

Women's Aid Federation of England
Annual Survey of Domestic Violence Services
2010-11

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 About Women's Aid

Women's Aid Federation of England (Women's Aid) is the national domestic violence charity that co-ordinates and supports an England-wide network of over 500 local specialist domestic and sexual violence services, working to end violence against women and children. Women's Aid campaigns for better legal protection and services, and provides a strategic "expert view" to government on legislation, policy and practice affecting abused women and children. The voices of survivors are at the heart of all our work.

In partnership with our national network, Women's Aid runs public awareness and education campaigns, bringing together national and local action, and developing new training and resources. We provide a package of vital 24-hour lifeline services, and a variety of publications including the *Expect Respect* Education Toolkit, our on-line resource, *The Survivor's Handbook*, (now translated into 10 languages), and a practical guide to running support groups and self-help groups - *The Power to Change* – which we produced in partnership with other European women's organisations. The Survivors' Forum is available on our website for women who have been affected by domestic abuse to share their experiences and to offer support to one another. We also provide a wealth of online information on domestic and sexual violence, all available at www.womensaid.org.uk.

Women's Aid also provide a website for children and young people, www.thehideout.org.uk. The Hideout offers a messageboard children and young people under 21 to share their views and thoughts about domestic abuse.

In partnership with Refuge, Women's Aid run the Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline. We also produce *The UK Gold Book* which is the only public directory of domestic abuse services, and is the result of a partnership between Northern Ireland Women's Aid, Scottish Women's Aid, Women's Aid Federation of England and Welsh Women's Aid, through which we have developed the UKrefugesonline database, UKROL. The online Women's Aid Domestic Abuse Directory contains contact details for these organisations and services: see http://www.womensaid.org.uk/azrefuges.asp?section=00010001000800060002®ion_code=0111&x=7&y=4

1.2 Services provided by domestic violence sector

In addition to the work carried out by the Women's Aid national office, our England-wide network of local community-based domestic and sexual violence organisations also offer vital direct services to women and their children. These include:

- **Refuge-based services**, providing a package of temporary accommodation, support, information and advocacy;

- **Outreach, floating support and other non-refuge based services** providing a wide range of advocacy and support, including:
 - resettlement services - enabling women and their children to make new lives in the community after leaving refuge;
 - drop-in centres and survivors' support groups;
 - telephone help lines;
 - counselling services for those who have experienced domestic and sexual violence;
 - specialist court advocacy services;
 - Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)
 - Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs)
 - floating support schemes providing advocacy and support to families living in the community.

1.3: Women's Aid's Annual Surveys

Each year, Women's Aid conducts a survey of the national network of domestic violence services in England in order to get a fuller picture of their use. This year, the survey comprises two separate sections:

- The Annual Survey (Survey 1) covering use of services for the preceding year, April 1st 2010 to March 31st 2011.
- The Women's Aid "Day to Count" Snapshot (Survey 2) – focusing on use of the same services on one typical day, June 16th 2011¹.

In some previous years, we have also circulated a separate Service Users' feedback questionnaire, aimed at collecting additional data from a sample of women using services on specified dates. This year, we decided not to undertake this additional survey in recognition of the additional information we have needed to collect from domestic and sexual violence services via special surveys during 2010 and 2011.

Together, these questionnaires give us information about the specialist domestic and sexual violence services provided by Women's Aid national network, and the numbers of women and children supported by these services.

As in other years, we have included a few additional questions on specific topics. This year – in view of the continuing concerns about the funding and commissioning of domestic and sexual violence services – we have concentrated on funding and commissioning issues.

We have tried to limit the range and detail of the survey questions in order to make it easier for our national network of services to complete, and to improve the response rate. Most service providers prioritise meeting the demand for services from victims of domestic violence over filling in questionnaires –

¹ For non-refuge based services, which do not always operate every day, we have – as in previous years - suggested organisations use data from the week commencing 13th June 2011.

which also means that some organisations are sometimes unable to respond at all.

In order to account for those organisations that do not respond to the questionnaire, we have, for a number of years, calculated an estimated total figure based on the data given by those organisations (between two-thirds and three-quarters of the total) for which we have full information. This means that in some sections of the report, we are using estimated figures extrapolated from the raw data we have collected, based on the response rates for that section of the survey, or for the survey as a whole. We believe that these estimated figures give a more accurate picture of the total numbers of women and children seeking help via our network's services, and they also enable comparisons from year to year.

1.4: Content of the report

This report contains an overview of the findings of this year's surveys, and where relevant compares them with findings from previous years.

Chapter 2 provides information on the methodology and response rate. In Chapter 3, we then provide the findings of Section 1 of our Annual Survey for 2010-11, giving information on the range of services offered and the total numbers of women and children using these services. Where relevant, data from previous years' surveys are also given in order to allow comparison across time. By comparing data over this time period we are able to analyse trends and consider the wider implications of any changes for Women's Aid network of services and our work within the domestic violence sector.

In Chapter 4, we then look at the findings from the "Day to Count" (Section 2 of the Annual Survey), which gives information about the use of services on one particular day (Thursday June 16th 2011) – or, in the case of non-refuge services (which may operate on one or two days a week, only) during the specified week, from Monday 13th to Friday 17th June inclusive.

Chapter 5 provides an overall summary and a brief conclusion.

1.5: Definitions

These terms are used throughout the report:

- **Domestic violence** (sometimes called domestic abuse) is physical, sexual, psychological or financial violence that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. This can include forced marriage and so-called 'honour crimes'. Domestic violence may include a range of abusive behaviours, not all of which are in themselves inherently 'violent'.
- **Sexual violence and abuse** includes a range of different behaviours of a sexual nature which are unwanted and take place without consent or understanding. Sexual abuse is often a component of domestic violence - for example, partners and former partners may use force, threats or intimidation to engage in sexual activity; they may taunt or

use degrading treatment related to sexuality, force their partners to use pornography, or to engage in sexual activities with other people.

- **Refuge-based services:** services provided and based in a refuge house by domestic and sexual violence organisations, (often alongside the provision of other community-based services.)
- **Outreach or non-refuge based services:** services not provided in conjunction with accommodation (although the individual organisation may also provide refuge-based services), but based within, and serving, the wider community.
- **All organisations** - means the total number of organisations providing domestic and sexual violence services, both refuge-based and non-refuge-based.
- **No recourse to public funds:** Women who, as a result of their immigration status, have “no recourse to public funds”, are not eligible for welfare benefits (such as housing benefit), and cannot access public services, such as temporary accommodation. (They are, however, eligible for legal aid – in principle; though in practice it may be hard to come by). When women with no recourse to public funds are accepted into refuge accommodation, the immediate costs often have to be covered by the refuge organisation.

1.6: Acknowledgements

Women’s Aid would like to thank all those from our national network of domestic violence organisations who responded to the Annual Survey 2010-11, and thereby enabled us to compile these figures. We are particularly grateful as we have requested information from our network on various occasions recently.

Chapter 2: Survey design and response rate

2.1: Introduction

The Women's Aid Annual Survey 2010-11 comprised two separate sections:

- Section 1, which asked for figures of the total numbers of women and children using specialist domestic and sexual violence services during the previous financial year April 1st 2010 to March 31st 2011.
- Section 2: an annual snapshot of women and children using domestic and sexual violence services during the week June 13th to 17th 2011, and specifically (in the case of refuge accommodation) on June 16th, the "Day to Count".

These surveys apply to all organisations providing any direct services to women and/or children who are or have been experiencing domestic or sexual violence². From our database, we identified all those organisations registered with Women's Aid and currently providing such services within England. Questionnaires were sent out in May 2011 to more than 400 separate organisations or sections of organisations, both by surface mail and by email, wherever possible. In some cases, we sent out more than one email to the same organisation, but asked that only one questionnaire be filled in for each service provided; i.e. one organisation could choose to fill out separate questionnaires for separate parts of their service, if that was easier for them; alternatively, the overall umbrella organisation could fill in one questionnaire for all those services within its remit. In either case, we asked them to indicate clearly which service(s) were covered in each response.

The initial closing date was Friday June 24th, but this was subsequently extended (after several reminders) in order to maximise response, with a final closing date of the end of August 2011.

2.2: Response

Several organisations sent in composite responses, covering more than one service; others had merged with other organisations, or had ceased to provide relevant services, or had closed completely. These mergers and closures resulted in a final total of **330 relevant organisations**.

Of these organisations, 227 responded to both Survey 1 and Survey 2 (69%) and a further 17 responded to one of the questionnaires, only, giving a response rate of 73% for Survey 1, and 70% for Survey 2. 74% of relevant organisations responded to at least one of the two surveys. In most of the following, an overall response rate of 70% will be used whenever estimated figures are extrapolated from the data provided, except where otherwise stated.

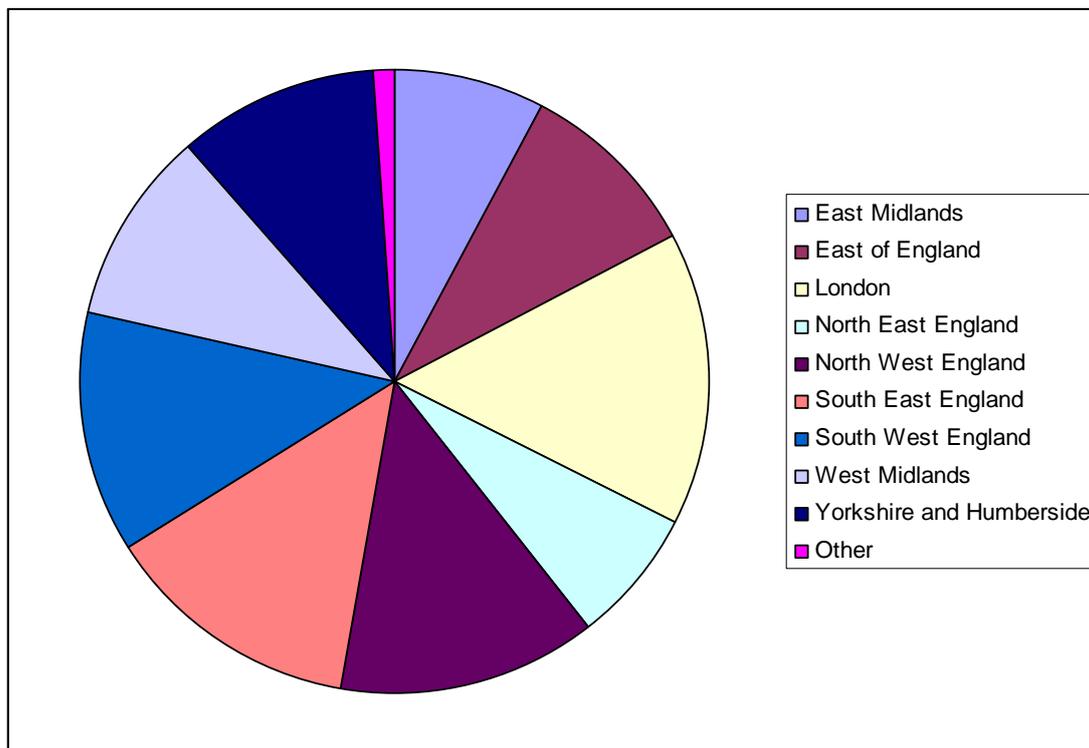
Tables 1 and 2 (overleaf) give a regional breakdown of the responses.

² Some of these organisations also provide separate services for men – either as survivors of perpetrators of domestic violence.

Table 1: Response by region

	Responding organisations ³	Non-responding ⁴	Total organisations	Response rate
East Midlands	19 (19)	9	28	68%
East of England	23 (20)	5	28	82%
London	37 (33)	15	52	71%
North East England	17 (17)	6	23	74%
North West England	33 (31)	14	47	70%
South East England	32 (28)	10	42	76%
South West England	31 (28)	9	40	78%
West Midlands	24 (23)	5	29	83%
Yorkshire and Humberside	25 (25)	9	34	74%
Other	3 (3)	1	4	75%
Totals	244	86	330	74%

Table 2: Regional breakdown of responding organisations



³ Figures in brackets are for those responding to one part of the Survey only.

⁴ i.e. those organisations not responding to either Survey 1 or the Day to Count..

2.3: Types of service provided

Based on responses received, the following services were provided during 2010-11:

- 194 (85%) of responding organisations provide refuge accommodation.
- 114 (50%) run a helpline.
- 194 (85%) provide non-refuge based services
- 77 (34%) of responding organisations provide all three types of service

The following chapters give an overview of the information we received on the use of those services during 2010/11.

Chapter 3: Annual Survey 2010-11: Findings from Survey 1

3.1. Refuge accommodation: Provision

194 responding organisations provided refuge accommodation, made up of 666 separate refuge houses, providing 2,986 family units of accommodation between them. Extrapolating from this on the basis of a 73% response rate, overall we estimate that there are more than **910** separate refuge houses in England, providing at least **4,090** separate family spaces in total, more than 99% of which were (in the year 2010/2011) funded by their local councils through the Supporting People programme (SP). Based on the data given to us, there will be an increase of just over 1% in the number of places funded by SP during the coming year 2011/2012.

Table 3: Number of refuge houses provided

How many refuge houses did you provide during 2010-11?	Number of organisations (responding organisations only)	Total number refuge houses (responding organisations only)	Estimated total refuge houses (on basis of 73% response rate)
1 refuge	82	82	112
2 refuges	40	80	110
3 refuges	24	72	99
4 refuges	7	28	38
5 refuges	9	45	62
6 refuges	6	36	49
7 refuges	1	7	10
8 refuges	1	8	11
9 refuges	7	63	86
10 refuges	1	10	14
More than 10 and less than 20 refuges	10	137	188
More than 20 refuges	3	95	130
No response	3	[3]	[4] ⁵
Totals	194	666	913

Table 4: Refuge accommodation and total family units from 2006 to 2011

	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010 - 11
Number of separate refuge houses (estimated)	680	800	900	690	913
Total number of family units (estimated)	3, 655	6, 000	4, 000	3,890	4,080

⁵ Estimated on the basis that the 3 organisations that provided refuge accommodation but did not respond to this question must have at least 1 refuge each.

3.2: Women and children accommodated in refuge accommodation 2010/11

We asked all those organisations providing refuge accommodation to tell us how many women and children and children in total used that accommodation throughout the year⁶. Extrapolating on the basis of a 70% response rate⁷, we estimate that around **18,170 women** and **19,100 children** stayed in refuge accommodation during the year 2010/2011. See Table 5.

Table 5: Women and children in refuge accommodation 2010/2011

	Responding organisations providing refuge accommodation	All organisations providing refuge accommodation (estimated)
Total women using refuge accommodation 2010-2011	12,720	18,170
Total children using refuge accommodation 2010-2011	13,370	19,100
Total number of organisations to which these figures relate	194	275

Responding organisations accommodated 563 women (and their 483 children) with no recourse to public funds due to their immigration status. This equates to an estimated **770 women** - 4% of the total number of women accommodated. Some funding was obtained for approximately two-thirds of these women with no recourse: see Table 6 (relating to responding organisations only).

Table 6: Funding for women with no recourse to public funds: Responding organisations only

Source of funding	Number of women⁸	% of women with no recourse⁹
Sojourner project	158	28%
Children Act	135	24%
National Assistance Act	14	2%
Community Care Act	18	3%
Other source of funding	52 ¹⁰	9%
Not funded, or no information	186	33%

While the numbers of women using refuge accommodation annually have tended to fluctuate around 17,000 each year, the number of children has declined since the peak in 2006/7 (though this number has increased again

⁶ "How many women and children in total stayed in refuge accommodation provided by your organisation between 1st April 2010 and March 31st 2011?"

⁷ We have used a reduced response rate here and elsewhere as not all responding organisations were able to give figures for all questions.

⁸ Actual numbers, from responding organisations.

⁹ Based on total of 563 women: responding organisations only.

¹⁰ Other sources of funding included: donations, local charities, and the organisation's own reserves. This figure also includes those who were funded by a local authority, but did not know the legislation under which that funding was obtained.

slightly in the last year.) See Table 7. Without more detailed research, it is impossible to say why this might be; however, possible reasons could include falling family size, and the tendency for women to have children later in life, combined with greater awareness of domestic abuse and the options available. This could lead to a greater number of women leaving their abusers prior to becoming parents, or after having one child, only.

Table 7: Estimated numbers of women and children using refuge accommodation annually (2002/3 – 2010/2011)

Survey Period	Women	Children
2002/03	17,094	21,465
2003/04	18,569	23,084
2004/05	19,836	24,347
2005/06	16,815	19,450
2006/7	17,545	25,451
2007/8	17,670	19,390
2008/9	16,750	19,005
2009/10	17,615	17,785
2010/11	18,170	19,100

3.3.Length of stay in refuge accommodation

The average length of time women and children stay in refuge accommodation varies enormously, depending on such factors as the availability of alternative (permanent or move-on) accommodation in the area, and the policies and practices of each refuge service provider. Some organisations are very specific¹¹; for example, “56 nights”, “32 days” “46 weeks”. Others say it is variable – anything from 3 months up to a year, depending on need.

We also asked whether the length of stay has changed recently¹². For example, it might have tended to become longer, because there are fewer housing options for women to move on to; alternatively, the refuge might not be able to allow women to stay as long as they used to, due to funding considerations, and the pressure from others needing that emergency space. The response to this question was inconclusive; slightly more organisations said that women tended to stay longer than those saying there was no change or that they were staying for a shorter time than previously, but quite a high proportion could not give an answer: see Table 8.

¹¹ Respondents were asked: “How long, on average, do women tend to stay in your refuge accommodation?”

¹² “Has the length of time women tend to stay in your refuge **changed** at all over the past few years?”

Table 8: Changes in length of stay in refuge accommodation

Has the length of time women stay in refuge changed recently?	Number of organisations	% of organisations	
Yes, women stay longer than they used to	86	45%	
Yes, women stay for a shorter time than they used to	25	13%	
No change	57	30%	42%
Don't know/no response	25	13%	
All responding organisations providing refuge accommodation	193	100%	

3.4. Outreach, floating support and other non-refuge services

191 responding organisations run outreach and other non-refuge-based services (excluding helplines). We estimate that around **118,990 women** and **24,180 children and young people** were directly supported by outreach and other non-refuge services provided by domestic violence organisations during the year 2010/11, and a further **86,170 children** received indirect support by virtue of the support given to their mothers¹³.

These organisations run a variety of different kinds of non-refuge-based services, including floating support, drop-ins, resettlement services, support groups, advocacy. In some years, we have collected separate figures for the usage of each of these services, but did not do so during 2010/11, in order to reduce the burden on our member organisations (some of which do not otherwise collect these separate figures).

Table 9 (overleaf) shows the estimated numbers of women and children using all services over a 9 year period from 2002/3.

113 responding organisations (50%) run a local or regional **helpline**, either in addition to their other services or as a stand-alone service. In total, responding organisations received at least **361,750 calls**¹⁴, and were able to respond in person to the vast majority of these, more than 75%.

3.5. Education and awareness-raising work in schools

82 responding organisations (37%) did some education and awareness-raising work with children and young people in schools during 2010/11, and a further three trained teachers to enable them to roll out a programme to the pupils they worked with. Not everyone could give figures of the numbers of children and young people involved these programmes, but it was in excess of 45,000 for responding organisations alone, and in the region of 64,000 – **65,000** if non-responding organisations had worked with schools to the same extent.

¹³ Based on figures from responding organisations of 83,291 women and 17,628 children and young people supported directly, and 60,322 children indirectly supported. Some responding organisations said they were unable to supply these figures – particularly those for children supported indirectly - hence our extrapolated figures have been revised on the basis of a 70% response rate, but are still likely to be an underestimate.

¹⁴ Some organisations do not keep a record of calls.

Table 9: Numbers of women and children supported in all services from 2004 – 2011

Year	Use of refuge accommodation		Use of outreach and other non-refuge-based services		Totals using all services	
	Women	Children	Women	Children/YP	Women	Children/YP
2002/03	17,094	21,465	105,476	66,331	122, 570	87, 796
2003/04	18,569	23,084	123,957	83,034	142, 526	106, 118
2004/05	19,836	24,347	176,369	104,846 ¹⁵	196, 205	129, 193
2005/06	16, 815	19, 450	114, 430	7,660	131, 245	27,110
2006/7	17, 545	25, 451	96, 500	23, 200	114, 045	48, 651
2007/8	17, 670	19, 390	109375	42,180	127, 045	61, 540
2008/9	16,750	19,005	91, 940	20,125	108,690	39,130
2009/10	17,615	17,785	107, 280	36, 585	124, 895	54, 370
2010/11	18,170	19,100	118, 990	24,180	137,160	43,280

¹⁵ Up to 2004/5, figures for children and young people supported within outreach services included those supported indirectly by virtue of their mothers receiving direct support. From 2005/6 onwards, this figure only includes children and young people directly supported within specialist children and young people's outreach services.

3.6. Services for men

100 responding organisations (44%) provided some services for male victims. This is an increase of 61% on the previous year. Sometimes this was simply a helpline service; others provided an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) who worked with both male and female victims; and a very few provided a more wide-ranging service. 22 of these provided separate dedicated staff to work with male victims, and 23 had separate premises for this work; 14 had both separate staff and premises.

In almost all cases, however, the number of male victims approaching the organisation for support was very small. Around 2,375 male victims were supported by responding organisations (a number of these by telephone, only). Extrapolating from this to the total number of organisations, this is slightly less than **3,400 male victims**, i.e. less than 3% of the total of female victims and survivors requesting support.

16 responding organisations (7%) provide perpetrator programmes, 10 of which ran from separate premises with separate staff¹⁶. These programmes had worked with 680 male perpetrators in all, or around 970, if a similar proportion of non-responding organisations also delivered perpetrator programmes or equivalent capacity. (There are, of course, also a number of organisations delivering perpetrator programmes which are not in the Women's Aid network, many of which are members of Respect.)

3.7. Funding of service provision

213 responding organisations said they had received some funding from one or more local authorities during the year 2010/11; 19 either did not receive funding, or did not respond to this question at all¹⁷. In many cases, this funding was through the Supporting People programme, only; though we do not have sufficient detailed information to be able to give numbers here.

173 of those organisations receiving funding from their local authority during 2010/11 said they would also receive (some) funding in 2011/12. In some cases, that was because they were part-way through a 2 or 3 year contract; in other cases, they had had made a successful bid for funding for the next year. Five organisations that had received funding from their local authority during 2010/11 said they would definitely not be receiving it during 2011/12¹⁸. A further 37 organisations (all of which did get at least some funding from the local authority during the previous year) said they did not yet know whether they would get any funding for 2011/12 – despite the fact that that they were already 3 months into the financial year at the time of responding to the

¹⁶ 2 others also provided separate staff for this work, but used the same office premises, though at different times.

¹⁷ 232 organisations in total responded to the part of the survey that included this question.

¹⁸ Domestic Violence Support Services West Lancashire (639), Kennet Safehouse Service (4044), Grimsby Women's Aid (North East Lincolnshire) (228), Stonham - Aasra Project (4462) and Watford Women's Refuge (627). Not sure whether names should be given here?

survey¹⁹. Two organisations that did not get funding from their local authority in 2010/11 said they would be getting some during 2011/12.

19 organisations (8%) said that some services they had provided during 2010/11 had now been transferred to another provider through procurement. An equivalent number (including 4 of the same organisations) had also gained some services from another provider during the last 12 months. 29 organisations had had some or all of their services decommissioned completely²⁰. Seven organisations had merged with another organisation in the past year; and a further four had taken over another organisation during the same period.

Table 10: When funding for services ends

Type of service	Number of organisations providing this service	Organisations for which funding for this service ended by June 2011 ²¹	Organisations where funding ends <i>within 12 months</i> i.e. by June 2012 ²²	DK/No information given/ No outside funding
Refuge accommodation	193	10	64	60
Floating support	128	7	48	41
Resettlement	88	6	34	24
IDVA	68	7	30	13
ISVA	12	1	6	3
Specialist children's/young people's service	135	13	62	31
Support groups, counselling, drop-in, etc.	114	5	42	50
Helpline	101	3	32	51
Work in schools	60	13	10	31
Other specialist service	72	7	34	18

The following comments on funding were typical of many: uncertainty, cost-cutting, and failure to recognise the expertise of those working in the domestic violence sector were recurrent themes.

We are finding that the funding environment is becoming very competitive and increasingly price led, as opposed to quality. This makes the voluntary sector very vulnerable and is a driver to cutting costs - which has a direct impact on the quality of services delivered. We are also finding that [the] domestic violence specialism is in danger of not being recognised as necessary to provide services. There are worrying trends on strategic bodies to have a split with 'providers'. This will only serve to lessen the influence of the DV sector to shape the strategic agenda and is a threat to effective multi-agency working. [62]

¹⁹ Subsequently we have received further information about the current situation from some of these organisations, but here we report on responses to the Annual Survey only.

²⁰ Two of these said that some or all services had been transferred to another provider. One other organisation had also gained some services as well as having some decommissioned.

²¹ In some cases, there are two or more sources of funding; in which case, the one which ends earliest is given.

²² See footnote 10. Where it is stated that funding is provided and/or bid for annually, it is included within this column, as there is no guarantee that it will be renewed beyond mid-2012.

We recently tendered for IDVA services ... in consortium with another local DV agency but were unsuccessful. This was the second commissioning process for this work; we appealed against the result of the first process as we felt that there were fundamental ethical problems in the process and decision-making. ... We did not win the commission in the second process which we believe was due to our being realistic about the number of women we could work with. It is our belief that organisations who claim that they will be able to work with very large numbers of women are the ones who win the tender. [311]

Although the SP contracts are supposed to run until March 2012 we were told to expect 30% cuts at the end of June 2011. [5093]

Currently the future of the refuge is very unsure. SP have requested that we look at possibility of delivering the service with a 5% or 10% cut to funding ... Either one of these options could mean that the service is too costly for the organisation to run, as the budget is already very tight.... and this level of cut would affect the service badly, as the only way to make such drastic savings would be to cut staffing levels.... [4215]

Pressures around grant funding applications and decisions leave providers with great uncertainty around services continuing. This is unsettling for staff and clients alike. [We] need to move to 3 year funding streams to ensure sustainability. [3697]

3.8. Staffing

We asked for numbers of full-time equivalent staff in June 2010 and June 2011, in order to get an indication of whether staff numbers were changing in response to funding cuts. Not all responding organisations were able to give us these figures; but calculating from those that were, the overall differences in totals of different staff roles are shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Total staff numbers June 2010 and June 2011: responding organisations only²³

Staff roles	Staff numbers June 2010	Staff numbers June 2011	Change since 2010
Managers	444	416	- 6%
Admin/finance staff	213	205	- 4%
Support workers in refuge accommodation	743	734	- 1.2%
Outreach support workers	450	420	- 6.6%
IDVAs	199	215	+ 8%
ISVAs	10	16	+60%
Specialist ch/yp workers in refuges	222	162	- 27%
Specialist ch/yp workers outside refuge	150	98	- 35%
Helpline staff	149	153	+ 2.6%
Volunteers with women	673	762	+ 13%
Volunteers with children	91	95	+ 4%
Other staff	161	161	No change

²³ 224 organisations responded to this question.

Overall, the reduction in staff is particularly significant in the provision of specialist children’s and young people support workers – both in refuges and in the community. There are notable increases in IDVAs and ISVAs (the latter from a very small base), presumably as a result of increased central government funding. There is also a small increase in helpline staff, and a much larger increase in volunteers – perhaps to replace paid staff.

3.9. Training

Staff in 51 responding organisations (21%) have undertaken Women’s Aid’s national accredited qualification in domestic and sexual violence. 89 members of staff have commenced training and (at the time of responding) 84 of these had completed the qualification. Reasons given for staff not undertaking this training are shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Reasons for staff not doing WA accredited qualification

Reasons given for not doing WA qualification ²⁴	Number of organisations
Course too expensive	103 ²⁵
Cannot spare time for training	43
Already have alternative qualification	49
Didn’t know about it	25
Other reason	22
No reason given	10
Does not apply – staff have undertaken WA training	51

Comments on training included the following:

Many of our workers already have the CAADA qualification²⁶. Few of the courses are in [our area] so there are additional travel and accommodation costs. [192]

We are uncertain about our funding right now, so can't afford outlay on training. [332]

[We have] alternative [qualifications] – i.e. social care qualifications or other similar [ones], plus significant experience in this area. ... We are already very experienced and trained so [we] question do we need this training? [72]

Cannot spare time for experienced staff to do a basic DV course just for the sake of a qualification. May consider [it] for new staff in future, if funding allows. [48]

In the following chapter, we move onto consider the findings from the Day to Count snapshot survey.

²⁴ More than one reason could be given.

²⁵ A further 6 organisations who had sent some staff for training nonetheless said it was too expensive to send any more staff.

²⁶ This training, offered by another organisation, is to work as an IDVA, only.

Chapter 4: The ‘Day to Count’ snapshot survey

4.1: Day to count: Introduction

The Women’s Aid “Day to Count” (Survey 2) is a snapshot survey asking for the numbers of women and children supported by each responding organisation on one specific day (June 16th 2011) in refuge accommodation, and during the week 13th -17th June²⁷ in other non-refuge based services.

234 organisations responded to Survey 2²⁸ (the Day to Count), 185 of which, provided refuge accommodation, and 180 provided non-refuge services. 110 provided a local or regional helpline (with or without other services). 142 provided both refuge and other services. 38 provide only outreach services; four provide a helpline only; and 43 just provide refuge accommodation (or refuge plus helpline).

4.2. Residents of refuge accommodation

185 organisations providing refuge accommodation responded to Survey 2, giving snapshot information relating to the ‘Day to Count’ – Thursday June 16th 2011. 2,388 women and their 2,604 children were resident on that day in refuge accommodation provided by these responding organisations.

Extrapolating from the information given, on the basis of 70% response rate, we estimate that on this day, **3,410 women** and **3,720 children** were resident in refuge accommodation. More than half the children were under the age of 5 years.

Tables 13, 14 and 15 below and overleaf give a breakdown of these women in terms of certain demographic characteristics. Because the numbers are relatively small, we have here included responding organisations only.) Table 16 gives the age breakdown of children resident on the ‘Day to Count’ in accommodation provided by responding organisations.

Table 13: Women residents on June 16th 2011 (responding organisations only)

	Number of women	% of total residents
Total women resident	2, 388	100%
Of these – women in employment	122	5%
Of these – women with children	1, 567	67%
Of these – women who are pregnant	148	6%
Of these – women with NRPF	108	5%
Of these – escaping forced marriage	78	3%
Of these – disabled women	293	12%

²⁷ We asked for data from the whole week for non-refuge services as many services of this kind operate on only one or two days a week, so would provide a more accurate record.

²⁸ This equates to a 70% response rate.

Table 14: Women residents on June 16th 2011: Ages (responding organisations only)

Age groups	Number of women	% of total residents
16-20 yrs	214	9%
21-25 years	599	25%
26-30 years	541	23%
31-35 years	369	15%
36-40 years	238	10%
41-45 years	182	8%
46-50 years	101	4%
51-55 years	66	3%
56-60 years	34	1%
61-65 years	13	0.5%
66 years and over	3	0.12%
Age unknown	28	1%
Totals	2, 388	100%

Table 15: Women residents on June 16th 2011: Ethnic origins (responding organisations only)

Ethnic group	Number of women	% of total
White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	1,337	56%
White – Irish	14	0.5%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	8	0.3%
Other White background	76	3%
White and Black Caribbean	63	3%
White and Black African	28	1%
White and Asian	13	0.5%
Any other mixed or multiple ethnic background	40	2%
Indian	107	4%
Pakistani	210	9%
Bangladeshi	55	2%
Chinese	8	0.3%
Any other Asian background	44	2%
Black Caribbean	93	4%
Black African	151	6%
Any other Black background	37	2%
Arab	23	1%
Any other ethnic group	66	3%
Unknown	15	0.6%
Total	2,388	100%

Table 16: Children resident in refuge accommodation June 16th 2011
(Responding organisations only)

Resident children 16/6/2011	Number in each age group	% of total
Under 5 years	1, 389	53%
5 – 10 years	879	34%
11 – 16 years	336	13%
Totals	2, 604	100%

4.3. Women seeking refuge who were turned away

On that day, a total of 224 women who were seeking refuge at one of the responding organisations could not be accommodated within that service – usually because there was no space. Of these, 163 women could not be accommodated because the service was full; 13 were turned away because they had no recourse to public funds; and 48 women were turned away for some other reason. 73% (164 women) of those who could not be accommodated were referred elsewhere.

Assuming non-responding refuge organisations were also having to turn away women in similar numbers, this means that on one single day, **320 women and their children** could not be accommodated in at least one of the refuges they approached for support.

4.4. Referrals to other agencies

We asked respondents whether they had had any increased difficulties recently in referring clients to other agencies for specialist help and support²⁹. These agencies could include mental health services, counselling, alcohol or drug services, Social Care and Children’s Services, and so on, any of which could have been affected by cuts in their funding.

On the whole, the majority of respondents had not (at the time of asking) yet been affected by difficulties or delays: only 67 respondents (35%) said they had been affected by delays and difficulties in referring to statutory agencies; and 42 (22%) reported problems in referring to agencies in the voluntary sector. The following were among some of the comments we received from those who felt service provision and referrals to other services were already being affected:

Mental health services appear reluctant to accept referrals. Also, it is often difficult to refer vulnerable adults to safeguarding teams.... [and] to get mental health and learning disability teams to accept referrals, especially in relation to autism. [68]

Referrals for women with mental health issues taking quite a long time even via the GP. [There are] long waiting lists. Referrals for family and children

²⁹ “Have you experienced any increased difficulties recently in referring clients to other agencies for specialist help and support? (e.g. mental health services, alcohol/drug services, Social Services, counselling, etc.)”

counselling [are also] becoming extremely difficult. NSPCC have changed their remit in [this area.] [139]

Floating support services are filled to capacity. Social Services have a high number of referrals so they do not respond quickly to requests from the refuge for assistance. [231]

Housing services have fewer bed and breakfast places and women are waiting longer for rehousing in the public and private sectors. Mental health services provide limited services only and Social Services rarely prioritise families who are accommodated in a refuge, as they are seen as being safe, even though they may have multiple and complex problems which refuge workers struggle to deal with effectively. In the voluntary sector, we are finding that services are diminishing as charities lose funds, e.g. the local Barnardo's parenting support service was recently closed down. [311]

Counselling services have very long waiting lists, so women are finding it increasingly difficult to access these services. Also, the counselling is generic and not specific to our client group. There is the additional problem of finding counselling services that cater for the five main Asian languages. Statutory organisations are very reluctant to take on referrals with high support needs, simply accepting that because they are in a refuge the risks have been minimalised. This is very difficult where someone has high mental health needs. [20]

We find it very difficult to find refuge accommodation for suicidal women, women with other mental health problems and with substance misuse issues, if we are full. It is difficult to say whether this difficulty has increased over the past year but it is certainly a problem. We have difficulty getting Social Care to take responsibility for children that we have concerns over. ... We act as advocates for the children and are very persistent with Social Care in trying to get them to understand our concerns for the safety and well-being of the children. It would be very easy sometimes to give up and not continue to insist on them carrying out their statutory responsibilities. [527]

A slightly different angle was provided by those who felt that the statutory agencies were using the voluntary sector – including specialist domestic violence provision – to take on work that they would previously have done.

[We are] increasingly finding that health visitors, social workers and family support workers are relying on us to do work that they would have previously had to do. [245]

More women [have been] abusing the refuge route as a way to get housing that they need. On several occasions recently, [they have] been advised by a client that they have been actually told to say they need to go into a refuge as this will speed up their housing claim... This sort of practice is unacceptable as it takes space away from survivors in genuine need. [53]

It is likely that, with continued funding cuts, longer waiting lists, non-availability of services, and over-use (or misuse) of remaining service provision will all worsen over the coming year.

4.5. Women and children using non-refuge services during a typical week

Outreach and other non-refuge-based services³⁰ often do not operate every day; therefore our snapshot survey of women and children supported in these services covered the whole week from June 13th to June 17th 2011. 180 organisations providing such services responded to Survey 2.

During that week, participating organisations directly supported a total of 8,701 women and 2,041 children/young people within their non-refuge services, and at least a further 9,358 children were indirectly supported. Extrapolating from these figures on the basis of a 70% response rate, we estimate that **12,430 women** and **2,915 children and young people** were directly supported in non-refuge services. (The estimated total of 13,370 children and young people indirectly supported is almost certainly an underestimate, as not all services keep these figures.) Tables 17 and 18 (below and overleaf) give a breakdown of these women in terms of age group and ethnic origins. (Figures from responding organisations only).

While the vast majority of responding organisations offering non-refuge services (130 – 73%) said that they were able to support all the women who needed it during that week, 41 organisations were not able to do so during the week in question, meaning that at least 458 women who needed outreach support could not be given it immediately.

Table 17: Women using non-refuge-based service during week 13th – 17th June 2011: Ages (responding organisations only)

Age groups	Number of women	% of total residents
16-20 yrs	578	7%
21-25 years	1,306	15%
26-30 years	1,618	19%
31-35 years	1,488	17%
36-40 years	1,229	14%
41-45 years	943	11%
46-50 years	607	7%
51-55 years	359	4%
56-60 years	141	2%
61-65 years	91	1%
66 years and over	76	1%
Age unknown	265	3%
Totals	8,701	100%

³⁰ including floating support, resettlement, drop-in services, IDVAs – but not local helplines

Table 18: Women using non-refuge-based service during week 13th – 17th June 2011: Ethnic origins (responding organisations only)

Ethnic group	Number of women	% of total
White – including English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	6,413	74%
White – Irish	47	0.5%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	14	0.2%
Other White background	208	2%
White and Black Caribbean	82	1%
White and Black African	45	0.5%
White and Asian	57	0.6%
Any other multiple ethnic background	72	0.8%
Indian	245	3%
Pakistani	474	5%
Bangladeshi	81	0.9%
Chinese	29	0.3%
Any other Asian background	116	1%
Black Caribbean	142	2%
Black African	146	2%
Any other Black background	42	0.4%
Arab	39	0.4%
Any other ethnic group	130	1%
Unknown	319	4%
Total	8,701	100%

We also asked respondents how many women they were unable to support in their outreach services during the week beginning June 13th 2011, due to lack of capacity. Not all relevant organisations were able to provide this information. Of the 152 organisations which did so, 113 of them said that they were able to support everyone who was either already using their outreach service or who contacted them or during that week. The remaining 40 organisations between them were unable to support 455 women who had approached them during that week. In most such cases, these women would have offered a place on a waiting list, and given support in future when capacity became available. Some might have been referred to alternative service provision.

We also asked all organisations – whether or not they operate a specific “helpline” - about telephone calls they received on the Day to Count³¹. Responding organisations told us they received at least 1,120 calls³² asking for support and/or information, the vast majority of which (94% -1053 calls) were answered in person on the same day. This equates to at least **1,600 calls** if non-responding organisations are taken into account.

³¹ “Please give the number of telephone calls from women (or others calling on their behalf) seeking information/support for domestic or sexual violence on Thursday June 16th 2011.”

³² Some organisations did not keep a record of how many calls they received.

Chapter 5: Summary and conclusion

Women's Aid's 2010-11 Annual Survey was based on responses from voluntary sector organisations providing specialist support services (including refuge accommodation and outreach services) to women and children experiencing domestic and sexual violence. 244 out of 330 eligible organisations responded to at least one section of the survey – a response rate of 74% overall; and 227 responded to both surveys (69%). For most purposes, we have used an average response rate of 70% in order to estimate total numbers using all service provision.

The results of this survey indicate that the domestic and sexual violence sector in England continues to provide a wide range of both refuge and non-refuge based services, giving help and support to large numbers of women and children annually. During 2010-11, an estimated **137,160 women and 43,280 children and young people** were provided with one or more forms of direct support following domestic and/or sexual violence. 18,170 women and 19,100 children were provided with refuge accommodation, and the remainder with other forms of outreach, advocacy, counselling and support. A further **86,170 children** were supported indirectly as a result of their mothers using outreach and other non-refuge services.

These figures indicate a further increase in the number of women supported in both refuge accommodation and by non-refuge-based services; though there has been a slight drop in the numbers of children and young people directly supported in specialist outreach services. (This could possibly relate to the removal of funding for such services, and is likely to worsen in future due to the 35% reduction in specialist outreach support staff for children and young people, between June 2010 and June 2011. See Chapter 3, section 3.8).

The numbers of women and children resident in refuge accommodation on the Day to Count³³ are very similar to those resident on typical days in 2010 and in 2009 and represent an 83% occupancy rate overall. On the same day, an estimated 320 women and their children seeking accommodation in a refuge were turned away – the majority of these because the refuge was full. This indicates that there was little or no available capacity in many areas for other women and children needing safe emergency accommodation, until some of the existing residents moved on. Overall, the total number of refuge spaces across England constitutes just over 65% of the number of places needed, based on the estimate of one family place per 10, 000 population³⁴.

³³ An estimated 3,410 women and 3,720 children.

³⁴ In 1986, the European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities said one refuge space should be available per 10,000 inhabitants, and this has generally been accepted in the UK and across Europe as the minimum necessary. See for example, Quilgars, Deborah and Pleace, Nicholas (2010) *Meeting the needs of households at risk of domestic violence in England: The role of accommodation and housing-related support services* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government); Logar, Rosa (2006) *Bridging gaps: From good intentions to good co-operation* (Vienna: WAVE Co-ordination Office); WAVE Co-ordination Office (2004) *Away from violence: Guidelines for setting up and running a women's refuge* (Vienna: WAVE).

From the annual figures, the number of women and children with no recourse to public funds that are being financially supported for a temporary period in refuge accommodation has risen again, by around 25%. This now amounts to around 4% of all refuge residents both annually and on the Day to Count.

From the Day to Count, 12% of women resident in refuges were known to be disabled³⁵. Only 5% were in employment – indicating the difficulties women face in remaining in work when moving to a refuge. 67% had children with them, the majority of these children being under 5 years of age. 3% were known to have escaped forced marriage – though the true proportion could be higher; and many of these had also been subject to partner and/or family violence as well.

Continued funding for services was of considerable concern for some respondents; and these concerns will have become still greater as a result of the government spending review and forthcoming cuts in local authority budgets. Total staff numbers had already dropped considerably between June 2010 and June 2011 – with the exception of IDVAs, ISVAs³⁶, and volunteer staff.

Take-up of training for the Women's Aid national accredited qualification in domestic and sexual violence was also to some extent limited by reduced resources: while one in five respondents said of their staff had undertaken this training, the cost of completing the course and achieving the qualification was the most frequently given reason for not doing so.

The provision of specialist accommodation for victims of domestic and sexual violence, together with outreach, advocacy and other support services for women, children and young people, is crucial to the safety and well-being of many survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Taken as a whole, the evidence provided from these surveys reinforces the importance of these specialist services, and the need for continuing and sustainable funding across the Women's Aid network of local voluntary sector organisations.

³⁵ In previous years, the proportion of disabled residents has tended to be under-estimated – judging from increased numbers being identified within the Service Users' Feedback Surveys.

³⁶ Many such posts have benefited from central government funding, which is not available for other support staff.