

SVAAN Monthly Update – August 2009



Welcome to the Sexual Violence Action and Awareness Network (SVAAN) monthly email update. Usually sent on the last Friday of every month, the update is full of information for organisations who work in the sexual violence sector. If you have events or information you would like to be included email anna.booth@eaveshousing.co.uk. Feel free to quote or circulate information from the update, but please credit Lilith if you do so.

Due to staff changes here at Eaves, we haven't had a monthly update in a little while – so here is a mid-month bumper edition...

Harriet Harman calls for greater protection for women

A review into best practice for police and prosecutors in rape cases has been delayed. Harriet Harman used her position as Gordon Brown's stand-in over the summer break to demand a scrutiny into the conviction rates in rape cases. The deputy prime minister was due to make an announcement regarding the review of rape victim support but refused at the last minute, stating that it failed to address the concerns of women.

Her stance has been supported by Vera Baird, the Solicitor-General, but Jack Straw, the Justice Secretary, and Alan Johnson, the Home Secretary, have refused to include a scrutiny into low conviction rates in the report, reportedly because such a review could not be completed before the next election.

News of shelving the review comes only days after it was revealed that a man accused of rape 12 years ago cannot be retried because the police have lost the case file. While representatives from the women's sector have repeatedly made the point that complaints of sexual violence often fall on disbelieving ears, with delayed responses from the police leading to loss of evidence and massive trauma for the victims, opposition to Ms Harman's stance is widespread in the media. Rather than considering the debate at hand, the coverage seems to focus more on the fact that Harriet Harman is taking advantage of her position as deputy prime minister to get across her own personal agenda.

Perhaps more worrying still are the comments left by the public on media websites. One man labelled Ms Harman as a 'one trick pony,' stating that 'like Prescott before her, she is there as a token in her case to keep the women's vote on side.' Others – both men and women – conclude that Ms Harman is on a campaign to make women 'more equal than men,' agreeing with an article that called her 'ghastly, hideous and ranting,' with one contributor even comparing her to Stalin.

On the topic of rape law itself one contributor stated 'What's needed is stronger punishment for women who lie about rape.' Another person suggested that there are 'degrees of rape,' and in response to a female contributor stating that the law did need to be changed, one man stated 'I kinda get the impression you just don't like men in general.'

Regardless of what these contributors might think, the statistics on conviction rates in Britain speak for themselves. Despite an increase in women reporting rape (from 6,281 in 1997 to 12,165 in 2008) the conviction rate has fallen to 6.5 per cent in England and

Wales, while in Scotland it is only 2.9 per cent. This is compared to a conviction rate of 25 per cent in France.

The review has been shelved until the end of this year at least.

For a true anti-Harman rant in all its glory, have a look at the Mail's [Femail Section](#)

Mayor announces further rape crisis provision in the capital

On 3 August 2009 Boris Johnson announced proposals to open a new rape crisis centre in Ealing and to provide further funding for the existing Rape and Sexual Abuse Support centre in Croydon.

The Greater London Authority, which has agreed to make £375,000 available over the next three years to part-fund a new rape crisis centre is in talks with Ealing Council about the possibility of locating the centre there. Croydon's rape crisis centre will receive a further £260,000.

Campaigners point out that the Mayor has still failed drastically to meet his campaign pledge of £744,000 per year of funding for rape crisis. The Deputy Mayor, Kit Malthouse, denied that the Mayor had miscalculated the amount of money that would be made available, claiming that the original figure was based on there being little local authority assistance in funding the centres. However, due to local authorities pledging more funding than anticipated, there was no need for the Greater London Authority to pledge the full £744,000 per year.

The Mayor has further stated that he intends to open two more rape crisis centres in east and north London in order to deliver his manifesto commitment. However, at present there appears to be no news on exactly where these centres will be, how much money will be allocated or when the centres might open.

View the Greater London Authority press release [here](#).

New research into effects of pornography

Teenagers today spend 87 hours a year looking at pornography, according to a survey carried out this year for CyberSentinel, a parental control software company, and further studies suggest that 80 per cent of men watch pornography on TV or the internet, with many of them actually becoming addicted.

Mary Anne Layden, Sexual Trauma and Psychopathology Programme co-director at the University of Pennsylvania is concerned about the effects that pornography is having on both men and women. Studies have found significant changes in beliefs when subjects have been shown pornography; they believe that unusual behaviour such as having sex with animals and mixing sex with violence are more acceptable. They also become less negative in their attitudes toward rape and believe that rapists should receive lighter sentences. Layden states that in the last 12 years she has specialised in the treatment of sexual violence victims and perpetrators and in that time has not treated one case of sexual violence that did not include pornography.

Furthermore, pornography does contribute to difficulties in marriages, with many women blaming themselves for their partners' inclination to view pornography, according to divorce therapist Charlotte Friedman.

OBJECT, an organisation which campaigns against the objectification of women, launched their Feminist Fridays in March of this year. The purpose of these events is to reinvigorate grass roots feminist protest against the 'lads' mag' industry. At each event activists enter shops selling the magazines and clothe each one with a paper bag covered in feminist slogans. In 2006 the Home Office, the Periodical Publishers Association and the National Federation of Retail Newsagents Office drew up a code of practice on the display of lads' mags, stating that retailers should cover up any sexually explicit covers, and ensure that the publications remain well above the eye-line of children. Since these requirements were largely ignored, OBJECT launched its Feminist Fridays campaign.

'Lads' mags' are just one way that pornography is being normalised in our culture. These magazines are directly linked to hardcore pornography and prostitution through adverts in their back pages. This normalisation of the industry leads inevitably to relaxed attitudes among readers to gender inequality and violence against women.

Pornography is a valuable industry. In the US it is the third largest industry for organised crime after drugs and gambling, and in the UK it is a billion-pound industry that looks likely to continue to expand.

For a longer article click [here](#)

For OBJECT's Feminist Fridays campaign go to <http://www.object.org.uk/index.php/take-action-feminist-fridays>

Case Law Update

R v C [2009] UKHL 42

The appeal before the House of Lords related to the offence of **engaging in sexual activity with a person with a mental disorder impeding choice**. For the offence to have been committed the accused (A) intentionally touches another person (B), the touching is sexual, B is unable to refuse because of or for a reason related to a mental disorder and A knows or could reasonably be expected to know that B has a mental disorder and that because of it, or for a reason related to it, B is likely to be unable to refuse.

The legislation states that B is unable to refuse if:

- (a) he lacks the capacity to choose whether to agree to the touching (whether because he lacks sufficient understanding of the nature of or reasonably foreseeable consequences of what is being done, or for any other reason), or
- (b) he is unable to communicate such a choice to A.

The trial judge allowed the case to go to the jury on the basis that they would be entitled to reach the conclusion that, because of her mental capacity, the complainant was unable to refuse due to an irrational fear of what was happening to her. On this basis they found the defendant guilty of the offence. The Court of Appeal allowed the defendant's appeal against conviction on the basis that the complainant's irrational fear due to her mental disorder could not be equated with a lack of capacity to choose and there was no evidence that she was physically unable to communicate any choice that she had made. The Crown appealed to the House of Lords on the basis that the Court of Appeal had wrongly narrowed the criteria.

The House of Lords allowed the Crown's appeal, stating that Parliament had in mind an inability to communicate which was the result of or associated with a disorder of the mind. There is no warrant at all for limiting it to a physical inability to communicate.

Parliamentary Update

David Burrowes asked the Secretary of State for Justice how much money has been distributed from the Victims Fund for 2008-09. **Alan Campbell** responded on 20 July 2009, stating that a total of £1.25 million had been allocated to victims of sexual violence.

Edward Garnier asked the Secretary of State for Justice whether he would be publishing any reviews relating to the murder of Zuzanna Zommer in October 2007 and whether he would be holding an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding her death. **Jack Straw** responded, on 21 July 2009, that there had been two reviews of the murder of Zuzanna Zommer by perpetrator Michael Clark, who was subject to the sex offender notification requirements but not subject to statutory probation supervision at the time of the murder. The second of these, commissioned by Leeds Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is yet to report, but an executive summary will be published upon completion.

Natascha Engel asked the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families what recent assessment has been made of progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General's study on violence against children. **Dawn Primarolo** responded, on 21 July 2009, that the government had taken note of this study and in response is revising the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children,' and has also published new guidance on protecting children from sexual exploitation, trafficking and gang activity.

Parmjit Dhanda asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to ensure a sustainable funding strategy for the specialist violence against women voluntary sector. **Phil Woolas** responded that in general funding for local services are determined by local commissioners. He further stated that addressing domestic and sexual violence will be key priorities in helping local partnerships to deliver fully on the public service agreement requirements.

Theresa May asked the Secretary of State for Justice how many people imprisoned for sexual violence offences have been released under the end of custody licence scheme and how many of them have committed similar offences since their release. **Jack Straw** responded that the most recent data, published on 30 June 2009, showed that between 29 June 2007 and 31 May 2009, 9 prisoners released on ECL had served a sentence for a sexual offence. Of these, 6 were eligible for release whilst the other 3 were released in error. None of the 9 prisoners re-offended while on the period of ECL.

Campaigns

Eaves and OBJECT *Demand Change!* Campaign launched at a high profile event on the 24 June at the Houses of Commons.

On 24 June Eaves and OBJECT launched their *Demand Change!* Campaign at the House of Commons.

The key aims of the *Demand Change!* Campaign are:

- to promote an increased understanding of the myths and realities surrounding prostitution
- to call for prostitution to be seen and widely understood as a form of violence against women
- to lobby for adoption of the 'Nordic model' of tackling demand and decriminalising women in prostitution.

Get Involved:

- Sign this [online petition](#) to tackle demand for prostitution and circulate the link widely;
- Send this template lobbying letter to your MP ([word doc](#));
- Download this [petition](#) to use in your community / workplace etc;
- Download campaign posters to spread the word [here](#) (green version) and [here](#) (black version)

For more information, visit the campaign [website](#)

Consultations, Research and Opportunities

Female Voice in Violence

Building Bridges, ROTA's research and policy project on gangs, is currently undertaking a research project into women affected by serious youth violence – **Female Voice in Violence**. The Project aims to gather evidence from third sector practitioners working with young people to collect examples of best practice and then present these to local, regional and national statutory stakeholders. This project is being delivered in partnership with the Women's Resource Centre. The deadline for completion of the survey is **31 September 2009**.

For more information on Building Bridges please contact Carlene Firmin, Policy Officer and BBP Lead on carlene@rota.org.uk or go to <http://www.rota.org.uk/pages/BBP.aspx>

See also: [Survey – Support services for women and girls affected by gang and serious youth violence](#)

LVSC developing new 5 year plan

The **LVSC** is in the process of developing a new 5 year plan that it hopes will meet the challenges facing Londoners and the voluntary and community sector that serves them. In order to do this it is collecting responses to a web survey. Go to the [LVSC website](#) to read more about the consultation and to access the web survey. The closing date for submissions is **8 September 2009**. The final version of the plan will be presented at the AGM and conference on **24 November 2009**.

LVSC: The Big Squeeze

The **LVSC's** report entitled [The Big Squeeze](#), which looked into how the recession is affecting the voluntary and community sector in London, is now available to view. The survey, which took detailed responses from 100 organisations in London, found that:

- 95% of groups responding indicated the recession was already affecting them and the communities they support;
- 71% reported an increased workload as a result of an increased demand for their services;
- 80% were not confident that they could continue to meet this demand indefinitely.

Capacitybuilders

Capacitybuilders is a government organisation that gives grants to organisations that provide capacity building support and aims to improve the support available to third

sector organisations. It is now consulting on its draft Single Equality Scheme, which is an action plan detailing how it will tackle discrimination. To read the briefing and questionnaire click [here](#) and to read the draft equality scheme click [here](#). The consultation is open until **25 September 2009**.

Refreshing the Compact

The **Refreshing the Compact** consultation aims to revise the agreement that sets out shared commitments and guidelines for working between the government and the third sector. The draft revised version is intended to bring the Compact up to date with the changes in the law, policy and practice and in so doing wants to gather the views of those working in the public and third sectors. The deadline for responses is **12 October 2009**.

Conferences, Training, Meetings and Events

Get Cross: Show Solidarity to End Rape Now

Join U.N. Action's global photo campaign by uploading a [cross-armed image](#)

Women's Resource Centre and Women and Girls Network training

A project run by the Women's Resource Centre and Women and Girls Network offers a range of support to LC-funded organisations working in the field of violence against women and children (specifications 43, 59, 60, 61 & 63, 62, 65, 69, 70 and 72). The aim is to make women's organisations more effective and sustainable by providing training, resources and support as well as campaigning and lobbying. They are offering a wide range of free support:

- Accredited training for frontline workers;
- Training and 1-1 support on infrastructure issues;
- Professional exchange seminars;
- Good practice briefings;
- Template policies;
- Monthly email newsletter;
- 6 monthly discussion and networking meetings for funded organisations;
- Opportunity to be a member of WRC's online women's sector network.

Contact Ellen Storrar, WRC Development Officer at ellen@wrc.org.uk or 020 7324 3047.

Feminism in London 2009

Feminism in London takes place on **10 October 2009**. Events include a panel discussion entitled "What's wrong with prostitution?" <http://www.fil.btik.com/home.ikml>

The Survivors Trust: Behind Closed Doors

The **Survivors Trust** has produced a series of short films called **Behind Closed Doors** to raise awareness about rape and sexual abuse, and the help that is available to survivors through member groups. The films are being offered free to anybody who would like to use them within their own work.

You can view the films at <http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org/info/behind-closed-doors.aspx> or contact Abigail Hunt at abigail.hunt@thesurvivorstrust.org or on 01788 550554 for information on how you can use the films.

NSPCC Conference: Promoting safe sexual cultures in education settings: Preventing sexual bullying

On **2 October 2009** the NSPCC is holding a national one day conference for all staff working in educational settings to explore approaches to prevent sexual bullying among children and young people.

With rising problems of sexual bullying in education, this conference is essential for all those working in educational settings.

Delegates will hear of the impact of sexual bullying on the lives of children and young people and professionals working in the education sector and how positive steps can be taken to address this issue.

Presentations from key national and local projects will illustrate how best to support children and young people in developing safe, respectful sexual relationships, and create a culture where sexual bullying and coercive sexual relationships will not be accepted.

You will be able to:

- identify activities that promote safe sexual cultures in education settings;
- recognise, respond to and manage sexual bullying in education settings;
- contribute to the establishment of a national agenda for future action against sexual bullying.

Speakers include:

Julie Bentley (chief executive, Family Planning Association) - Chair

Baroness Morgan of Drefelin (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children, Young People and Families) - tbc

Max Hyde (National Union of Teachers [NUT] executive member and vice chair, Education, Equalities and Professional Development Committee)

Dr Elly Farmer (chartered clinical psychologist, NSPCC)

Hannah White (UK programme and policy manager, WOMANKIND Worldwide).

Further information:

Date and time: Friday 2 October 2009, 9am – 4.30pm.

Location: Inmarsat Conference Centre, 99 City Road, London EC1Y 1AX.

Registration fees: Delegate fee £150. Vegetarian food will be provided. If you have any specific dietary or access requirements please let us know five weeks before the event.

[Download a flyer and booking form for this event \(PDF, 264KB\)](#)

For further information about this event, please contact Radha Singh (NSPCC events officer) on 020 7825 2760 or email eventsorganiser@nspcc.org.uk

Bright Ideas Conference: *Creative ways of implementing the Improving Safety and Reducing Harm - Children, Young People and Domestic Violence toolkit*

The Greater London Domestic Violence Project is holding a unique event comprising a selection of practical, active and fun sessions for frontline workers to experiment with new ways of working with children and young people who are affected by violence. Each session is based on an aspect of the new Department of Health and GLDVP toolkit: Improving Safety and Reducing Harm - Children, Young People and Domestic Violence.

Who should attend?

This event is aimed primarily at frontline practitioners across all sectors that work directly with children and young people where domestic violence is an issue in their lives, whether at home or in their own relationships.

Participants will have the opportunity to:

- Learn and develop new skills such as art therapy
- Hear from young people directly about their experiences
- Explore different ways of working with young people
- Network with each other in dynamic and creative ways
- Benefit from 'caring for carers' and therapeutic interventions.

Location

Shoreditch Town Hall

380 Old Street, London EC1V 9LT

Map and detailed travel information will be sent to participants upon booking.

Each participant will receive a free copy of the new Improving Safety and Reducing Harm - Children, Young People and Domestic Violence Toolkit.

Date and Time:

Tuesday 15th September 2009, 9am until 4.30pm

Conference costs:

The early bird catches the worm...

£119/£129 vol/stat if your booking form is received before the end of July. £139/£159 vol/stat price thereafter.

How to get your booking form: email cypconference@gldvp.org.uk or download from the Greater London Domestic Violence Project www.gldvp.org.uk

Funding News and Opportunities

Government Equalities Office (GEO) Special Fund

£1.6 million is to go to Rape Crisis Centres and Survivors Trust centres from the GEO's Special Fund. These specialist centres provide services such as counselling and advocacy to women and men who have been raped or experienced sexual violence. In addition the Policing Minister David Hanson has also announced that £1.67 million will be used to establish eight new Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), support 15 existing SARCs and fund 43 Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs).

For further information click [here](#).

The Sigrid Rausing Trust

The Sigrid Rausing Trust is a grant-giving foundation based in London. They run four programmes, including women's rights, and past grantees have been organisations covering a whole range of violence against women issues.

The trust offers 'main grants,' which vary between £15,000 and £850,000, and decisions are made by the trustees 3 times a year, usually in February, June and October. For an enquiry form click [here](#).

The trust also offers 'small grants,' of up to £15,000. These are awarded throughout the year. For an enquiry form click [here](#).

To find out more about the Trust and the awards it has to offer, visit their [website](#).

The Department of Health

The Department of Health has released its Third Sector Investment Programme for 2010-2011. They have changed their guidelines on eligibility and themes of funding, so take a look at the information pack [here](#). You should ensure that your proposal contributes to:

- Information, advice, advocacy and support;
- Personalisation and dignity;
- Community and user involvement and peer support;
- Promoting, supporting and maintaining positive behaviour in terms of health; and/or
- Reducing inequalities in health.

Note: the deadline for round 1 of the application process is **4 September 2009**.

Hardship Fund (Community Development Foundation)

The Hardship Fund offers grants of between £50,000 and £250,000 to organisations with an annual income of at least £200,000 that are in financial hardship due to the recession, which is impacting on their ability to deliver services in the following areas:

- Health and social care;
- Housing support;
- Education and training;
- Information, advice and guidance.

Grants will be paid from **October 2009** and need to be spent by **September 2010**. For further information and how to apply, visit the [website](#).

Barnet grants to voluntary organisations

Financial assistance of up to £50,000 is available to voluntary and community organisations to support vulnerable people, to meet differing patterns of need within the community, and to make services easier to access. The main aim of the programme is to improve the quality of life of people whose opportunities may be limited by economic, social or cultural disadvantage; disability; isolation; fear of crime; unemployment; or other forms of social exclusion, with a view to promoting equal access to services and equality of opportunity.

Applicants should be providing (or planning to provide) a service that will benefit Barnet and its residents, and priority will be given to activities which cannot go ahead without Council support. Project, revenue and start-up/one-off grants are available.

For further information, telephone Ken Argent on 020 8359 2020 or Haroon J Khan on 020 8359 2092.

Peter Minet Trust Grant

Grants are available to organisations who aim to improve the quality of life of people living in the inner city boroughs of South East London – particularly Lambeth and Southwark. Awards range from £1,000 to £3,000 and there is also a small grants scheme for one-off events. The next deadlines for applications are 4 September 2009 and 8 January 2010. For further details and how to apply visit the [website](#).

Thames Community Foundation Trustees' Fund

This fund is aimed at smaller voluntary organisations who may be seeking funding for the first time. Funding is available for projects that seek to address the needs of:

- Children and young people;
- Problems associated with addiction;
- Adults with disabilities;
- Welfare.

Grants of up to £2,000 can be awarded to groups based in, and working for the benefit of residents of, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hounslow, Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth.

The next closing dates for the Trustees' Fund are: **1st September 2009, 30th November 2009** and **1st March 2010**.

For further information go to the Thames Community Foundation [website](#).

Wates Foundation

The Wates Foundation provides grants to third sector organisations in London and other eligible counties that promote social responsibility and address issues of disadvantage. One-off payments are capped at £15,000, while periodic payments can total up to £40,000. The focus of the Foundation grants between 2008 and 2010 is split between:

- Building family values;
- Improving community health;
- Addressing crime in the community;
- Improving the voluntary and charity sector.

For more information and how to apply visit their [website](#).

Vacancies and Volunteering

Mosac

Supporting non-abusing parents and carers of sexually abused children

1, Part-time Training and Development Co-ordinator

£19,348 per annum inclusive of OLW for 21 hours per week

This is a fixed term contract until 31 March 2011, funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

The Co-ordinator will be responsible for developing and leading training programmes, which will include safeguarding children and skills development. The successful candidate will also recruit, support and train Mosac volunteers. Applicants should have experience of designing training and delivering to a wide range of audiences.

Location: Greenwich, London

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 24th August 2009

To download an application pack, please visit their website at www.mosac.org.uk and look under Information. Any enquiries please ring 020 8293 8582

Applications from all sections of the community irrespective of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin or disability are welcomed.

2. Part time Advice Worker

7 hours per week (term time only)

This is a fixed term contract for one year in the first instance, funded by London Councils.

An Advice Worker is required to provide free impartial and confidential advice to clients using a person-centred holistic approach on a wide range of matters.

This is a new role and candidates should have the enthusiasm and passion to be a part of developing this new and exciting service. The post holder would also be required to develop and maintain an advice and information library system and work towards achieving the Quality Mark.

Experience and skills in delivering quality advice and information services to a range of people from different backgrounds and working with vulnerable people is essential.

This service aims to reach, but not exclusively, people from disadvantaged groups e.g. people with mental health/learning difficulties, people that speak/or are from Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Somali and Urdu communities.

For any further information please email Namita at info@mosac.org.uk or phone 0208 293 8582. To apply, please download an application pack from www.mosac.org.uk.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 24 August 2009

Please email your completed application form to: info@mosac.org.uk or send it to Mosac, 141 Greenwich High Road, London SE10 8JA. Applicants selected for the interview will only be contacted. Interviews planned on Friday 4th of September.

All applicants must be eligible to work in the UK. Successful candidates will need to undergo an enhanced CRB check.

SVAAN Meeting Dates for 2009

Wednesday 16 September, 11:00–13:30

Thursday 12 November, 14:00–17:00, Open forum

Open forums are open to both voluntary and statutory members of the SVAAN network.