

**Interview with Liz Harvey – Wycombe Women's Aid  
Chloe Willett's additional notes– 25.2.02**

Women's Aid has been in High Wycombe for 20 years.

They own 5 houses near each other; 1 is for admin; group and counselling rooms, the other 4 houses can accommodate 13 women and their children.

There are 9 employees:

1 full time Manager 2 work 30 hours and 6 work 20 hours

There is 1 Welfare Officer

2 Welfare Workers to help with legal and benefit matters

1 Welfare Assistant

2 - 20 hour Outreach Workers, 1 of whom works with Asian women

2 Child Workers.

Between them they offer family support, outreach, drop-in sessions and support for women who were in the hostel, and of course support and counselling for those staying in the hostel.

Very few of the women who are in the Wycombe hostel actually lived in High Wycombe; they go for obvious reasons, to other towns who in return will send their women to High Wycombe. The need to get away from an abusive partner is paramount and it has to be woman's decision. Obviously the abused woman from Wycombe will contact Wycombe Women's Aid so will people from South Bucks and Chiltern. There are no women's aid hostels there. Though they support the hostel with £7,000 from Chiltern District Council and £2,500 from South Bucks District Council.

They would like to offer more support for the children. At the moment there are too few hours, but Liz was impressed by the idea that the Youth Service could offer support and Women's Aid could use school facilities.



## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Partnerships**

The County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Partnerships is seeking to find out as much as possible about the way that the County Council's partnerships with voluntary organisations work. Clearly, if a full picture is to be built up, it is important to know the views of voluntary organisations. Therefore, it would be very helpful to have answers to the following questions.

How would your organisation define a partnership?

Personal contacts with the following organisations:

WDC – Housing	Police
BCC – Social Services	Samaritans
Domestic Violence	Hospitals

Does your organisation feel that the County Council treats it as a partner and values the relationship? If not, what should the Council do to improve the situation?

Yes – Individual Social Workers

SLA – used to be discussed annually but not done now – therefore lack of contact  
Concern about split children/adults/OP commissioning and portfolios

What are the objectives of the partnership and is your organisation clear about them?

Yes

Is there a satisfactory level of consultation? Are your organisation's views listened to and acted upon?

Often invited to consultation, can we have a few in Wycombe?

What form does your contract with the County Council take (for example is there a service level agreement or any other form of written contract with the Council)?

SLA.

All homes registered

If there is a written contract, how helpful is it? If there is no such document would your organisation find one useful?

SLA.

Annual meeting would be helpful.

What contract monitoring or other monitoring does the County Council carry out?

None.

How time consuming or onerous is the monitoring process?

We make sure we satisfy contract and will communicate outcomes. WDC more involved, but they use us more.

Early Years examining our children's facilities annually.

What problems has your organisation found with the partnership, have they been resolved and how?

Miss regular annual meeting.

What help does the Council provide with training and developing your organisation's staff?

Early Years training and Social Services training.

What more could your organisation do given greater resources and how would it benefit clients?

Big Issue – Not more funding

Develop Aftercare – after school, youth )  
- house for children ) Can we use facilities in schools?  
- sensory room )

Is your organisation aware of the Bucks Infrastructure Group (BIG) and the proposed Compact? If so, would your organisation see advantages or disadvantages in a compact?

Not sure.

Networking - Rape Crisis  
- Victim Support  
- Samaritans  
- Domestic Violence  
- ACT  
- Drugs (Sefton House)

How could partnerships be made more effective?

Unknown

Could your organisation benefit from closer links with County Councillors?

Already o.k.

It is not an objective of this particular exercise to get into the detail of funding. Nevertheless, it would be helpful to have some thoughts on the following:

How is funding obtained from the County Council?

BCC easy – money arrives

How could the system be improved?

All o.k.

Does the funding provide security for a reasonable period (one, two or three years or more)?

3 years rolling

What additional funding does your organisation have to seek and how time consuming is this?

Chiltern D.C. - £7K

S.B. D.C. - £2.5K

+ others

Children in Need? And other one offs

If your organisation receives additional funding, is there any conflict between the requirements of different funding bodies?

None

Do different funding bodies have different monitoring requirements and, if they do, what difficulties does this create?

No

What short-life funding (lottery, charitable trusts etc.) does your organisation receive?

Odd one offs

Christmas time – Lions, churches

What strategy does your organisation have for dealing with the loss of this or any other funding?

None