

Background information on Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid

Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid is Scotland's first feminist Asian, Black and Minority ethnic women's aid group. The project was established in 1981 with refuge accommodation being made available in Quarriers Village in the Inverclyde District to Scottish Women's Aid.

At that time there was a growing need for a separate Asian women's refuge due to the increasing number of Asian women fleeing domestic violence. The specific linguistic and cultural needs of women made it difficult for mainstream women's aid workers to provide satisfactory support and advice. Experience had shown that ethnic minority women were missing out on mutual support that women in refuge provide each other because of linguistic and cultural barriers. Many of the women could not communicate in English and had little, if any knowledge of organisations such as social work services or job centre plus. Most felt isolated and sometimes terrified in the mainstream refuges.

In 1991 Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid moved to Glasgow. Due to funding constraints the project was based at various locations providing information and support to women whilst the refuge accommodation remained in Kilmacolm.

In 1995 security of funding enabled the drop-in centre at Willowbank Street to be opened. The drop-in centre is the first point of contact for a woman or agency requiring support and assistance.

The refuge was opened in 1998 and can accommodate 9 women and children (if any). The refuge has 7 flats (2 are sharing) ranging from one bedroom to four bedrooms. There is also an office for the refuge staff and a children's playflat. The refuge is equipped with a CCTV camera for the security of the residents.

The charity is registered with the Care Inspectorate who are required by the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 to follow the Scottish Regulators' Strategic Code. Individuals working in care services must be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). You can find more information about the SSSC on their website www.sssc.uk.com. HGWA staff members are registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

HGWA currently employ 10 members of staff, all with extensive experience of supporting women, children, and young people with varied support needs. The organisation is a single sex woman only service in terms of the Equality Act 2010. The staff team and charity trustees are a diverse group of women from a range of backgrounds. The daily management of the organisation adopts a hierarchical staff structure.