

## How to contact us

Our office hours are as follows:

Monday – Friday:  
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

If our staff are unavailable when you telephone, you may reach an answering machine. A message can be left for us to phone you back, but if this is unsafe or not possible you may have to try again.

**PLEASE DO.**



## Emergency contact numbers:

You may wish to speak to someone or find safe alternative accommodation on a weekend or evening when our offices are closed. Our answering machine will give you up to date information on where to get help or you can call:



**Domestic Abuse Helpline:  
0800 027 1234 (24hrs)**

**Out of Hours Social Work:  
01595 695611**

**Lerwick Police:  
01595 692110 or  
999 in emergencies**

St Olaf Street  
Lerwick  
ZE1 0ES

Phone: 01595 692070

Text: 07748435584

Email:

[shetland\\_womens\\_aid@hotmail.com](mailto:shetland_womens_aid@hotmail.com)

[www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk](http://www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk)

# Shetland Women's Aid



Registered Charity No: SC 015199

**Tel 01595 692070**



## Who are we?

We are a registered charity which offers counselling, advice and support. We provide refuge accommodation to women and their children who are being or have been physically, emotionally or sexually abused.

## Staff

All our staff are women. We employ qualified staff who have experience of working with a range of issues women might face. Our staff also work with children and young people affected by abuse and family breakdown. We work as a collective and have both paid and unpaid workers.

## What is abuse? What are its effects?

Sometimes it is obvious when a woman or child is being abused. Sometimes, however, the abuse is more disguised and they are not sure if they are being abused. Abuse usually makes women or children feel powerless. Someone else imposes their will on the woman or child. An abused woman or child can experience emotional, physical or sexual abuse. Many women try to hide or play down the abuse because they are frightened or ashamed and may feel they have no other options.

## Counselling

We offer one to one counselling where the client and one of our counsellors come together in a private and confidential setting to talk through the client's issues. Most counselling takes place in the counselling room at our offices. We aim to provide a safe environment for women to share their problems.

In the counselling sessions the client is enabled to explore their experiences and feelings, talking about them freely and openly in a way that may not be possible with friends or family, to a person who neither judges nor offers advice.

Counselling is usually by appointment which is offered as quickly as possible. We work in a client centred way and offer a flexible service depending on an individual's changing needs. All our counselling sessions are free of charge.

## Refuge

Our refuge is a place of temporary safe accommodation for women and their children (if any) away from an abusive situation. Refuge is provided until suitable alternative accommodation can be found. Sometimes our refuge is used to provide a "breathing space" during a temporary separation.

Our office staff can help clients make claims for Housing Benefit and other appropriate benefits if required.

Our refuge is subject to strict rules to ensure that the safety of women and children staying there is not put at risk.

No visitors or pets are allowed and residents are asked to keep the address confidential. Residents are encouraged to treat the refuge as their temporary home and for that reason other guidelines are kept to a minimum.

## Confidentiality

We offer clients complete confidentiality within the charity. No charity member will share information with someone outside the charity without the client's permission, unless a court orders us to do so OR if there is a child or vulnerable adult concern.

## Children

Our children's service provides one to one counselling; refuge accommodation for children and mothers as well as support and advice. Individual counselling is provided for children and young people who have current or previous experience of domestic abuse or family breakdown. We have a playroom and counselling space at our office, but can also arrange to meet young people in their local area if more convenient. We operate an open referral policy and youngsters over the age of twelve can self refer. This service is flexible, Shetland wide, free of charge and open to children and young people who are not accessing the refuge services.

