



LOCAL AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT

MID TERM OCTOBER 2012 (Year 1)

Service Level Agreement : £16,000 Per Year for 2 year period

Funding Utilised : Contribution to Centre Core Expenses

Rape Crisis Expansion of Services :

We continue to achieve expansion of our support services throughout Argyll and Bute. Funding has been secured for a 3 year period from **The Henry Smith Charity** which has enabled employment of 2 part-time Support and Development Workers in Oban. Each worker will also assume responsibility for monthly service provision on the Islands of Mull and Tiree. This has been a major achievement for the organisation as we have been striving for several years to meet the support needs in Oban, but recognised the only way of providing a cost effective and sustainable service was to have local workers established in the area.

We were also successful with our funding application to **Comic Relief**. The Tessa Youth Prevention Project will now run on a 3 year rolling programme basis to all secondary schools Argyll and Bute wide. Year 1 of the project began in Tiree High School in August this year and will finally complete the first year's programme in Islay High School in June, 2013. Within 48 hrs of the Tessa Workshops being delivered in Tiree High School, there were two disclosures of sexual abuse from young people. Support is being provided by one of the Oban workers on a monthly face to face basis and regular weekly telephone support in-between. Early intervention is vital to young people disclosing sexual abuse. The sooner young people can access support, the sooner they can move forward without any long term damage to their mental and

physical health and wellbeing and personal potential. Historically, there have been disclosures of sexual abuse from young people in almost every school visited. Travel costs for Mull and Tiree are being funded by the Community Health Partnership for a one year period only.

Our Helensburgh Support and Development Worker, who has been instrumental in the development of Tessa, moved to the role of Youth Support and Prevention Project Worker and will facilitate all Tessa Workshops with coordinated support from local paid and volunteer workers. We have a new part-time Support and Development Worker in the Helensburgh and Lomond area. There is now a significant amount of support and prevention work being carried out within the MOD Base to both Naval Personnel and their families.

Volunteer Recruitment and Training :

A programme of volunteer recruitment and training was completed in the spring of the year to volunteers from the Kintyre Peninsula. 5 excellent volunteers completed their training successfully and are now providing local face to face and telephone helpline support. Importantly, because these volunteers are a considerable distance away from our Dunoon 'Hub', they meet regularly for Peer Support and receive individual support and supervision on a monthly basis from the Volunteer Support and Development Worker. They have constant access to support via the telephone and are actively encouraged to 'de-brief' after difficult support sessions. We have altered our volunteer training programme for the more rural/remote areas of Argyll and Bute. We now deliver our training over 4 intensive weekends on a residential basis. It is more cost effective, reduces time and travel for Rape Crisis Trainers and the external trainers who provide expert input in their particular field i.e. Police; P.F. Services; Prostitution and Pornography; Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection, Intimate Partner Sexual Violence etc. Residential Training has proved to be extremely beneficial to the volunteers who have time to get to know their volunteer colleagues and share their hopes and fears. Additionally for the Rape Crisis Centre, we have volunteers trained in a much shorter timeframe than our usual 15 weeks of one and a half days per week training sessions. All volunteers

have a personal development plan which means that training is on-going throughout their time with Rape Crisis.

We have secured funding from the Voluntary Action Fund to recruit and train volunteers in Mid Argyll and the Isle of Islay. These programmes will be carried out between November 2012 and March 2013 and we are hopeful of receiving a significant amount of interest in both areas.

Group Support Therapies :

Two blocks of group support therapy have been carried out in our Dunoon Hub and female survivors from Cowal, Bute and Helensburgh have participated. Each block of group support runs once per week over an 8 week period.

Group support has always been received with great enthusiasm and evaluates extremely highly. There is no doubt that if Rape Crisis had the required resources, group support could be run on a permanent weekly basis for survivors who have low self-esteem, isolation and social interaction issues. There have been significant benefits for survivors by way of reduction of prescribed medication and reduction in the use of alcohol as a coping strategy. Considerable improvement in Mental, Physical Health and Wellbeing has also been evidenced.

Our plans for the near future are to expand our group support to more areas by training other workers and volunteers on group facilitation.

Following on from our successful partnership group work with Rooftops (Quarriers) in Oban, we are planning to increase inter-agency group work, particularly for agencies that provide support to young homeless people who have alcohol/drug misuse issues as a direct result of their sexual abuse, or who are at increased risk of sustained sexual abuse due to their current lifestyles.

Male Support :

Although the vast majority of our service users continue to be women and girls (as we would expect due to the gendered analysis of sexual violence), the number of male survivors contacting Rape Crisis continues to grow steadily. As our most recent stats show, we provided 103 support sessions to male survivors between April 2011 and March 2012 (stats attached). The issues male survivors experience are different from women and therefore, a slightly different approach to support is required. All Rape Crisis paid support workers are trained in 'Male Support'. Our volunteers initially work with women only, but once settled and established, they receive training on specific issues for male survivors and how best to meet the different needs of male survivors. Interestingly, although we have provided support to male survivors in Cowal, Bute and Helensburgh, the highest number of male referrals continue to come from Oban.

Tessa Youth Project :

The planning and timetabling of workshops within 10 secondary schools was a lengthy and difficult piece of work which was made much easier with the assistance of a QIO, courtesy of Clelland Sneddon. We owe sincere thanks to Catherine Dobbie for her work and committed support of the Tessa Youth Project.

Year one of a 3 year rolling programme began in August this year within Tiree High School.

Since then, Tobermory and Oban workshops have also been completed. Tessa is currently being facilitated within Rothesay Academy. The remaining 6 secondary schools will receive the workshops between now and June 2013 (completing year one's programme in Islay High School).

We facilitate a 'Parents/Carers/Community' Evening of Workshops in each secondary school as it is vital that the adult community understand our work and the important role they play in keeping their young people safe, both online and in their personal lives.

These evenings, although not as well attended as we'd have hoped for, have evaluated very positively.

Below is just one comment received from a parent after the evening workshop (sent to the participating school who passed on to Rape Crisis.

"I wanted to say how impressed I was with the presentation on Wednesday evening. The Tessa Project will cover very relevant issues which you would not always think to discuss with your child, no matter how much you think you cover everything you should! It was a shame more parents did not attend. Please pass on my thoughts to the Tessa Workers from Rape Crisis. Many thanks"

We look forward to compiling all the information, feedback and evaluations received at the end of year one and reporting the outcomes.

Referrals of young people experiencing various forms of sexual abuse (internet and in their personal relationships) have steadily increased as a direct result of Tessa. Additionally, many parents are also seeking support from Rape Crisis as sexual violence never just affects the 'victim', but has a devastating ripple effect on entire families.

Continued Challenges :

We continue to evidence the need for Rape Crisis Support services throughout Argyll and Bute and have been successful in expanding these services to more remote/rural areas; we are almost victims of our own success. As always, if we are to sustain these services, there will be an on-going need to secure additional, long term funding. While all funding is received with gratitude, short term and specific project funding has significant drawbacks in terms of limited service provision which can be detrimental to service users when funding runs out and services are again withdrawn. This also reduces the organisations credibility as a locally embedded service provider.

Additional outreach 'hubs' are extremely costly. We aim to share premises with other organisations, but rental costs, telephone and utilities require in excess of £7,000 per annum, money that our limited

core funding budget is unable to sustain. Ways of bringing in local funding in each 'hub' area needs to be found as a matter of urgency to maintain each area's service.

We have been working closely with the NHS Community Health Partnership identifying gaps in service provision for survivors of Rape, Sexual Abuse and Childhood Sexual Abuse in Argyll and Bute and we have submitted a funding application which, if successful, will allow us to meet some of these gaps in service through continued volunteer recruitment and training whilst providing Awareness Raising Training to all front-line workers in partner agencies (particularly NHS, Social Work, Police and Alcohol Drug Partnerships) on the effects of sexual violence, how to deal appropriately with disclosure and referral pathways to specialist support services.

In conclusion :

Whilst significant achievement have been made by the organisation to make access to specialist support services easier for survivors in Argyll and Bute, the task of continued expansion and protection of these services becomes more and more challenging in these harsh times of funding restrictions.

Rape Crisis has a very small paid workforce and continuation of our expansion of support services will certainly require additional paid workers in outreach areas to coordinate Rape Crisis services. Our volunteers are invaluable to the organisation, but the reality is that volunteers' lives and circumstances change and they move on – another reason to maintain on-going volunteer recruitment and training programmes. Paid workers posts are vital in providing the much needed support and supervision of volunteers and to ensure continuous training needs are met, ensuring volunteers' skills are maintained and updated.

Signed.....**Alison Black**.....Date...25/10/2012