

EVIDENCE PACK

Calling for a PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) on Rosslyn Road

Contents

- Synopsis
- Photographic Evidence
- Clinic Incident Log
- Resident Statements
- Staff Statements
- Leaflets
- Clinic Location

Synopsis

Local group Reclaim Rosslyn Road are campaigning for the public space outside the British Pregnancy Advisory Services (BPAS) Clinic on Rosslyn Road to be free from intimidation and harassment, allowing those who wish to exercise their legal right to healthcare to do so without interference or judgement.

The group first approached Richmond Council in 2014 with a petition signed by 348 local residents requesting that the Council explore all available avenues to instigate a “buffer zone” around BPAS Clinic. Since that time, legislation has been introduced which gives Councils the ability to protect the space around the clinic in the form of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) under s59 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

The evidence in this pack has been gathered by supporters, residents and the BPAS Clinic. It is just a fraction of the available evidence which goes back many years. We believe it demonstrates the necessity of a PSPO for Rosslyn Road.

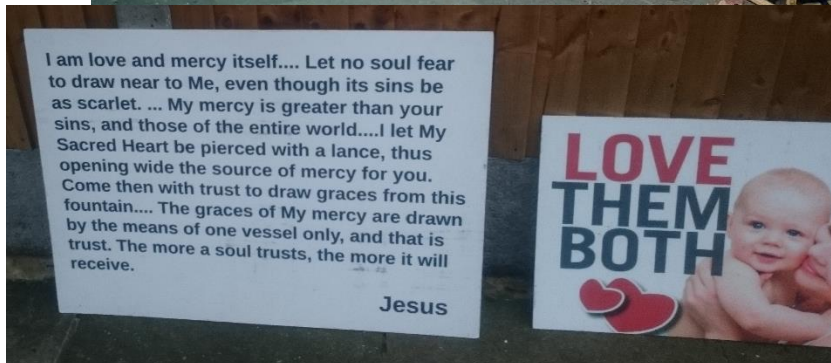
THANK YOU

Photographic Evidence

2nd Nov 2017



These protestors are standing on the pavement directly opposite the clinic. A woman is also standing at the clinic's entrance itself with leaflets and rosaries but she refused our request to take her picture.



Photographic Evidence

2nd Jan 2017



The man walking to the left is a protestor. He was stood directly in front of the entrance gate but did not want to be photographed standing there.

One protestor is usually stood in front of the gate and the others stand of the other side of the road.

Protestors pray and sing aloud as well as handing out leaflets and plastic rosaries.

Incident Log

The Incident Log at the BPAS Clinic on Rosslyn Road is in the format of A4 paper “Log Sheets” which are stored in lever arch files – BPAS is in the process of digitizing these records. Client names are not recorded.

This is the format the log sheets take, further quotes are taken directly from log sheets.

1/3/2018		Zoho Creator - Protest Activity Report (Public)	
Comment ID	935		
Clinic	BPAS Richmond		
Date-Time	09-Dec-2017 15:46:08		
Source	Client comment form		
Protest organisation (if known)			
What were the protesters doing?	Shaking her head at me and genuinely making me feel really guilty like I'm killing a life. She was disgusted.		
How did their presence and/or activity make you feel?	Made me feel so guilty and awful.		

Incident Log

Since 2014, over 500 statements have been made and the below should be viewed as indicative rather than exhaustive. All of these statements come from clients at the Richmond clinic.

#810, 2017

"worst of all they were singing songs when I was in the waiting room, could hear them through the window. **it made me feel horrific**, and so so angry. I think it is so unjust, not only that these idiots feel they have a right to comment on our situation, but also that **the local council/police allow it to happen**. I had a really positive experience with BPAS, but **nothing can possibly prepare you for coming into contact with these people on what is potentially one of the most difficult days of your life.**"

#838,2017

"They handed me a leaflet as **I entered, nauseous and terrified, and told me they could save me**. One of them held a huge placard with bible quotes. They changed throughout the day with more graphic images as the day progressed- aborted foetuses accompanying bible quotes seemed like an oxymoron to me. The protester as I left said a prayer for me and **followed me down the road until I got in my car**. It was horrendous. It was already the most difficult thing I've ever done and a decision that took over my life for weeks. I was experiencing physical pain from the pregnancy as well as the nerves and embarrassment. To be faced with this was like **being chased by an anachronistic mob with pitchforks** - as if they would try to drown the witch if they could. It was being looked down on in a way I never imagined. Lives are important - mine was more important - I still don't regret my decision."

#936, 2017

"**Last thing I needed when already going through something so traumatic**"

#938, 2017

"Very intimidated and angry. I knew they were aiming at a confrontation and even the prospect upset me. Thinking of how vulnerable most of the women in my position are, **I felt completely indignant at how inappropriate their presence there was.**"

Submitted by Staff Member

"Client attended yesterday with her partner who did not want her to have an abortion. Client has advised us that **he is violent towards her**. Today client attended alone for the EMA [Early Medical Abortion] 1st part [of 2 parts], whilst here in the unit she received a call from her partner saying he knows that she is here. Also **she received a text message from one of the protesters telling her not to go ahead with the abortion. It has transpired that her partner gave one of the protesters his and her mobile numbers.**"

#489, 2016

"They would walk up to you before even getting to the clinic and bother you about feeling guilty about doing this to a child. As this was a medical reason and not personal choice **I felt very hurt and it was uncomfortable and even upset me to the point of tears.**"

#601, 2016

"It personally didn't concern me as everyone has a right to their belief. However, **I do not think it is right they are allowed to be so close to the clinic as this is a difficult decision already without being handed leaflets to make you feel more guilty.**"

Resident Statements

Resident J – Name and address given

"My first contact with the protesters outside the BPAS clinic in Rosslyn Road was when they stopped my young, teenage daughter because they assumed she was entering the clinic. She was genuinely upset by that 'intervention'. Later, we residents and the mothers and children from the nursery in ETNA had to endure the horrible colour pictures that the protesters had decided we residents needed to see in order to be 'educated' on the realities of abortion. Despite their charm offensive towards the childrens' mothers, these displays caused much distress and the protesters eventually realised they were doing their 'cause' more harm than good and withdrew them - but only after sustained pressure from local residents. Now, instead of pavement displays, they can be seen showing cornered young women these same images on their mobile phones. I could detail many run-ins with the protesters, often requiring the presence of the police but the incident that stays with me was when I was followed home by a protester; my crime having been to photograph him lying flat out across the gate entrance to the clinic. I needed to call the police who dealt with the situation well and allowed me to proceed home unmolested.

I do not object to the protesters' point of view although I and many other residents do find their pretence, that they are trying to educate and help the clinic clients, deceitful and hypocritical. They should be honest enough to admit they want the clinic closed! I object to their colonisation of a part of my immediate locality in order to try to emotionally bludgeon young women to prevent them accessing legal healthcare - and to the inevitable confrontations that this creates. These young women should not be subject to this one-sided pressure and the residents should not have to feel that they are walking a gauntlet every time they walk to the local shops.

Resident Statements

Resident M – Name and address given

*“I live in Twickenham and I did not know that there was a BPAS clinic until one day I saw the posters of dismembered babies. I had had my **first miscarriage** a few months before and it was still heavily on my mind. **Seeing those dead babies reminded me of that awful time.** I was upset, and angry of being so graphically reminded of it.*

Since that first occurrence, I have witnessed women and their partners and families being hurt by the anti-abortion protesters outside the clinic.

***I mostly avoid that area in order to not witness such situations,** but mostly what bothers me is that this kind of harassment can still be taking place in 21st century England. I worry about what it says about us as a society and what it can do to my daughter and to our children in general. This can't be right and it has to stop.”*

Resident P – Name and address given.

*“I've escorted girls into the clinic before, after seeing a couple of **nervous looking teens trying to find the address.** The usual suspects were outside, the girls looked lost and I knew what they were **looking for. So chatted and walked them in,** physically putting my arm across the side of them to avoid the leaflets being forced into their hands.”*

Resident R – Name and address given.

*“About a year ago I had my niece come to stay. A twenty one year old girl. I live round the corner from the clinic and have to pass it to go to shops and catch bus etc... but **within days of her living with us she could no longer walk pass the clinic** because she was always being approached. Something she did not want to deal with. I do feel strongly that residents and people using the clinic should be able to go about their legal business without constant hassle. I have no problem if people want to protest about something but there has to be a time and place that is appropriate. Anyway, **reducing young women to tears (which I have seen on many occasions)** can surely not come under the heading of legal protest can it?”*

Resident Statements

Resident by online form so no name recorded. #393

"They were intimidating and they made me feel angry because they should not be allowed to intimidate people in a vulnerable situation. I was also annoyed because I had to find a way of explaining to my then 5 year old daughter. My son's nursery is round the corner and I always took a different route to avoid the protesters, which isn't right either. I should have the right to feel unthreatened walking on that street and so should everyone."

Resident by online form so no name recorded. #402

"I live near the clinic they group together – one evangelical website gives the location of the clinic and best public transport, etc. They stand across the road calling out "don't do it" or shouting prayers, and I have hear them calling the women who go in "Mummy". They hold up photos of cute babies and what they claim are aborted fetuses. Displaying models of developing fetuses and claims of what the fetus feels etc. in utero and in abortion. It is a narrow street and what they do and say is suitable and inescapable for residents and women going in. They frequently station themselves by the front gate and I have twice seen them grab entering women by the arm and call them Mummy!"

Resident by online form so no name recorded. #242

"I am writing this to stress my disgust at the people who are hanging around outside your clinic (Anti-abortion). All women attending this clinic are under stress from their decision without being judged upon arrival. I am sure that the lady's presence isn't helping and if anything is severely off-putting. I do not agree she/them should be allowed to continue with this."

Name supplied. #792

"Protesters are a daily presence outside my local clinic. There is always one person a few feet from the entrance thrusting leaflets and plastic baubles at any one entering the clinic, and trying to talk to them. They bring posters, placards etc, at one time literally accusing the clinic of murder. Occasionally, on a Saturday, there is a large group standing opposite on the other side of the road, praying, 'singing' etc, which can only intimidate clients."

Name supplied. #725

"The main (paid) protester was deep in conversation with a young woman immediately outside the clinic. I (courteously I hope) interrupted to check whether she (the young woman) was happy with the discussion. She said it was ok. But she then took the opportunity of the interruption politely to break off and enter the clinic. The protestor, who had clearly been working on the young woman for some time, was calm but said 'That's spoiled everything'."

Staff Statements

These statements were written by staff and collated over the past year, again these are indicative and not exhaustive.

"I entered the clinic and 2 protesters had cameras filming me. I asked them to stop and they just laughed. It was an invasion of my privacy. What were they going to use it for? Did this put my safety in jeopardy?"

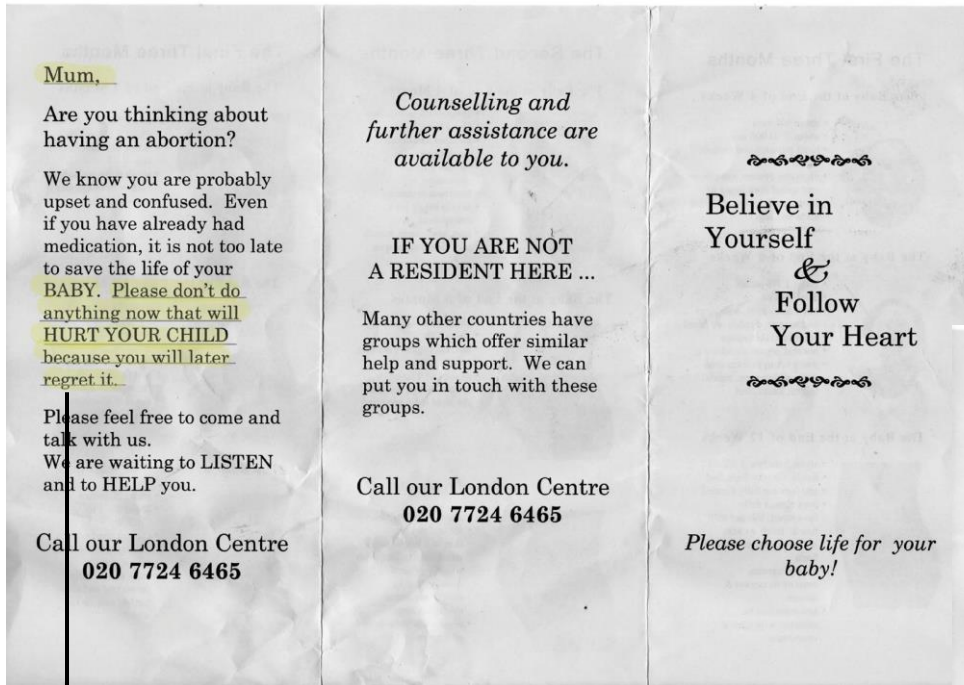
"One of my clients disclosed at the end of consultation that a lady stopped her outside, grabbed her arm saying to not kill her baby because they will help. She asked me if I am considering her a killer because she knows that she cannot manage to support a child."

"Clients are incredibly stressed. They often factor the protesters into their decisions regarding treatment. An early medical abortion over 2 days has fewer risks and side effects but clients will often say to me they will have a simultaneous early medical abortion because they don't want to face the protesters again when they return to the clinic."

"Every day now I enter and leave work via the back door to avoid the confrontation and them running towards me as I walk in the front gate. They can be persistent when I and other people have told them we do not want to engage with them. I don't leave work to go for lunch anymore because I don't want a conflict. I sit away from the staff room window so they cannot see me eating my lunch inside work. I have had to advise my sister and partner to come via the back door when collecting me from work to avoid them. I am cautious about driving my car to work so they don't know the car I drive or my number plate."

"I have heard them claim they only speak to people who want to speak with them- this is an absolute lie as they run across the road to block the gate and continue talking at people even when they say they are not interested or they walk away into the clinic or down the street."

Leaflets

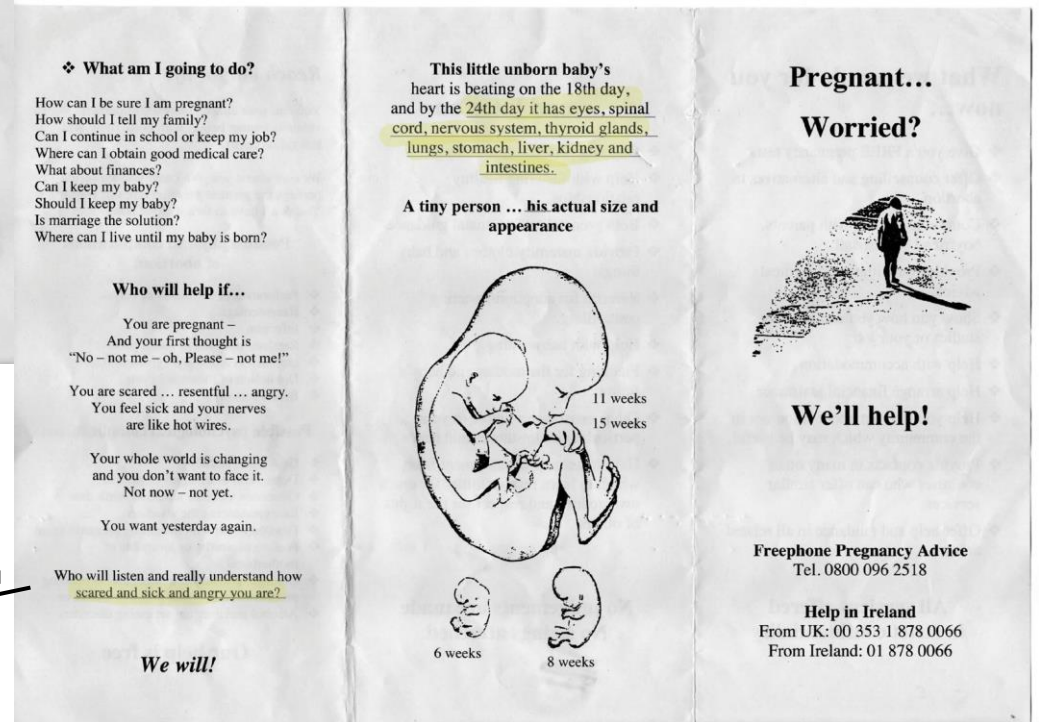


These leaflets are given to anyone attending the clinic or passing by. These leaflets were all gathered in December 2017.

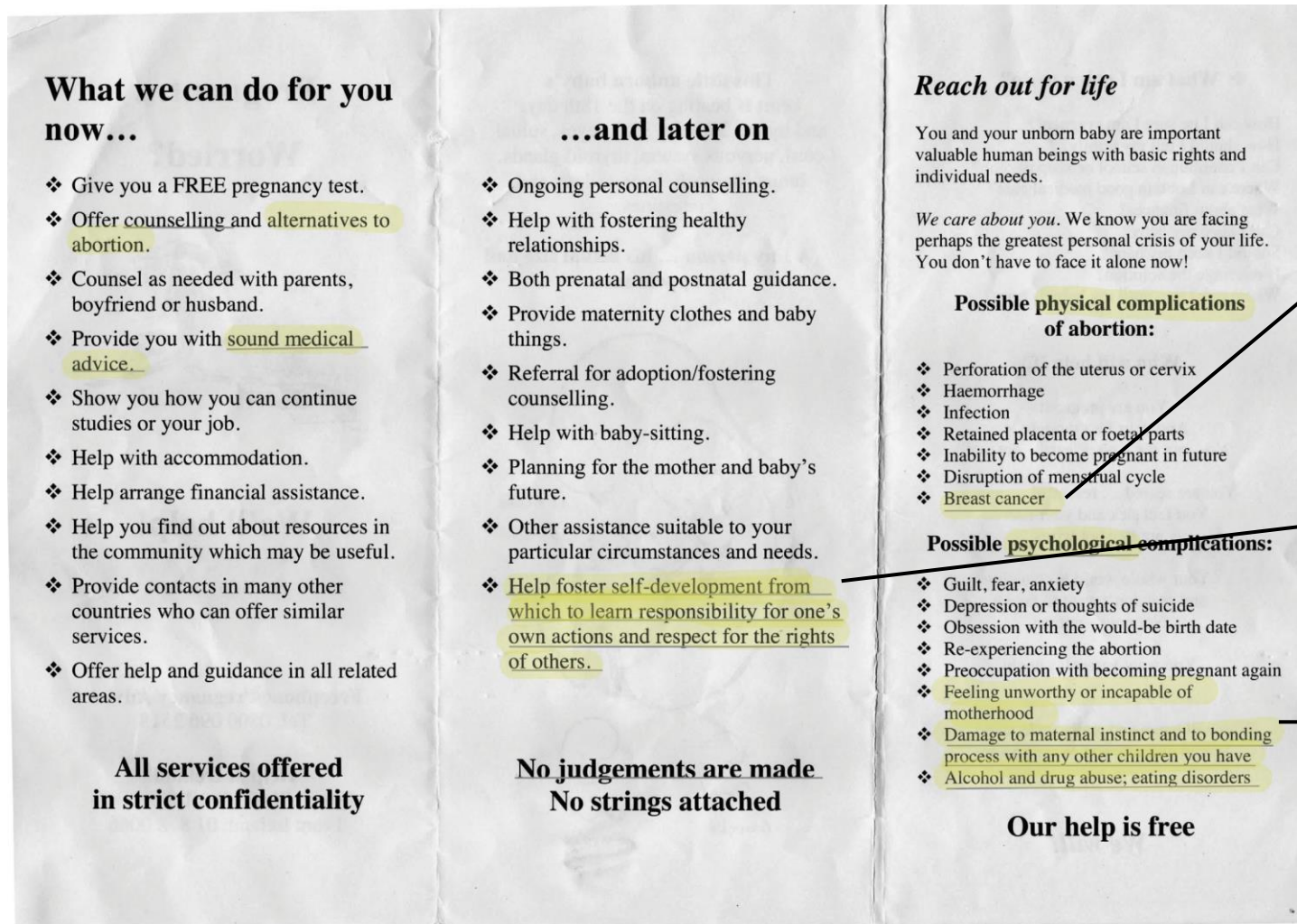
“Please don’t do anything now that will HURT YOUR CHILD because you will later regret it...”

This language is threatening and emotionally manipulative.

“how scared and sick and angry you are”



Leaflets



It is well documented that breast cancer is not a side effect of an abortion ([WHO Report: Safe Abortion 2.2.6.8](#)).

“Help foster self-development from which to learn responsibility for one’s own actions and respect for the rights of others”

Judgemental assumptions about the lifestyle of people using the clinic, contrary to the statement below that **“No judgements are made”**

These supposed side effects are completely unproven, and are clearly intended to scare patients out of using the clinic.

Leaflets



***Do you know
someone who has
had an abortion?***

*Tell them "Do not despair.
God in His mercy and love*

Reaches out to you, offering you His forgiveness."

Help if you are struggling after abortion

The Good Counsel Network: Offers one to one counseling for those who regret their abortion and need help. Call them on 020 7724 6465.

Rachel's Vineyard: Offer weekend Retreats for those suffering after abortion.
Contact Marene on 07505 904 656

For more resources and help after an abortion see
www.goodcounselnetwork.com

The Good Counsel Network is an organization which exists to assist women struggling to come to terms with an unplanned pregnancy, through advice and practical help. We also provide moral support and help in finding healing after an abortion.

To women who have had an abortion...

I would now like to say a special word to women who have had an abortion. The Church is aware of the many factors which may have influenced your decision, and she does not doubt that in many cases it was a painful and even shattering decision. The wound in your heart may not yet have healed. Certainly what happened was and remains terribly wrong. But do not give in to discouragement and do not lose hope. Try rather to understand what happened and face it honestly. If you have not already done so, give yourself over with humility and trust to repentance. The Father of mercies is ready to give you His forgiveness and His peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. You will come to understand that nothing is definitely lost and you will also be able to ask forgiveness from your child, who is now living in the Lord. With the friendly and expert help and advice of other people, and as a result of your own painful experience, you can be among the most eloquent defenders of everyone's right to life. Through your commitment to life, whether by accepting the birth of other children or by welcoming and caring for those most in need of someone to be close to them, you will become promoters of a new way of looking at human life.

Pope John Paul II

Judgemental and emotive language.

"remains terribly wrong."

"give you His forgiveness"

"ask forgiveness from your child"

Clinic Location

The clinic is located in a residential area in East Twickenham, just off the main road from Richmond to Twickenham. The East Twickenham Neighbourhood Association (ETNA) is next door and during the week is the home of Rosslyn Nursery and Preschool, a day care setting for children ages two to five. On the other side is the Twickenham Park GP Surgery. From September 2019, Deer Park Primary School will move to Ryde House on Richmond Road – less than 5 minutes' walk away.

With the opening of the school, there will be an increase in the number of children using the road, which is already regularly used to access the Rosslyn Nursery and Preschool.

