

## Membership

We offer membership to both individuals and groups that are interested in fostering stronger links with us and the wider women's sector. Becoming a member of the WRDA is easy and more importantly free to join. We continually strive to work towards women's equality and to keep our members up to date and although membership is free. We accept donations to continue the work we are involved in. To donate visit our Localgiving page on

[www.localgiving.org/charity/WRDA](http://www.localgiving.org/charity/WRDA).

If you are interested in becoming a member of WRDA please contact the Communications and Membership Worker, Megan McClure Botha via [info@wrda.net](mailto:info@wrda.net).

## New Member Focus

### Girls Rock School Northern Ireland

Established in March 2016, Girls Rock School Northern Ireland offers workshops and mentoring in electric guitar, bass, drums and vocals to women and girls of all ages).



We are part of a global Girls Rock! movement, united by the common desire for gender equality in the music industry. We are a small but dedicated collective, with each of the team giving their time all in the name of "empowering girls and women of all ages to riff, rock and roll!"

Find out more about this fantastic organisation on their Facebook page, @girlsrockschoolni

### WREn (Wellbeing in a Rural Environment)

WREn is a community interest company welcoming to anyone interested in natural health, mental wellbeing and organic goodies. Members of the CIC support each other's developing businesses and provide mutual promotion.



The aim of the collective is to encourage the growth of interest in this healing area of Strangford Lough, promoting it as a centre of excellence and hub for natural health.

You can find out more about this group on their website, [www.wrenholistichealth.life](http://www.wrenholistichealth.life).

## WRDA Out and About

Reach Out! A selection of where we have been promoting and delivering the BCB programme in June and July.

- ⇒ Homestart Warrenpoint
- ⇒ Footprints Women's Centre
- ⇒ Loughinisland GAA
- ⇒ All Saints Men's Club
- ⇒ Omagh Sure Start
- ⇒ Cancer Lifeline
- ⇒ Coyles Cottage Women's Group
- ⇒ South East Fermanagh Foundation
- ⇒ Clonoe Community Centre
- ⇒ East Belfast Community Development Association
- ⇒ Castleberg Breathing Better Group
- ⇒ Enniskillen Stroke Group
- ⇒ Ballycastle GAA

If you are interested in the Breast, Cervical and Bowel Screening Awareness Programme please contact our office on **028 9023 0212**.



## Westminster Lifts Ban on Equal Marriage and Abortion in Northern Ireland

As the Northern Ireland Executive Functions Bill passed through Westminster in recent weeks a couple of dogged MPs who have been working for some time to secure equal marriage and abortion rights for Northern Ireland successfully

added on amendments to address these issues. Using the arguments of equality and human rights, particularly **in the case of abortion access where the United Nations and the UK's own Supreme Court have both been very clear that the law here violates human rights**, Labour MPs Stella Creasy and Conor McGinn achieved huge



support for their amendments in the House of Commons. The Scottish National Party made a last minute decision to support the amendments despite the fact that they usually abstain on devolved issues. They noted that the protection of human rights and the fact that the NI Assembly has been out of action for so long made this case an exceptional one and the vast majority of their MPs voted to support both amendments. The Conservative Party also took the step of allowing their members a free vote which was extremely instrumental in the majority being so large.

As 383-73 MPs cast their vote in favour of marriage equality and a short while later another 332-99 voted to decriminalise abortion, campaigners began to celebrate. The journey of this new law was far from over however and just a few days later it was being debated by the House of Lords. Again both amendments received solid support with one additional amendment being added on in relation to the change in abortion law. **They added a clause that requires a consultation period of between 8 and 12 weeks to explore how the changes to abortion law should happen.** This will influence the type of abortion access that will be set up in Northern Ireland and how it will be delivered but it will not reverse the decision to decriminalise abortion and provide increased access to the procedure here in Northern Ireland.

Continued on page 3...

### Inside this Issue

= Westminster Lifts ban on Equal Marriage and Abortion in NI

= Community Facilitator Programme Open For Applications

= Raise Your Voice Project Update

= Learning Disability Pride

= New Member's Focus

= WRDA Out and About



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🐦 @WRDA\_team @WSLobbyistNI

## Community Facilitator Programme Open for Applications

WRDA has opened recruitment for its Award winning Community Facilitator programme. The training will be delivered in Lisburn this year and offers local women the opportunity to complete a Level 3 OCN Certificate in Learning and Development, develop facilitation and leadership skills, and increase their employability in the learning and development / community sector. They will also gain employment opportunities delivering WRDA's training programmes on a self-employed basis.

It is aimed that the programme will commence Monday 30th September 2019, one day a week (Mondays), from 9.30am – 2.30pm and run until late November / early December, with some delivery anticipated in January.

**(Eligibility:** Age 18+ with some active involvement in their local community).

**Open day at Atlas Womens Centre,  
Batchelor's Walk, Lisburn**

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August, between 10 – 12 noon  
(Creche facilities available).**

Please come along to the open morning for more information or contact Deirdre Quinn on 02890 230212 to indicate interest.

wrda  
**community  
facilitator**  
programme



**HSC** Public Health  
Agency

## Raise Your Voice

The Raise Your Voice project has revealed their new logo. This exciting project aims to tackle sexual harassment, sexual violence and the attitudes that cause this behaviour.



Across two years Raise Your Voice will be working directly with the community to consider the problem of sexual violence not as a string of isolated incidents, but as part of a larger and deeper problem. The workshops will involve sharing stories, drawing the threads of different experiences together, firming up our understanding of sexual violence and empowering people to tackle these behaviours and beliefs in ourselves and others. On the 9<sup>th</sup> July WRDA Good Relations Worker, Elaine Crory presented a pilot workshop of the Raise Your Voice programme to the Anti-Sexual Harassment Forum. The workshop received good feedback and delivery to community groups will start in September. If your group would like to be involved in the project please let Elaine know by emailing her on [elaine.crory@wrda.net](mailto:elaine.crory@wrda.net)

**Justice  
and =  
Equality  
= Fund**

MANAGED BY ROSA

## Learning Disability Pride 2019

WRDA once again attended the Learning Disability Pride (LDP) event in Carrickfergus on 22<sup>nd</sup> June and what a day it was! A fabulous celebration for people and organisations that work with and support men, women and children with a learning disability. The sun was shining and the atmosphere was electric and lots of awareness was raised around WRDA's Breast, Cervical and Bowel Screening Awareness Programme, which is tailored for groups with a learning disability.



During Learning Disability Pride Week Emma and Paula, our Training and Development Outreach Workers delivered the Breast, Cervical and Bowel Screening Awareness Programme in Armagh, Aughnacloy, Newry and Banbridge.

**For more information on the programme please call  
028 9023 0212.**

**HSC** Public Health  
Agency

## Westminster Lifts Ban on Equal Marriage and Abortion In Northern Ireland

The bill then went back to the House of Commons for its final stage on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July and was voted through by MPs. This was the day that we could finally say a law had been passed to lift the ban on same sex marriage and abortion – a truly historic occasion! Of course we have to remember that **both clauses are dependent on the NI Executive not re-forming before the 21<sup>st</sup> October**, something that seems incredibly unlikely to anyone who has been following the lack of progress in the local political negotiations. **The equal marriage law must then take effect in January 2020. Regulations governing abortion access have to be in place by March 2020**, following the period of consultation. It is important to note that decriminalisation of abortion does not mean unregulated or unlimited access, as some anti-choice campaigners have been wrongly suggesting. Regulations will be brought in that set out the terms of access such as time limits, which healthcare practitioners are allowed to administer abortions of different types and in which types of healthcare setting, and criteria that must be met for any abortion allowed after the official time limits in certain circumstances. All of this will still have to be worked out and the consultation will allow people the opportunity to share their views.

It is extremely important that all of us who believe in abortion access take time to talk to our friends, family and neighbours about why these changes are so important. There will be a lot of negative campaigning in the coming months which will be particularly painful for those who have made the difficult decision to end a pregnancy. We have recently seen anti-choice campaigners picket outside a Dublin hospital with small white coffins, a disgusting stunt that does nothing but upset and traumatise the many parents who have had to leave that same hospital with their own child inside a similar coffin. **In WRDA we will be standing with all those women and pregnant people who have had abortions to fight abortion stigma and to support this important change in the law.**