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# Introduction to Routes to Support

## Summary

Routes to Support is the UK wide database of violence against women and girls services and refuge vacancies. Services listed on the database run a full range of service types including outreach, helpline, IDVA, DAPA and floating support services. Routes to Support is an Internet based system but is not publicly accessible; access is only available to authorised staff in domestic violence agencies. Each service has an individual record on the database, which includes key details - such as entry criteria and restrictions - that help determine whether the domestic violence service is suitable for the woman being referred.

The service first launched in December 2002 as UKRefugesonline (UKROL) and concentrated on domestic abuse services and refuge vacancies, over time our services have also started to offer wider range of support to women experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women such as sexual abuse, trafficking, forced marriage and FGM. Because of this the Steering Group agreed that the name “UKRefugesonline” no longer adequately represented the project and the services listed. With that in mind we were delighted to announce that from 22 May 2017 we would run the same vital resource but with a brand new name, “Routes to Support: the UK violence against women and girls service directory”

## Benefits

* Routes to Support aims to improve the services received by women and children escaping domestic abuse in need of refuge accommodation and other support services.
* Domestic violence practitioners are able to access information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to seek support services and refuge vacancies for women and children in need.
* The service increases the speed and efficiency by which domestic violence practitioners can refer women to suitable refuges and other services, as it negates the need to spend valuable time phoning around refuges. This means that women at risk can access the services they need more quickly.
* The database also provides an agreed selection of data to the Gold Book Online which services are willing to share more widely. It does not contain vacancy data and services can choose not to share any information here. Basic public contact details are also included in the public directory on the Women’s Aid website – again services can opt out.

## Organisations involved

The Routes to Support partnership consists of the leading domestic violence bodies across the UK: Women’s Aid Federation of England; Welsh Women’s Aid; Scottish Women’s Aid; Refuge; and Northern Ireland Women’s Aid. The technical system is managed by Strategic Applications Ltd.

## How to apply

To apply for access to or inclusion on Routes to Support you will need to complete, sign and return the Access and Inclusion Application at the end of this pack along with the following supporting information:

* Your constitution or memorandum of articles
* Your aims and principles
* Any publicity you have and information about the domestic violence services you provide
* If possible, a copy of your latest annual report.

**Please note that if you are also completing an application for Full Membership you need not send the above information twice.**

Once access has been approved you will need to return the signed declaration page of the Service Level Agreement on page 14 of this document and complete an additional questionnaire giving us information to create your service entry (not included in this pack).

## Contact Details

Routes to Support Co-ordinating Organisation: Women's Aid Federation of England.

Contact: Sarah Davidge

Telephone: 0117 983 7136

E-mail: ukrol@womensaid.org.uk

# Routes to Support Criteria for Access & Inclusion Policy

## Background & Rationale

The Routes to Support system, the public directory (Gold Book) and the information contained on the Women’s Aid website, are all intended to provide women and referring organisations with a listing of those organisations that currently provide services that specifically address the needs of women and children experiencing domestic violence/abuse.

It is important to note that, though all Routes to Support partners have a vested interest in raising and promoting the quality of domestic violence/abuse services for women and children, it is not currently within the scope of the project to veto the inclusion of services throughout the UK-wide network on the basis of the quality of the service provided.

The purpose of this policy therefore, is to clarify the different eligibility criteria for:

1. Inclusion in the system so that other organisations can view information about the service and make referrals.
2. Access to the system so that the organisation listed can also view information about other services.

We have taken the view throughout the policy that this system should only be accessed by female staff that provide services to women and children. This will mean that some services may be listed on the system, but will not have access to the system.

## Policy

**Criteria for Inclusion (listing on the system):**

The criteria for inclusion in the Routes to Support system, the public directory (Gold Book) and the Women’s Aid website are as follows:

1. The main activity of the organisation must be the provision of services specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse.
2. An exception to the above criteria, may be granted to other organisations eg. organisations that provide a service to men and women who have experienced same-sex abuse or to those organisations that run a pet fostering service for the pets of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse.
3. The organisation must support the following primary aim: “to promote the protection of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse”.
4. The organisation must complete all compulsory information in the questionnaire and also provide information regarding the delivery of services by or for men.
5. The organisation must be able to provide, where further proof is needed, a copy of its latest annual report and where necessary, a copy of its Constitution including its aims and objectives.

**Criteria for Access:**

The criteria for access to the Routes to Support system are:

1. Either:
   1. The only activity of the organisation is the provision of services specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse.
   2. The organisation is able to demonstrate that:
      1. the main activity of the organisation is the provision of services specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse; and
      2. that where the organisation provides services to men, this is either for “referrals only” (such as in the case of a domestic violence/abuse helpline) or the services provided to men are a separate part of the organisation and the organisation is will not have access to the system; and
2. the organisation does not employ men in the direct service provision to women and children.
3. A named representative of the organisation must sign the Routes to Support Service Level Agreement.

Please note that, in line with the above criteria, access will not be granted to pet fostering organisations.

# Routes to Support Fee Structure

Women’s Aid is pleased to offer inclusion on and access to Routes to Support at a very heavily subsidised rate (compared to the actual costs of running it – see footnotes).

In addition, Women’s Aid is offering an enhanced subsidy to those organisations who are Women’s Aid Members. We are pleased to inform you that if you decide to join Women’s Aid, as a Full Member you will receive up to **three service entries on Routes to Support free of charge,** a substantial further discount on any additional entries as well a range of other services. Membership fees are set on a sliding scale between £75 and £600 per annum depending on the annual income of your organisation. If you would like to join Women’s Aid please visit our website for more information at [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk) or contact Sarah Davidge on [ukrol@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:ukrol@womensaid.org.uk) or 0117 9837136.

## Summary of the Routes to Support fee structure:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Women’s Aid Members | Non-Members |
| 3 free service entries to Routes to Support (Subject to meeting the access and inclusion criteria) | No free service entries |
| ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FEE[[1]](#footnote-1) - MORE THAN 3 ENTRIES  Access and Inclusion £50/entry  Inclusion only £20/entry(50% discount) | ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FEE – ALL ENTRIES  Access and Inclusion £100/entry  Inclusion only £ 40/entry |
| Set up fee[[2]](#footnote-2) – one off  £25 per new service entry  (50% discount) | Set up fee- one off2  £50 per new service entry |



# Service Level Agreement

This Service Level Agreement is intended to ensure that the Routes to Support system remains effective and secure and helps refuge and domestic abuse services provide a better service to women and children experiencing domestic abuse. It sets out each party’s obligations including your organisation’s responsibilities in using the system.

## About Routes to Support

Routes to Support is a UK-wide online information system that contains information about domestic abuse services available for women and children and refuge vacancies.

The Routes to Support system comprises a carefully passworded website with a strict level of security that is available only to refuge and domestic abuse service providers and, via a confidentiality agreement, to those who are responsible for building and administering the system. The system includes:

* information about services and accommodation provided by refuge and domestic abuse service providers;
* up to date information about vacancies (bed spaces) available;
* accurate and up-dated public and non-public contact details for referral process;
* search functions to enable searches for specific support services, geographical areas and vacancies;
* permissions for inclusion in the UK Gold Book and the online Domestic Abuse Directory.

It does not contain confidential address information and will not be linked to any publicly accessible database that stores confidential addresses.

## Routes to Support roles and responsibilities of the Project Partners:

The Routes to Support project as a whole is managed by the “Project Partners”, namely: Scottish Women’s Aid, Welsh Women’s Aid, Women’s Aid Federation of England and Women’s Aid Federation of Northern Ireland.

Each Women’s Aid organisation “owns” and is responsible for the data and information collected within its remit.

**All Partners are responsible for:**

* providing quarterly reports to the Project Steering Committee which include accurate information about activities undertaken, income and expenditure;
* providing annual audited accounts relating to income and expenditure on the Project;
* providing figures on anticipated costs for the planning of forthcoming budgets;
* participating in any working groups as identified by the Steering Group as required;
* providing statistics, data, and other information requested by the Project Co-ordinator in the process of fulfilling the Fundraising and Public relations protocols
* monitoring and carrying out daily telephone reminders to ensure that vacancy information is inputted on a daily basis by participating refuge organisations;
* generating income for the project

**The four Women’s Aid federations are also responsible for the following in their respective countries:**

* undertaking biennial research to update information about services on the system;
* providing telephone support for user management and any ongoing training issues;
* user management;
* providing telephone training on how to:
* set-up, update and discontinue user logins for your organisation;
* search for and view current vacancies;
* obtain information on admission practices and referral procedures;
* perform more advanced searches on other criteria;
* confirm updated details about your organisation online;
* update vacancy information.

**Women’s Aid Federation of England is also responsible for:**

* producing the public directory, the UK Gold Book, in accordance with Steering Group decisions. This directory will provide information and contact details of domestic abuse services for women and children throughout the UK;

In addition, the Partners delegate to Women’s Aid Federation of England, until further notice or until alternative arrangements are agreed by the Steering Group, project co-ordination which includes the following:

preparation and circulation of papers for Steering Group meetings including proposals for draft budgets and funding sources, service delivery issues and any other papers Partners may wish to submit;

* co-ordination and administration of the Steering Group;
* liaison with Resource Information Services (RIS);
* compilation of the annual budget;
* fundraising activities and liaison with funders; and
* compilation of reports from the activities reports provided by all Partners relating to their activities undertaken and income and expenditure.

Each Project Partner has agreed to these conditions as outlined in schedule 1 of the Joint Venture Agreement.

**Technical support/contractors:**

The Project is currently supported by Strategic Apps Ltd who built, have updated and have technically supported the Project.

Strategic Apps Ltd, or any other technical support/contractors as appointed by the Steering Group, will be responsible for:

* providing ongoing technical support for the Routes to Support system;
* hosting the Routes to Support system on the internet and providing technical support for the hosting of the system;
* ensuring data is securely and regularly backed up

## Routes to Support Roles and Responsibilities of Service Usergroups:

By signing this Service Level Agreement you are agreeing to each of the following conditions. Failure to adhere to these conditions may result in your service being suspended from the Routes to Support site. In addition, your service may be removed from any future editions of the UK Gold Book. If your service is removed from the site an administrative fee may be required in order for your service to be reinstated.

1. You agree to use Routes to Support as the key source of information on vacancies in refuges and to obtain information regarding domestic abuse services.
2. Services will not sell, trade, or pass on to a third party (other than individual clients) information obtained from Routes to Support without the express permission of the Steering Group.
3. Services will follow the specified referral procedure for each service contained on Routes to Support, when making referrals to other domestic abuse service providers.
4. Services will follow the specified referral procedure contained on Routes to Support, when providing a service.
5. Services will keep confidential all non-public information, including non-public contact numbers and numbers of vacancies contained on Routes to Support.
6. Each service must nominate one user for the role of Project Admin user. If this person leaves another member of staff must be nominated for the role.
7. Primary users must ensure that all individual users within their usergroup have a unique and individual login, password and answers to security questions. Passwords must not be shared by staff within individual services.
8. Primary users must provide logins and passwords to female staff only.
9. Primary users must ensure that staff or volunteers who leave their organisation are suspended and/or deleted from their usergroup, otherwise they will be in breach of the security measures.
10. Research Update - It is the responsibility of individual organisations to ensure that the information on their services is checked and updated when any changes take place and when requested by the Managing Agent.
11. Once trained it is the responsibility of individual organisations to ensure that that training is disseminated within their organisations. Charges may be levied for additional training.
12. In accordance with the criteria for access and inclusion (see Appendix 1) you must inform the relevant Women’s Aid federation for your country if your services change, particularly if you begin offering services to men and/or employ male members of staff.
13. You should inform your managing agent of any problems with accessing the Routes to Support system.
14. You should request the permission of the Routes to Support Steering Group before any form of publicity or promotion of the system – in line with the PR protocol.
15. All general public enquiries about Routes to Support should be passed on to the main line numbers listed below.
16. You agree to keep confidential the direct lines and identity of Routes to Support staff (especially in relation to enquiries from other non-domestic violence/abuse service provider organisations and the general public).
17. You should refer all enquiries about Routes to Support to your Routes to Support contact person by taking details and passing these on by phone or email.
18. Services must update vacancy information as soon as possible, at least once a day by 10.30 each weekday morning. This is essential even if the number of vacancies have not changed as this informs other service users that the information provided is up to date and therefore accurate.
19. You should contact the relevant Routes to Support vacancy monitoring staff immediately if you are unable to update your vacancies or add a note the system.
20. Your service may be required to pay a fee to be reinstated on the system should you be suspended from the site for repeated, consistent and unreasonable failure (as defined in the Routes to Support vacancy monitoring protocol) to update your vacancies and/or inform your managing agency of problems doing so.
21. Services must have separate entries for each geographical region in order to maintain the efficiency of the search functions on Routes to Support and the provision of services to survivors.

You should contact the relevant Partner depending on your needs (please see general roles and responsibilities above):

Scottish Women’s Aid: 0131 226 6606

Welsh Women’s Aid: 01286 882 733

Women’s Aid Federation of England: 0117 983 7136

Women’s Aid Federation of Northern Ireland: 02890 249 041

## Routes to Support Service Level Agreement Declaration

Our organisation agrees to adhere to all the points listed above and understands that failure to do so may result in our service being suspended from the Routes to Support site with an administrative fee being charged in order to be reinstated. We also state that we support the following primary aim of the system: “to promote the protection of women and children who have experienced domestic abuse”.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Signed by (name): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Contact email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Routes to Support Primary user name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\* The Primary user name given should be the individual who has permission to manage your usergroup and provide/confirm information about the services you provide.

Policy reviewed and agreed on: 27 April 2009



# Routes to Support Access and Inclusion Application

## About Routes to Support

Routes to Support is a UK-wide online information system containing information about specialist domestic violence/abuse services available for women and children and refuge vacancies.

The Routes to Support system is managed through a carefully passworded website, with a strict level of security that is available only to specialist domestic violence/abuse service providers. The system includes:

* information about services and accommodation provided by specialist domestic violence/abuse service providers;
* up to date information about vacancies (bedspaces) available in refuge houses;
* accurate and up-dated public and non-public contact details for referral process;
* search functions to enable searches for specific support services, geographical areas and vacancies;

It does **not** contain confidential address information and will not be linked to any database that stores confidential addresses.

Routes to Support partners are expected to raise and promote the quality of domestic violence/abuse services for women and children. It is not currently within the scope of the project to determine the quality of the service provided.

## Access and Inclusion to Routes to Support

Currently, there is a two-tier level system operating on *Routes to Support* for services that meet the Access and Inclusion Criteria*.*

1. A service can have inclusion on the system. Inclusion means that the service’s details will be available to view on Routes to Support and, if appropriate for the organisation, the Gold Book Online and the Women’s Aid website so that other organisations can view information about the service and make referrals..
2. A service which has inclusion may also be able to gain access to Routes to Support.Access to Routes to Support enables a service to go into the system via individual usernames and passwords and search for information on domestic violence services including vacancy details of refuge services.

The purpose of this questionnaire therefore, is to clarify the different eligibility criteria for access and inclusion.

Organisations that are not constituted for the primary purpose of providing domestic violence services cannot be included in or gain access to Routes to Support. Therefore it is not possible for an organisation to have access to Routes to Support if they are not listed as a specialist provider on the system.

The current Routes to Support policy is that this system should only be accessed by female staff providing services to women and children. Therefore some services may be listed on the system, but will not have access to it.

In line with the access and inclusion criteria in this document, access will not be granted to pet fostering organisations.

For those services that are not eligible for access to the system, please refer to the Gold Book Online, an online database of service information which includes that information from Routes to Support which services are happy to share more widely. For more information on this resource contact [Goldbook@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:Goldbook@womensaid.org.uk)

## 

## Questionnaire

Please note that 1 box **must** be ticked in each section:

**Inclusion**

a) Please answer the following questions if you wish to be INCLUDED in Routes to Support, the Gold Book Online and the Domestic Abuse Directory (please tick):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | |
|  | Our main activity is the provision of services specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse |
|  | **Or,** we provide a service to men and women who have experienced same-sex abuse |
|  | **Or,** we run a pet fostering service for the pets of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse |
| 2. | |
|  | We support and have signed the statement of support for Women’s Aid\* |
| 3. | |
|  | We agree to complete all compulsory information in the service questionnaire and also provide information regarding the delivery of services by or for men. |
| 4. | |
|  | We agree to provide Women’s Aid with a copy of our Constitution or Governing Document including our aims and objectives and, when available, the latest annual report and any publication material along with this questionnaire. |

**Access**

b) Please answer these further questions if you wish to also have ACCESS to Routes to Support (please tick):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | |
|  | We confirm that the only activity of the organisation is the provision of services specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse |
| **Or,** we confirm that:  the main activity of the organisation is the provision of services specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children who have experienced domestic violence/abuse;  **and**  that where the organisation provides services to men, this is either for “referrals only” (such as in the case of a domestic violence/abuse helpline) or the services provided to men are a separate part of the organisation and will not have access to the system; |
| 2. | |
|  | We can confirm that the computer used to access *Routes to Support* will be based in a female-only space and that female staff only will be given access to the system. |
| 3. | |
|  | We agree to complete all compulsory information in the service questionnaire and also provide information regarding the delivery of services by or for men. |
| 4. | |
|  | A named representative of the organisation will sign the Routes to Support Service Level Agreement. |

**PLEASE COMPLETE**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of project: |  | | | |
| Named representative: | | | | |
|  | | | | |
| Address: |  | | | |
| Phone No: |  | | Fax No: |  |
| E-mail: |  | | | |
| Type of organisation (e.g. refuge/helpline, etc) | |  | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Signed: |  | Date: |  |

Please send the completed questionnaire to:

Routes to Support Project Coordinator,

Women’s Aid,

PO Box 3245,

Bristol

BS2 2EH

You should also enclose:

* your constitution,
* aims and principles,
* any publicity you have and information about the domestic violence services you provide
* if possible, a copy of your latest annual report.

(Please note if you are also including a Full Membership Application you do not need to provide this information twice)

1. *The average cost per service for maintaining the UKROL system is over* ***£350****.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *The average cost of setting up each new entry on the system is over* ***£100****.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)