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# NO MORE

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violence against women

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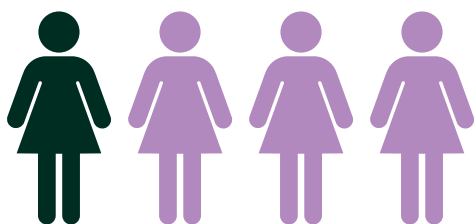


## No More Violence Against Women

### Action Pack

Tackling domestic violence has been a longstanding concern for the WI. The WI campaigned for the funding of refuges for survivors of domestic violence and their children in every county, to adequately define domestic violence under the law so that women and children in the home were protected, and to make sure that domestic violence survivors were able to access justice through the courts. Whilst progress has been made, much more action is needed to achieve a society where women are free from the fear of violence and abuse, and survivors are able to access specialist support services, wherever they live.

The prevalence of violence against women is alarming and unacceptable. Last year, an estimated 1.3 million women across the UK experienced violence towards them, including domestic violence, rape, forced marriage, sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse and harassment. Whilst the Government introduced its Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill this year, it is still lacking in key areas. The Bill gives little to assure the protection of specialist women's support services, which have been the victims of vicious funding cuts. The need for more refuge spaces is urgent. According to Women's Aid the number of refuge spaces continues to fall short of minimum standards by 1,715 bed spaces in May 2018.



**IN THE UK 1 IN 4 WOMEN WILL EXPERIENCE DOMESTIC ABUSE**

### EXPERIENCES OF ABUSE HAVE SERIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL, EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES AND MAY LEAD TO:



**2** **WOMEN ARE KILLED EACH WEEK BY A CURRENT OR FORMER PARTNER IN ENGLAND AND WALES**

#### **What is the campaign calling for?**

**At a national level:** the campaign aims to show Government that the WI is concerned about the continuing prevalence of violence against women and the impact this has on children, wider society and the economy.

**At a local level:** the campaign is calling for greater support for specialist support services such as women's refuges.

**WI members and communities:** the campaign will raise awareness in communities about abuse to give greater focus on early intervention and prevention of violence.

## Get Involved:

### 1. TAKE PART IN 16 DAYS OF ACTION 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER - 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

This autumn we are encouraging members to take action to end the scourge of violence against women by pledging to take part in 16 days of action.

Spearheaded by the UN, 16 days of activism against gender-based violence runs from 25<sup>th</sup> November (International Day to End Violence against Women) to 10<sup>th</sup> December (Human Rights Day).

The action days provide WI members with the opportunity to show their commitment to tackling violence against women by taking part in one or more of the actions. Suggestions include:

- Work together in your WI to put together care packages for your local women's refuge centre. Make sure you check in advance what types of donations they are able to accept. You can find local services near to you at this web link: [www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-abuse-directory/](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-abuse-directory/)
- Hold a bake sale or fundraising event and give the proceeds to your local refuge centre.
- Arrange a candlelight vigil or evening walk in your local area to draw attention to the campaign and ask your community to 'make the streets safe for women'.
- Hold a photo opportunity wearing orange, the UN colour for the 16 days of action.
- Volunteer at your local women's refuge.



### 2. TAKE PART IN WHITE RIBBON DAY 2019: 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER

- White Ribbon day is all about recruiting male ambassadors in your local community and asking them to pledge to speak out against violence against women. Since 2012, NFWI Wales has been working on the White Ribbon campaign to inspire more men to speak up publicly to challenge the attitudes, behaviours and gender inequalities that contribute to violence against women. We are now asking WIs in England to do the same. To find out more visit: [www.whiteribbon.org.uk](http://www.whiteribbon.org.uk).



### 3. ASK YOUR MP TO SUPPORT ACTION TO END ONLINE ABUSE:

- The WI is a member of the Centenary Action group, one of the largest coalitions of women's rights activists and organisations in the UK. We are supporting their campaign to end online abuse.

Online abuse is a growing problem, and has a devastating impact on people's lives. It also disproportionately affects young people and women. We are asking government to commit to more practical action to #endonlineabuse.

In October 2018 the Chancellor announced a new Digital Services Tax of 2% on tech giants like Facebook, Google and Twitter. As such, the NFWI is encouraging members to write to their MP to ask them to support ring-fencing at least 1% of this new tax to end online abuse. Get in touch with the Public Affairs team for a template letter you can use to write to your MP.

## SAVE THE DATE

## International Women's Day:

8<sup>th</sup> March 2020

International Women's Day provides a great opportunity to shine a spotlight on our campaign to end violence against women. It is also a chance to celebrate women's enormous contribution to human kind and the achievements – social, economic, cultural and political – that women have accomplished.

For IWD 2020, the theme is 'Think equal, build smart and innovate for change'. As the largest women's membership organisation in the UK this is a key time to raise awareness of the WI campaign.

The NFWI will be taking part in the 'Million Women Rise' march again, hoping to get an even larger turn out of members, and will be arranging a pre-meeting venue for members to attend beforehand. If you are interested in attending, please register your place at [www.thewi.org.uk/millionwomenrise](http://www.thewi.org.uk/millionwomenrise).

## Case Study: Nutfield Gals WI

Nutfield Gals WI have been working with their local women's refuge centre, Reigate and Banstead Women's Aid (RBWA) since 2017. Like most other refuges, RBWA found themselves suffering severe cuts and are constantly faced with the financial challenges of running the refuge with less funding. All new clients of the refuge are provided with a welcome box which contains toiletries and some starter foodstuffs which help the women to gain a measure of independence to feed themselves and their family, until they have the means to do so themselves. They are provided with bedding and towels if they have a room, and a toy and book for those who have children. However, these items need to be donated or the money raised to finance them. As such, Nutfield Gals regularly make donations including clothes, female toiletries and baby/toddler items such as nappies and wipes and non-perishable food.

They invited the manager of RBWA to speak at their WI meeting, and members were shocked to hear some of the harrowing stories of some of the survivors of abuse and violence. Donations are desperately needed by the refuges as many women and their children arrive with very little, if anything at all. Women who have suffered from abuse and violence often require counselling and advocates who help them through any legal, medical, financial or housing

issues they may be facing, as well as play therapy for the children. These centres face a constant and unrelenting battle to find sources of funding for these essential requirements. After hearing this, Nutfield Gals WI held a fundraising event which raised over £650, providing a great deal of support to the centre.

The support provided by RBWA helps women and their children to overcome further difficulties after leaving the perpetrator. But very few if any, other refuges are able to offer this level of care and support.

Volunteers, as well as donations and funding, are essential to the operation of these refuge centres. Many volunteers offer their time, skills (accounting, cleaning & laundry) and care to show these women that they are not alone and that there is hope for the future. To find out about

volunteering, donating or fundraising for your local Women's Aid visit: [www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-abuse-directory/](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-abuse-directory/).



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