

## Care service inspection report

# Stirling and District Women's Aid Housing Support Service

Unit 7  
Stirling Arcade  
Stirling  
FK8 1AX

Inspected by: Sandra Wright

Type of inspection: Announced (Short Notice)

Inspection completed on: 6 February 2014



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**Service provided by:**

Stirling and District Women's Aid

**Service provider number:**

SP2011011761

**Care service number:**

CS2011306073

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## Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

### We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	5	Very Good
Quality of Staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership	5	Very Good

### What the service does well

Stirling and District Women's Aid had established a range of contacts and partnerships with other professionals and organisations to provide packages of support tailored to meet the support needs of the women and children who use their service.

The staff team worked well together sharing knowledge and expertise to benefit the women they supported. They also offered opportunities to women who wanted to work with them on a voluntary basis.

### What the service could do better

The service needs to update some of the policies and procedures.

They need to use Support plans to evidence the positive outcomes for women who use the service.

### What the service has done since the last inspection

This was the first inspection since the service was registered as a Limited Company.

### Conclusion

Stirling and District Women's Aid provides a high quality service tailored to meet the needs of women affected by domestic abuse.

**Who did this inspection**

Sandra Wright

# 1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

This service was registered with the Care Commission on 18 December 2012.

Stirling and District Women's Aid provides a service for woman and children. The Woman's Aid support service operates from a central office in Stirling with outlying refuge accommodation for woman and children.

Stirling and District Women's Aid aims to offer support, information and temporary accommodation for women and their children who have been physically, emotionally or sexually abused by a partner or former partner.

We provide refuge, information and support services for women, children and young people in the Stirlingshire area who are victims of domestic abuse.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

**Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of Staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good**

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com) or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

## 2 How we inspected this service

### **The level of inspection we carried out**

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

### **What we did during the inspection**

We wrote this report following short notice inspection which took place on 18 December 2013. We then contacted a variety of people to get further information to support the inspection. We concluded the inspection on 6 February 2014. The inspection was carried out by Sandra Wright, Inspector.

As requested by us, the provider of the service sent us an annual return and a self assessment.

During this inspection we asked the service to show us evidence to support their practice. We looked at records including:

- \* Service users' support plans
- \* participation policy and procedure
- \* information booklet
- \* training records
- \* registration certificate
- \* relevant policies and procedures

We had discussion with three staff in the office and the Manager during the inspection. We spoke with three women attending a group and one woman when she visited the office.

We took all of the above evidence into consideration when writing this report. We also took into account the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 and associated Statutory Instruments, the National Care Standards - Housing Support Services and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers.

### **Grading the service against quality themes and statements**

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

### **Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)**

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

### **Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at [www.firelawscotland.org](http://www.firelawscotland.org)

## **What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection**

This was the first inspection since the service registered as the current entity.

## **The annual return**

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

**Annual Return Received:** No

## **Comments on Self Assessment**

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The Care Inspectorate received a completed self assessment document from the service provider as requested. The service identified what they were doing well and also their vision for the future. They identified ways that they could further improve their service.

## **Taking the views of people using the care service into account**

During the inspection we spoke individually with a group of women and also with one woman individually. All said that they had benefited from the support given by Stirling and District Women's Aid.

Comments included:

"I am treated with respect"

"The staff are really nice"

"The accommodation is lovely, it's very welcoming and very safe"

"I have found the groups helpful, they have improved my outlook"



"Staff do exactly what is needed, in fact they go above and beyond what is needed"

"I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for this service"

"They did all sorts of things for me, they were my advocates when I needed them"

### **Taking carers' views into account**

Carers include parents, guardians, relatives, friends and advocates. They do not include care staff.

Not applicable

## 3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

### Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

#### Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

#### Service strengths

We found that the service was operating to a very good standard in relation to this Quality Theme.

We saw that the service had a Participation Policy, which told service users how they would be involved and also informed staff practice about how they should actively look for the views of service users.

We found that they used a number of strategies to involve the women in improving the service, including:

- \* Service users had individual support plans which were drawn up in conjunction with their dedicated support worker. The structure of the plans was clear and used plain language. The plans covered the areas that women were likely to need support with, including safety, health, housing, money, confidence and self-esteem. The plans helped women to identify the kind of support they needed and helped staff to know what to do to support them effectively
- \* Service users were asked regularly to complete evaluation sheets for example in relation to groups they attended to find out if they were what women wanted. We saw evidence that changes were made to the activities of the groups as a result of service users views
- \* A system of regular reviews helped to ensure that service users influenced the direction of their support.
- \* The Manager attended reviews which offered service users an opportunity to express their views

- \* Exit questionnaires were used to find out if people who had moved on had benefited from the support and what changes could be made to make the service better
- \* House meetings took place in shared refuges in order to offer everyone the opportunity to comment and manage household tasks and duties
- \* Suggestion boxes in refuge also provided opportunity to present views
- \* A very informative welcome pack helped the women know what they could expect from the service
- \* The service had a clear complaints procedure which was evident in the office base and in refuges
- \* People who used the service were also provided with this information directly when introduced to the service.
- \* We saw many thanks you cards from women who had appreciated the support they had received from the service
- \* Initiatives like women writing what it felt like when they entered refuge helped staff to understand and empathise with women
- \* The service had responded to need by expanding staffing and had built upon the rural support provision
- \* In response to the needs of the women a legal service and external counselling service had been established to give advice and further support.

In summary, we found that this service worked in close partnership with women to involve them in the direction of their own support plans. They had taken account of feedback from service users to improve and develop the service.

### **Areas for improvement**

We saw that regular house meetings took place and were minuted. Some of the minutes did not evidence follow through from the last meeting. See recommendation 1.

Some of the questionnaires were not dated. See recommendation 2.

**Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good**

**Number of requirements: 0**

**Number of recommendations: 2**

### **Recommendations**

1. House meeting minutes should identify feedback from the previous meeting.  
National Care Standards - Housing support services - Standard 8 - Expressing your views

2. Questionnaires should be dated to identify when suggestions were made for audit purposes. National Care Standards - Housing support services - Standard 8 - Expressing your views

### **Statement 3**

We ensure that service users' health and wellbeing needs are met.

#### **Service strengths**

We found that the service had achieved an excellent standard of practice in relation to this Quality Statement.

From our examination of support plans and other written records, we noted the following strengths:

- \* Each service user had a support plan which detailed their health and wellbeing needs and how the staff could support and enable them to make progress. This included practical help and advice, for example, regarding housing applications, registering with health professionals, legal and financial issues. The service user we met with told us they felt very involved in the process and confirmed the plans were relevant and regularly reviewed.

- \* A full and thorough risk assessment was completed before the woman entered the refuge, this ensured that staff were appropriately informed and identified measures to maintain safety at all times.

- \* A Keyworker system was in place to ensure continuity of support. The keyworker worked with women in a variety of ways such as:

- \* supporting at meetings, for example, with housing

- \* linking with other professionals such as social workers or workers from other support agencies if this was appropriate

- \* working individually with the women to enable them to develop their skills and self esteem

- \* working with the women to identify areas where they need more support and then making sure that this happened

- \* providing support and encouragement

- \* Each service user had an occupancy agreement which very clearly set out expectations of people who live in refuge with a focus on keeping people safe.

- \* We found that the service operated sensible rules within refuge to keep people safe

- \* Women had asked for support with healthy eating. In response the service arranged for a dietician to attend one of the groups to talk about healthy eating. This enabled women to find out how they could eat healthily on a budget

- \* Group activities such as Indian head massage and alternative therapies offered women the opportunity to try out relaxation techniques to improve their wellbeing

\* The service worked alongside other agencies to ensure they planned to meet the emotional and physical needs of the women. They had established positive working relationships these services which enabled women easy access to a range of health services. We saw evidence of visits from the 'Keep Well' project who were available to do health checks for women. We saw links health visitors who visited the refuge if needed. In addition we saw evidence that the service had good links with local schools and nurseries to enable them to support women with children

\* Information and contact details of organisations that may be of additional help to service users in terms of health and wellbeing were displayed in refuge locations so that women could contact them independently if they wished

\* The Citizens Advice Bureau was located in the Women's Aid office once a week to provide a service to the women and had worked in partnership to establish a legal advice service

\* As part of the support plans, staff encouraged and supported women to look after their physical health. Staff had supported women to go for local walks and bowling to improve physical health and emotional wellbeing. The service encouraged women to use peer support and organised groups outings, for example, to the cinema

\* In discussion we found that staff were very aware of the challenges facing the people they worked with. They were sensitive and caring and had built a bank of resources that they could use to support service users and sign post them to appropriate services.

Overall, we found that the support offered by this service had a significant positive impact on the health and wellbeing of service users.

### **Areas for improvement**

We saw that the outcomes for the women using the service were excellent. However we suggested that the support plans should evidence the outcomes more which may help women identify their achievements. See recommendation 1

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 1

### **Recommendations**

1. The Manager should consider how support plans could be used to identify outcomes for service users which would help them to see what they had achieved and also identify alternative ways to support women. National Care Standards - Housing support services - Standard 4 - Housing support planning

### **Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing**

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

#### **Statement 1**

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

#### **Service strengths**

Evidence found in Quality of Care and Support, Statement 1, also applies to this statement.

#### **Areas for improvement**

Evidence in Quality of Care and Support, Statement 1 also applies to this statement.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0



### **Statement 3**

We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

#### **Service strengths**

At this inspection we found that the service achieved a very good standard in relation to this quality statement.

\* All of the staff were aware of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Codes of Practice. The SSSC are the body who regulate care staff and decide the level of qualification for each post. Whilst registration for this work group is not required at this time, we found that all of the Support Workers were appropriately qualified in order to meet the qualification requirements of the SSSC. Staff also knew about the National Care Standards and had access to information to inform their practice.

\* The Manager was fully registered with SSSC and demonstrated commitment to training and personal development.

\* A staff induction programme was in place to ensure that they know what is expected from them

\* A training needs analysis identified areas for team development and individual training needs

Staff had access to a range of additional training opportunities, including, Child protection, Vulnerable adults, Suicide awareness and CAADA dash (Co-ordinated Action against domestic abuse). Staff used their training to understand and identify the needs of the women they worked with and look for ways to support them to achieve

\* The staff team regularly shared their experiences and knowledge with each other at staff meetings which provided them with on-going support as well as an opportunity to update their knowledge

\* Staff had regular supervision with their line manager which provided an opportunity to discuss their work, any issues that had arisen, any feedback from women and children and identified current qualifications, and training needs.

The Manager used supervision to give feedback about performance and practice

\* There was a designated children's worker who worked alongside the support workers to support families. We heard how they had worked together to the women and the children for example in helping with sleep routines

\* Staff members were involved in raising the awareness of domestic abuse and the support that is available. Staff presented information in schools and to other agencies such as social work teams, housing and health colleagues

\* Staff told us that they enjoy working in Stirling and District Women's Aid.

The core group of staff had been with the service for some time which provided consistency to service users

\* The service also offered opportunities for volunteers to work in the office and also act as befrienders.

**Areas for improvement**

The manager identified that she was establishing a process for formal staff exit interviews to help identify where improvements could be made within staffing.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 6 - Excellent

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

## **Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership**

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

### **Statement 1**

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

### **Service strengths**

Evidence found in Quality of Care and Support, Statement 1, also applies to this statement.

### **Areas for improvement**

Evidence in Quality of Care and Support, Statement 1 also applies to this statement.

**Grade awarded for this statement:** 5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements:** 0

**Number of recommendations:** 0

#### **Statement 4**

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide

#### **Service strengths**

In Quality Theme 1 Statement 1 we identified a range of ways that the service involved service users in passing on their views. Other people who were involved in the service are known as stakeholders. These include staff and other professionals.

We found that this service had some very effective systems in place for monitoring and improving the service, taking into account the views of service users, staff and other stakeholders.

We found evidence of many strengths to support this statement, such as:

- \* The service is affiliated to Women's Aid Scotland and had achieved accreditation for National Service Standards
- \* They had undertaken an Organisational Health Assessment funded by Scottish Government and scored well.
- \* The Manager has been subject to 360 performance review carried out by the Chair of the Board who interviewed staff and partner organisations as part of the process
- \* The manager directly monitored staff practice and gave them feedback about their performance This helped staff to consider where they could make improvements to their practice and recognise when they did good work
- \* Audits of case files were carried out to ensure that care plans were completed, relevant and up to date
- \* Staff members were encouraged to take on responsibility and individual skills and expertise were used to inform practice and increase the knowledge of the whole staff group
- \* The service had an active Board of Directors who met once a month to oversee the operations. Members of the Board had carried out recent training on director responsibilities and about domestic abuse which helped them fulfil their duties.
- \* Staff were consulted through staff meetings and supervision
- \* The service had a complaints system which was displayed in the office and in the refuges. We found evidence that complaints were taken seriously, that they were recorded, along with the resolution and action taken
- \* We found staff to be a very well supported team, they described being treated with respect and described the Manager as being very supportive
- \* The service made appropriate notifications to the Care Inspectorate.

All of this provided evidence that the service actively carried out audits to ensure they are doing a good job.

**Areas for improvement**

The service expressed commitment to continued assessment and audit.

We saw that some policies needed to be updated however the Manager was aware of this and had a plan in place to carry out this work.

**Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good**

**Number of requirements: 0**

**Number of recommendations: 0**

## **4 Other information**

### **Complaints**

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

### **Enforcements**

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

### **Additional Information**

#### **Action Plan**

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Inspectorate re-grading a Quality Statement within the Quality of Management and Leadership Theme (or for childminders, Quality of Staffing Theme) as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme being re-graded as unsatisfactory (1).

## 5 Summary of grades

<b>Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good</b>	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 3	6 - Excellent
<b>Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good</b>	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 3	6 - Excellent
<b>Quality of Management and Leadership - 5 - Very Good</b>	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 4	5 - Very Good

## 6 Inspection and grading history

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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## **Translations and alternative formats**

This inspection report is available in other languages and formats on request.

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هه باى تسرد سىم ونابز رگىد روا ولکش رگىد رپ شرازگ تعاشا هى

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