



WOMEN'S
COMMUNITY
HOUSE

2015/16 Annual Report



*Imagine
losing
yourself!*



President's Report

In the past, the President's Report has been a reflection of the last fiscal year (2015/2016); however, 2016 was a history making year for Women's Community House (WCH) and to honour this pivotal part of our rich history, I found myself "looking back" over the years.

Since 1978, Women's Community House has grown to be one of the largest shelters in the country. We are an active and participatory member of a dynamic community that has achieved an international reputation for services offered to abused women and their children. Through advocacy at the regional, provincial, national, and international level, Women's Community House promotes solutions to ending violence against women.

During this past year, we have continued to innovate and grow. WCH and the Sexual Assault Centre London (SACL) explored whether a merger of the two organizations would enable us to provide even better services for those impacted by woman abuse and sexual violence. After two years of careful consultation with all audiences, together with relationship-building across the two organizations, both boards agreed unanimously, at a joint board meeting on June 22, 2016, to become one organization. It was an emotionally charged meeting and a truly significant point in the history of both organizations.

Jennifer Noel, Chair, SACL said, "We know that we will be stronger together! The time is now for us to strengthen our presence in our community and continue to create communities of safe spaces and advocate for social and political change".

We dream of an inclusive world of shared power where everyone lives freely without fear of violence. We believe that together, and with our many partners and those with lived experience, we can make this vision a reality.

Over the coming months, we will begin the integration process with the stalwart belief that

together we will be able to deliver better service to those impacted by woman abuse and sexual violence.

We owe a debt of thanks to many:

- To our founding mothers who had the vision to know that our community was in desperate need of a shelter and for having the fortitude to soldier on to make that a reality;
- To our many board members and volunteers who, over the last 38 years, through their unwavering commitment, devotion and vision, have helped shape WCH into an outstanding leader in this community and nationwide;
- To the Executive Directors, the management teams and their staff who each day, every day, 365 days a year, tirelessly provided/provide quality service with high levels of client satisfaction. Your dedication to the vision and mission of WCH is exemplary;
- To our current board and members of the unification committee who gave many hours, much expertise and knowledge with the end decision to become one organization is sincerely acknowledged and much appreciated;
- To Marie Nother, our sincere thanks for supporting the Board so competently.
- And finally, thanks to Kate Wiggins, our current Executive Director, who will lead our new organization with perseverance, devotion and a strong belief that a community free of violence is within our reach.

I am honoured and privileged to have been a Board member and Chair of the Board of Directors of Women's Community House. I am confident that the next chapter in our history will be as exciting and, undoubtedly, as remarkable and significant as the last.

Anne Baxter
President/Chair,
WCH Board of Directors



Message from the Executive Director

I usually find myself saying in this report, on an annual basis, that it was an exceptionally busy year – and, once again, it was. Not only was it busy; it was a banner year for Women’s Community House (WCH) and I am delighted to be able to share some of our stellar highlights!

The **Child Witness Program** went through a thorough review resulting in a brand new program with re-developed offerings, including the concurrent Mom’s program and a program for adolescents. The new program has stirred up a lot of interest from other communities.

In January 2016, we began the search for a new **Financial Team** as *Melanie Murphy*, Finance Manager, and *Ewa Kaminski*, Finance Assistant, both decided to retire in the spring of 2016. They will be *greatly* missed. We are so fortunate to have hired two awesome women - *Tracy Gallina* as our Finance Manager and *Sophia Alferova* as our Finance Assistant.

In March of 2016, **Mine 101** proudly celebrated its 5th Birthday and achieved another milestone by generating a significant profit that will go towards our Children’s Programs.

In May of 2015, we started the process of becoming accredited with **FOCUS Accreditation**. *Susan Dill*, former Director of Residential Services, was the lead for this project. This was a huge undertaking. Being an accredited organization identifies to funding bodies, service users and potential service users, family members and other key stakeholders that the organization is meeting current professional standards, is committed to providing high quality services and is engaged in ongoing learning. This process can normally take up to three years; however, with Susan’s leadership and a phenomenal team of staff, we received our 4 year accreditation on July 14th, 2016.

Our two **signature events** in 2015 started in June with **Grand House Party (GHP) 13: 60’s Pop, Rock & Soul Rewind** when over 400 GHP fans rocked to what

was being referred to as “The best show yet!” Thanks to *Jean Meilleur, Katalin Kiss, David Blamires, The London Singers, The Grand House Party Orchestra*, all of our sponsors and everyone who bought tickets and came out to another fantastic Grand House Party! In September, our **9th Annual Walk a Mile in Her Shoes** welcomed 125 London and area men as they kicked up their heels once around Victoria Park. To each and everyone one of you who walked in support of the women and their children we serve and to those who cheered you on from the sidelines, thank you.

A heartfelt thank you to our “Champions”, UNIFOR, for hosting yet another fantastic **Annual Bob White Charity Classic** in August in support of WCH, the Woodstock Shelter and Second Stage Housing.



Champions Award:

UNIFOR was presented with the Champion Award at the 2016 Group Hug.

Thank you to all of our funders, particularly *MCSS*, who continue to support all our efforts, especially the unification work we have been doing with Sexual Assault Centre London (SACL). Thank you to the *Ministry of the Attorney General* for 2 more years of funding for our outstanding Family Court Support Worker Program.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to our 2015/16 awesome **Board of Directors**: *Anne Baxter*, President; *Shannon Wilson*, Vice President; *Susan McGugan*, Treasurer; *Sandy Jansen*, Secretary; *Janice Lamoureux, Sean Quigley, Julie White*, and

2015/2016 Statistics



Platinum Award:

Platinum Award Recipients at the 2016 Group Hug: Lutheran Social Services and Royal LePage Shelter Foundation. Absent in this award category: Sisters of St. Joseph.

Bo Lavrencic. Your diligent support of our efforts to unify with SACL along with your vision and commitment inspire all of us.

Congratulations to *Shelley Yeo* who has been appointed to the role of Assistant Executive Director.

And finally, to all our amazing *staff, volunteers* and *community partners* for making this our best year yet, thank you!

Peace,

Kate Wiggins
Executive Director

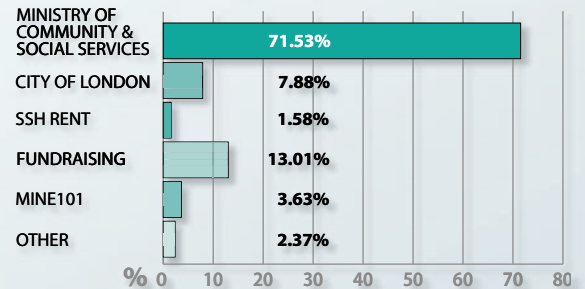


2015/16 Board

Left to right: Sandy Jansen; Bo Lavrencic; Janice Lamoureux; Shannon Wilson; Suzanne Fratschko Elliott; Susan McGugan; Anne Baxter; Kate Wiggins; Sean Quigley

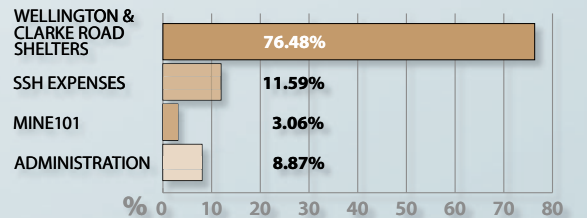
Total Residents	629
Number of Women	443
Number of Children	186
Women & Children Referred Elsewhere	154
Helpline calls	3,623
Walk-In's	652
Second Stage Housing Tenants	48 women/64 children
Transitional Outreach Clients	499
Family Court Support Program Clients	360
Community Group Program	47 children/25 moms

REVENUE



Ministry of Community & Social Services	\$ 3,417,730
City of London	376,359
Second Stage Housing Rent	75,401
Fundraising	621,841
Mine 101	173,488
Other	113,252
Total Revenue	\$ 4,778,071

EXPENSES



Wellington & Clarke Shelters	\$ 3,773,030
Second Stage Housing Expenses	571,925
Mine101 Expenses	151,089
Administration	437,616
Total Expenses	\$ 4,933,660

Excess (Loss) Revenue over Expenses. \$ (155,589)

THESE FIGURES MAY NOT CORRESPOND TO AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

This report is available, within a reasonable timeframe, in accessible formats for all abilities (large print, audio form, etc.) and may be ordered by contacting Pamela Coray at (519) 642-3003 ext 2252 or pamelac@shelterlondon.org.

Our Services

- **The Shelters** The Wellington Road Shelter (40 bed) and Clarke Road Shelter (27 bed) are high-security and universally accessible with crisis intervention counselling services for abused women and their children.
- **Second Stage Housing** offers independent apartments in the South London community. It is a 25 unit apartment complex, with rent-geared-to-income, offering housing to women and children usually for up to one year who require safe, temporary housing while continuing to make changes in their life.
- **The Transitional Outreach Program** offers on-going assistance within the community. Counsellors meet clients in a place that is safe for them to discuss various topics such as individual safety plans, assisting with navigating the systems (legal, financial, housing, health, etc), safe, affordable housing, connecting to resources and supports in the community, and advocacy and referrals.
- **The Abused Women's Helpline** is staffed by trained counselors and provides telephone and TTY support, information, and local referrals for women in crisis, 24 hours a day.
- **The Counselling & Support Centre** offers professional counsellors who are available to provide support and information for questions relating to abuse and the impact it may be having on someone's life. Risk assessment and safety planning are available. Walk-in or by call.
- **Family Court Support Program** offers assistance to victims of domestic violence or abuse going through the Family Court System by providing information about family law procedures, assistance in recording the history of abuse for court documentation, safety planning for court, accompaniment to court proceedings, etc.
- **Community Group Program for Children & Their Moms** provides an opportunity for children to begin to understand the abuse that happened in their family. Groups are offered for children aged 5-16, are free of charge, and are held in safe, accessible locations. Transportation and healthy snacks are included. Moms also have the opportunity to explore and reflect on how to support their children's healing.
- **Public Education** on abuse and women's issues in schools, community service agencies, service clubs, churches, and information fairs is an ongoing and fundamental part of our commitment to ending woman abuse.
- **New Beginnings Loan Fund** offers interest free loans to help women leaving abusive relationships to start rebuilding their lives.
- **Advocacy** takes place regionally, provincially, and internationally as Women's Community House actively promotes solutions to ending violence against women.

Abused Women's Helpline: 519-642-3000 1-800-265-1576



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Mine101 

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