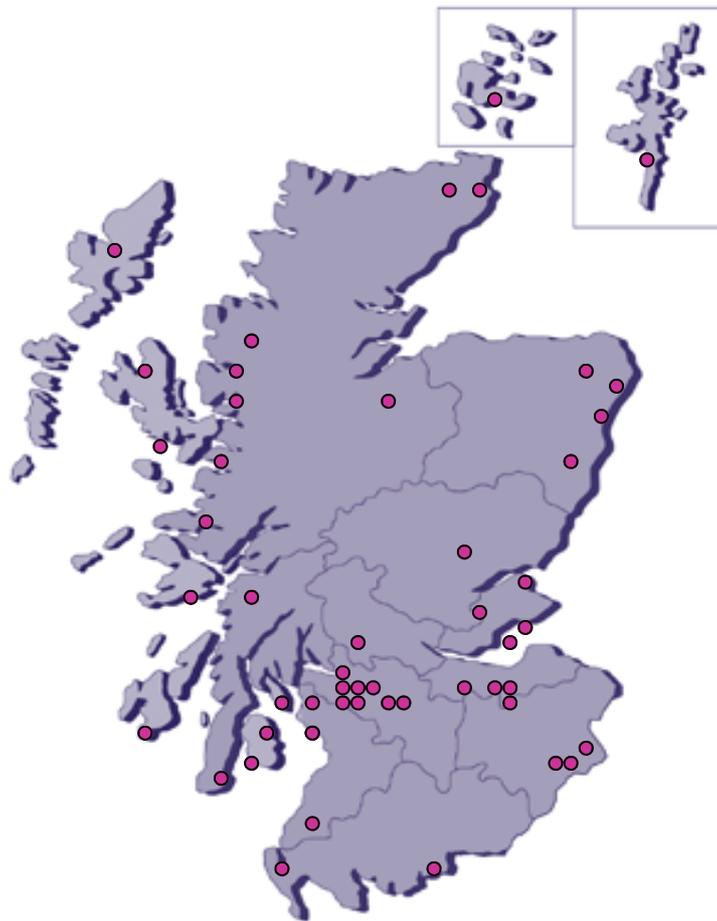


ANNUAL UPDATE 2013

Celebrating 10 Years



**of working with women
throughout Scotland**

The Scottish Women's Convention aims to:

- enable women to influence policy in Scotland.
- ensure that issues important to women are considered at all stages of the policy making process

Development Manager's Report

This year has been extremely busy and exciting for the organisation.

Record numbers have attended SWC events throughout the year. Feedback has been excellent. Women speaking with the SWC have raised a number of local and national issues which will be taken forward by the organisation including welfare benefit reform, employment opportunities, childcare and local transport provision.

Social media activities have been key to the increase in numbers attending.

The development of the Young Women's Network (YWN) has also led to different voices being heard on issues affecting women in Scotland

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Samantha Ritchie

SWC Board of Directors

Agnes Tolmie (Chair)

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Patricia Donnelly

Julie Hall

Elspet Macintosh

Tanveer Parnez

Giri Polubothu

Chair's Report

The SWC has continued to develop over the past year. The amount of work undertaken and completed by such a small team is to be commended.

Women want to work with us - want us to listen to them and take their concerns to those who can make a difference to their lives.

The increase in the number of events as well as the networking and social media activities have contributed to the success of the organisation.

In the run up to the Referendum vote in 2014, the SWC will be talking to women about what they want and need. Women's voices are important and politicians must listen.

SWC ACTIVITIES 2013

Roadshows

The SWC roadshow programme engaged with women in Portree, Breakish, Kyle of Lochalsh, Eyemouth, Haddington, Greenock and Livingston.

Women attending events were asked about -

- the opportunities available locally for formal and informal education;
- the impact of changes to welfare benefits and service provision on families and communities;
- the kind of Scotland they would like to see post Referendum.

In Haddington, Greenock and Livingston, local councillors, the STUC and a number of local organisations also provided informative presentations to the participants.

International Women's Day

The theme of the 2013 was *'The Influence of Women'*. Speakers and participants celebrated and acknowledged the positive difference women worldwide have made on a day to day basis in all aspects of family, social, economic and political life.

It was also an ideal time to highlight what has still to be done - younger women were encouraged to continue the progress towards equality; women who have overcome obstacles and challenges should be recognised as role models for the future generation.

The new SWC banner was also unveiled at the evening reception.

'A False Sense of Perfection' Young Women's Event

Over 70 young women from throughout Scotland attended this event in Glasgow. Speakers provided an overview of the main issues for young women as well as discussing personal encounters with sexualised behaviour. A range of workshops allowed those attending to speak openly about their experiences.

This successful conference was very well received. Feedback confirms the need for events for young women.

Greenock Conference

Due to the high level of response to the Roadshow event, a local Conference was organised in Inverclyde. Speakers provided an introduction to local and national issues affecting women today. Facilitated groups encouraged discussion around experiences in a number of key areas of inequality for women.

Older Women and Employment Conference

Employment rights, pensions, work/life balance and discrimination were all topics referred to by speakers. An active question and answer session provided delegates with the opportunity to explore actions for change for older women in the workplace.

Geographical Information Groups (GIGS)

GIGs are continually being established throughout Scotland. Following roadshow events, many women want to stay actively involved in the consultation process.

The SWC greatly appreciates the support of these groups when responding to consultations and surveys.

"More local events please."

"Really enjoyed the event – very interesting!"

"Well done to everyone organising – great event"

CEDAW

The SWC continued to provide secretariat to the Scottish CEDAW Shadow Report Forum. In May 2013, the SWC undertook the production of the Scottish CEDAW Shadow Report. This report was submitted to the CEDAW examining Committee in Geneva in June 2013.

Copies of the report were sent to Scottish and UK Government officials.

The SWC was also invited to attend UK Ministerial meetings prior to the CEDAW examination which took place in July 2013.

"I feel very inspired."

"Excellent. Really enjoyed the discussions."

"Can't wait until the next one."

"Really enjoyed the day. Will definitely come back."

Briefing Papers

- CSW Agreed Conclusions - June 2013
- Changes to Employment Tribunals - June 2013
- Scottish Parliament Health and Sport Committee Inquiry into Teenage Pregnancy - August 2013
- CEDAW Concluding Observations - September 2013

"Thank you to the SWC for all the work undertaken to hear the voices of women in Scotland and ensure they are taken forward."

"Very interesting."

"Well organised and inclusive."

"Please may we have more of this."

CSW 2013

The SWC produced a report, *Violence Against Women in Scotland*, in response to the Commission on the Status of Women Priority Theme for 2013 which was

"Elimination and Prevention of all Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls"

The information gathered from SWC events was used to inform UK Government officials of the issues facing women in Scotland.

The SWC was invited to be part of the UK NGO Liaison group for CSW and also participated in Ministerial meetings around the priority theme.

At CSW, in March 2013, the SWC was invited to speak at a parallel event by the All Indian Women's Conference. The Development Manager spoke of the importance of family and education in the fight against violence against women and girls.

A follow up event was held in Edinburgh for women in Scotland. This partnership activity, undertaken with other women's organisations in Scotland represented at CSW, focussed on the outcomes from CSW and the impact these would have on women in Scotland.

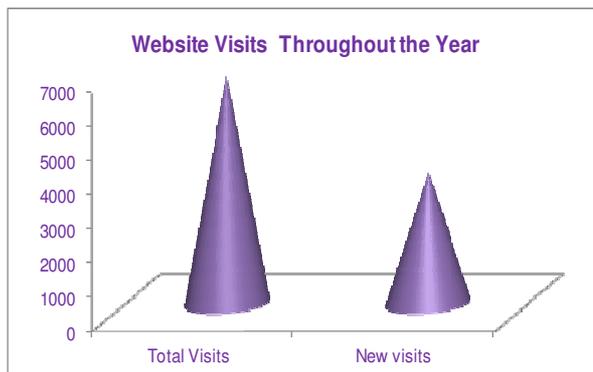
A report was produced of the discussions which took place.

Copies of reports from all SWC events, consultation responses and briefing papers are available to download from www.scottishwomensconvention.org

SWC Website & Social Media

Over the last year, social media and website activity has increased by over 600%. The SWC has quadrupled its followers on Twitter, doubled its 'likes' on Facebook and has developed a blog for the Young Women's Network.

Using a range of forms of communication is important when trying to network with women throughout Scotland. Expanding social media activities has given the SWC a higher profile at local, national and international levels. The organisation will benefit from these activities in the foreseeable future.



Other Activities

- The SWC enews bulletin is distributed monthly to the mailing list and other interested parties. The SWC mailing list has continued to grow with an increase of over 20% on 2012.
- The SWC has been invited to speak at a number of external events including local and national meetings,
- Holding stalls and networking activities at STUC Equality Conferences as well as local activities throughout Scotland has raised the profile of the organisation.
- The Young Women's Achievement Award was presented to Alison Fraser at the STUC Youth Conference in June. The closing date for this year's nominations is **31 March 2014**.
- Media activity has increased with a number of local and national press pieces as well as radio and TV interviews around the work of the organisation and the priorities for women.

Consultation Responses

- Inquiry into Underemployment in Scotland - Scottish Parliament Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee - January 2013
- Inquiry into Women and Work - Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee January 2013
- Redesigning Community Justice - Scottish Government Consultation - April 2013
- Licensing of Sexual Entertainment Venues - Scottish Government consultation September 2013
- Bus Regulation (Scotland) Bill - Private Members Bill by Iain Gray MSP - October 2013
- Human Trafficking (Scotland) Bill - Private Members Bill by Jenny Marra MSP December 2013
- Expert Working Group on Welfare - Call for Evidence - December 2013

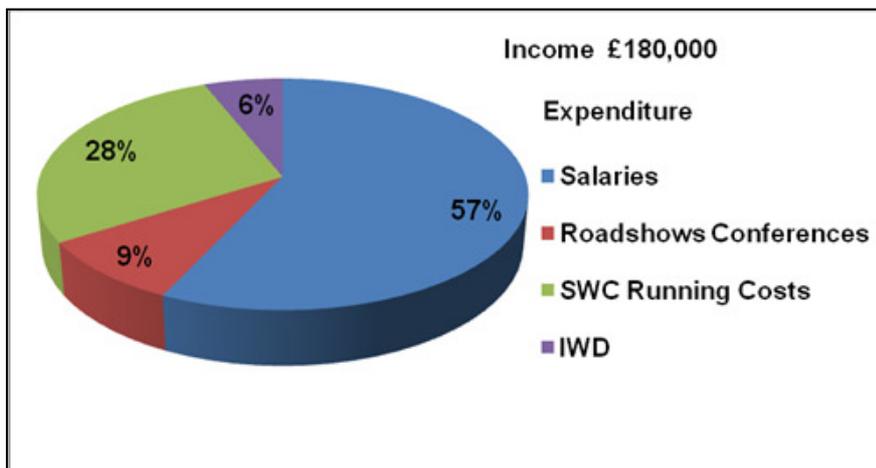
Young Women's Network (YWN)

Following the success of the SWC Young Women's Focus Group event in December 2012, the Young Women's Network (YWN) has been developed as an interactive forum.

This method of engagement allows young women from throughout Scotland to contribute their views and concerns via an online blog, Twitter, Facebook and a quarterly enews bulletin. By encouraging active participation in the consultation process, the SWC is able to ensure that issues which are important to young women are discussed and debated.

Local roundtable events have taken place in Greenock and Livingston. Further events are planned. As well as conference events, the SWC will explore the best way to meet and talk with young women throughout Scotland.

The establishment of the YWN has highlighted to the SWC that young women in Scotland want to discuss issues which effect them. The SWC will continue to develop this network and encourage more young women to participate in SWC activities.



Summary of Accounts April 2012 - March 2013

Thank You!

The SWC would like to extend our thanks to:

- Wylie and Bisset Chartered Accountants.
- Thompsons Solicitors, UNITE the Union, Unison, GMB Union, Thomas Tunnock Ltd, Walkers Shortbread, Cairndene Ltd, Foundation Scotland, Watt Brothers.
- Sean Feeny and the team at Hampden Advertising for prompt, quality printing.
- Last, but never least, all of our volunteers who have handed out bags, facilitated tables, taken coats, taken notes and generally supported the work of the SWC over the last year.

Your contribution is always greatly appreciated.

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