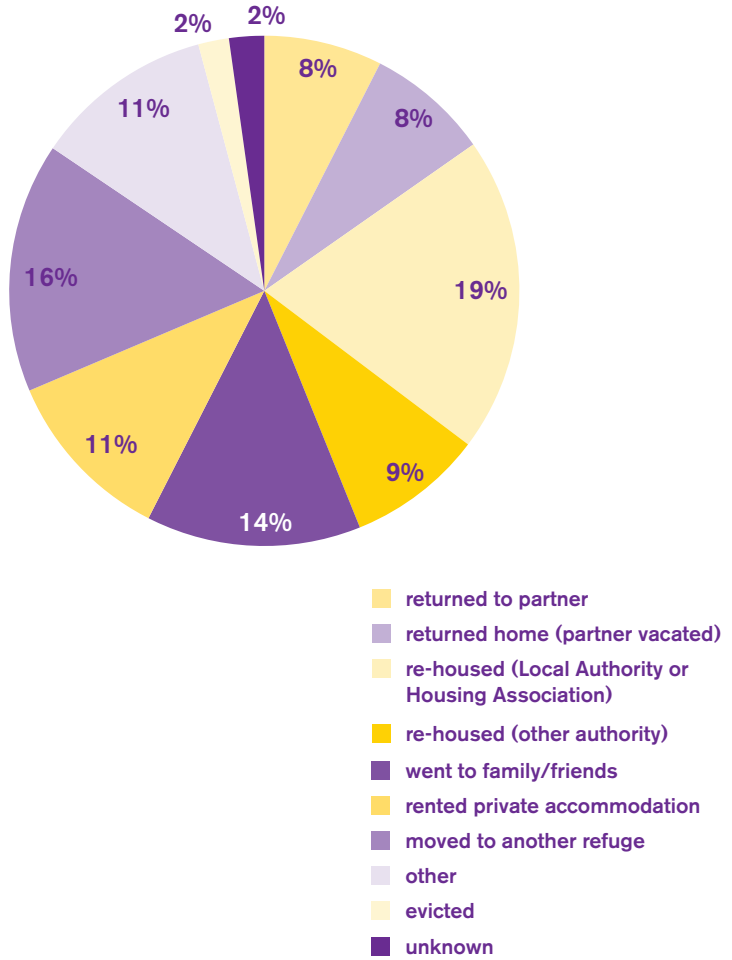
From this chart it can be seen that a quarter of women were resident for more than six months, slightly more than for last year (22%).

Extra support needs – women

There were 411 women benefiting from extra support during the year (71%), a much higher proportion than last year (50%).

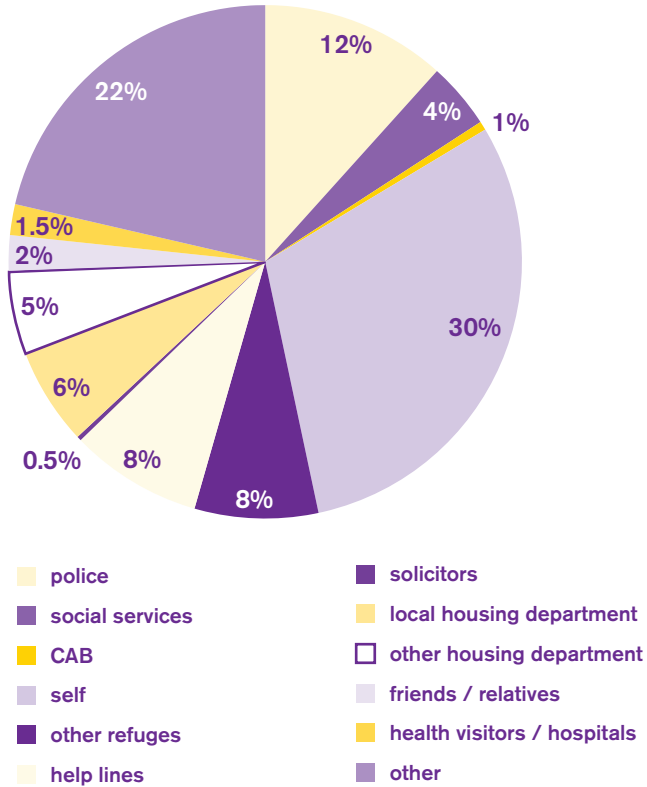


Action on leaving



It is pleasing to see that under 2% of the women were evicted from any of the Essex refuges this year.

Referral source for refuge residents



Outreach and Floating Support

A noticeable difference has been seen this year within Outreach Work throughout the county. There has been a sharp rise in the number of women accessing Outreach services, without having been resident in a Refuge. The number of clients (excluding Thurrock for whom there were no figures available) was 1374 in 2008–9 compared with 973 in 2007–8.

The number of families helped with floating support has remained fairly constant with 174 families re-settled back in the community with initial help and support. The scheme provides varying levels of assistance dependent on individual need and also supports women to maintain their tenancies.

Basildon Women's Aid

PO Box 41
Basildon
SS14 0ND
Tel: 01268 581 591
Fax: 01268 581 791
Email: refuge@basildonwa.org
Website: www.basildonwa.org
Manager: Lyn Headley

Braintree Women's Aid

PO Box 4128
Braintree
CM7 5QP
Tel: 01376 321 720
Fax: 01376 329 967
Email: Marianne@bwaid.co.uk
Manager/Chief Executive: Marianne Hatwell

Chelmsford Women's Aid

PO Box 2538
Chelmsford
CM1 1AP
Tel: 01245 493 114
Fax: 01245 496 253
Email: refuge@chelmsfordwa.co.uk
Manager/Chief Executive: Chris Moran

Colchester & Tendring Women's Refuge

PO Box 40
Colchester
CO1 2XJ
Tel: 01206 500 585
Fax: 01206 500 325
Email: info@colchester-refuge.org.uk
Website: www.colchester-refuge.org.uk

For Women centre

Tel: 01206 867 120
Refuge manager: AnnTaylor

Harlow & Broxbourne Women's Aid

PO Box 2489
Harlow & Broxbourne
CM18 6NS
Tel: 01279 836 611
Fax: 01279 836 144
Email: info@womensroom.org
Website: www.womensroom.org
Chief Executive: Janet Dalrymple

Southend Domestic Abuse Services

Please contact Harlow & Broxbourne
Women's Aid

The Dove Project

4 West Road
Westcliff on Sea
SS0 9DA
Tel: 01702 302 333

Fledglings

Tel: 01702 343 868

SHE Helpline

Tel: 01702 300 006

Thurrock Women's Aid

PO Box 32
Thurrock
RM17 6HN
Tel: 01375 845 899
Fax: 01375 845 869
Email: info@thurrock-wa.org
Website: www.thurrock-wa.org
Manager: Erica Jenkins

ChildLine

For children experiencing problems
such as abuse or bullying
www.childline.org.uk
www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk
Tel: 0800 11 11

The Hideout

Website to help children and young people
understand domestic abuse and offering
advice on how to take action if they are
being abused.
www.thehideout.org.uk

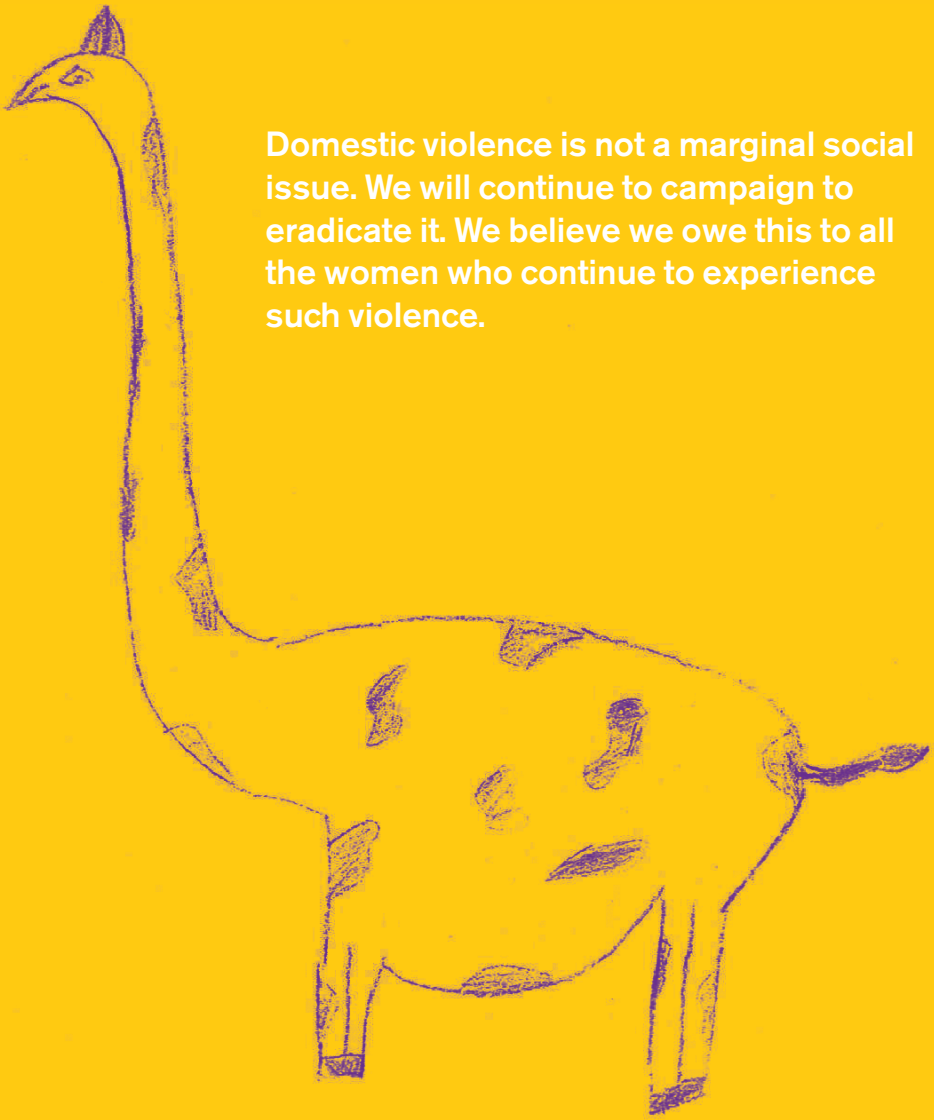
ManKind Initiative

For male victims of domestic abuse
www.mankind.org.uk
Tel: 01823 334 244

Men's Advice Line

Helpline for men experiencing
abusive relationships
www.mensadvice.org.uk
Tel: 0808 801 0327

Domestic violence is not a marginal social issue. We will continue to campaign to eradicate it. We believe we owe this to all the women who continue to experience such violence.



This is not really goodbye, just to say that that all the support I have had has been incredible. To me it was like having a real family that I never really had. The smiles, the laughter, the words of comfort and encouragement, the shoulder I have leant on will help me along the way to the rest of my days. The discovery of the fighting spirit at the very end brings me joy.

The Refuge

Colchester and Tendring

01206 500 585

advice support accommodation 24 hours

Patrons: Ruth Rendell
Amanda Root

Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge Ltd

PO Box 40

Colchester

Essex CO1 2XJ

tel 01206 500 585

fax 01206 500 325

email info@colchester-refuge.org.uk

www.colchester-refuge.org.uk

Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge is a registered charity, no. 1058295
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