



BSWA

Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid



BIRMINGHAM AND SOLIHULL  
WOMEN'S AID

# Strategic Plan 2023-28

# Introduction

This year, we enter our 45th year of supporting local women and their children affected by domestic abuse and all issues of violence against women and girls (VAWG). Our strategic plan for the next five years reaffirms our vision, and sets out our commitments and plans to ensure that we continue to deliver excellence in VAWG amid the ever challenging and complex times that lie ahead following years of austerity, impact and aftermath of the Covid pandemic, continuing fight for women's rights and equality, and unprecedented pressures on Housing, Health and Social Care.

We are a fluid, flexible, nimble, responsive and adaptable organisation – in direct response to what women tell us they need. The development of our wide reaching and multi-dimensional services will ensure that women and their children are supported to be independent and resilient, and live free from violence, abuse and fear. Over the next five years, we will continue to meet the immediate and longer-term needs of women experiencing violence and abuse, but we will also put an increasing focus on tackling prevention and early intervention. We will work with our partners – new and existing – through co-production and collaboration, to promote a whole system approach. We will link these local solutions and share innovative practice to strengthen local and national infrastructure. At the same time, we will continue to work with agencies and professionals to ensure systems work for women and children rather than against them.

We will be the voice of change. We will build on our achievements, developing our knowledge and capability, and drawing on our strengths, experience, partnerships and resources to make change happen. We will continue to co-work, educate and train – and challenge where it is necessary. We believe that a combination of lived, learned and professional experience is crucial in accomplishing our goals. We have never been more stalwart in our commitment to work through the gender lens framework, fighting inequalities and fiercely protecting women only spaces, and services by women for women. Alongside supporting legislation which works to protect women, we will join others to influence and progress change.

Our multi-faceted approach sets us apart as the region's most comprehensive provider of support services, and defines our distinctive contribution. In a continually evolving cultural and social demographic, cultural competency is absolutely critical. We will always work to meet women's individual needs and embrace diverse communities, ensuring that equality and access is at the heart of everything we do, alongside implementation of The Race Code. We greatly value the energy, commitment, shared values and ethos that our workforce has. This is the strength of our organisation and will help us to ensure that we continue to be purposeful, targeted, and influential as we move forward.

Maureen Connolly  
Chief Executive

Patricia McCabe  
Chair

# About BSWA

## Our Vision

- To create space for women and children subjected to abuse to be safe, take action and be in control.
- To build a society where violence against women and children no longer exists through developing understanding, challenging inequality and inspiring change.

## Our Culture

Our commitment to all of the women and children we work with, and to the women that work here is:

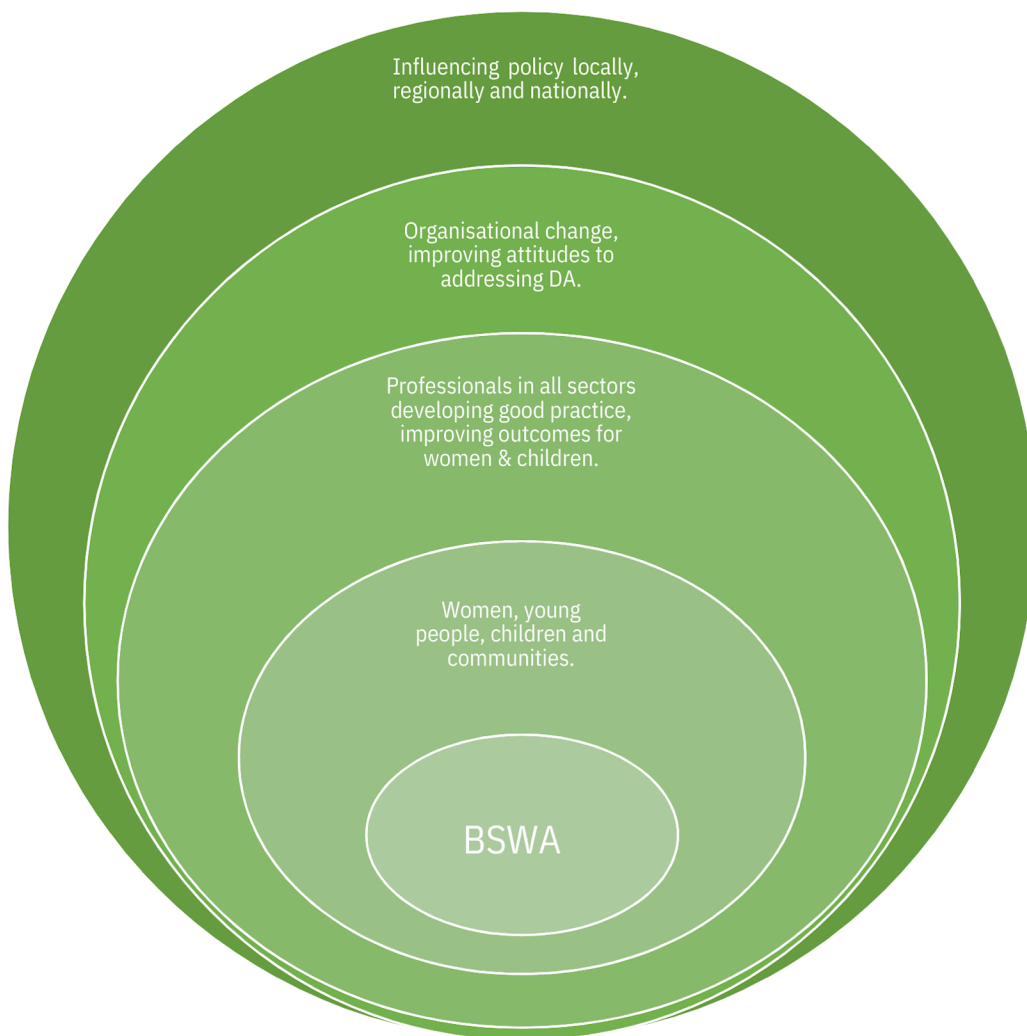
- We listen
- We believe your experiences of abuse
- We prioritise your safety
- We do what we say
- We continually learn
- We recognise your strength

## Our Values

- Trust and Integrity
- Belonging and Inclusion
- Openness and Accountability
- Services run by women for women



# HOW WE INFLUENCE CULTURAL CHANGE ABOUT DOMESTIC ABUSE



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- PRIORITISING WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S SAFETY, PROTECTING WOMEN ONLY SPACES AND SERVICES.
  - INFLUENCING CULTURE CHANGE, DEVELOPING BEST PRACTICE AND EMBEDDING POSITIVE CHANGE.
  - EMPOWERING WOMEN AND CHILDREN TO ACCESS HELP, AND HOLDING PERPETRATORS TO ACCOUNT.
  - DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING OF DA THROUGH EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND CHALLENGING BAD PRACTICE, MYTHS AND STEREOTYPES.

# Our Priorities for 2023–28

We are ambitious about the impact we can have over the next 5 years. Over this period, four core priorities will guide our work:

# 1

## HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

We will develop and deliver high quality services for women and children that meet their needs and make them safer. We will work to deliver early intervention, prevention and protection.

# 2

## EQUALITY

We will embed anti-discriminatory practice and challenge inequality in all that we do.

# 3

## INFLUENCE

We will use our expertise as leading Domestic Abuse specialists to build the understanding that drives cultural change.

# 4

## PROFILE

We will tell our story and engage others to secure the resources, recognition and support necessary to enable us to achieve our vision.

The following sets out our plans for each of these four priorities.

# Strategic Goal 1

**We will develop and deliver high quality services for women and children that meet their needs and make them safer.**

**To achieve this goal we will:**

- Explore and develop models around safe accommodation.
- Grow co-located services with partners across all areas to reach more women and children.
- Invest in the development of our staff and managers to enable them to continue to respond to women's and children's needs.
- Ensure that quality assurance underpins our services.
- Build the Early Intervention Hub to promote effective responses to women and children at the earliest point possible whilst ensuring high-risk women are supported and made safer.
- Embed understanding of children as victims of DA throughout our service delivery.
- Respond to the housing crisis including making real the option for women to stay in their own home.

## **The impact of this will be:**

Women and children access and receive timely, expert support and can live happy, fulfilled lives as defined by their own diverse perspectives.



# Strategic Goal 2

**We will embed anti-racism and anti-discriminatory practice and challenge inequality in all that we do.**

**To achieve this goal we will:**

- Develop specialist projects within services and embed learning to develop capacity to respond to marginalised women and children.
- Implement the Race Code and further embed anti-racist practice.
- Secure women-for-women, single-sex services as the best practice model for DA.
- Develop and promote services for women with no recourse to public funds.

## **The impact of this will be:**

Women and children are safe and supported with dignity, can freely express themselves and feel respected – and nothing undermines this.



# Strategic Goal 3

**We will use our expertise as leading DA specialists to build the understanding that drives cultural change.**

**To achieve this goal we will:**

- Build understanding of the importance of women only, single-sex services with commissioners and decision makers.
- Model and promote the importance of interpreting provision within commissioning.
- Continue to build understanding and achieve cultural change around holding perpetrators to account, and not blaming women.
- Build community understanding of the gendered nature of domestic abuse and its impact.
- Influence responses to children affected by DA.
- Influence local, regional and national strategy, policy and practices.

## **The impact of this will be:**

Domestic abuse support systems evolve, develop and innovate and deliver high quality, effective and equitable care for women and children.



# Strategic Goal 4

**We will tell our story and engage others to secure the resources, recognition and support necessary to enable us to achieve our vision.**

**To achieve this goal we will:**

- Embed women's and children's voices in promoting understanding of the impact of our models of working.
- Collate and use data effectively to better enable us to tell our story.
- Maximise relationships with funders and supporters to build awareness of what's different about our way of working.
- Promote engagement with new and existing funders through our Fundraising Strategy.

## **The impact of this will be:**

Funders, commissioners, the public and a loyal and expanding supporter base, are connected to our values, work, impact, challenges and successes.



# Cross-cutting Themes

**These themes underpin our strategy. We will continue to develop these areas to make sure we achieve our goals.**

## **Women's and Children's Voices**

We will always seek the participation of, and listen to, represent and incorporate women's and children's lived experiences of domestic abuse in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services.

## **Collaboration and Partnership Working**

We will work through partnerships and representative bodies, other service providers and many others to achieve our goals. We will lead where necessary, convene the organisations and people we need in a common cause, or provide support to others where that will have the greatest impact. We will continue to work collaboratively with partners to amplify our impact and build capability together.

## **Funding**

We will continue to diversify our income sources and lobby for multi-year funding commitments from Funders and Commissioners to enable vital services to be sustained and which supports the impact that we can make. We will make the best use of the funding and support that we have, prioritising the activities that have the most impact in addressing need.

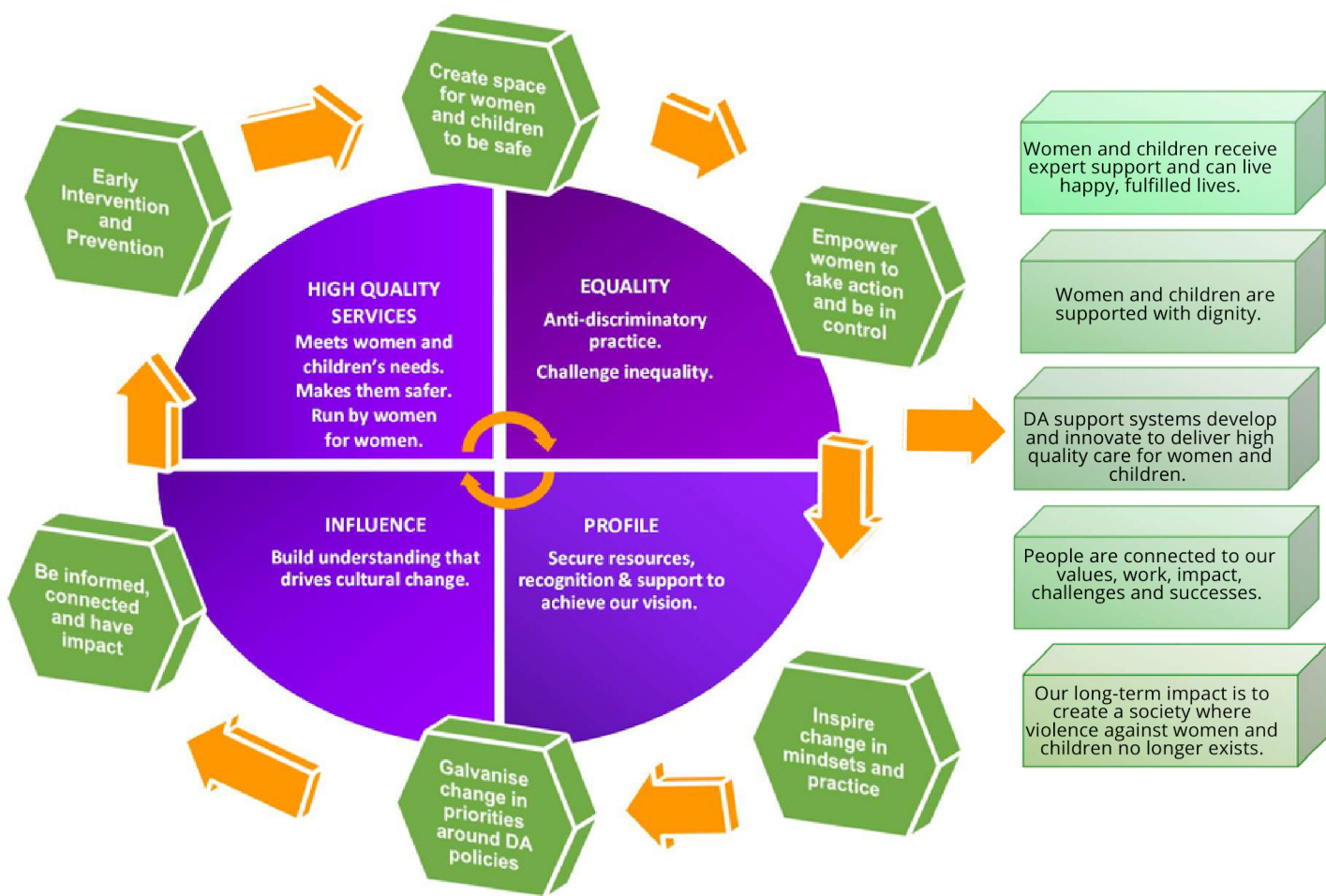
## **Evaluation, learning and insight**

We will develop our evaluation, learning and insight in order to improve the evidence-base of our models of working. We will build and disseminate our learning of trauma-informed, strengths-based practice and provide accurate evidence about what works. We will use this to educate those that we work with professionally, and in society, to challenge beliefs, attitudes and views – so we can dismantle them.

## **Change and Transformation**

We will develop and build our organisation based on our learning and evidence. We will strengthen our operating model to ensure that our internal workings can best support effective delivery of our goals. We will continue to develop our governance, people, processes and infrastructure, to help us work effectively, efficiently and flexibly.

# HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR VISION



Our Building Blocks

Working together to  
end violence against  
women and children.



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