**Report on 16 Days of Activism 2018**

**In Perth & Kinross**

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**Wed 28 November 16 Days Question Time Joan Knight Studio, Perth Theatre**

An audience of about 50 people attended Perth Theatre to hear a panel chaired by Rose Fitzpatrick CBE, QPM, former Deputy Chief Constable, Police Scotland, speak about their work in challenging gender based violence, supporting survivors and what makes them passionate about the work they do. There then followed questions to the panel and debate on such issues as the difficulties in supporting families in rural Perthshire and what churches and faith groups can do to challenge behaviour from within their membership.

This was the first time this format has been used by the Partnership and all present found the event to be enjoyable, informative and will be repeated in the future.

**Friday 30 November Trauma Informed Practice Workshop Royal George Hotel, Perth**

35 staff from a variety of professional backgrounds - health, teaching, social work, Women’s Aid, RASAC, - attended a workshop delivered by Dr Mairead Tagg, Clinical Psychologist and Gwendoline Telfer, Training Officer, RASAC P&K. The workshop discussed the effects of trauma on the individual from pre-natal to old age and the ways in which clients would present when being counselled. Dr Tagg then gave some good practice advice on supporting and advising clients and Gwendoline informed the audience of a course on Trauma Informed Practice developed in conjunction with PKC and available to all employees and partner agencies.

**Saturday 1 December Seeing Injustice, Imagining Change St John the Baptist Church, Princes Street, Perth**

An enthralled audience heard Bishop Anne Dyer discuss the images portrayed in a series of pictures and suggest how these can change attitudes to violence against women. Bishop Dyer was challenging and passionate in her delivery and the audience left with a lasting impression.

**Monday 3 December Leaves on the Track Salvation Army, South Street, Perth and HMP Perth**

Actress and playwright Naomi Breeze delivered “Chrissy’s Story” to an invited audience in the afternoon and to a group of prisoners and prison staff in Perth Prison in the evening. Those present heard how the behaviour of Chrissy‘s partner affected everyone around him and how poor decision making and life style choices had far reaching and unimagined consequences. Whilst prisoners serve their sentences in jail their partners and families face hardship and discrimination back in their own community. Both audiences were challenged to reflect on their own behaviour and attitudes.

**Tuesday 4 December Commitment to address Gender Council Offices, 2, High Street Perth**

**Based Violence by PKC**

The Chief Executive and senior staff were updated on the work of the Perth & Kinross Violence Against Women Partnership and the 16 Days of Activism 2018. Perth & Kinross has been selected by Close the Gap to be a Pathfinder Authority as part of the Equally Safe at Work initiative. As part of the initiative the Council will research and develop a workplace strategy to support staff in all aspects of gender based violence and the Chief Executive will make a public statement supporting the initiative and committing the council to be proactive in encouraging victims of gender based violence to seek help and support.

**Thursday 6 December Thursday in Black High Street, Perth**

About 30 members of the PKVAWP met at noon in the High Street Perth to show support for women around the world who experience rape and gender based violence. Thursdays in Black grew out of the World Council of Churches “Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988 – 1998)”, in which the stories of rape as a weapon of war, gender injustice, abuse, and many tragedies that grow outward from such violence became all the more visible. What also became visible was women’s resilience, agency and p[personal efforts to resist such violations.

Our members were able to hand out leaflets, explain to members of the public the reason for our protest and to publicise the remainder of the 16 Days programme.

**Thursday 6 December Reclaim the Night Perth City Centre**

Around 200 individuals were welcomed by the Provost and Chief Executive of Perth & Kinross to the Council Buildings for refreshments and entertainment before taking to the streets of Perth to “Reclaim the Night” as a major public event in the 16 Days of Activism.

The Reclaim the Night marches started in the UK on the 12th November 1977, when torchlit marches were held across the north of England because of the serial murders by Peter Sutcliffe, dubbed by the press as the ‘Yorkshire Ripper’, who sexually attacked and murdered thirteen women across Yorkshire between 1975 and 1980. The police response was to tell women not to go out at night, effectively putting them under curfew. Over the years the marches evolved to focus on rape and male violence generally, giving women one night when they could feel safe to walk the streets of their own towns and cities and to demand the right to live without the fear or reality of rape and male violence.

**Friday 7 December Reflections on 16 Days in Perth Joan Knight Studio, Perth Theatre**

Local MSP and Deputy First Minister of Scotland, John Swinney, addressed an audience of around 100 who had gathered at the Perth Theatre. Mr Swinney praised the work of the PKVAWP and the wide ranging nature of the activities over the period of the 16 Days of Activism.

He spoke more generally on the ubiquitous nature of gender based violence and in particular amongst young people on the campuses of colleges and universities. A new resource to help staff support victims of gender based violence has been introduced in all Scottish colleges and universities. The project has seen more than 100,000 cards distributed to every college and university detailing specialist services so that staff can deal with disclosures of violence against women and girls. The idea for the cards came from Fiona Drouet, mother of Emily Drouet, who took her own life after experiencing a campaign of gender based violence whilst at university.

Mr Swinney then introduced the next speaker, Jasvinder Sanghera.

**Friday 7 December An Audience with Jasvinder Sanghera Joan Knight Studio, Perth Theatre**

**Jasvinder Sanghera CBE** was born and brought up in Derby. A survivor of a forced marriage, she is the founder of Karma Nirvana, a national award winning charity that supports both men and women affected by honour based abuse and forced marriages.

During the course of the morning Jasvinder spoke candidly and in detail about her personal experience of abuse and the effects of forced marriage on herself and her relationships with family, friends and colleagues. The attitudes of the many within the Asian community still revolve around family honour and the requirement for women and girls to submit to this without question. All professionals working with young girls -teachers, social workers. police officers - must be alive to changes in their circumstance which could indicate that they may be being prepared for forced marriage.

She spoke about the charity she founded, Karma Nirvana, and of the many young victims of forced marriage and, in particular, those who had been murdered for refusing to submit to a forced marriage. She emphasised that this abuse is ongoing and experienced daily by women and girls across the country many of whom are isolated by their families and are unable to seek help and support. Karma Nirvana operates a UK helpline providing support and advice to victims and anyone who needs more information on forced marriage or honour based violence.

**Friday 7 December Healthy Relationships Perth Theatre**

**Monday 10 December Children Recovering from Domestic Abuse Royal George Hotel, Perth**

Perthshire Womens Aid hosted this event to a mixed audience of around 40 professionals – teachers, social workers, third sector support workers, childcare providers – to discuss the traumatic effects of domestic abuse on children and their specialist support needs. Workers from the CEDAR Project (Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery) gave an insight into the methods used to support their clients group, giving the audience a chance to participate in some of the activities used.