

Next Step (Against Domestic Abuse)

The mission of the organisation

The mission of our organisation is to offer support to victims of domestic abuse and related issues. The overall aim of the organisation is to help improve the quality of life in the community of South Derbyshire by providing drop-in facilities, help-line and outreach services for victims and survivors of domestic abuse and related issues and aims to make a long-term difference to the quality of life to those victims and their families who are affected.

What kind of service do they offer to the community?

We offer a support service to people in South Derbyshire and the surrounding areas, who are survivors of domestic abuse. We do this via the helpline which includes access to refuges nationwide, outreach service, drop-ins, self-help groups, befriending and counselling etc. enabling them to make informed choices about their situation and the safety of themselves and their families

We enhance the service we are able to offer with the support of a team of dedicated volunteers, which in turn assists them with enhanced employment and skills opportunities.

Fit with SDDC Corporate Plan/Strategies

Sustainable Growth and Opportunity

We work with a lot of volunteers who receive training, development and support to increase their skills and employability. This enables us to extend the service available for clients. Many of our volunteers move onto paid employment or further education, whilst others may volunteer to build their confidence and continue to volunteer with us for some time or do other volunteering opportunities. We also support clients with self-help activities and encourage move on to courses and other activities available locally.

Safe and Secure

We work in partnership with other agencies both statutory and voluntary to improve the support for victims of domestic abuse to reduce the percentage of people who are at risk of domestic abuse and the number of people who are feeling unsafe when alone in their home. Increase awareness and understanding of domestic abuse to reduce repeat incidents. We also take the referrals for the sanctuary scheme which increases the security of victim's property enabling them to stay in their current property if it is safe to do so, this is particularly useful for larger family or who have older male children for who it is difficult to find refuge accommodation this also helps individuals stay within the area when they have their support networks. We also take the calls for refuges nationwide.

Lifestyle Choices

Clients receive help and advice to enable them to make informed decisions about their situation and safety for both themselves and their children. They are then supported to enable them to make the changes and make a long term difference to the quality of their lives. By supporting the adults and enabling them to make informed decisions the family life is improved which improves things for children and young people.

Value for Money

We are excellent value for money as we only have a small staff team but work with volunteers to enable us to extend the service available and the accessibility for victims across South Derbyshire. People who present themselves at the council with issues around domestic abuse are all referred to Next Step and we also take the referrals for the Sanctuary Scheme.

Examples of current projects /programmes

The help-line - which is answered 50% of the time by volunteers took over 2000 calls this year resulting in victims and other professionals being able to access advice, information and support as well as access to refuges nationwide. This is also part of the Derbyshire County Helpline taking the calls for South Derbyshire.

Outreach/Drop-in - for advice, information and support at various locations across South Derbyshire making it more accessible for people in rural locations to access face to face support. This is run by Outreach staff and volunteers.

Counselling – On-going counselling is available to all clients who are suffering or have suffered domestic abuse, this is available through a team of volunteers who are on placement from their course or having completed the course and wishing to develop their skills and knowledge, this is set up with regular reviews and we provide management and clinical supervision in addition to coordination and administration.

Delivery of the 'Freedom Programme' which is a participatory course for clients to increase their awareness of domestic abuse and recognise the signs of abusive behaviour in future relationships and look at the effects of abuse on children.

98% of our face to face clients are from South Derbyshire with the remaining clients being people from the immediate outskirts having difficulty accessing the normal services available to them for a variety of reasons. The helpline callers are from people who are hoping to access the refuge in South Derbyshire often from out of the area or from people living or working in South Derbyshire wanting support from someone living in South Derbyshire.

We currently have one full-time and four part-time members of staff and 23 volunteers who work in a variety of roles within the organisation.

We do not charge for our services at the moment however we expect that we will need to request a small contribution for our counselling service in the near future.

Our turnover is around £115,825 which the majority is from Reach Communities Lottery funding and £3745 which is from SDDC. We also do some fundraising to assist with meeting the ever increasing costs.

We promote ourselves at awareness events to other professionals and the public and via our web-site which is www.next-step.org, leaflets and posters which are distributed throughout South Derbyshire at various locations to include SDDC, GP's, police, social services, libraries, schools, other health professionals, notice boards and other voluntary and statutory organisations although our recent evaluation confirms that almost a third of our beneficiaries consulted heard about next step through a friend or word of mouth and about 60% through partners such as the police, health visitor or housing services etc.