

# VAWDASV RESEARCH NETWORK

## Newsletter

### NETWORK UPDATE -

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Welcome to the VAWDASV Research Network Newsletter.

This edition includes the latest news from our members, including journal publications, details of Calan DVS’s new Sexual Trauma and Recovery Centre, a call for volunteers to help gather stories for Bawso’s 30th anniversary celebrations and a new resource for professionals supporting young people aged 10-25 who are using harmful behaviours in their intimate or family relationships, developed by SafeLives. We have also included an update on the Postgraduate Research subgroup and shared the Network’s response to UK Parliament’s Inquiry into minimising the harm to those engaging with the family justice system. This edition also includes nine funding and collaboration opportunities that may be of interest and benefit to members.

Don’t forget to join our new LinkedIn Group! The group is a collaborative space to share knowledge, celebrate good news, seek or share opportunities and highlight the innovative work taking place in Wales and beyond to end VAWDASV. [Click here to join the group](#) (linkedin.com)

Thank you to all our members who have contributed to this edition. If you would like to know more or include an item in our next quarterly newsletter, please get in touch: [vawdasvwales@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:vawdasvwales@southwales.ac.uk)

**Emily and Sarah**  
Prof Emily Underwood-Lee and Dr Sarah Wallace  
Co-chairs of the VAWDASV Research Network Wales

### IN THIS EDITION -

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News .....	2
Research .....	5
Funding and collaboration opportunities .....	6
Events .....	8
Get in touch .....	8

## NEWS -

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### Calan Domestic Violence Service opens new Sexual Trauma and Recovery Centre

Calan Domestic Violence Service has opened a new Sexual Trauma and Recovery (S.T.A.R.) Centre. The centre has been designed through collaboration and engagement with survivors, creating a therapeutic, psychologically informed space where people feel supported and safe.

The S.T.A.R Centre includes:

- Therapy Rooms – Providing access to a range of specialist therapists in sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse (CSA)
- Wind-Down Room – A dedicated space for survivors to reflect after therapy sessions
- Multi-Agency Hub – Hosting professionals from Sexual Health, Thrive's SWAN Project, ISVAs, Women's Probation, and Bawso.



The aim of bringing these agencies together in one space is to provide a holistic, wraparound support system for survivors. This environment is intended to foster collaboration among specialists, enabling seamless referrals, knowledge sharing, and best-practice approaches to ensure comprehensive support.

**Michelle Whelan, Chief Executive, Calan Domestic Violence Service, said:** “The launch of our first S.T.A.R. Centre is a huge milestone for Calan DVS. We are incredibly proud and grateful to everyone who played a role in making this vision a reality, including our funders: Welsh Government’s VAWDASV Capital Grants Scheme, Clothworkers Foundation, Neath Port Talbot Council Sustainability Communities Grant Fund Scheme/UK Government, South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, and Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner.”

**[Click here and take a moment to view the transformation of the new dedicated S.T.A.R Centre \(canva.com\)](#)**

To find out more please contact: [mwhelan@calandvs.org.uk](mailto:mwhelan@calandvs.org.uk)

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### **‘How can we minimise the harm to those engaging with the family justice system?’: VAWDASV Research Network’s Response to Westminster Call for Evidence**

The VAWDASV Research Network has submitted a response to a UK Parliament Inquiry on ‘*How can we minimise the harm to those engaging with the family justice system?*’

The Network’s response, which all members had an opportunity to contribute to, highlights what is working well as well as the challenges. The paper includes two case studies from services in Wales, Bawso, which supports survivors from racialised communities, and Dewis Choice, which supports older survivors.

**[Click here to read the Network’s response \(vawdasv.wales\)](#)**

MAY 2025

## Update on the VAWDASV Postgraduate Research Group

The VAWDASV Postgraduate Research Group is a subgroup of the VAWDASV Research Network Wales and includes members who are currently enrolled on a PG programme carrying out research in VAWDASV.

The subgroup first met in December 2024 and now meets bi-monthly online. Its key purpose is to share resources and ideas specific to this area of research and study / connecting with peers / sharing projects / support learning. There is a collaborative approach to choosing the focus for each meeting and a good balance of information sharing (presentation) and interactive discussion. Themes for discussion have included researcher wellbeing, research ethics and maximising research impact.

Contact [rebecca.haycock@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:rebecca.haycock@southwales.ac.uk) if you are interested in joining the group. The Network has also set up an LGBTQ+ working group. Please contact [Siubhan.O'Donnell@newpathways.org.uk](mailto:Siubhan.O'Donnell@newpathways.org.uk) for more information.

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## Help Bawso Celebrate Thirty Years of Supporting Black Minority Ethnic and migrant victims and survivors of VAWDASV



Bawso is celebrating its 30 year anniversary later this year!

Established in 1995 by a small group of black and minoritised women in Cardiff who were concerned about the appropriateness of services provided to victims of domestic abuse, Bawso services now extend across Wales, employing over one hundred trained and experienced staff and numerous volunteers.

Bawso is seeking passionate partners and volunteers to support preparations for their 30th anniversary celebrations, planned for 25<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

If you are able to contribute any time or expertise in the run up to the celebrations to help gather and share the story of Bawso over the last 30 years please get in touch with Nancy Lidubwi: [nancy@bawso.org.uk](mailto:nancy@bawso.org.uk)

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## Verge of Harming Phase 2: Empowering Engagement Resource

'Empowering Engagement' is an evidence-based practice resource for professionals, developed from the evidence of the Verge of Harming Phase 2 research report, which you can read more about below. The resource is recommended when supporting young people aged 10-25 who are using harmful behaviours in their intimate or family relationships.

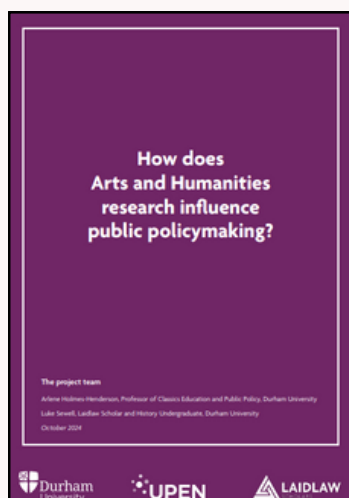
The resource offers clear guidance, practical tools, and a trauma-informed approach to support young people throughout the beginning, middle and end phases of the intervention. It also includes essential information on risk management and safeguarding, as well as a new preparation phase designed for practitioners.



[Click here to find out more about the resource](https://safelives.org.uk) (safelives.org.uk)

Join the webinar on 16th June! [Click here to register](https://eventbrite.com) (eventbrite.com)

## Research Network Featured in Research as an Example of Good Practice



A report by Durham University and the Universities Policy Engagement Network on the role of Arts and Humanities research in policymaking features the VAWDASV Research Network Wales as an example of good practice!

The report *How Does Arts and Humanities Research Influence Public Policymaking?* explores the myriad of ways in which Arts and Humanities research impacts on public policymaking. Professor Emily Underwood-Lee, Network Chair, shares how the VAWDASV Research Network operates to maximise the impact of research on decision-making through listening and collaboration.

[Click here to read the report](https://upen.ac.uk) (upen.ac.uk)

## MEDR Publishes Strategic Plan 2025-30

The Strategic Plan sets out our ambitions for a collaborative tertiary education and research sector that delivers high-quality learning and research, meeting the needs of the economy and society, improving participation rates in tertiary education, and creating more flexible pathways for learners.

This is MEDR's first strategic plan, and includes an aim to establish regulatory conditions to advance equity and equality of opportunity and work with partners to contribute to eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation, gender-based violence and abuse.

[Click here to read the Strategic Plan](https://medr.cymru) (medr.cymru)

[Click here to read the consultation response report](https://medr.cymru) (medr.cymru)



## Participants needed: Routes to Safety Project



The Routes to Safety research, delivered by SafeLives and funded by the Nuffield Foundation, is focusing on the how the different parts of a person's identity can affect their journey to safety including the help they receive, the risks they face and how these impacts on their situation.

### SafeLives needs diverse voices to shape this work

SafeLives would like to hear the voices of victim-survivors of domestic abuse with marginalised identities and professionals supporting these communities. If you or someone you are working with would like to be involved, please share the poster or visit [webpage](https://safelives.org.uk) for more information.

### Support to participate

SafeLives would like to reach a diverse range of people, so please let them know if there is something they can do to make the research more accessible. You can do this by emailing [Nanya.coles@safelives.org.uk](mailto:Nanya.coles@safelives.org.uk)

[Click here to visit the Route to Safety webpage](https://safelives.org.uk) (safelives.org.uk)

[Click here to download the poster](https://canva.com) (canva.com)

# RESEARCH -

## Verge of Harming Phase 2: New Research Report & Practice Resource

Safe Lives' Verge of Harming Phase 2 research report, in partnership with Respect and supported by The Wish Centre, New Era, Cheshire Without Abuse, SAFE and Harbour has been published!

The report explores how professionals can best support young people using harmful behaviours in their intimate or family relationships. Based on the voices of young people and practitioners, it outlines what effective, trauma-informed support should look like—and why.



[Click here to read the report](https://safelives.org.uk) (safelives.org.uk)

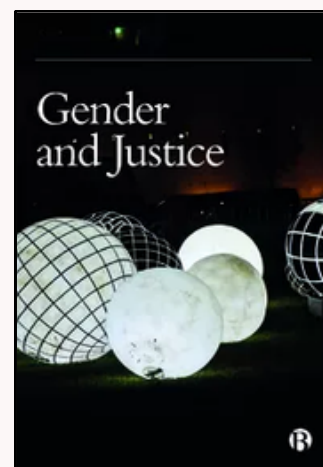
Join the webinar on 16th June! [Click here to register](https://eventbrite.com) (eventbrite.com)

## Journal publication: Exploring secrecy through the mother-child relationship where there has been domestic violence and abuse: challenging discourses of mother blaming

The journal Gender and Justice has published a research article by Rebecca Haycock, University of South Wales. This research focused on the lived experience of four mothers (post-separation) exploring concepts of secrecy and agency through individual qualitative interviews. Findings have implications for research and intervention, and for policy that is specific to the Welsh context, which was where the study was located.

[Click here to read the article](https://bristoluniversitypressdigital.com) (Bristoluniversitypressdigital.com)

If you would like to hear more about this research, please contact:  
[rebecca.haycock@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:rebecca.haycock@southwales.ac.uk)



## Journal publication: Interventions for Improving Informal Social Support for Victim-Survivors of Domestic Violence and Abuse: An Evidence and Gap Map



This evidence and gap map, published in Campbell Systematic Reviews, was conducted by University College London and SafeLives. It aims to establish the nature and extent of the empirical primary research on interventions aiming to create or enhance informal support for victim-survivors of domestic abuse, identifying clusters of evidence potentially suitable for synthesis, and gaps in the research base.

[Click here to read the article](https://wiley.com) (wiley.com)

MAY 2025

# FUNDING AND COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES -

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## Health and Care Research Wales Focused Call: Communication in Women's Health

This focused call invites research proposals focused on aspects of the topic: Communication in Women's Health. A budget of approximately £750k is available for this call, and Health and Care Research Wales expects to fund between three to six projects, depending on cost and quality of proposals received.

Stage 1 closes 28th May 2025.

[Click here for more information](http://healthandcareresearchwales.org) (healthandcareresearchwales.org)

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## National Institute for Health and Care Research: Health and Social Care Delivery Research (HSDR) programme

The Health and Social Care Delivery Research (HSDR) Programme is looking to fund high quality, well designed research which will be carried out by effective and efficient research teams, providing findings which meet the needs of NHS and social care managers and leaders. The HSDR programme funds evaluative research that has the potential to improve health and social care services. Research may be primary (qualitative and/or quantitative), secondary and evidence syntheses. Typical projects are mixed-methods studies with a clear focus on the organisation and quality of care. There should also be a focus on the experience of patients, staff and service users.

Call closes 29th July 2025.

[Click here for more information](http://nih.ac.uk) (nih.ac.uk)

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## Medical Research Council: Supporting researchers to involve public at pre-application stage

Apply for funding to run a scheme at your research organisation to reimburse public partners who work with researchers to develop MRC research funding applications.

Call closes on 26th June 2025.

[Click here for more information](http://ukri.org) (ukri.org)

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## Innovate UK: Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP): 2025 to 2026 Round Two

UK registered academic institutions, research and technology organisations (RTOs) or Catapults can apply for a share of up to £9 million to fund innovation projects with businesses or not for profits.

Call closes on 11th June 2025.

[Click here for more information](http://ukri.org) (ukri.org)

### Medical Research Council - Gap fund for early-stage development of new healthcare interventions

Apply to the Developmental Pathway Gap Fund to address a single-step evidence gap and de-risk the development of a new medicine, medical device, diagnostic test, or other medical intervention.

Call closes on 9th July 2025.

[Click here for more information](#) (ukri.org)

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### UK Research and Innovation Policy Fellowships 2025

Spend 18 months as a UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) core policy fellow, Natural Hazards and Resilience policy fellow or What Works Innovation fellow to inform policy to address pressing national and global challenges.

Call closes on 15th July 2025.

[Click here for more information](#) (ukri.org)

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### Innovate UK: DCMS Create Growth Programme Competition 4: large projects

UK registered micro, small and medium enterprises in the creative sector can apply for a share of up to £8 million for innovation projects to grow their business. This funding is from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Call closes on 29th May 2025.

[Click here for more information](#) (ukri.org)

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### Arts and Humanities Research Council: Collaborative doctoral landscape award in the arts and humanities

Apply for a collaborative doctoral landscape award in the arts and humanities. These awards enable UK non-higher education institutions (non-HEI), individual or consortia, to support high-quality doctoral training.

Applications close on 20th November 2025.

[Click here for more information](#) (ukri.org)

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### UK Research and Innovation: Proof of Concept Funding

Apply for proof of concept funding to support the commercialisation of research and the development of new products, processes or services.

Call closes on 29th May 2025.

[Click here for more information](#) (ukri.org)

## EVENTS -

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### Verge of Harm[ing] Phase 2 Webinar

Join SafeLives to hear about the research from phase 2 of the Verge of Harming project and their evidence based practice resource, empowering engagement.

Join the webinar on 16th June from 10:30-11:30am.

[Click here to register](#) (eventbrite.com)

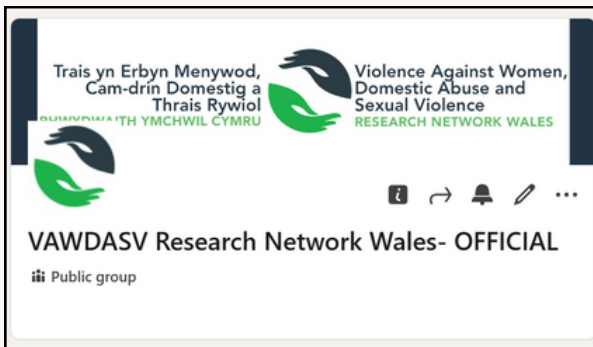
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## GET IN TOUCH -

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For more information on the network or if you are looking to join us or if you would like to submit an article for our next quarterly newsletter, get in touch via email: [vawdasvwales@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:vawdasvwales@southwales.ac.uk)

### Join the Network's LinkedIn Group!



The VAWDASV Research Network Wales LinkedIn group is a collaborative space for those with an interest in research on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence to share knowledge, celebrate good news, seek or share opportunities and highlight the innovative work taking place in Wales and beyond to end Gender-Based Violence.

[Click here to join the group](#) (linkedin.com)