

Dear Friend of Standing Together,

I hope it is not too early to send you our best wishes for this festive season and for 2012. We are able to look forward to next year with a surprising degree of optimism, especially bearing in mind the current financial climate. We have been able to focus on a sustainable twin-track approach which delivers a great local partnership and a national and international output. Locally we have seen some changes in our staff line up which are described below but we have managed to find our way through these without disrupting our purpose or outputs. I genuinely feel that we are now a stronger organisation which can seek the improvements in the coordinated response to domestic violence which are always available wherever you are in the world.

It is this international perspective which has become one of our most interesting activities in 2011. We have worked in (deep breath) Bosnia, Romania, Sicily, Brussels, Italy, Finland and Spain in what has been a busy but valuable schedule. The most striking thing about these visits has been the similarity of the issues. We have long held the view, supported by our colleagues in the sector, that gendered violence has the same characteristics across the world. Certainly the problems that we have seen indicate this is true. Possibly more important to our business model is that the solutions available through a coordinated community response remain crucial and central to success.

Unfortunately, despite the levels of investment in domestic violence increasing in most countries, we have found nowhere where it reaches the level justified by the evidence of the damage and costs of that violence. As economies shrink so that investment, wrongly in our view, also shrinks. This means that the ability of the specialist domestic violence sector cannot hope to match the need to provide specialist services to victims and their children or to hold perpetrators to account. This means that the statutory (or public) sector must do more at a time when they are facing real challenges.

Whilst this sounds disconcerting, and it should do, the solutions are known. A coordinated community response to domestic violence provides a framework which matches activity to demand. Additionally many of the countries in Europe and beyond are a long way behind our approach and we can help them speed up the rate of their development and introduction of operational practice that works.

Back in the UK we are starting our build up to our 4th charity bike ride – the 112 – which was an outstanding success this year. We raised over 22K and are hoping to at least match this on May 12th 2012 but we will not be able to do it without our friends. So if you can help by riding your bike 112 kilometres let us know.

Thank you for being a supporter and I hope this year ends joyously for you all.

Anthony Wills

Chief Executive.

Training

Over the last six months Standing Together has continued to train managers and practitioners from a wide range of agencies that encounter domestic violence amongst their client base. We have run 18 courses and trained 245 participants since April this year. Trainees come from many sectors, notably: Housing, Health, Criminal Justice and Children's and Adult services. Two important new areas of recent training have been the sessions we have designed for Crown Court Judges and for Neighbourhood Wardens.

Some of the courses have been commissioned in response to a particular situation within an agency, others because of policy or procedure development across a sector. In other cases, managers have become more aware of the prevalence of domestic violence and want staff to be competent and confident about responding safely.

The Foundation courses cover the dynamics of domestic violence and best practice, and skills courses cover issues such as enabling safe disclosure of domestic violence, risk identification and risk assessment, and safety planning. This enables participants to build upon and develop their knowledge and skills in a series of linked modules.

The following feedback signifies the undeniable importance of such courses:

"One of my agreed actions during the following 14 days [from the training] was to start routinely asking [about DV].... little did I expect to have uncovered two women reporting domestic abuse in the clinic immediately afterwards the same evening.... one very long standing and very significant had never ever told anyone ... All highly relevant therefore to my professional work and I feel sad that I hadn't been aware of the need to ask beforehand."

Dr Nick Theobald, Clinical Lecturer / Associate Specialist, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London

Standing Together has traditionally focused its training in Hammersmith and Fulham and adjacent boroughs, but is hoping to expand this offering further afield over the next year, made more achievable since the launch of the new website where training courses are listed.

For more information, contact [Jenny Bowes](#) or [Peta Sissons](#).

Personal Development Workshops

Standing Together is currently organising a series of Professional Development workshops for its partners. These will focus on extra barriers to accessing services around domestic violence for groups with particular vulnerabilities. The team is currently liaising with experts and colleagues working in DV who have specialist knowledge on these areas and has workshops planned on LGB, Transgender, Irish Travellers and women over 50. No date has been set yet, but if you would like to be kept informed please email [Eli Crouch-Puzey](#).

MARAC

The Kensington & Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham MARACs (Multi-Agency-Risk-Assessment-Conferences) are continuing to reduce risk to high risk domestic violence survivors. In 2011 the Kensington & Chelsea MARAC was externally reviewed by CAADA (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse) and was given a glowing report with all aspects of best practice met. Standing Together is looking forward to taking on a third MARAC, the Brent MARAC, in 2012. We are the only voluntary sector organisation with such extensive experience of MARACs.

Annual Domestic Violence Conference

Due, once again, to the generous support of the LBHF Safer Neighbourhood Division the fourth annual LBHF DV Conference was a great success, bringing together practitioners, campaigners and commissioners. With themed presentations covering young people experiencing domestic violence and stalking, delegates heard a range of presentations that were informative, practical and inspirational. Standing Together wishes to thank all the speakers who participated, especially Patricia Bernal and Carol Faruqui of Protection Against Stalking for their incredibly moving stories of Clare Bernal and Rana Faruqui, who were both murdered by their stalkers. Attendees felt these personal accounts made the issue of stalking very real and helped to re-motivate and inspire them.

Other speakers included Kimberly Fuller from Domestic Violence Intervention Project (www.dvip.org) and Ester Mcgeeny from Women and Girls Network (www.wgn.org.uk), who provided practical advice on what referral options were available locally. Joanna Sharpen from Against Violence and Abuse (www.avaproject.org.uk) talked convincingly about what works across the UK for young people and Marie Horner from Tender (www.tender.org.uk) presented on a film made by and for young people, currently touring youth clubs and schools on the importance of preventative work.

The aim of the Domestic Violence partnership is to work together and share best practice and the conference provided the perfect opportunity to do this, by gathering experts from all areas in the same room, working both directly and indirectly with domestic violence. It provided a great opportunity to share knowledge and build networks. Through feedback we know many delegates welcomed the chance to network and share information and updates within services.

WOSAFEJUS Project

The WOSAFEJUS project, co-financed by the European Program Daphne III, was set up to assist in the development of community policies and best practices relating to women's human rights protection, especially in regard to the struggle against violence against women in the private domain. Standing Together have been the training and experts in the Coordinated Response to Domestic Violence incidents for this project.

The Final Conference of the project took place in Bologna this month. Both Anthony and Beryl spoke at the Conference, bringing the Standing Together approach to an audience from all four partner cities –

Bologna, Barcelona, Catania and Cluj Napoca. Our work on this project has seen the initialisation of much change in all these partner cities.

Maternity Project

Since January 2011, the BIG Lottery funded Domestic Violence: Health & Maternity Project at Standing Together has been working in partnership with maternity services at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust to develop responses to pregnant women experiencing domestic abuse. In July, we successfully obtained a grant from Imperial College Healthcare Charity to fund an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate for the maternity services for a period of two years. This post will support both midwives and survivors through creating a single point of access for domestic violence advocacy, offering specialist support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and enabling specialist advice and support to be offered on hospital sites. We are very much looking forward to her starting work in January 2012!

New Members of the Team

Eli Crouch-Puzey joined the team in July 2011 to coordinate the Housing Project. She brings knowledge and experience of domestic violence from working in a women's refuge. Prior to this Eli worked in Public Relations.

Sally Jackson joined the team in November 2011, to manage the local Domestic Violence Partnership and to ensure delivery of the multi-agency Action Plan for the borough. Sally started her working life in nursing but moved in domestic abuse around 15 years ago. Based in Portsmouth she managed the local helpline and then the City Councils Domestic abuse services. .

Annie Poland joined the team this month, taking on the role of Office and Data Administrator.

Survivors Cookbook

Food can be one of life's biggest comforts – it can sometimes make you feel safe. The simple act of eating as a family in your own home can be difficult, more so when you are a victim of domestic violence. The Survivors' Cookbook combines a wide range of easy-to-prepare recipes, from both survivors and those who work to support them and make their lives safe. Gordon Ramsay and Jo Brand, 'Friends' of Women's Aid and Standing Together, have also contributed their favourite recipes.

A suggested donation of £5 is proposed for the Cookbook (with £1 for postage and packaging for each cookbook) with all proceeds supporting the work of [Women's Aid](#) and Standing Together Against Domestic Violence. To order The Survivors' Cookbook, email cookbook@standingtogether.org.uk with your name, delivery address, phone number and the number of copies that you wish to order.

Every Click

We now have an Everyclick account which means by simply using this search engine we can raise money for ST just by clicking—follow the link <http://www.everyclick.com/standingtogether> and press “make this my homepage” button.

Furthermore, once you have Everyclick you can also join “Give as you Live”. Most online shopping supports this and donates to your cause every time you shop (John Lewis 2.5% of your purchase).

Audit reports

Standing Together's Board has approved the Accounts Audited to 31/03/2011. If any Friend of Standing Together would like a copy, just email finance@standingtogether.org.uk. Standing Together has done well to keep its work programme and staff team intact throughout 2011 and we are pleased to report that we are very hopeful of doing the same in 2012.

Contact Details

For information about specific areas of the CCR please contact Standing Together on 020 8748 5717 or by email:

CEO & Consultancy — [Anthony Wills](#)

Finance — [Shasca Foster](#)

Training — [Peta Sissons](#)

SDVC — [Tanya Allen](#)

MARAC — [Briony Redman](#)

Housing — [Elinor Crouch-Puzey](#)

Operations — [Beryl Foster](#)

Training & DVCN — [Jenny Bowes](#)

Partnership — [Sally Jackson](#)

Maternity & Health — [Jessica Donnellan](#)

Children & Health — [Venetia Boon](#)

Enquiries — [Annie Poland](#)