

# Independent Choices

Meeting the needs and promoting the rights of women who have experienced domestic abuse

# Annual Review 20092010

**from  
beginning  
to end**

Providing  
independent  
support  
to women  
since 1978

Special features



An end to violence  
towards women

**The 16 Days of Action  
Against Gender Violence**

**Economic Abuse**

INDEPENDENT  
CHOICES

Including reports on our

**Women's Domestic Abuse Helpline**

**Community Helpline Language Service**

**Women's Safety Service**



Meeting the needs and promoting  
the rights of women who have  
experienced domestic abuse

## Contents

Page 2	<b>Chair's welcome</b>
Page 3	<b>From Beginning to End 16 Days of Action 2009</b>
Page 4	<b>Independent Choices Overview and work into 2009 - 2010</b>
Page 5	<b>Women's Domestic Abuse Helpline</b>
Page 6	<b>Community Helpline Language Service</b>
Page 7	<b>Women's Safety Service</b>
Page 8	<b>Volunteering</b>
Page 9	<b>Economic abuse</b>
Page 10	<b>Partnership support At a glance - Statistics 2009 - 2010</b>
Page 11	<b>Treasurers Report Accounts summary</b>
Page 12	<b>Opening the Shutters - International Women's Day Thanks and Acknowledgements Contact us</b>

## Chair's welcome

Welcome to the 2009 - 2010 annual report for Independent Choices. This has been an exciting year for us with the implementation of our business plan and appointment of our new Chief Officer, Sam Priestley in June. We have become a stronger organisation, with clear leadership and support structures in place for our staff and volunteers ensuring the continued future and development of our services to women. We were successful this year in tendering for the Women's Safety Service with Greater Manchester Probation Trust (GMPT) and saw it's development during the year with the addition of new staff to the team and enhanced management support. This service has been established now for 13 years with Independent Choices and provides vital support to women who are the victims and current partners of men undertaking the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme with GMPT.

This year, our services (including the Helpline and Community Helpline Language Services) reached out to over 8,000 women across Greater Manchester with increasing use of our new email advice service. Thanks as always must go to our funders and supporters for 2009 - 2010 and to the staff and volunteers who continue to deliver high quality services with commitment and dedication. Thanks to fellow board members who have ceased their term of office this year. We were also able to welcome new members to the board including them in our board review day in February 2010. Next year we will be promoting the membership of Independent Choices alongside recruiting new skills to the board.

I hope this Annual Report informs you of our work and our values and highlights our ongoing commitment to ensure that domestic abuse is kept on the agenda and that women's rights and choices are supported.

**Louise Murray**  
**Chair of Board of Trustees**

### Domestic abuse training and consultancy

Independent Choices has over thirty years experience of working with, and influencing strategy for domestic abuse issues.

- We are available to provide training and consultancy on request
- Bespoke training a speciality (rates vary)

For more information on the range of courses available and costs, please email us at: [admin@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:admin@independentchoices.org.uk)





An end to violence towards women

# from beginning to end

The theme of this report and our activities during the annual 16 days of action 2009 (25th November - 10th December), was 'From beginning to end'. The 16 days of action is a period of international campaigning that calls for the Elimination of Gender violence.



Speaker - Faye Macrory, NHS Manchester

The key message of this theme is that support and choices should be available to women from the early stages of abuse to the point when abuse may reach crisis point, from prevention through to post support. Independent Choices believe that this can only be done if there is enhanced public awareness and that there is a range and a pathway of services for survivors of abuse across all aspects of our community. This involves not only frontline efforts but also leadership and commitment at a strategic level.

We have work towards the realisation of a 'from beginning to end' approach through this year. Specifically we have done this through our economic abuse project; Working proactively with local authorities, as an example of this we worked with Manchester City Council on a homeless protocol for women in domestic abuse situations. We have also held meetings with the domestic abuse leads in each of the ten boroughs and planning for and enabled Greater Manchester campaigning and 'shared message' approach. Most significantly however was our work on the theme culminated in the Independent Choices multiagency regional conference on the 3rd December 2009.

### 'Co-ordinating community responses to domestic violence' taken from the book by Ellen Pence

- Developing policies and protocols
- Enhancing networking among service providers
- Building monitoring and tracking systems
- Developing a supportive infrastructure for victims
- Providing sanctions and rehabilitation opportunities
- Addressing the needs of children
- Evaluating the effectiveness of community response

### IT'S A FACT

A study of 200 women's experiences of domestic violence commissioned by Women's Aid, found that 60% of the women had left because they feared that they or their children would be killed by the perpetrator.

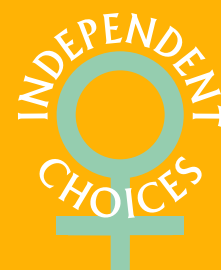
(Humphreys & Thiara, 2002)



The vision of the conference in December was to enable a greater 'continuum of care' across all sectors responsible to work with domestic abuse. Hence we were pleased to see participation from all ten boroughs of Greater Manchester and attendance of 82 practitioners representing 52 agencies.

Networking was another a key aspect of the day, workshops and stalls were facilitated by a range of voluntary and statutory providers. Thanks go to our speakers Emma Scott - Rights of Women; Faye Macrory - NHS Manchester; Superintendent Simon Retford - Greater Manchester Police and Kate Cook - Manchester Metropolitan University. The event was funded with the support of Greater Manchester Police, Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and Greater Manchester Probation Trust.

Greater Manchester 16 days of action activities in 2009 also included over 20 events across Greater Manchester. Involvement was seen from groups across the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester and involved people from the sporting world, arts, Women's sector, men's campaigning organisations (White Ribbon Campaign) and Black and Ethnic minority groups.





International Women's Day at Manchester Town Hall

# Independent Choices overview and work in 2009 - 2010

by Sam Priestley  
Chief Officer

**This year (2009 - 2010) has been a progressive and eventful year for Independent Choices. As our three year business plan 2008 - 2011 enters into its second year, we have seen developments in both the quality and reach of our services and also within our organisational structure.**

This year the Helpline and the Women's Safety Service reports show that not only have we responded to a significant amount of need within the region and for individuals who are still in the daily fear of domestic abuse. But additionally, we have improved and diversified services further by improving our awareness and response towards the significant and complex problem of domestic abuse. The staff team has grown from seven in the team to nine.

As I started the role as the first Chief Officer in June 2009, I was enthusiastic to join such an energetic and visionary organisation. Having previously worked in the Women's Aid myself in the 1990's, I have been professionally aware for the past 14 years of the excellent work of the Helpline and Independent Choices.

With the legacy of 31 years of organisational achievements in offering safe, supportive services and independent advice to women, I have now focused work this year with the board to look at where our efforts would be best utilised strategically and into the future.

We have carried out our work during 2009 - 2010 within two contexts: Firstly, in the context of unprecedented change. Change in how women want to access services; change in how services will be commissioned, particularly during the recession; and change in how we as a voluntary/ third sector agency can be flexible to the political and social agenda. And secondly, within the context of enhanced interagency regional working. Independent Choices believes that by sharing and uniting our services and resources and by developing one clear message about domestic abuse across Greater Manchester that women survivors will be safer and have more choice. Hence we are advocates at a strategic level at forums such as GMAC SVCG (Greater Manchester Against Crime, Serious Violent Crime group) and we have worked closely with the Greater Manchester Police on the prevention of domestic homicide. We have liaised with our closest partners in the women's sector across Greater Manchester and visited our partners in the National domestic abuse and specialist helplines. We have explored with them our vision and objectives and we strongly hope these links will get stronger in the next two-five years.

## Plans into 2010 - 2011

In order to further realise our vision... 'That all women and their dependents are made aware of their rights and offered choices so that they can live without the fear of abuse', it is our intention to strengthen our existing services and to design and develop new services and innovations to reach women in 2010 - 2011. We will also encourage the continuation of services for women by women and aim to do so with our partners in the women's sector.

In meeting needs, we would focus on those women whose domestic abuse remains under reported or where current services are insufficiently meeting needs. These include particularly young women, disabled women, women in black and minority ethnic communities and women with complex needs. We will endeavour to learn more from women in the year ahead about the best ways to support them. We intend to further utilise multimedia and have already updated our website [www.wdchoices.org.uk](http://www.wdchoices.org.uk)

As with everyone in this unsecure financial time we intend to diversify our income and increase fundraising. We will work to secure a further contract of delivering the Women's Safety Service which is up for re-tender in August 2010 and we will continue our work to ensure funding is maintained for the helpline services.

We hope you enjoy reading this report which goes on to detail the actual outcomes of our work in the period. We are very happy to hear from you if you would like to know more of our work and vision. We look forward to working with you our partners and the community of Greater Manchester in uniting against domestic abuse from when it may begin to when it ends.

**“ Our commitment to provide services continues from the beginning of abuse to when it ends... ”**



# Women's Domestic Abuse Helpline Services

by Karen Harrison  
Helpline Service Manager

**In 2009 - 2010 we sustained a reliable and confidential Helpline service to women who are experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse. We also provided consultation, advice, support and signposting to agencies.**

This service has continued to be available for 33 hours per week with no break in service. There were 6193 incoming contacts to the Helpline service and 1847 outgoing contacts were made on behalf of women

Our non-urgent email advice service for women and agencies continues and we respond to emails within three working days. Emails to this support service can at times be very serious in nature so staff have been professionally trained to run this service and respond appropriately and provide clear advice on rights. We also encourage women to follow up the email by calling us if they feel it is helpful so further support can be given. A freephone number would be a great encouragement if resources can be secured.

Independent Choices improved the website design and the information provided on the site. This has directly improved the Helpline's ability to support to women as it includes information on economic abuse and a new downloadable safety plan which includes financial safety planning. We can also now monitor visitors to the site [www.wdchoices.org.uk](http://www.wdchoices.org.uk) which had 7809 visits; of these 4032 were unique hits.

**“ Is your home where the hurt is? ”**



This year we carried out domestic abuse awareness training for 21 new volunteers and more structured training and awareness sessions for all volunteers and workers at the Helpline. We contribute proactively to support women engage in work across Greater Manchester.

By training volunteers to a high standard they are able to gain employment in the domestic abuse and related fields, we provide references and support. We are very committed to assisting women to sustain employment if they are experiencing domestic abuse. Both these factors help to reduce worklessness in the region.

Other achievements this year include our continued attendance at practitioner forums, specialist working groups around domestic abuse and the Women's Aid conference in July 2009. We have even used our presentation skills to full effect when we took part in a 'Dragons Den' event in Salford, and won £1000, to help promote the Helpline service throughout the Salford area.

In January 2010 we started work on an interagency Greater Manchester campaign on domestic abuse called 'End the Fear' [www.endthefear.co.uk](http://www.endthefear.co.uk) The campaign is intended to have a regional reach during the Football World Cup June 2010. The helpline prioritises work that enables greater awareness of services to all victims of domestic abuse in Greater Manchester. We are preparing to extend our opening hours to contribute to such campaigns. We continue to speak out in the media and utilise promotional opportunities to reach new groups of women who maybe in fear of abuse.

We contributed to a number of research and evaluation reports this year and we are mentioned by Domestic Abuse Management Group (DAMG) internal review and Greater Manchester Against Crime (GMAC) as being an important service model to be developed and sustained.

We look forward to a strengthened commissioning future for services such as the Helpline and in the meantime we continue to take the calls which support the women directly to end the fear of abuse.

## Type of advice provided in 2009 - 2010

Counselling & Support	<b>925</b>
Housing	<b>963</b>
Welfare Rights	<b>183</b>
Debt	<b>29</b>
Legal advice	<b>360</b>
Request for space	<b>2452</b>
Message for refuge	<b>85</b>
Tracing	<b>39</b>
Media	<b>36</b>
Volunteering	<b>376</b>
Consultation	<b>588</b>
Other call	<b>1404</b>

*NB: 7440 in total adds up to more than 6193 as more than one type of advice given.*

*Please also see map of statistics on page 10.*

## Who made the call

Agency	<b>1416</b>
Health Agency	<b>120</b>
Media	<b>31</b>
Social Services	<b>170</b>
DVO	<b>50</b>
Homeless Section	<b>692</b>
National DV Helpline	<b>2</b>
WA Group	<b>1051</b>
Family	<b>98</b>
Housing	<b>19</b>
Police	<b>119</b>
Other	<b>759</b>
Friend	<b>114</b>
IDVA	<b>213</b>
Self	<b>1339</b>

**The Helpline is operational Monday - Friday 10am - 4pm**

**Tuesday until 7pm 0161 636 7525**

**Non-urgent email service - response in 3 working days**

**[helpline@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:helpline@independentchoices.org.uk)**

“ The CHLS is well used by women who prefer to speak to someone in their first language - Urdu or Punjabi and who understands their culture and background

A4 poster in Urdu and Punjabi utilises tear-off strips along the bottom with the Helpline contact details.

# Community Helpline Language Service

by Farheen Anwar  
CHLS Supervisor

The Community Helpline Language Service (CHLS) for women of South Asian origin now in its fifth year is a service for an advertised 9 hours per week. The CHLS is a unique service provided by Independent Choices and is part of the Women's Domestic Abuse Helpline.

The languages spoken by the CHLS worker are Urdu and Punjabi with additional languages spoken by volunteers. We received 988 calls from or regarding women of South Asian origin. Although overall contacts to the Helpline are down from 2008 - 09, there is an actual increase in the number of calls from South Asian women. The CHLS Supervisor provided support for all volunteers with a focus on volunteers who can speak community languages.

To help raise awareness about the CHLS we received some funding to design a poster in Urdu and Punjabi. This involved hiring a model and a photographic studio in order to portray the right image. We have also recently amended our leaflets by adding a paragraph in Urdu in order to increase awareness further.

کیا گھر میں آپ کے ساتھ بدسلوکی ہو رہی ہے؟  
کی زچاڈے نالل ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਸਲੂਕੀ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ؟

کیا آپ ایک ایسی لڑکی ہیں جس کے ساتھ نیچے درج افراد بھڑائی، بدسلوکی، مالی یا جسمی بدسلوکی کر رہے ہیں یا آپ کی مرضی کے خلاف آپ کی شادی ہو رہی ہے؟

- کوئی ایسا فرد جس کے ساتھ آپ کے تعلقات ہیں
- جس کے ساتھ آپ کو تعلق پہلے تھا
- مطلقاً یا کوئی ترقی نہیں

اگر آپ کسی کے ساتھ راز میں اردو یا پنجابی میں بات کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو بلاپ ان کو نیچے درج نمبر پر فون کریں۔

سوموار اور منگل صبح 10 بجے تا 1 بجے سہ پہر  
بدھ 1 بجے سہ پہر تا 4 بجے سہ پہر

**0161 636 7525**  
Helpline: Monday - Friday 10am - 4pm  
Community Helpline Language Service in Urdu & Punjabi: Mon & Tues 10am - 1pm, Wed 1pm - 4pm  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

WOMEN'S DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE  
An Independent Choices Service

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

0161 636 7525  
[www.wdvh.org.uk](http://www.wdvh.org.uk)

A lot of the calls were around specific issues that BMER (Black Minority Ethnic and Refugee) women may face, such as:

- Immigration issues/No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)
- Language barriers
- Interpreters have little experience/knowledge of domestic abuse issues
- Forced marriages
- Religion used to control women
- Being accused of being too westernised
- Being prevented from integrating into society eg. not being allowed to go to language courses/employment training/women's groups
- Unaware of options/rights/laws
- Social exclusion
- Racism
- FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)
- Izzat (honour) & Sharm (shame) being brought on the family

“ It is an important Helpline and a lifeline for some women, as this may be the first call they make to an outside agency

# Women's Safety Service

by Joanne Korede  
Services Manager

Independent Choices are the current providers of the Women's Safety Service which is contracted by Greater Manchester Probation Trust to provide an advice and support service to women whose partners/ex-partners have been convicted of an offence in the context of domestic abuse and have been sentenced to attend the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP). The Women's Safety Service also supports women when their partners/ex-partners are attending the Healthy Relationships Programme in prison.

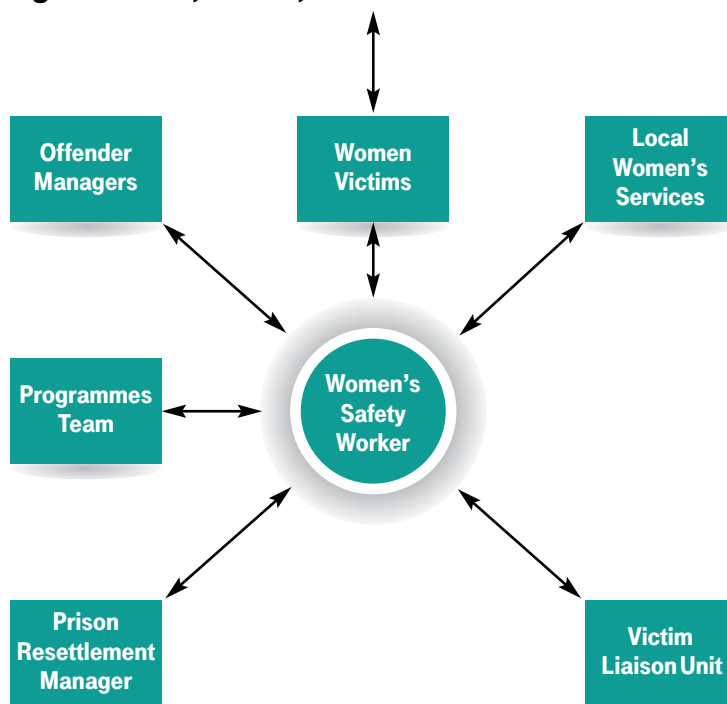
We did 443 safety plans from April 2009 to March 2010 with women this year and received 568 referrals for the same period.

In June 2009 - 2010 the new contract started. The contract was developed to employ a Service Manager, three full-time and one part-time women's safety workers and a women's safety project administrator. This was an increase of 1.5 staff. All staff are trained in Domestic Abuse Awareness, Victim's SARA (Spousal Assault Risk Assessment), Child Protection training, MARAC protocol and several of the team have attended a Self-Harm Awareness Training Course. The team work across the ten boroughs of Greater Manchester and are available throughout the week to give advice and support to women whose partners or ex-partners are attending the IDAP programme. Staff attend relevant forums such as Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC), Local Review Meetings and Multi-Agency Public Protection (MAPP) meetings. This year we now have achieved two staff fully trained by CAADA (Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse) as qualified Independent Domestic Violence Advisors. We attended the Respect National Practitioners Network Meeting in November 2009.

Some of the key functions of the Women's Safety Service are to promote women and children's safety by constructing a realistic safety plan taking into account the individual woman's circumstances. We also provide realistic information to women about the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme and Healthy Relationships Programme and the possible outcomes and keep women updated on attendance on the programmes. Another key function of the service is to make referrals to local women's support services for support, advice and assistance where more intensive support is needed. We also play a key role in contributing to the evaluation of IDAP by obtaining feedback from women at regular intervals.

## How we work at WSS...

A co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse  
Eg. MARAC, MAPP, DV Forum



Some comments about WSS from our services users:

“ All support and advice was excellent

“ I am very pleased with the support I received from WSS

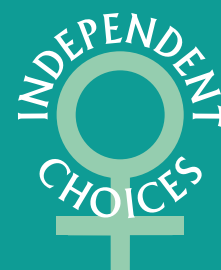
“ After my visit, I felt like a weight had been lifted

“ I have realised that incidents that happened to me were not my fault, listening to my worker helped me to realise that

### IT'S A FACT

In any one year, there are 13 million separate incidents of physical violence or threats of violence against women from partners or former partners.

(Walby and Allen, 2004)

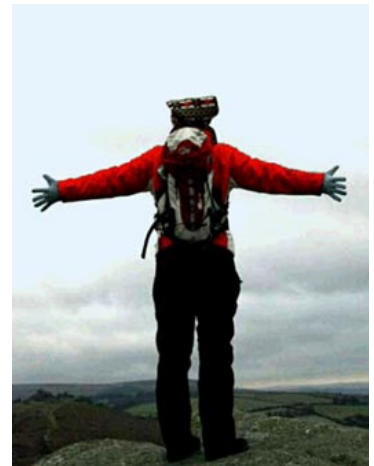


# Volunteers

We are very fortunate to have a team of strong volunteers at the helpline, but this current year has been less successful than previous years in sustaining volunteers for the rota.

Volunteer recruitment can be a challenge and therefore we were not always able to cover the two phone lines. A call can take over an hour to deal with, for example if a woman requires refuge space. If only one line is being covered this can result in the line being blocked for other incoming calls.

We are taking learning from this situation and developing our training and other options to ensure this team is strengthened next year.



## A volunteer's journey by Tahira

I have been a volunteer at the Helpline for approximately 18 months. I began volunteering because I have an interest in women's issues, more specifically I wanted to help, support and empower women who are experiencing/fleeing domestic abuse.

Since becoming a volunteer I have benefited from ongoing training and now have a much broader understanding of domestic abuse and associated issues such as housing, debt and welfare rights. I have also been able to gain knowledge of the various services and agencies that are available to women at both a local and national level.

Working at the Helpline has given me the knowledge and experience to secure two part time roles as a Domestic Abuse Outreach Worker. Although I am very busy I still continue to volunteer with the Helpline. I work with a great team of women within the Helpline who offer a strong peer structure; my skills and knowledge are continually updated enabling me to provide a better and more holistic service.

### IT'S A FACT

**Women are more likely than men to have experienced all types of intimate violence (partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking) since the ages of 16.**

**And nearly half the woman who had experienced intimate violence of any kind, were likely to have been victims of more than one kind of intimate abuse.**

(Coleman et al., 2007)

## Women by Yasmin K Ilahi

This poem was inspired by many books I have read on the mistreatment of women.

To be a woman is something to be cherished  
A mother, daughter, sister, wife and friend  
To be a woman is something to be cherished  
I have a brain a mind of my own, I have rights,  
hopes and dreams  
To be a woman is something to be cherished  
I have the right to freedom a voice, a choice  
I choose to love  
I choose to love  
I am a woman I am strong I belong  
To be a woman is something to be cherished,  
at the hands of a man women shall not perish.

*Yasmin was a volunteer with the Helpline 2009-2010*

# Economic abuse

As a response to the call to respond some of the earlier effects of the announcement of the national recession in 2009, IC applied for a short term grant from the Targeted Support Fund (September 2009- March 2010). However we wanted to make long term change so we decided to review our practice around responding to, recording and raising awareness of economic abuse and results have made a very positive impact for the future.

What is economic abuse? Economic abuse falls into four categories:

- 1 **Interfering with education and employment**  
prevented from getting a job, not letting you attend education courses
- 2 **Controlling access to economic resources**  
demanding your wages/benefits
- 3 **Refusing to contribute**  
putting all the bills in your name
- 4 **Generating economic cost**  
destroying your belongings, taking out loans in your name

Economic/financial abuse can have serious and long term effects on women and children experiencing it. Women and children can become trapped in a cycle of poverty; they can experience physical and psychological ill health, isolation and feeling that they can't escape from the abusive relationship.

By researching economic abuse (EA) as a form of domestic abuse Independent Choices (IC) and the Women's Domestic Abuse Helpline (WDAH), have become far more aware of the extent and varying forms of EA. Over the six months period we researched what EA is, who is affected by it and what other agencies were doing to support women that were experiencing EA. We also produced training materials that would help raise awareness of EA and assist women and agencies in safety planning. It has helped us to reach our objectives of supporting and advocating for women who experience all forms of abuse within an intimate relationship. It has enabled us to identify the varying forms of economic abuse and begin to monitor the extent of EA.

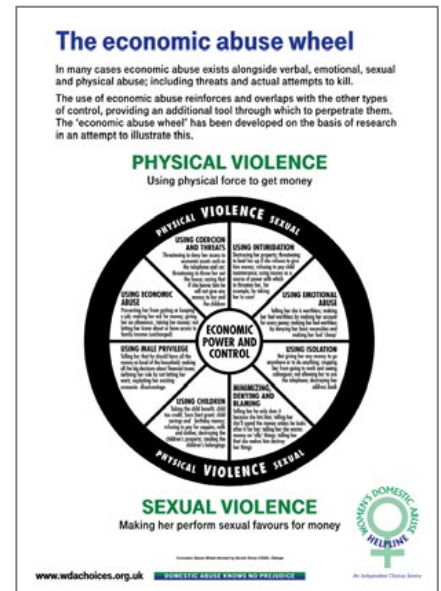
## Economic abuse seminar

The seminar was held as an International Women's Day event in March 2010 and was well attended by 30 workers from 21 agencies from the Greater Manchester area. As the hosts, we did a presentation on EA - what we had found from our research, naming the forms it can take and looking at statistics from other research. We also had a speaker who was a debt adviser, who talked about the issues for her organisation, and the increase that they had seen in women being forced to take secured loans against their property by their partner. She pointed out that a high proportion of women that they see are experiencing domestic abuse and often as part of that economic abuse but as an agency they don't monitor domestic abuse. We held four workshops around issues of domestic abuse. From the workshops we identified the four main areas that participants felt we should all focus on these were;

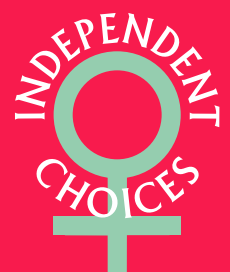
- Awareness/training for agencies and partnership working
- More advertising/awareness raising amongst women and the public
- Monitoring - to find out the extent of EA
- Partnership working

The materials that we have produced are:

- Training package to be used with volunteers at the Helpline and can be adapted to deliver to other agencies
- An enhanced safety plan that now includes financial planning. This can be used by volunteers/workers as a guide when talking to women or women themselves can download the safety plan off our website. This was included as handout to all participants on training
- Although not funded directly by TSF, we have added information on EA and the safety plan to our website
- Reproduced the EA wheel (with the permission of Refuge) and use of their information booklet to accompany the awareness/training sessions
- An EA presentation to be used with outside agencies to continue to raise awareness of EA
- We adapted our database and introduced 'type of abuse' experienced, including EA.



**“ We have made a ‘root to branch’ change in how we respond to and understand economic abuse and we know the legacy of this will last into the next few years, where we envisage demand and need for this type of support and advice to increase**



# Partnership supporting statement

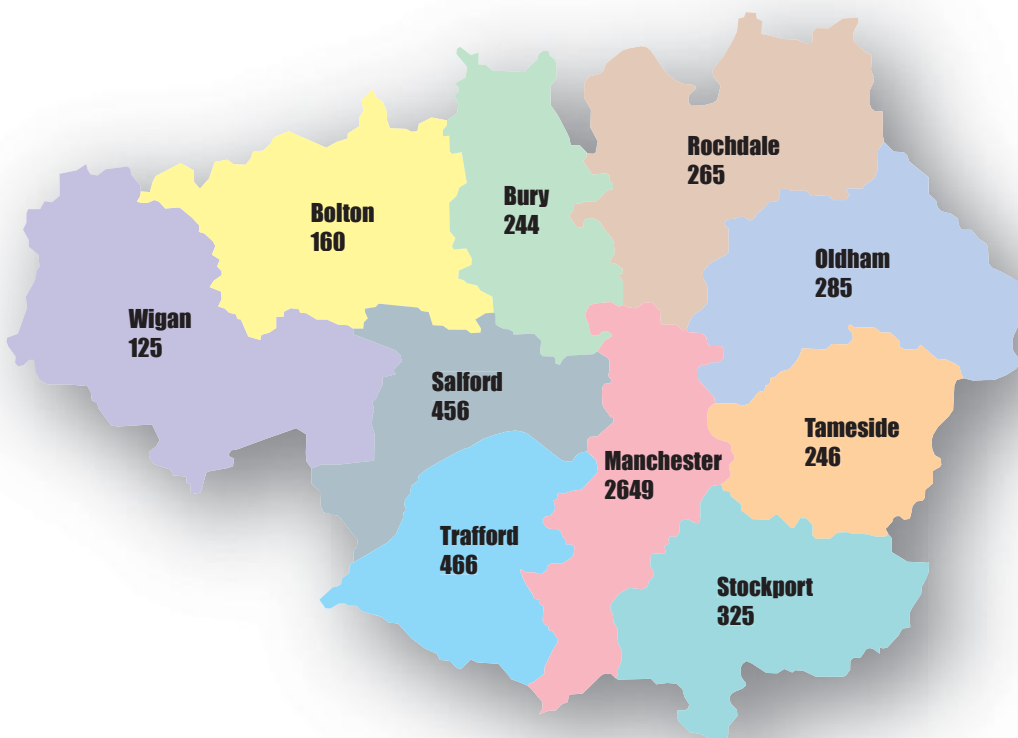
Despite an increasing profile and recognition of the strategic importance of dealing with domestic violence, the sector is characterised by a complex set of partnerships and arrangements between public and voluntary sector agencies. This is such a complex environment, and yet an issue of real strategic significance to the delivery of City Region priorities. Navigation through this complexity requires a single and authoritative voice and source of expertise at a GM level on the topic.

Independent Choices, having been supported by AGMA in the past is in a position to perform exactly this function, and indeed this work has become more directed and high profile in the last year or so. The GMAC Serious Violent Crime group, is committed to ensure a minimum standard of expected response from all commissioned agencies dealing with domestic violence, and this greater consistency of response is essential in building public confidence in the service offer. Independent Choices have been crucial to this work, bringing with them not only authority and expertise but also the learning and development of their own service offer.

**Will Blandamer**  
Director - GM Public Health Network

## Annual statistics at a glance

Further information can be provided on age, ethnicity and support needs on our website.



### WDAH incoming contacts

Area from	Contacts
Bolton	121
Bury	204
Oldham	247
Rochdale	229
Salford	420
Stockport	272
Tameside	216
Trafford	435
Wigan	90
Manchester	2544
Not known/not district specific	342
Outside Greater Manchester	1067
<b>Total calls</b>	<b>6193</b>

### WSS contacts

Area from	Contacts
Bolton	39
Bury	40
Oldham	38
Rochdale	36
Salford	36
Stockport	53
Tameside	30
Trafford	31
Manchester	105
<b>Total calls</b>	<b>408</b>

### Website stats

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Total
Unique hits	310	299	268	296	307	310	345	106	361	461	465	504	<b>4032</b>
Visits	546	530	525	631	610	631	693	511	666	804	772	890	<b>7809</b>

\*New website domain name [www.wdchoices.org.uk](http://www.wdchoices.org.uk) introduced in December 2009

# Treasurer's Report

**This year we developed a new finance handbook, and with this improved systems around finance which has made day-to-day and board responsibilities more efficient and effective.**

**We maintain close working relationships with all our funders and supporters, and we are grateful for their ongoing support.**

We have been proud to provide required monitoring information on a cyclical basis and have achieved our targets in relation to the same.

In October 2009 we took on a part time Finance Administrator, Tracey Bryson. Tracey works two days a week to improve our financial practice and support the operational needs of the organisation.

This year we secured a strong contract for the Women's Safety Service and have continued to run an efficient helpline service. With the appointment of the Chief Officer we look to increase and diversify our fundraising income further and fulfil the second year of our business plan.

## Accounts 2009 - 2010 summary

### Statement of Financial Activities Including Income and Expenditure Account Year Ended 31st March 2009

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2010 £	Total Funds 2009 £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
Donations	1,347	889	2,236	53,350
Grants	1,500	88,890	90,390	83,740
Contract Fees	172,564	-	172,564	132,360
Fees and other Income	-	-	-	-
Bank Interest	-	-	-	2
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>175,411</b>	<b>89,779</b>	<b>265,190</b>	<b>269,452</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>				
Staff Costs	164,554	55,457	220,011	148,156
Other Costs	41,112	38,225	79,337	58,995
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>205,666</b>	<b>93,682</b>	<b>299,348</b>	<b>207,151</b>
<b>Net Incoming Resources before Transfers</b>	-44,731	10,573	-34,158	62,301
Transfer between Funds	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure) for the year</b>	-44,731	10,573	-34,158	62,301
Balances Brought Forward	153,777	6,467	160,244	97,943
<b>Balances carried Forward</b>	<b>109,046</b>	<b>17,040</b>	<b>126,086</b>	<b>160,244</b>

All of the society's operations are classed as continuing.

Movements on reserves and all recognised surpluses or deficits are shown above.

The statements are an extract from the Independent Choices unaudited Financial Statements 2009 - 2010.

### SURVEY

#### 99% of women said "YES" to services for women by women.

For International Women's Day 2010, we attended the Manchester Town Hall event and carried out a survey of 100 women. Of this survey 96% said they would use domestic abuse services if they needed to and 99% said they would advise a friend to use them, if needed.

We asked whether they see a need for women's services to be delivered by women and 99% said yes. The two main reasons (total 62%) were that women can empathise/understand and it is easier to talk to a woman.

When asked what new services that would like to see, 61% asked for more education in schools, with children and with men.

Next year sees the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day. We are interested to find out about your ideas and events, so please let us know what you are planning by emailing us at [admin@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:admin@independentchoices.org.uk)



# Opening the shutters International Women's Day

**During March 2010 we started a project called 'Opening the Shutters'. The aim of this on-going project is to celebrate, through art and images, the 'story' of women who have survived domestic abuse and to examine the moment of 'change' for women who have come through these experiences.**

The initial work was achieved with the help of a small grant from Manchester City Council. We engaged a community artist, Beate, to carry out one-to-one work-sessions with women who have used, or engaged with our services. The hope was that this partnership could create 6 - 7 pieces of art, primarily photography or creative writing to use on our website in order to inspire other women. These images and words could also possibly be incorporated into future publicity. We hope to share the progress of this project at a small event on the 1st December 2010 and within International Women's Day next year... so watch this space!

## Thanks and acknowledgements

**All the volunteers that work or have worked on the Helpline  
or are members of the Board of Trustees**

Funding and donations

**Greater Manchester Probation Trust**

**Manchester City Council** Manchester Adult Social Care

**Manchester City Council** Crime & Disorder

**AGMA**

**NHS Manchester**

**Manchester City Council** International Women's Day Grant

**Targeted Support Fund** Economic Abuse Project

**Salford CVS** Dragons Den

**Individual public donors**

**The Women's Aid Refuges that donate referral income**

### Independent Choices

PO Box 390 Manchester M16 7WE  
Website [www.wdchoices.org.uk](http://www.wdchoices.org.uk)

#### Women's Domestic Abuse Helpline

Helpline **0161 636 7525**

Non-urgent advice e-mail

[helpline@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:helpline@independentchoices.org.uk)

Admin e-mail [admin@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:admin@independentchoices.org.uk)

#### Women's Safety Service

Tel **0161 636 7526**

Fax **0161 636 7527**

E-mail [wssadmin@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:wssadmin@independentchoices.org.uk)

#### Sam Priestley

Chief Officer, Independent Choices

Tel **0161 636 7534**

E-mail [sampriestley@independentchoices.org.uk](mailto:sampriestley@independentchoices.org.uk)

