

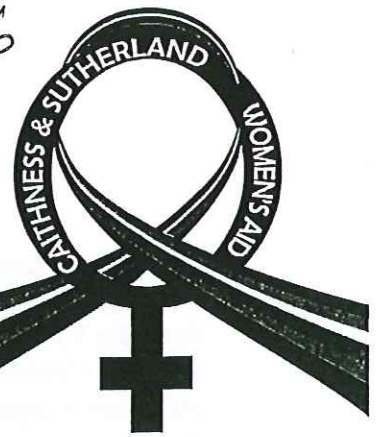
Caithness & Sutherland Women's Aid

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A Charity giving information, support and temporary
accommodation for Women, Children and
Young People who have experienced.
Domestic Abuse



A Registered Scottish Charity
Charity Number SC-034356

Ref:- Consult/RG/AJM

7 January 2010

Rhoda Grant MSP
Parliamentary Office
The Scottish Parliament, Room M1.06
Holyrood
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

Dear Rhoda

Caithness & Sutherland Women's Aid were delighted to learn of your commitment to challenging (with a view to reconstructing) the existing Civil Protection Orders which basically give little or no reassurance of protection to women and children who have experience of Domestic Abuse or other forms of Violence Against Women.

As Women's Aid workers we are consistently supporting abused women who find themselves (following court disposals) totally responsible for ensuring their own protection around further episodes of violence and other forms of abuse. It would be absolutely wonderful for all women to have access to the privilege of obtaining a Protection Order without financial burden. So many women who, in my experience, have been subjected to further violence and abuse directly relating to the fact that they could not afford to "buy" their protection or indeed feel empowered enough – after the Judicial System has so pathetically let them down.

Caithness & Sutherland Women's Aid applaud you reverently for your empathy, understanding and support around the plight of abused women and children who have to endure such degrading and damaging experiences at the hands of the perpetrator and also, sadly, at the mercy of our Judicial System.

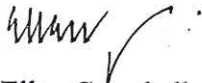
You will see from the enclosed scrip that CASWA have already responded to your consultation document through the VAW Strategy Group, of which we are members. I sit on the VAW Strategy Delivery Group, The VAW Training & Awareness Group and the Local Caithness & Sutherland VAW Forum. The VAW Strategy Action Plan sets out enthusiastic targets for improving Services to women, children and young people who have experience of Domestic Abuse and other forms of Violence Against Women. Caithness & Sutherland are earnestly involved in the ongoing improvement and development of Services for victims of DA and VAW and are engaging at all levels ensuring constructive external relationships are maintained with partner organisations.

On another note, CASWA are in the process of submitting an application for a grant from Leader to open up and develop our Outreach Service to women, children and young people in North and West Sutherland. Up until now we have not had the opportunity to offer our Service on the North and West Coast due to lack of resources. However, we have now identified this opportunity – the funding process is quite onerous. We need to gather recognised support from Practitioners, Agencies and people like you to further our aim. I wonder if I could possibly ask you for a letter of support which would strengthen our application.

Caithness & Sutherland Women's Aid extends their most sincere support to you in the success of your Proposed Civil Protection Orders and Access to Justice (Scotland) Bill.

Kind regards

Yours Sincerely



Ellen Campbell
Service Co-ordinator
Caithness & Sutherland Women's Aid