

Edinburgh Women's Aid is turning 50

Edinburgh Women's Aid, which opened its first refuge in 1973 has unveiled plans for a series of year-long events next year to mark 50 years of providing support for tens of thousands of women and their children who have experienced domestic abuse. The events will include a competition to design a commemorative artwork and that will be unveiled at an exhibition in January.

Events planned throughout the entire year will highlight and pay tribute to those who have provided support for women and their families over the past five decades. This has meant giving women a safe place to stay in a refuge, specialist housing support, legal advice and help securing employment.

The aim of the commemorative artwork will be to showcase how the charity has evolved over the years, the ongoing support available to help keep victims of domestic abuse safe and forthcoming plans.

In addition to being launched at the 50th anniversary

exhibition, the artwork will also feature on the cover of the charity's printed and digital Impact Report and various other marketing materials, including pull-up banners, leaflets, website and social media. The winning artist will also receive a prize of £500.

Entries can be created in any medium and should be submitted with the entry form available on EWA's website, www.edinwomensaid.co.uk by 1 November 2022.

Linda Rodgers, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Women's Aid, said: "2023 is such an important milestone for us, it gives us pause to remember the amazing women who came before us – who fought against the odds to get our first refuge in 1973, who provided support and sanctuary to countless women over the many years and those survivors who went on to their full potential after escaping abuse.

"We'll also be taking the time to think about 'what next' so that we continue to provide innovative and necessary services to women and children in Edinburgh."

Women and children's rights campaigner Lydia Okroj, who has worked with Edinburgh Women's Aid and Scottish Women's Aid for over 40 years and recently received an honorary doctorate from Stirling University in recognition of her outstanding work, said:

"EWA, which has been at forefront of shaping support services, policy responses and legislation in the city, which has been informed by the women they have supported, have so much to be proud of as they reach their 50th anniversary.

"Although awareness of domestic abuse has come a long way since 1973, when EWA began to provide refuge and support to 'battered wives', the need for the charity to continue supporting women, children and young people remains the same today as it did then, which is why it is important to highlight this milestone.

“It’s been a privilege to work alongside so many committed women over the past four decades and to have played a part in supporting survivors of domestic abuse and also to be involved in so many significant changes in legislation over the years, which will be showcased in some of the events planned throughout 2023.”

