

Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018 - 2025

WELLBEING
EDUCATION GENDER EQUALITY
EMPOWERMENT
CHOICE INSPIRE SURVIVAL HEALTH
FUTURE INDEPENDENCE SUPPORTED
SECURE JUSTICE **HEALING** BOYS GIRLS SAFE LOVE
CONFIDENCE COLLABORATION
EQUALITY INSPIRE PROTECTED
WOMEN MEN TRUST CHOICE
HOPE AWARENESS OPTIMISTIC VOICE
UNDERSTANDING RESPECT JUSTICE FUTURE BELIEF
ZERO TOLERANCE TRUST BEING HEARD
COMPASSION FAMILY AWARENESS STRENGTH
BREAKING THE CYCLE FAMILY STRENGTH
RESILIENCE PROGRESS
NEVER TOO LATE
EMPATHY PREVENTION PROTECTED



Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018-2025

Executive summary

Domestic abuse has been identified as a priority for Coventry, and is a key issue for public health, West Midlands Police, community safety and safeguarding. Data from 2015/2016 showed a significantly higher rate of domestic abuse in Coventry compared with the rest of England, although similar to the West Midlands region. The annual cost of domestic abuse in Coventry is thought to be around £34.8 million; human and emotional costs are estimated at an additional £60 million.

The Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018-2025 addresses domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage. It recognises that domestic abuse can affect anyone, although women and children carry the highest burden. It highlights a number of groups that face additional barriers to accessing help and support, and/or may be at an increased risk of certain types of abuse. The following groups are identified as falling within these categories:

- Adults with care and support needs, including disabled people
- Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugees
- Older people
- Men
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

The priorities of the strategy have been informed by engagement with a wide range of stakeholders including service users, young people, adults with care and support needs, domestic abuse service providers, other voluntary and community sector providers, West Midlands Police, community safety, health and social care, Coventry and Rugby clinical commissioning group and education. They are based on the four Ps of the government's CONTEST counter-terrorism strategy, the framework of which supports a systematic way of tackling issues requiring a multi-agency approach such as domestic abuse. The four Ps are Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

The annual cost of domestic abuse in Coventry is estimated to be

34.8m



This includes physical and mental health costs of

10.4m



Social services costs of

1.7m



Combined criminal justice and legal costs of

9.9m



Housing and refugee costs of

1.2m

Human and emotional costs of

60m



The cost of domestic abuse to public services in England and Wales is an estimated

3.856bn

11.6m
Through lost economic output



According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales an estimated

1.9m

adults aged between **16-59** years had experienced domestic abuse

LOCAL DATA

In Coventry between April 2016 and July 2017



Data from West Midlands Police show that there were **8022** calls in Coventry to West Midlands Police that were initially classified as domestic abuse



Women were victims of domestic abuse five times more often than men

2189

crimes had female victims compared with

419

with a male victim

The average age of a domestic abuse victim was

26

years old



Children were involved in or witnessed

1133

crime incidents and

1757

non-crime incidents

FORCED MARRIAGE



The Forced Marriage unit in the UK provided support to approximately

1400 cases in relation to a possible forced marriage

The majority of cases (80%) involved female victims; the remainder (20%) had male victims



Data from West Midlands Police show that there were

9 incidents in Coventry between January 2015 and March 2018

At ward level, the highest number of incidents occurred in Foleshill (10 of 30)

HONOUR BASED VIOLENCE



Data from West Midlands Police show that there were **22** honour-based violence incidents in Coventry between January 2015 and March 2018

Women from Black Asian, minority ethnic and refugee backgrounds are at an increased risk of specific forms of domestic abuse such as honour-based violence and forced marriage



Prepare



The development of a strong governance and service commissioning structure to provide high quality, equitable services that are shaped around the needs of victims at all levels of risk, and ensure that their voices are heard and responded to.

Prevent



A long term approach to improve awareness, understanding and early identification of abuse at all levels of society. Victims will be empowered to report and staff will be given the skills and confidence to support them. Interventions tailored to victims with a range of needs will help to break the intergenerational cycle of abuse and minimise repeat victimisation.

Protect



There will be effective information sharing and referral pathways between key agencies, breaking down organisational and cultural barriers to ensure victims of abuse are identified and protected. The safety of victims, and that of their children (where applicable), will be paramount. Victims will be supported to access safe and appropriate accommodation; and safeguarding procedures will be robustly implemented to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected, and that the voice of the child is always heard and valued.

Pursue



An approach centred on achieving justice and positive outcomes for victims, including reductions in offending. There will be better understanding of perpetrator risk to support the use of court action and act of court disposal, so that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions and appropriately supported to understand and change their offending behaviour.

Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018- 2025 will be supported by an action plan, which will be monitored by the multiagency Domestic Abuse Strategic Group to ensure that our vision of empowering and protecting victims of domestic abuse is achieved. In March 2018 the government launched the Domestic Abuse Bill Consultation. The implementation of Coventry's Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018-2025 will consider the findings of this consultation.

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Foreword

Domestic abuse happens every day, affecting not only the victim but also the wider family and community. However, it still remains very much a “hidden crime.” We know that there can be stigma attached to reporting and that certain groups of people within our community face additional barriers to accessing services which could help and support them.

Coventry’s vision is to reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse. We want to help and support victims but we also want to change the behaviour of those who inflict the abuse, to break the cycle and reduce the likelihood of further incidents, either within an existing relationship or with a new partner.

We are not just talking about violence, abuse can take many forms. There has been a lot of background work looking at the national, regional and local data, and consultation with affected groups and service providers which has driven the thinking behind the formation of the strategic priorities.

Domestic abuse is everybody’s business. We must engage members of the public to open up the discussion around domestic abuse to ensure that it no longer remains a hidden crime, and support public and third sector services to adopt a joined up approach in order to achieve better outcomes for those who need help.

Cllr Abdul Khan
Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities

In Coventry between
April 2016 and July 2017
women were victims of
domestic abuse crimes
five times more often
than men

Definition of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is a manifestation of one person (or persons) exerting power and control over another¹. Domestic abuse is most commonly thought of as occurring between intimate adult partners, however it can feature in relationships between people as young as 13 or over 60; be perpetrated by children against their parents; and involve the wider family².

Domestic abuse can encompass, but is not limited to, the following components³:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

In March 2018 the government launched a Domestic Abuse Bill consultation. One thing they are consulting on is the broadening of the definition of domestic abuse to cover the concept of economic abuse rather than just financial abuse. This would incorporate situations such as perpetrators denying victims access to basic resources (e.g. food, clothing, transportation); and victims being made to take out loans or enter into other financial contracts against their will⁴.

This strategy uses the term domestic abuse rather than domestic violence or domestic violence and abuse to emphasise that this behaviour is not limited to physical violence.

Coercive or controlling behaviour

In 2015 parliament introduced an offence of coercive or controlling behaviour. Examples of such behaviour may include isolating someone from their relatives and friends, repeatedly putting them down or taking control of their daily life (e.g. what they can wear and who they are allowed to see)⁵. It does not have to have a physical element. Due to the subtlety of many of the behaviours that comprise coercive control it may be poorly understood by authorities and not be recognised by the victim⁶.

The offence does not apply if it is perpetrated against a child aged under 16 by someone who is 16 or over and has responsibility for the child; this is covered by the offence of child cruelty or neglect under the Children and Young Persons Act⁷.

Forced marriage and honour-based violence

Domestic abuse encompasses honour-based violence and forced marriage. Forced marriage is “a marriage conducted without the consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor”; and honour-based violence is “a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community”⁸.

Please be aware that if you are accessing this document online there are a number of hyperlinks see a full list on pages 61 to 63. These are indicated in the main body of the document with a digit highlighting the link reference.

Scope of the strategy

This strategy is clear that women comprise the majority of victims of domestic abuse. However it recognises that men are also victims, both in mixed-sex and same-sex relationships, and that the male experience of domestic abuse is under-represented. Coventry has made the decision to develop a domestic abuse strategy rather than a violence against women and girls strategy to ensure an inclusive approach that addresses the differing needs of men and women as both victims and perpetrators.

This strategy will focus on domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is also captured within the government definition of domestic abuse⁹ and Coventry has done extensive work to tackle this issue through the commissioning of the 'Ending FGM in Coventry' service and the 'Petals' web app; therefore female genital mutilation is not addressed in this strategy.

Although the overlap with other so-called 'hidden crimes' such as child sexual exploitation and modern slavery is recognised, these are being addressed separately in Coventry and do not form part of this strategy.

Coventry City Council has commissioned a sexual violence prevention programme for children and young people, and an intimate partner violence prevention programme for young people to address the issue of sexual violence. A sexual violence needs assessment is also being carried out to better understand our local needs and inform the re-commissioning of our sexual violence services. Therefore it will not be discussed separately in this strategy.

Strategic and political context

National

A number of national sources have been drawn upon to inform this strategy.

The Government's Violence against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG) 2021 has committed to achieving ongoing reductions in the prevalence of domestic abuse by breaking the intergenerational cycle of abuse; giving greater attention to the risk of becoming a perpetrator; challenging attitudes and beliefs about abuse; and improving awareness among children and young people about healthy relationships¹⁰. Relationship education is to be made compulsory in primary schools, and sex and relationship education will be compulsory in secondary schools¹¹.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has developed [guidance](#) on multi-agency working to highlight the need for co-ordinated partnership working at operational and strategic levels, along with training and organisational support¹².

The strategy is also informed by the second joint targeted area inspection programme, "The multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse", which recognises the long-term harmful consequences on children and young people who are victims or witnesses of domestic abuse¹².

Local and regional

A number of local and regional strategies and guidance have also informed the strategy and will impact on how we work with our partners to deliver its priorities.

Coventry's Council Plan 2022-2030, which sets out the vision and priorities for the city, has highlighted domestic abuse as a key area of focus¹³.

Coventry's Parenting Strategy 2018-2025 recognises domestic abuse, mental illness and substance misuse as significant issues for some parents in Coventry, which impact on their children.

Coventry's Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2018-2025 will tackle substance misuse in the city, supporting this strategy's vision to reduce and prevent domestic abuse¹⁴.

Work is taking place locally to develop links between the Domestic Abuse Strategy and the subsequent housing and homelessness strategy, acknowledging that domestic abuse is a significant cause of homelessness.

Coventry's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023 has a focus on reducing violence, sexual abuse and the risk of individuals developing multiple complex needs¹⁵; and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlights the issue of domestic abuse in Coventry¹⁶.

[The West Midlands Domestic Violence and Abuse Standards](#) provide a framework for statutory and specialist domestic abuse services to improve and commission services, and develop professional practice¹⁷.

Regionally, West Midlands Police and the [Police and Crime Commissioner](#) have made the identification and prevention of domestic abuse a strategic priority¹⁸.



National picture

Domestic abuse is known to be under-reported therefore the following figures represent only part of the picture.

Prevalence of domestic abuse

According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (year ending March 2017) an estimated 1.9 million adults aged 16-59 years had experienced domestic abuse (defined as non-sexual partner abuse, non-sexual family abuse, sexual assault or stalking) in the previous year (1.2 million women and 713,000 men)¹⁹.

For both men and women, the most common type of domestic abuse was partner abuse, specifically non-physical abuse, threats, force, sexual assault or stalking¹⁹.

The 16-19 year age group made up the highest proportion of victims of domestic abuse for men and women (combined data from 2014 to 2017)¹⁹.

Domestic abuse-related crime

Police in England and Wales recorded 1.1 million domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes in the year ending March 2017. 43% were recorded as domestic abuse-related crimes, 57% remained as incidents. Domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police accounted for 32% of violent crimes¹⁹.

There were 46 arrests for every 100 domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by 39 police forces in the year ending June 2017. A decision to charge was made in 72% of domestic abuse-related cases referred to the Crown Prosecution Service by the police; and of those that proceeded to court 76% resulted in convictions¹⁹.

Domestic homicides

Between April 2013 and March 2016 454 domestic homicides were recorded by the police in England and Wales; 70% of the victims were female. More than three-quarters of female victims were killed by a male partner or ex-partner. Of the male victims, two-thirds were killed by another male¹⁹.

Coercive and controlling behaviour

4246 offences of coercive control were recorded in the year ending March 2017 across the 38 police forces for which these data were available¹⁹.

Repeat victimisation

Repeat victimisation in domestic abuse is poorly captured in the Crime Survey for England and Wales as many people either do not respond to the question or reply that they do not know. Data from the year ending 2015 survey show that 15% of people experienced two episodes of victimisation and 16% experienced at least three episodes²⁰. Women are more likely to experience repeat victimisation than men²¹.

The health impacts of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is associated with an increased risk of mental health problems, including depression and anxiety; a greater use of mental health services; and an increased likelihood of self-harm or suicide¹⁷. Substance abuse (misuse of alcohol and/or drugs) may co-exist with mental health problems and is independently associated with domestic abuse²².

Domestic abuse can cause both long and short-term impacts on physical health including, injuries such as bruising and broken bones; pregnancy complications such as miscarriage and stillbirth; and onset or exacerbation of chronic conditions such as migraines²³.

The cost of domestic abuse

The cost of domestic abuse to public services in England and Wales is an estimated £3.856 billion per year²⁴. Local government's annual contribution to this figure is about £479 million.

Honour-based violence and forced marriage

Although honour-based violence and forced marriage are considered under the definition of domestic abuse, they are distinct from other forms of abuse in that they are driven by a desire to maintain perceived cultural norms and traditions, and that failure to do so would 'dishonour' the family²⁵. That said, honour-based violence and forced marriage are not exclusive to any religion, culture or society²⁵.

Prevalence of forced marriage

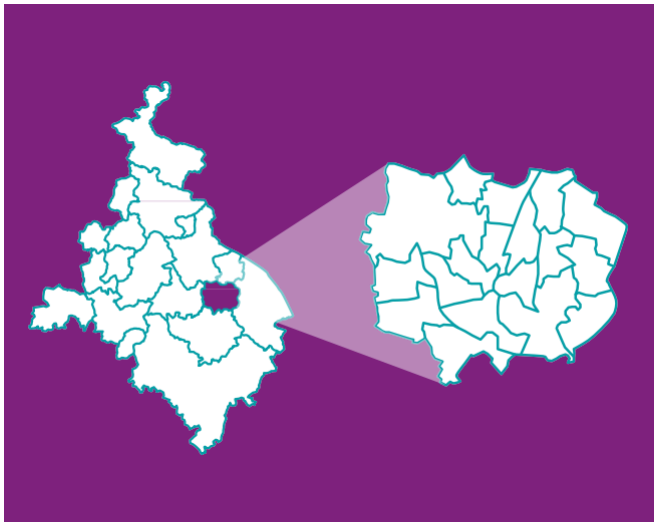
The Forced Marriage Unit in the UK provided support or advice to approximately 1400 cases in relation to a possible forced marriage (i.e. those at risk of a forced marriage, in the process of being forced into marriage, or already in a forced marriage) in 2016²⁶. The majority of cases involved female victims (80%); the remaining 20% were male. More than one-third (35%) of victims were 18-25 years old; slightly over one-quarter were aged under-18²⁶. In 2% of cases the victim identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender which may be an underestimate as these data are not collected routinely. In 10% of cases the victim had a learning disability²⁶.

Prevalence of honour-based violence

Data on incidents of honour-based violence are not routinely collected, therefore up to date data is hard to obtain. In 2014/2015 1353 incidents of honour-based violence were reported by 33 (out of 43) police forces in England and Wales as part of a data collection exercise. The data are from the 10 months prior to 31st January 2015 as a full year's data was not available²⁷. Between 2010 and 2014 29 honour-based murders or attempted murders in the UK were reported in the media; the majority of victims were female²⁵.

These figures are underestimates as incidents of this nature are known to be underreported by victims; may not consistently be categorised as honour-based violence by the police or other public bodies; and, as demonstrated above, not all public bodies respond to requests for data.

West Midlands police reported that between April 2016 and July 2017 there were 419 male victims of domestic abuse in Coventry



Regional and Local picture

In 2016 Coventry was estimated to have a population of 352,900 . The average age was 33 and is decreasing, which has implications for the burden of domestic abuse in the city.

Prevalence of domestic abuse

Data from 2015/2016 showed a significantly higher rate of domestic abuse in Coventry compared with the rest of England, although similar to the West Midlands region . For this reason domestic abuse has been identified as a priority by the Coventry Police and Crime Board.

Data from the West Midlands Police between April 2016 and July 2017 show that there were 8022 calls in Coventry to West Midlands Police that were initially classified as domestic abuse. Over the same period 2763 incidents were later categorised as domestic abuse crimes and

4287 as non-crime* domestic abuse incidents. Women were victims of domestic abuse crimes five times more often than men: 2189 crimes had female victims compared with 419 with a male victim. The average age of victims was 26 years old. Children were involved in or witnessed 1133 crime incidents and 1757 non-crime incidents.

Prevalence of honour-based violence and forced marriage

Data from the West Midlands Police show that there were 22 honour-based violence and 9 forced marriage incidents in Coventry between January 2015 and March 2018. The majority of incidents involved individuals of Asian ethnicity, at an overall rate of 6.0 per 10,000 (1.8 per 10,000 of the Asian population per year). Unfortunately there was insufficient data to enable a comparison with the rest of the West Midlands.

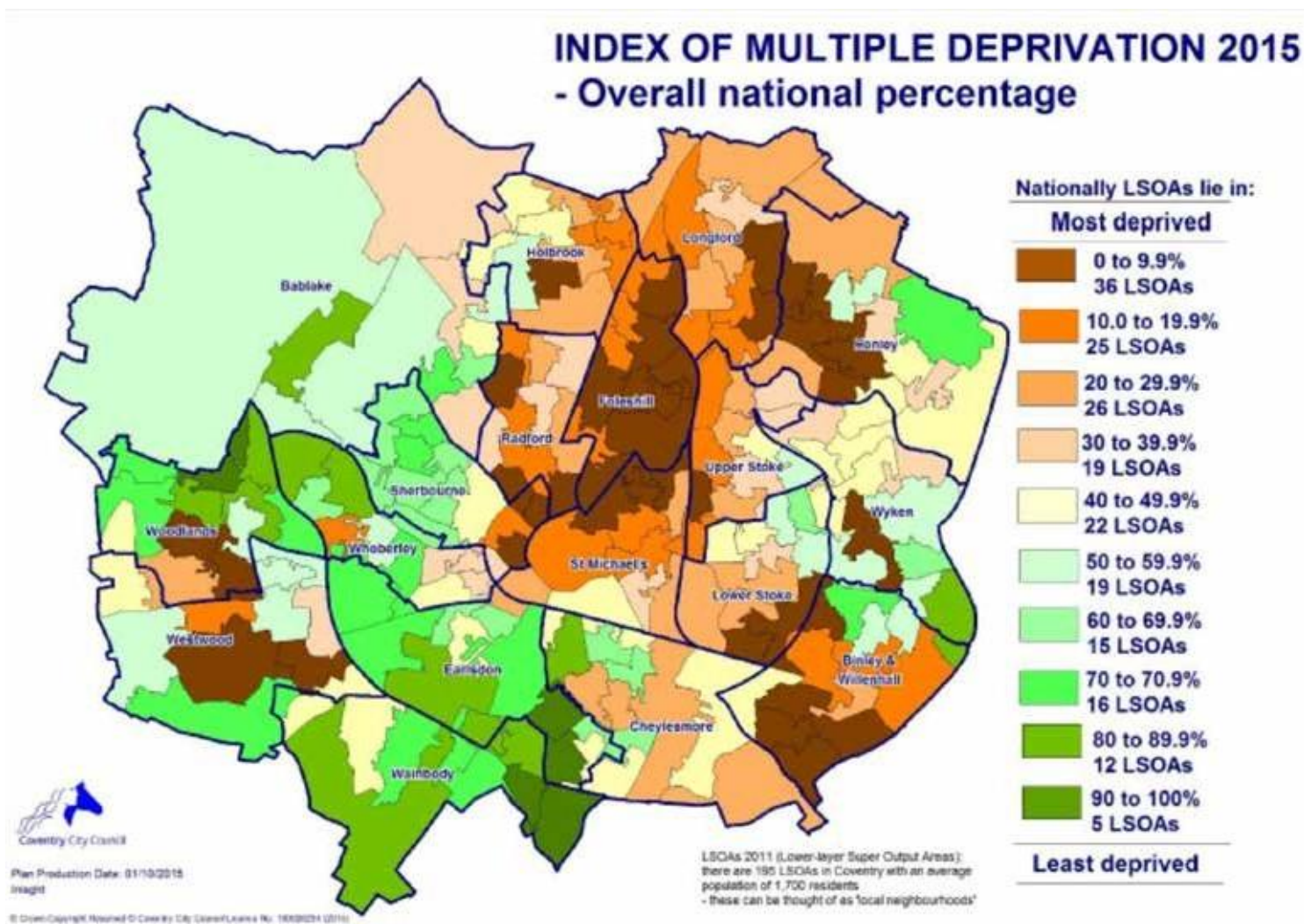
At ward level, the highest number of incidents occurred in Foleshill (10 of 31), which according to the 2011 census has the highest Asian/Asian British population in the city and is a known area of high deprivation³⁰. The data do not suggest however that incidents are concentrated in one particular area of the city.

Financial impact of domestic abuse

The annual cost of domestic abuse in Coventry is estimated to be £34.8 million. This includes physical and mental health costs of £10.4m; social services costs of £1.7m; combined criminal justice and civil legal costs of £9.9m; housing and refuge costs of £1.2m; and £11.6m through lost economic output. Human and emotional costs are estimated at £60 million³². These estimates have been made using the 2009 British Crime Survey for a population of 16-59 year olds, therefore the actual costs may be even higher.

*Non-crime incidents are those where there is no evidence of a criminal offence being committed but that may be a precursor to criminal behaviour (eg. coercive control), and recording of the incident would be desirable for future follow-up.

Figure 2. Index of Multiple Deprivation map of Coventry³¹

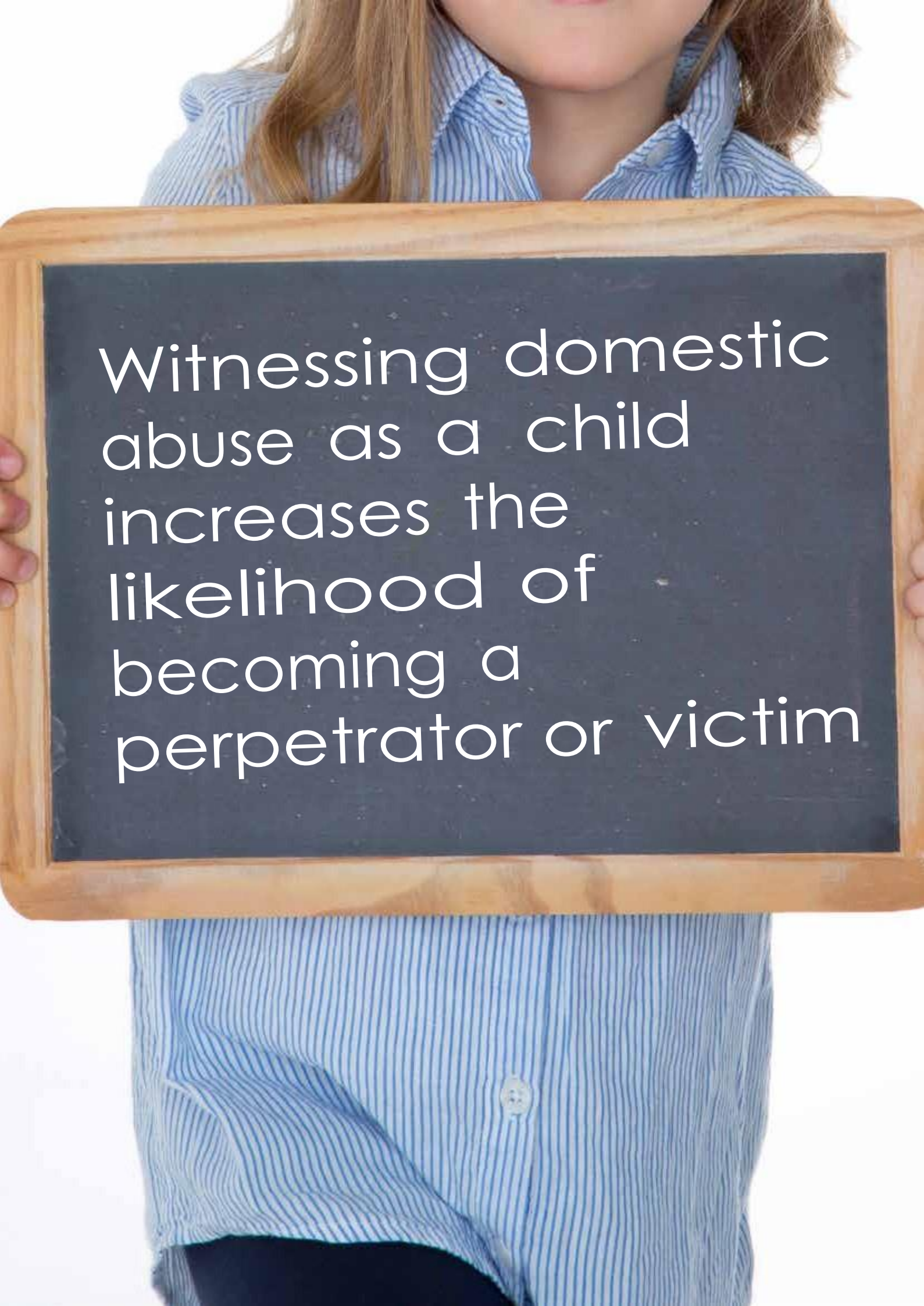


Who is affected?

Domestic abuse affects men and women; people of all sexual orientations; all religions and ethnicities; and individuals of all ages. It is also the case that some relationships are mutually abusive therefore individuals of both genders may be both a victim and a perpetrator.

That said, evidence shows that the majority of victims are female¹⁹. Domestic abuse experienced by women is distinct from that experienced by men. Domestic abuse perpetrated by men against women is a gendered crime rooted in gender inequality and the position of women and the family in society³³. Women are more likely than men to be the victim of domestic homicide¹⁹ and are more likely to be subjected to repeat victimisation³⁴. Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (year ending 2017) showed that women were more likely than men to have experienced multiple forms of abuse in the previous year¹⁹. For some women, pregnancy or having recently given birth is a risk factor for domestic abuse⁹. Women and girls are predominantly affected by forced marriage and honour-based violence compared with males²⁵.

In families where domestic abuse occurs it is important to remember that children and young people are also victims. They are sometimes referred to as secondary victims³⁵ which risks minimising the significant detrimental impact that domestic abuse has on their health, wellbeing, behaviour and education³⁶; and does not acknowledge that they too may be abused. In relationships where domestic abuse is a factor, children are thought to witness approximately two-thirds of incidents³⁶; and approximately 50% of these children have themselves been subjected to physical abuse³⁶. Domestic abuse is also known to be strongly associated with child neglect³⁷. Witnessing domestic abuse increases the likelihood of a child or young person becoming a perpetrator or being subjected to domestic abuse as an adult³⁶. Children and young people may face barriers to seeking help for domestic abuse. These include : protectiveness of the non-abusing parent, loyalty to the perpetrator, fear of the consequences, and fear of being taken into care. Additional barriers identified by local service providers in Coventry include age, with children under 18 months being particularly at risk and unable to communicate their experience; and one or both parents encouraging their child to keep the abuse a secret.

A person with long brown hair, wearing a blue and white vertically striped button-down shirt, is holding a wooden-framed chalkboard. The chalkboard is dark and has white text written on it. The text reads: "Witnessing domestic abuse as a child increases the likelihood of becoming a perpetrator or victim".

Witnessing domestic abuse as a child increases the likelihood of becoming a perpetrator or victim

Under-represented groups

Individuals from certain groups may face additional barriers to accessing services. Some of these barriers may be specific to particular groups while some are common across all. Some of these groups - namely older people, adults with care and support needs, and black, Asian, other ethnic minorities and refugees – also have increased vulnerability to certain types of domestic abuse.

Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee

Women from black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee backgrounds are at an increased risk of specific forms of domestic abuse such as honour-based violence and forced marriage³⁹.

Women from ethnic and religious minorities are more likely to under-report domestic abuse; and migrants and asylum seekers are less likely to be aware of available support services

They face potential barriers to reporting that are associated with their cultural background and/or immigration status including^{40,41}:

- Protecting family honour
- Normalising and accepting the abuse
- A language barrier
- Dependency on the abuser(s) to remain in the UK
- A lack of recourse to public funds

Adults with care and support needs including disabled people

Disabled people, including those with an intellectual impairment, are more likely to experience domestic abuse than non-disabled people^{42,43}.

Potential barriers to accessing services include⁴⁴:

- Inability to leave without assistance
- Feelings of shame and that the abuse was their fault
- Preferring to stay with an abusive partner than enter the care system
- Feeling that they should be grateful for the care they receive from their abuser
- Lack of accessible information about support services
- Lack of services tailored to their needs

Individuals suffering from dementia may become violent towards their partner. They are also more vulnerable to certain types of abuse, such as financial abuse, by their carer⁴⁵.

Older people

Older people may be more at risk of neglect and financial abuse compared with psychological, physical and sexual abuse⁴⁶.

They may face the following barriers to accessing services^{47,48}:

- Dependence on others
- Failure to recognise the situation as abusive
- A lack of awareness of services
- Previous lack of support from friends, family or services

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

Potential barriers to service access include⁴⁹:

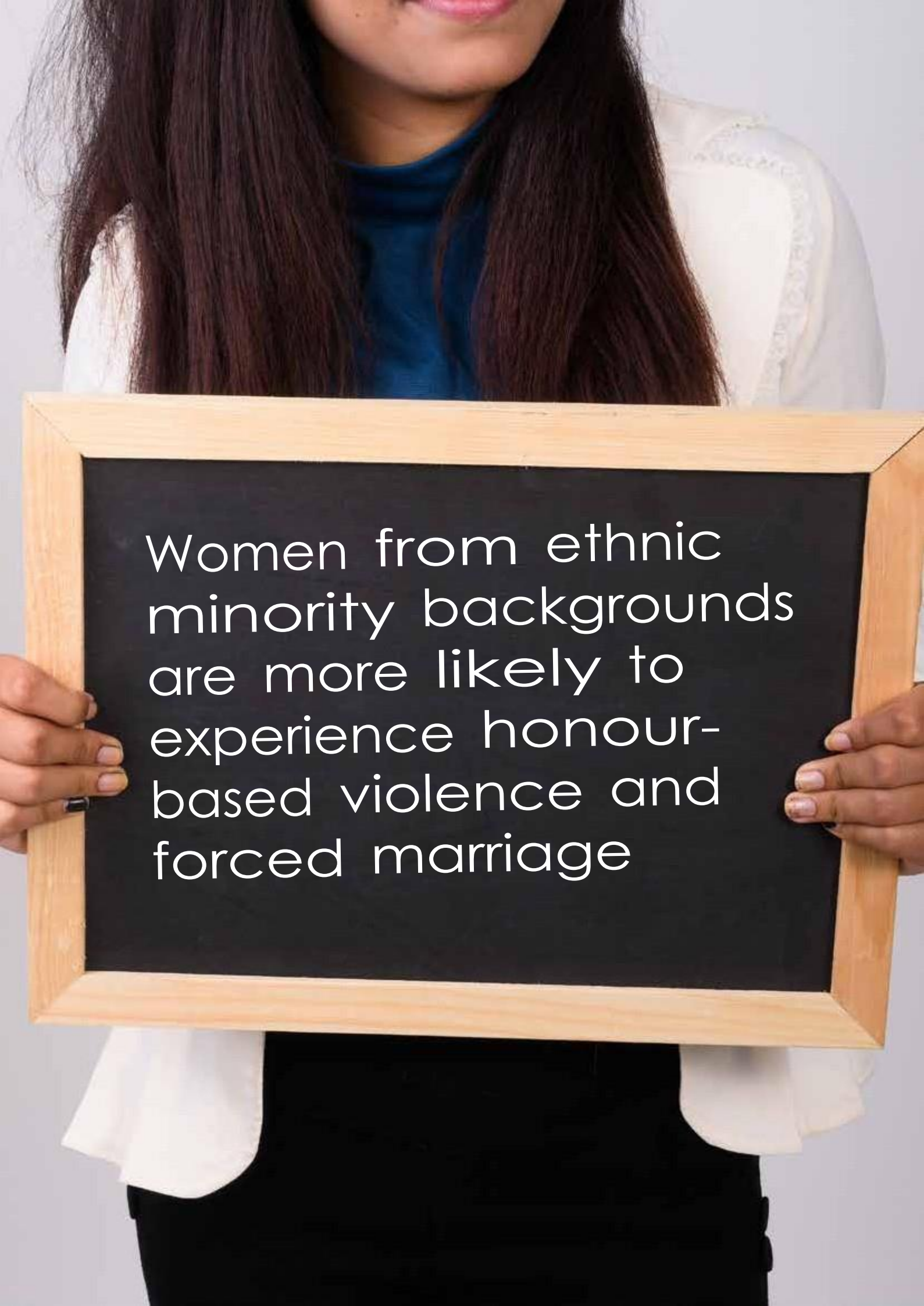
- Fear of homophobia
- Not identifying with the experience of domestic abuse
- Believing that services are designed around heterosexual relationship models and don't cater to them
- Concerns about being 'outed'

Men

Men are less likely than women to report experience of domestic abuse for a number of reasons, including^{50,51}:

- Not identifying with society's portrayal of domestic abuse
- Fear of being separated from their children and concern for their welfare
- Love of their partner and commitment to the relationship
- Lack of confidence

Table 1. Illustrates the barriers certain groups may face to accessing services; and the risk of some groups to particular types of domestic abuse.

A woman with long, dark, wavy hair is holding a rectangular sign with a light-colored wooden frame. She is wearing a blue turtleneck under a white, long-sleeved blouse with lace detailing on the shoulders. The sign has a black background with white text. The background is a plain, light grey wall.

Women from ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to experience honour-based violence and forced marriage

Coventry domestic abuse services

Service provision

Since 2014 domestic abuse services have been commissioned in Coventry to provide:



A helpline



Security installations



A single point of access



Supported accommodation



Community-based victim casework



A domestic abuse perpetrator service



Victim aftercare support



Services for children and young people affected by domestic abuse

The services include specialist provision for Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee individuals; victims of honour-based violence and forced marriage; children; disabled people; and men. In addition to the commissioned provision there are other organisations that support victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Service use data - commissioned services

The table below shows data about service users who have accessed commissioned domestic abuse services in 2016/2017.

Accommodation service

131 service users started support:

- 98% were female
- 43% were aged 18-24 years
- 98% were heterosexual
- 67% were White British (based on data available)
- 47 service users were from outside Coventry City Council
- Emotional (130), mental (129) and verbal (127) abuse were the top three types of abuse reported.

Perpetrator service

271 people were referred for support:

- 69% of referrals came from social care
- 93% were male

195 service users received support:

- 46% were aged 25-34 years
- 98% were heterosexual
- 58% were White British (based on data available)
- 12% were disabled
- Verbal (197), physical (158) and emotional/psychological (91) abuse were the top three types of abuse reported.

Community based support

472 people were accepted for support:

- 97% were female (based on data available)
- 16% were disabled
- 99% were heterosexual
- 65% were White British
- The top three most common sources of referral were self (93), other (81) and the police (64)

Children's service

117 children were referred for support and 72 were carried forward from the previous year:

- 53% were male
- 60% were aged 5-11 years
- 57% were White British
- 19% were disabled

Commissioned services

Significant provision of domestic abuse services for women and children in Coventry comes from a non-commissioned provider.

Refuge services

New referrals accepted into refuge services:

- 75 women
- 35 children

Existing service users:

- 17 women
- 18 children

Ethnicity:

- 60% were White British

Advice and advocacy service

1276 new women were supported:

- 655 accessed the service for case work and emotional support
- 621 women called the helpline for telephone support
- 215 women attended activity-based groups across the city
- 115 women accessed the counselling service

Independent domestic violence advisor service

167 high risk victims:

- 70% had multiple and complex needs

Forced marriage and honour-based violence service

25 women supported around forced marriage:

- 76% were Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee
- Most were aged 22-30 years

147 women supported around honour-based violence:

- 79% Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee
- Most were aged 31-40 years

Consultation & Engagement

In the preparation of this strategy, Coventry City Council and partners consulted with various stakeholders and conducted a needs analysis to determine the areas of focus for the strategy.

Professionals from a wide range of disciplines (including community safety, domestic abuse service providers, voluntary and community sector organisations, West Midlands Police, general practice, Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust, and Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group) came together to discuss the proposed priority areas of the strategy, identify potential gaps and suggest how these could be addressed in the strategy. Their thoughts and ideas have been incorporated into this document.

Service users, members of the public, and statutory and voluntary stakeholders were also invited to complete surveys to identify the priorities that were most important to them.

Targeted engagement was undertaken with young people and adults with care and support needs. A focus group was conducted by Positive Youth Foundation with 15-18 year olds; and adults with care and support needs were surveyed through Grapevine. The engagement process focused on exploring what individuals in these groups understood about domestic abuse and their attitudes towards seeking help. Guidance from the Alzheimer's Society was also sought in relation to domestic abuse and dementia. They highlighted the complex problems that can arise for those responsible for their care.

Governance

The working group comprises membership from:

- West Midlands Police
- Community safety
- Public health and insight
- Commissioning (adults and children)
- Coventry and Rugby clinical commissioning group (safeguarding)
- Children's social care
- Regulatory services

The Coventry Police and Crime Board holds overall responsibility for the strategy. The Working Group has links to an operational group, which comprises local providers; the Coventry Health and Wellbeing Board; Coventry Safeguarding Adults Board; and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Implementation of the strategy is supported by an action plan, the development of which will be informed by the named groups and further stakeholder consultation.

The Domestic Abuse Working Group will transition into a strategic group, and will monitor the implementation of the action plan and support the commissioning of future domestic abuse services in Coventry.

Strategic priorities

The priority areas for the strategy have been derived from data, consultation with stakeholders, including service users, and national and regional policies, strategies and guidance.

The model for this strategy is based on the framework of the government's CONTEXT counter-terrorism strategy: Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue⁵². It is a well-established, systematic approach to capturing key areas of concern for issues that require a multi-agency response and can therefore be appropriately applied to domestic abuse.

Prepare



Why this is important

Governance and effective partnership working

Domestic abuse is a priority for the following agencies: West Midlands Police, public health, safeguarding and community safety. Close working between these agencies and other key partners is necessary for a cohesive and effective response to this issue.

Provide high quality and equitable services

Coventry City Council has committed to the West Midlands Domestic Violence and Abuse Standards which support the delivery of safe, effective and evidence-based care and support; and outline the expected minimum standards of care¹⁷.

Service planning and commissioning must be supported by robust data collection to ensure that the needs of the local community are met. This should include the identification of victims from under-represented groups. In 2017 an audit of Coventry's domestic abuse services identified a gap in funding for language support and interpreters in accommodation services; as well as a need for an increase in Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee-specific accommodation.

Effective utilisation of resources

Needs-led commissioning will help to avoid duplicating services and wasting money.

Outcomes

Statutory organisations and specialist services will provide safe and effective support that is responsive to the needs of victims and allows their story to be heard. Services will work closely in partnership to ensure that victims do not have to tell their story more than once. Services will be underpinned by robust, visible governance structures to ensure clear management, accountability and responsibility, including during periods of change and uncertainty.

Improved data collection by local and regional services in contact with victims and perpetrators to ensure that service provision is shaped by the needs of victims and is able to identify and respond to emerging trends. This should include identifying under-represented groups and those who may be more vulnerable to certain types of abuse, to help address barriers to service access.

Services will support victims at all levels of risk, including those with complex needs to ensure that factors that may impact on the victim's vulnerability to, and effect of, domestic abuse are addressed.

How we will achieve the outcomes

Through robust commissioning, governance and provider accountability we will ensure the development of domestic abuse services adherent to the West Midlands Domestic Violence and Abuse Standards and the recommendations of the joint targeted area inspection. The commissioning process will be informed by engagement with victims ensure that services reflect their needs. Commissioners and service providers will work together to develop tools to facilitate accurate data collection.

We will explore options for service mapping and carrying out a service evaluation, including a review of the point of access model, to inform future service development.

We will explore the development of referral pathways between service providers and key services, where they do not already exist, to support victims and perpetrators to access additional services.

We will explore the possibility of having Domestic Abuse Champions located in local relevant agencies to provide support for victims of domestic abuse.

As part of our commissioning strategy we will consider cross-boundary commissioning of specialist services where local need may not justify a local service.

Prevent



Why this is important

Break the cycle

Witnessing domestic abuse can have devastating long-term effects on children and young people, and increases the risk of creating an intergenerational cycle of abuse³⁶. Families affected by domestic abuse may have other complex needs² including parental mental health problems, substance misuse, housing or debt problems, offending or anti-social behaviour, and poor or inconsistent parenting⁵³. Addressing these may help to break the intergenerational cycle¹⁰.

CGL, Coventry's provider of substance misuse services, assesses all service users for domestic abuse and, depending on the circumstances, will make onward referrals to the appropriate agencies (e.g. Coventry's commissioned domestic abuse services, the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference [MARAC], Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub [MASH], Family Hubs etc.). Domestic abuse service providers are invited to attend multi-disciplinary team meetings; and CGL attends the Offender Management Forum and MARAC.

Data suggest that almost one-third of victims suffer repeat victimisation, although this is likely to be an underestimate²⁰. Prevention is important to help stop people getting trapped in a repeating pattern of abuse.

Honour-based violence and forced marriage are driven by the belief that certain behaviours are 'dishonourable' as they are in opposition with perceived religious or cultural traditions²⁵. Challenging such beliefs is important to preventative efforts.

Early identification and intervention

Coercive and controlling behaviour are central to domestic abuse but are poorly understood and may be hard to identify, including by the victim and the perpetrator⁶.

Victims of domestic abuse may not present to specialist services. Their first point of contact may be the police or a health care professional, among others; and it may take several contacts before disclosure. Surveys of adults with care and support needs, carried out to inform this strategy, indicated that they would seek help from the police, friends, a carer or relatives before they would go to a specialist service.

Domestic abuse is under-reported, therefore prevention requires focus on identifying perpetrators, as well as victims, and supporting them to change their behaviour.

Early identification supports the development of long-term interventions to prevent domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage, and a shift away from a crisis management approach.

Coventry's Early Intervention Service for children and young people supports the early identification of unhealthy relationships between young people which are often typified by coercive and violent behaviour. Many of the behaviours are considered precursors to domestic abuse, therefore the service has a preventative function. Service data show that 47% of 178 service users in 2016/2017 were identified as being engaged in unhealthy relationship behaviours.

Some groups face particular barriers to accessing support. A lack of information about available services and understanding of domestic abuse may contribute to this. Consultation to inform this strategy found that young people lacked awareness of services; and adults with care and support needs wanted more information about domestic abuse.

Raise awareness

Domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage, is everybody's business. Successful prevention requires awareness and understanding of domestic abuse at all levels of society.

Outcomes

Frontline staff will consider the needs of the whole family when addressing domestic abuse; and families will be supported by early intervention initiatives in Coventry such as the Early Intervention Service, the Family Nurse Partnership and Family Hubs, which may help to break the intergenerational cycle of abuse.

Frontline staff will be able to identify possible signs of victimisation, including evidence of controlling and coercive behaviour and seemingly isolated incidents as part of a pattern of abuse; and intervene early enough through information-giving, signposting and/or referral as appropriate, to reduce the risk of repeat victimisation.

Up to date guidance on referrals and interventions for domestic abuse that reflect changes in practice and process.

Frontline staff will be able to identify suspected perpetrators and know where to seek further information and advice to ensure that they receive appropriate interventions to support behaviour change and improve outcomes for victims.

Improved public understanding of domestic abuse (including coercive and controlling behaviour, honour-based violence and forced marriage); who it affects; and the needs of groups who may face additional barriers to accessing services and/or have increased vulnerability to certain types of abuse, to enable individuals to recognise when they or others may be a victim.

Children and young people will have improved understanding of domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage, recognising that it has no place in healthy intimate or family relationships.

Victims will have the confidence to report abuse early and seek help to prevent further incidents.

Parents will be able to recognise the signs that their child may be a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse and know where to seek help to ensure that they receive the necessary support to prevent further abuse and/or achieve behaviour change.

Attitudes towards honour-based violence and forced marriage are challenged to increase understanding that they have no cultural or religious justification, and encourage victims and potential victims to seek help.

How we will achieve the outcomes

We will develop a tiered core competency framework outlining the minimum knowledge and skills requirements for staff in contact with adults and children affected by domestic abuse, to support a holistic, needs-led approach that enables their complex needs to be addressed. This will reinforce expected standards of care for victims of domestic abuse. We will also ensure the dissemination of information to local services about domestic abuse services in Coventry.

CGL will continue to work with the domestic abuse providers and other agencies to strengthen partnership working.

We will engage with the staff in the Family Hubs to explore ways in which they can be supported to achieve sustainable change for families.

The Early Intervention Service will review and develop Relationship and Sex Education school lesson plans, and ensure that teachers are suitably trained to deliver them. We will engage with voluntary and community sector organisations that work with children and young people, schools, colleges and universities, to increase knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse including honour-based violence and forced marriage among children and young people; and explore the possibility of peer-led education delivered by individuals with lived experience of these crimes.

The Early Intervention Service will educate parents and carers to identify and discuss the early signs of unhealthy relationships between young people. We will consider the need for other methods of improving parental education on domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage, to support them to recognise where their own children may be affected.

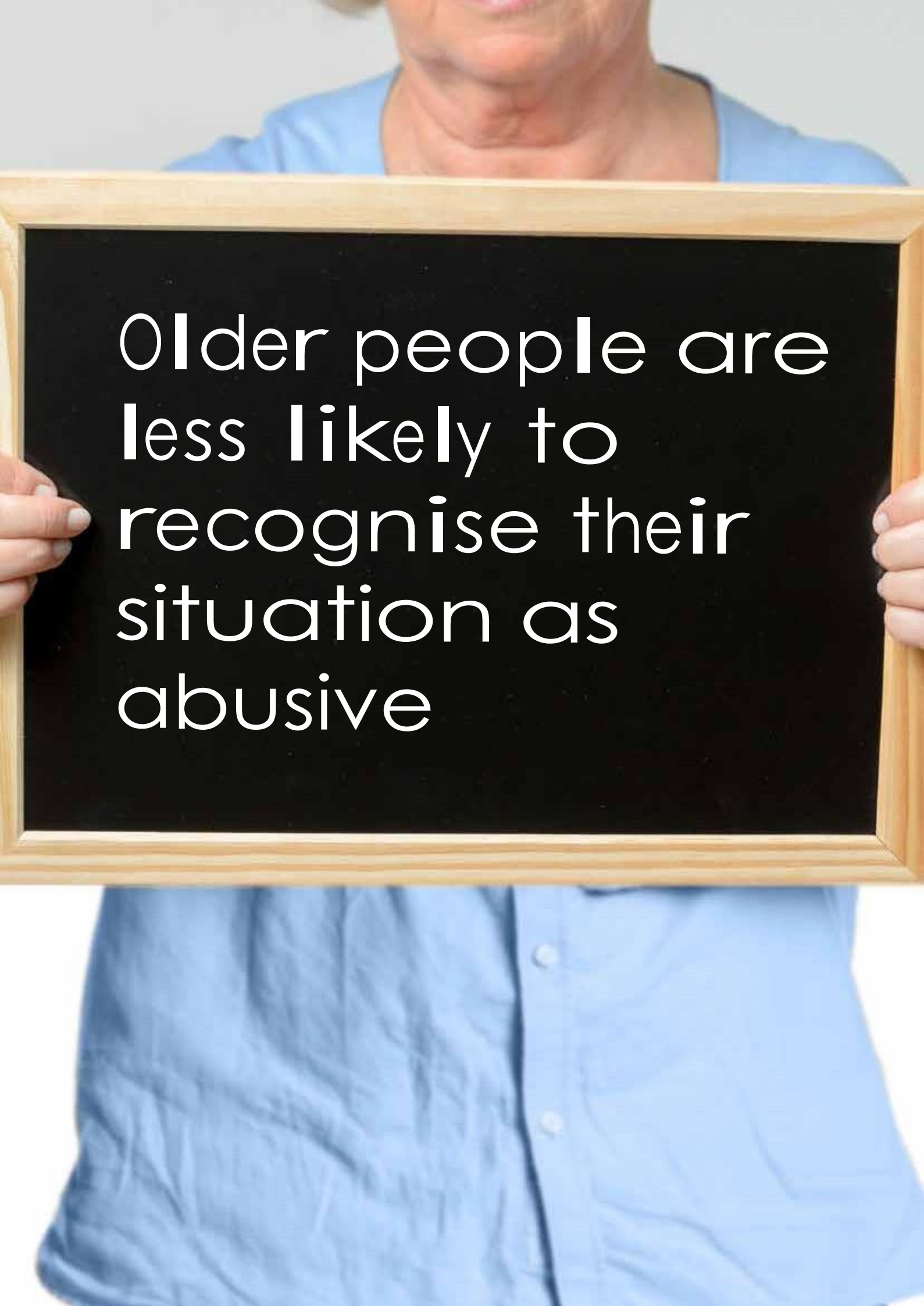
We will ensure that commissioned service providers maintain up to date guidance on referrals and interventions for domestic abuse that reflect changes in practice and process.

We will explore methods of engagement with faith and cultural leaders to challenge the beliefs that give rise to forced marriage and honour-based violence.

We will engage with voluntary, community and faith organisations that support groups who may face additional barriers to accessing services.

We will explore ways to engage with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce to improve employer awareness and understanding of domestic abuse.

We will develop a communications strategy to improve awareness and understanding of, and encourage conversations around domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage, among all groups in society. The strategy will challenge misconceptions, increase understanding of abusive behaviour, including coercive and controlling behaviour, and highlight the needs of groups that may face additional barriers to accessing services or be at risk of particular forms of domestic abuse.

A person wearing a light blue button-down shirt is holding a rectangular blackboard with a light-colored wooden frame. The blackboard is held in front of their chest, and their hands are visible at the corners. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Older people are
less likely to
recognise their
situation as
abusive

Protect



Why it is important

Information-sharing

Appropriate information-sharing between agencies is required to ensure that victims receive the most appropriate intervention, and to protect them (and their children where relevant) from ongoing harm. However, it presents ethical and legislative challenges, resulting in a lack of clarity about how information should be shared⁵⁴. The General Data Protection Requirement will come into force in the UK in May 2018⁵⁵. Its aim is to strengthen safeguards for all citizens from privacy and data breaches⁵⁶. Section 29 of the Data Protection Act currently provides an exemption to data processing rules for the purposes of the prevention or detection of crime, or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders⁵⁵.

The General Data Protection Requirement will also allow data processing for the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences⁵⁵.

As of February 2018, schools in Coventry have been receiving information about domestic abuse incidents involving their pupils (as witnesses or victims) directly from the police through Operation Encompass.

Information sharing processes should be as simple and clear as possible, ensuring that the victim's safety (and that of anyone else potentially at risk) forms the basis of any decisions. An example of an existing system that works on this premise is the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme which allows the police to disclose information about an individual to protect someone from domestic abuse; and for a third party to seek information from the police regarding an individual they are concerned about who has a history of abusive behaviour⁵⁷. Another example is the MARAC, which brings together agencies (the police, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors [IDVAs], health, child safeguarding, housing practitioners, probation and other practitioners from the statutory and voluntary sectors) to share information about high risk cases of domestic abuse to inform safety planning.

Access to appropriate and safe accommodation

Domestic abuse is a common cause of homelessness. In 2016/2017 in Coventry, violent breakdown of a relationship was one of the top three reasons for homelessness, accounting for 11% of cases.

In England the majority of referrals to refuge accommodation are from local authorities different to the one in which the service is based⁵⁸.

Transitioning from a refuge to long-term accommodation may create difficulties due to eligibility for and prioritisation of social housing (e.g. for out of area residents)⁵⁹. It must also be considered that some victims prefer to remain in their homes, and should be supported to do so safely if they choose to.

Accommodation needs vary between victims, and may be driven by factors including gender, culture, religion and sexual orientation.

Ensure that people know where to seek help

A lack of awareness of services and how to access them may act as a barrier to seeking help for domestic abuse. A focus group with young people found that they were not aware of the services available and were reluctant to seek help from professionals, preferring to speak to those with experience of domestic abuse.

Safeguarding

The 2017 joint targeted area inspection for domestic abuse (carried out in six areas across the country) found that agencies did not always adequately address the needs of children and young people affected by domestic abuse; particularly services supporting their parents¹².

Exposure of children to domestic abuse is a safeguarding issue and professionals are duty-bound to refer to children's services. Failure to appropriately acknowledge the experience of children risks both short- and long-term negative impacts on their health and wellbeing¹².

A significant proportion of adults requiring safeguarding do so as a result of domestic abuse⁶⁰.

Silo working of key agencies means that adult's and children's safeguarding needs are not always recognised in relation to domestic abuse¹².

Outcomes

Individuals within key agencies will be able to identify the circumstances in which it is appropriate to, share data; and know who to seek advice from when in doubt to ensure that victim's needs are not overlooked.

Strong channels of communication will exist between schools and West Midlands Police to ensure that pupils in homes where domestic abuse has taken place are identified and supported appropriately.

Victims of domestic abuse who are considering leaving or have decided to leave their home will be supported to do so; and will receive appropriate support to maintain their safety after leaving.

Victims of domestic abuse, including for those who are not residents of Coventry, will have 24 hour support to access emergency accommodation appropriate for their needs and circumstances. Provision of emergency accommodation will be driven by need, based on local data.

Victims ready to transition from refuges to settled accommodation will be treated as high priority for social housing; and those who wish to remain in their own homes will be supported to do so.

Understanding of the developments with regards to accessing housing benefit funds in relation to refuge accommodation for victims of domestic abuse.

Increased public awareness and knowledge, including among young people and adults with care and support needs, about the national and local domestic abuse services available and how to contact them.

Professionals supporting victims will ensure the implementation of the appropriate safeguarding procedures for adults and children; and ensure the child's story is heard and valued.

How we will achieve the outcomes

Existing information sharing agreements between agencies, health settings in particular, will be reviewed in light of the General Data Protection Requirement. Where inter- or intra-agency data sharing protocols or tools do not already exist these will be developed to support decision-making on how and when data should be shared. Commissioned domestic abuse services will be required to have a named information governance lead who can advise on information-sharing.

Schools will ensure an identified member of staff (known as a Key Adult) is appropriately trained to liaise with the police, utilise the information shared with them in confidence, and respond to children's needs as part of Operation Encompass⁶¹. Schools will ensure that parents are informed about the initiative.

Domestic abuse services will ensure that there is a safety plan in place for victims who are taking steps to leave their home, or who have recently left their home; and that this is reviewed on a regular basis.

Domestic abuse services, housing and other key agencies will work in partnership to ensure that victims of domestic abuse have access to appropriate housing. We will explore options to assess the demand for emergency accommodation so that service provision is informed by need.

We will ensure that domestic abuse services support the prevention and relief of homelessness, and align with the Housing Options Services that have been put in place to meet the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act. This will include advice and support for people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, alongside effective referral pathways.

We will engage with the Housing Benefits Team to stay informed about the housing benefit reform as it relates to refuge accommodation for domestic abuse victims.

A communications strategy will be developed to improve public awareness of local and national domestic abuse services. This will include the identification of appropriate communication channels and settings (e.g. youth centres, workplaces, cultural centres) to ensure that under-represented groups are reached. Alongside this, we will explore the development of a victim information pack to ensure that victims have access to information about the services and support available to them.

Locally commissioned domestic abuse services will be required to maintain an up to date website and publicity material with contact details of local and national services which will be accessible to those who do not speak English as a first language or have other requirements such as the need for easy-read materials.

We will explore the provision of peer-led support for young people who experience or witness domestic abuse, including honour-based violence or forced marriage.

Development of clear safeguarding policies for adults and children by agencies supporting victims or perpetrators of domestic abuse; and a named contact within agencies to advise and support staff to ensure appropriate implementation.

Close partnership working between key agencies to ensure that children's needs are addressed in all cases.

Pursue



Why it is important

Ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and are supported to change their behaviour

In managing incidents of domestic abuse it is important for professionals to address the behaviour of the perpetrator, as well as the needs of the victim. Failure to do so risks overlooking the underlying causes of the abusive behaviour, and implementing short-term interventions in the absence of long-term strategies to prevent ongoing abuse¹².

Manage risk and ensure that victims are supported early to reduce risk

Victims should be supported at the earliest appropriate opportunity to reduce the risk of ongoing abuse. This should focus on in- and out-of-court opportunities to address offending behaviour and achieve long-term behaviour change.

Outcomes

Perpetrators will receive appropriate support to understand and change their behaviour, and address the complex needs that may contribute to their actions, with the aim of achieving positive outcomes for the victim including reductions in offending behaviour

Professionals in contact with perpetrators will have an understanding of and be able to recognise coercive and controlling behaviour.

Perpetrators will be managed robustly but sensitively to achieve justice for victims and ensure that they feel supported and able to continue reporting incidents.

How we will achieve the outcomes

We will work to better understand the needs of perpetrators and the pathways in place to support them; as well as the dynamic nature of risk and how this influences the interventions used to manage them (e.g. actions alongside criminal justice, such as removals to prevent breach of the peace, domestic violence protection notices and orders, and civil orders).

We will develop effective referral pathways and information sharing agreements, working effectively with the police and probation service to understand how the wider partnership can support activity to achieve criminal justice.


We will explore options for service mapping and the evaluation of the effectiveness of services that are in contact with perpetrators, victims and families to determine the outcomes of services and inform commissioning.

Delivery

This strategy is supported by an action plan that will be implemented and monitored by the Domestic Abuse Strategic Group to ensure that the strategy achieves its aims of protecting and empowering victims and, in the long-term, reducing domestic abuse in Coventry. The implementation of the strategy will take into account the findings of the government's Domestic Abuse Bill consultation.

Acknowledgment

Many thanks to all the members of the Domestic Abuse Working Group for their hard work in developing this strategy; and to the service users, members of the public, domestic abuse service providers, wider stakeholders and council colleagues who provided their knowledge and expertise to help inform its priorities. Thank you also to Voluntary Action Coventry, Positive Youth Foundation, Grapevine and the Alzheimer's Society for their support in carrying out the engagement work for this strategy.

A person wearing a blue and yellow plaid shirt is holding a black sign with white text. The sign reads: "Children's voices must be heard and valued".

Children's voices
must be heard
and valued

Appendices

Draft high Level action pLan

Prepare:

- Oversight and accountability for delivery of the action plan by the Police & Crime Board.
- Accountability to relevant Boards, including the Safeguarding Boards, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children's Improvement Board and the Multiple Complex Needs Board.
- Assessment of robust and visible governance structures during the tender process when commissioning services.
- Review terms of reference for the MARAC and Offender Management Forum.
- Procurement and monitoring processes to ensure compliance with the West Midlands Domestic Violence and Abuse Standards and the recommendations of the joint targeted area inspection for all commissioned services.
- Develop effective information sharing agreements and have clearly defined referral pathways for service providers.
- Explore suitable training options for staff who may encounter victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse; and for elected members and council staff.
- Commissioners and providers work together to achieve consistent data collection by agreeing common data and reporting standards.
- Ensure equitable service provision by ensuring the needs of under-represented groups and those who may be more vulnerable to certain types of abuse are accounted for in the service specification.
- Develop needs-led services that adopt a 'whole family' approach.
- Map service provision and explore the evaluation of existing services to inform future commissioning decisions.
- Strengthen engagement with regional colleagues.
- Explore the possibility of having domestic abuse champions in local services.

Prevent:

- Develop a core competency framework that defines the knowledge and skills requirements of staff who may encounter adults and children at risk.
- Early identification of & intervention for those at risk or who are experiencing abuse, for example using Identification and Referral to Improve Safety in GP practices.
- Breaking the cycle of abuse within families by specifying that commissioned services take a 'whole family' approach.
- Explore methods of engagement with faith leaders around domestic abuse, including honour based violence and forced marriage.
- Explore ways to engage with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce to improve employer awareness and understanding of domestic abuse.
- Work with colleagues in Corporate Communications to develop a launch of the strategy and associated promotion on social media (and other channels) to raise awareness, particularly for those in identified under-represented groups or who may be more vulnerable to certain types of abuse.
- Engage with staff in the Family Hubs to explore how they support families who have experienced domestic abuse.
- Ensure that commissioned services maintain up to date guidance on referrals and interventions for domestic abuse that reflect changes in practice and process.
- Ensure that schools deliver relationship and sex education lessons; and parents/carers are supported to identify the early signs of unhealthy relationships between young people.

Protect:

- Review current information-sharing across agencies in light of the new General Data Protection Requirement. The commissioning process should include the need to identify a named information governance lead within a service.
- Explore the possibility of developing online information easily accessible to professionals to raise awareness of the services available. Part of the commissioning process for services should include an obligation to make stakeholders aware of their offering, this could include the development of a victim information pack.
- Provide access to safe accommodation by strengthening links between providers of refuge accommodation, frontline staff responding to reports of domestic abuse as well as the provision of emergency housing within the council. Accommodation provision should be needs-led.
- Ensure that those who are preparing to or have left the home are safely supported to do so.
- Keep abreast of developments with regards to the housing benefits reform.
- Commissioning process to ensure that services have safeguarding policies and procedures in place; and that staff are trained to recognise and deal with safeguarding issues. Contract monitoring of commissioned services should include a review of staff training records as well as effective operation of the safeguarding policies.
- Strong and effective leadership regarding the operation of the MASH and MARAC processes to ensure safeguarding is effective throughout the city.

Pursue:

- Review current information-sharing across agencies in light of the new General Data Protection Requirement. The commissioning process should include the need to identify a named information governance lead within a service.
- Explore the possibility of developing online information easily accessible to professionals to raise awareness of the services available. Part of the commissioning process for services should include an obligation to make stakeholders aware of their offering, this could include the development of a victim information pack.
- Provide access to safe accommodation by strengthening links between providers of refuge accommodation, frontline staff responding to reports of domestic abuse as well as the provision of emergency housing within the council. Accommodation provision should be needs-led.
- Ensure that those who are preparing to or have left the home are safely supported to do so.
- Keep abreast of developments with regards to the housing benefits reform.
- Commissioning process to ensure that services have safeguarding policies and procedures in place; and that staff are trained to recognise and deal with safeguarding issues. Contract monitoring of commissioned services should include a review of staff training records as well as effective operation of the safeguarding policies.
- Strong and effective leadership regarding the operation of the MASH and MARAC processes to ensure safeguarding is effective throughout the city.

Coventry City Council domestic abuse needs analysis

August 2017

Introduction

Purpose

This domestic abuse needs analysis is intended to provide an evidence base to inform the development of a domestic abuse strategy for Coventry.

Scope

The DA needs analysis covers:

- **Service scoping (supply) –**
 - what services do we currently commission?
 - what are they meant to provide (service specifications)?
- **Usage (met demand) –**
 - who accesses domestic abuse services?
 - ...for those experiencing/who have experienced domestic abuse [‘victims’]
 - ...for those who access perpetrator services
 - ...by protected characteristics under the Equality Act (e.g. by age, by gender, by ethnicity, by disability, by sexual orientation)
 - crime and non-crime data (unmet demand) –
 - what are the city’s overall trends in domestic abuse?
 - by protected characteristics under the Equality Act (e.g. by age, by gender, by ethnicity, by disability, by sexual orientation)
 - how many are repeat incidents?
 - how many involve children?

Service scoping

What services do we currently commission?

Coventry’s current domestic abuse services commenced on 29th September 2014. It replaced former contracts and demonstrated the council’s commitment to stop domestic abuse as set out in the Council Plan. The current contract is for a period of four years and includes a single point of access service which aims to provide a ‘one-stop’ contact point for victims of domestic abuse.

The contract consists of elements, each providing a specific service:

- helpline/single point of access and victim community-based support;
- victim supported accommodation;
- children and young people’s service; and
- a perpetrator service.

What are the services commissioned to provide?

The intention is that the services deliver an integrated multi-agency model, together, the Coventry Domestic Violence and Abuse Support Services (CDVASS):

1. Helpline, interactive website and victim community based services:

A single Coventry helpline to provide support and information for victims, perpetrators, children and young people, and professionals. It provides a single point of access to all victim services, and facilitates access to children's and perpetrator services. It also supports victims living in the community, including emotional support, support at court, support with property security and signposting to other specialist services; provides support to victims from Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee communities; and provides a peer support service for victims including support groups, workshops and opportunities to meet other people in similar situations.

2. Supported accommodation for victims and children:

Accommodation includes a mix of furnished self-contained and shared individual and family accommodation; women-only accommodation with separate units for male victims; accommodation adapted for physical and sensory impairments and for carers; provision for pets in self-contained units.

Support includes: comprehensive individual risk and need assessments; comprehensive safety and practical and emotional support planning; individual one to one case work and group support sessions; multilingual staff and culturally specific support including forced marriage, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation; signposting to other relevant specialist services; and 24/7 emergency referrals.

3. Children and young people service:

Support for children and young people in Coventry up to the age of 18 who are affected by domestic abuse in the home includes: support to children who are most at risk of harm; one to one and group support; support to enable children and young people to talk about their experiences, increase their confidence and improve their safety; support and advocacy for children and young people who are involved with the legal system.

4. Perpetrator service:

Delivery of the Brighter Futures Perpetrator Programme – a ten-week long programme that can be delivered on either an individual or group basis to male and female perpetrators aged 16 years and over.

The programme works by increasing self-efficiency; self-esteem; providing an insight into problem behaviours and their impact on others; emotion regulation skills; problem solving skills; and taking personal responsibility for problematic relationship behaviours.

Referrals can be made via the single point of access helpline; or alternatively, police, probation and social care have direct referral routes.

Crime and non-crime data

Domestic abuse in Coventry

Data from the West Midlands Police show that there were 5,771 incidents of domestic abuse recorded between April 2016 and March 2017. This is a reduction of 201 incidents (-3.4%) from the same time period in 2015/16. These included both crime and non-crime incidents.

Data on domestic abuse trends by protected characteristics such as age, gender and ethnicity of perpetrators / victims were not available.

Domestic abuse involving children

According to the West Midlands Police data from April 2016 to March 2017, 53% of domestic abuse cases involved children. That is an increase of 15.8% from the same period during 2015/16. Exposure to adverse childhood experiences like domestic abuse impacts on the risk of future violence, victimisation or perpetration; and lifelong health and opportunities.

Data from level 4 social care Children and Family Assessments show that in 2016/2017 56.3% of cases in Coventry involved domestic abuse; this is a decrease from 60.6% in 2015/2016. These cases represent children for whom there is a child protection concern, and therefore the highest level of need.

Data submitted by the council for the Troubled Families National Impact Study for January 2015 to December 2017 show that 824 (57%) of the 1456 families met the domestic abuse criteria for the Troubled Families Programme. The criteria is defined as at least one of:

- the young person (from age 16) or adult known to local services has experienced, is currently experiencing or is at risk of experiencing domestic abuse;
- a household or family member has been subject to a police call out for at least one domestic incident in the last 12 months; or
- a young person or adult who is known to local services as having perpetrated an incident of domestic abuse in the last 12 months

Police response to domestic abuse incidents

Between April 2016 and July 2017 in Coventry there were **8022** calls to West Midlands Police that were classified initially as domestic abuse; **127** of these were not attended by the police. A sample of 10 of these calls showed that this was for a variety of reasons including: the alleged perpetrator leaving of their own accord, the police were no longer required, and responsibility for the incident being handed over to another agency or individual (in one case the husband of a learning disabled woman who had reportedly been threatening her). The data indicate that the lack of police presence does not necessarily mean that a risk assessment was not been carried out.

Preventing domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is everybody's business – it is important to recognise that domestic abuse has an impact on the lives of the victims, offenders, children, and the community; and that often, suffering is hidden from view.

This year saw a significant decrease in the number of repeat incidents of domestic abuse – **291** between April 2016 and March 2017 compared to **565** over the same period in 2015/16. **6.7%** were repeat victims; with the repeat incident rate falling from **9.5%** in 2015/16 to **6.7%** in 2016/17.

While overall domestic abuse figures remained stable (falling by 3.4% although the significance of this is not clear) the decrease in the repeat incidents is thought to be a positive impact from improvements in the support provided by police and partner agencies; and management of repeat offenders – reducing repeat victimisation.

Addressing sexual violence

The Council have commissioned a sexual violence prevention programme. This is intended to raise awareness and educate young people about sexual violence, appropriate behaviour, and consent. It is being delivered to children, young people, teachers and parents in schools and youth groups. Further work is underway to develop an intimate partner violence prevention programme alongside this.

Service usage

Helpline/single point of access and victim community-based support

From April 2015 to September 2016, the service dealt with **4,338** calls (including referrals from professionals, advice, helpline, etc.) – giving an average of **2,892** calls per year.

From April 2015 to December 2016 (seven quarters), the service accepted **872** referrals – giving an average of **498** per year. The vast majority (96.7%) of referrals were female.

Victim supported accommodation

The service provided support to **221** people over the seven quarters from April 2015 to December 2016, that is, an average of **126** per year. The vast majority of people (98.2%) were female. The most common age range of people supported was 18-34, making up 70.1% of those supported. Location data is available on 57% of people supported – with most referrals from the wards of Foleshill, Henley, Radford and Lower Stoke. However, we do not have location data for 43% of referrals.

Children and young people's service

Between April 2015 and December 2016 the service received an average of **111** new referrals per year, and supported, on average, **273** children and young people. The majority were supported on a short-term basis of around 0-3 months or 3-6 months; and only a small proportion (9%) of service users were supported for more than six months. Of the 163 cases that were closed, the majority (58%) were because work with the child or young person had been completed within the quarter for which there was data.

Three-year's of data (with no double counting) is available for the numbers of individual children and young people who received support (assessments and interventions, and partial support) from children's services. This totalled **280** over three years, increasing each year.

Year	Number of children receiving support
2014/2015	86
2015/2016	88
2016/2017	106

Perpetrator service

On average, **238** perpetrators began support each year – an average of **182** perpetrators were on the programme every year, and 72 completed the programme. The vast majority (93.6%) of perpetrators accessing the service were male – most were aged 25-34 (44%), followed by 35-44 (29%). The majority committed either verbal (31%) or physical abuse (29%) – note that some may commit more than one form of abuse. Of the 262

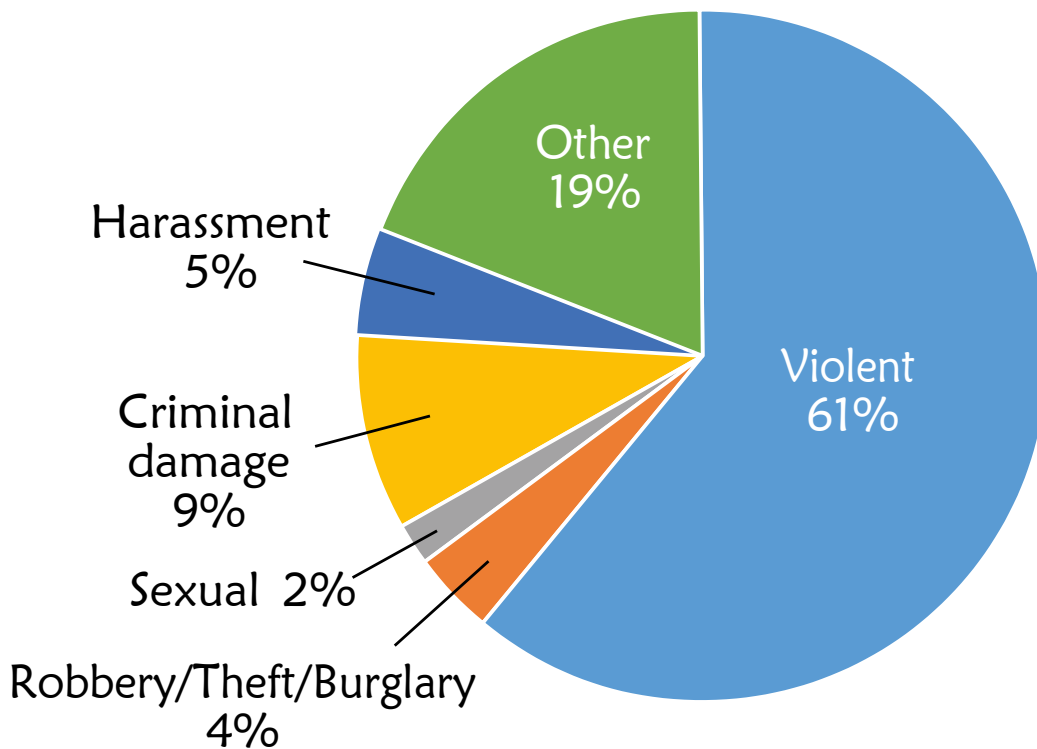
perpetrators accessing the service between April 2015 and September 2016, the most common postcode was CV6 (32%) followed by CV2 (21%) and CV3 (18%).

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West Midlands Police data analysis

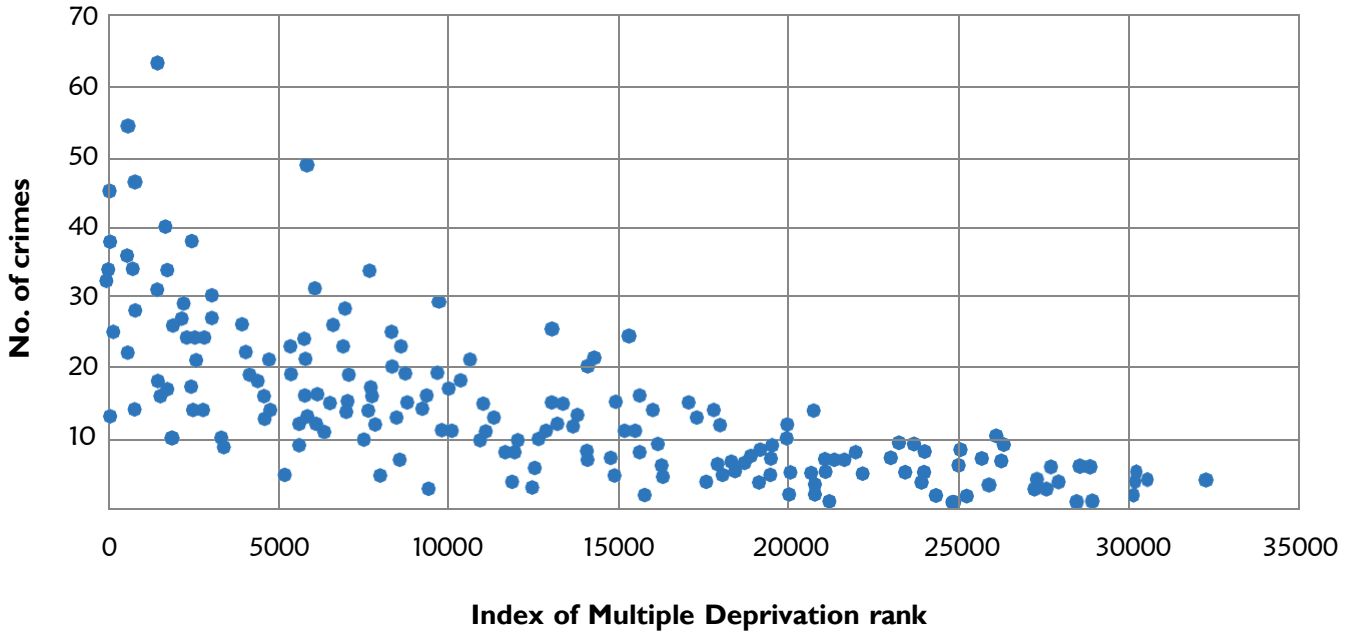
In depth data from April 2016 to July 2017 were provided by West Midlands Police. These included details on the types of crimes committed, the victim's gender and age, and the postcode in which the incident took place.

Data analysis showed that the most common type of domestic abuse crimes that took place in Coventry during that period was violent.



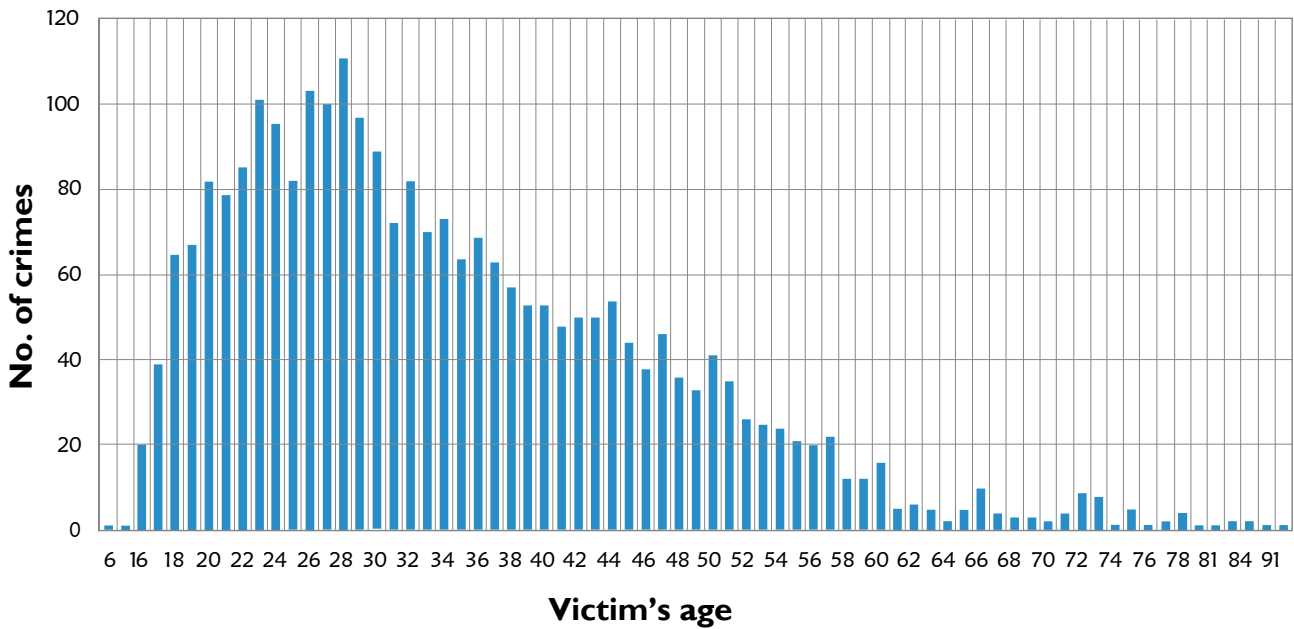
Higher numbers of domestic abuse crimes occurred in areas with higher levels of deprivation.

Number of crimes per Lower Super Output Area vs. rank of Index of Multiple Deprivation



Domestic abuse crimes more commonly involved individuals of younger ages; the median age of a victim was 26 years old.

Number of crimes vs. age of the victim



Governance and reporting structure



The Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy is owned and managed by the Police and Crime Board.

The working group that has led the development of the Domestic Abuse Strategy has now become the Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategic Group. It will report to the Coventry Police and Crime Board on progress against the strategy. The group is jointly chaired by Craig Hickin (Head of Environmental Services) and Liz Gaulton (Director of Public Health and Wellbeing).

The membership of the strategic group includes representation from:

- Coventry City Council
 - Commissioning lead
 - Public health
 - Community safety
 - Children's services
 - Adult social care

- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- West Midlands Police
- Probation
 - National Probation Service Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire (NPS CSW)
 - Staffordshire and West Midlands Community Rehabilitation Company (SWMCR)
- Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group
- The strategic group will be responsible for monitoring progress against an action plan to ensure that the aims of the strategy are achieved; and supporting the commissioning of future domestic abuse services. Progress will be shared with the Safeguarding Boards, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children's Improvement Board and the Multiple Complex Needs Board.

Consultation and engagement

Development event

A development workshop, led by Voluntary Action Coventry, was held on 14/11/17. This was attended by 30 people from a wide range of statutory and voluntary partners who discussed the four priority areas and provided details on where they felt there were gaps and how the strategy should address them. Some of the key issues raised include:

- Coercive control should be a central part of the strategy.
- A tiered core competency framework should be developed to ensure that frontline staff can identify and respond appropriately to domestic abuse.
- Information sharing between agencies requires clear protocols.
- Acknowledgement of young people as both perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse in the strategy.
- Whether a domestic abuse strategy, and not a violence against women and girls strategy is the right approach.
- Acknowledgement of sexual violence as an aspect of domestic abuse in the strategy.
- What does and doesn't work well with the current single point of access service model and whether it meets the needs of men.
- Consideration of the support available to individuals pursuing civil litigation which is currently means tested.
- That a full needs assessment should have been carried out before work on the strategy was started.

The following organisations were represented at the event:

- Barnardo's
- Compass
- Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group
- Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust
- Coventry City Council
- Coventry Haven
- Coventry Recovery Community
- CRASAC
- Creative Optimistic Visions
- General Practice
- Panahghar
- Refuge
- University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire
- Valley House
- Victim Support
- West Midlands Fire Service
- West Midlands Police
- Whitefriars Housing

General Survey

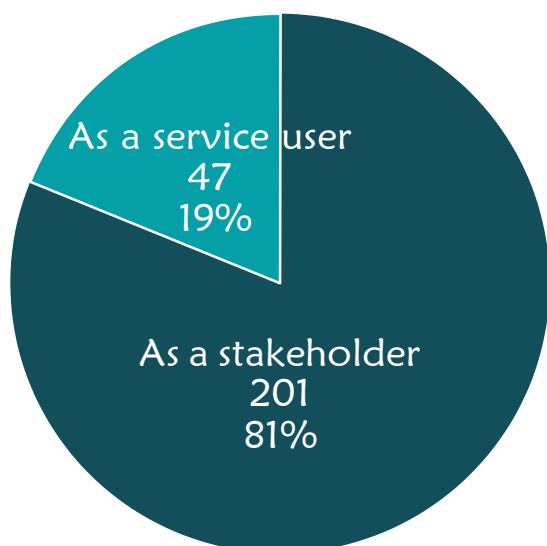
Domestic abuse stakeholder survey

Domestic abuse can be described as behaviour that involves one person having control over another. This behaviour may happen once or several times over months or even years. It happens between partners (i.e. boyfriends, girlfriends, husbands and wives) or family members who are aged 16 or older. People of any gender or sexuality can be affected. The abuse may be:

- Psychological (mental)
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional
- Honour-based violence
- Forced marriage

A total of 248 people responded to the survey, of which 47 were service users and 201 other stakeholders (service providers, commissioners, councillors etc.). Further details on the respondents are below.

Responding to the survey as...



Service users

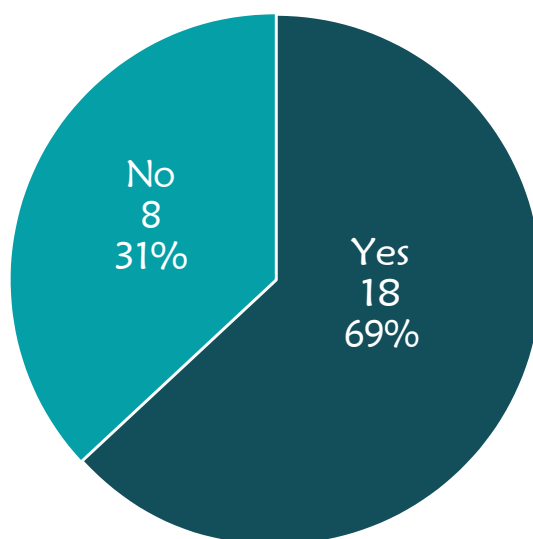
Of the 47 service users who responded to this survey, 27 reported that they experienced domestic violence and abuse. None had committed domestic abuse.

I have...	Count
Experienced domestic abuse	27
Committed domestic violence and abuse	0
Skipped question	20

Of the 27 respondents who had experienced domestic abuse 18 had sought help and 8 had not.

Have you sought help?	Count
Yes	18
No	8
Skipped question	1

Have sought help?



Service help

Of the 18 who had sought help and support, 16 stated where they had sought help:

Help sought	Responses
Support from West Midlands Police	7
Support from a Coventry domestic violence and abuse service	6
Support from your GP/practice nurse	6
Other (for example a friend, relative, carer)	5
Support from a domestic violence and abuse service outside Coventry.	3
Support from another health or social care provider (e.g. a sexual health clinic)	5
Support from school/college/university in Coventry	0

The three most common sources of help were West Midlands Police, a Coventry domestic abuse service, and the GP/practice nurse.

5 respondents highlighted that they also sought help from and family and friends and from Women's Aid outside Coventry.

Other support points	Count
Friends and Family	4
Women's Aid (outside Coventry)	1

Coventry Haven was highlighted as a service that users frequently sought help from; Sahil project was also highlighted in the other services section.

Answer Choices	Responses
Coventry Haven (support and accommodation for women and children)	6
Refuge (telephone helpline and website providing information and support)	3
Safe and Supported Partnership (accommodation, information and support)	2
Other (please name them) Sahil project	1

Have not sought help

For those who had not sought help (8 respondents out of 27 service users), the table below shows that the most prominent reason was the lack of awareness of domestic abuse and what it means. It is also worth highlighting that people were not afraid to seek help and were willing to seek help if they are aware of the issue and the help available to them.

Those who sought help and accessed the domestic abuse services said that there was little or no information available to inform people about the services. Service users felt that the police and commissioned services could improve engagement with victims and would benefit from more knowledge. On the other hand those who made contact with Haven said that the service was very good. Refuge, which is part of the commissioned domestic abuse services, was also commented on positively.

Reasons for not seeking help	Count
Did not realise it was domestic abuse at the time	4
Embarrassment	2
I did not know where to seek help	1
Different times and level of awareness	1
I was too afraid to seek help	0
I did not want to seek help	0

What worked well and what could be improved in domestic abuse services?



23 respondents identified their service priorities for the strategy. The table below shows that raising awareness about where and how to receive support was the most important priority area, but the rest of the priorities followed closely behind and as such there is no clear trend that can be identified.

Priority	Count
It is important that people who experience domestic violence and abuse know where to find help.	21
It is important that services offer appropriate support to people at all levels of risk (low, medium and high).	20
It is important that services work in partnership to make sure that people who experience domestic violence and abuse don't have to tell their story more than once.	19
It is important that the short-term and long-term housing needs of people who experience domestic violence and abuse are addressed.	19
It is important to increase awareness of domestic violence and abuse among children and young people.	18
It is important that people with additional needs (e.g. a mental health condition, drug and alcohol problems) who experience domestic violence and abuse are offered appropriate support.	17
It is important that people who may find it hard to access services (e.g. disabled people; people who don't speak English; people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) are appropriately supported to do so.	17
It is important that people who carry out domestic violence and abuse are held responsible for their actions.	17
It is important that services work in partnership to make sure that people who experience or carry out domestic violence and abuse are referred or signposted appropriately.	16
It is important that staff working with the public (e.g. GPs, teachers) can spot the signs of domestic violence and abuse (including honour-based violence and forced marriage).	16
It is important that relevant services share data to protect people experiencing domestic violence and abuse (and their children where relevant).	16
It is important that children and young people who live in homes with domestic violence and abuse are protected from harm.	16
It is important that services consider the needs of the whole family to try to break the cycle of abuse that can continue between generations.	15
It is important that cultural attitudes and religious beliefs that give rise to honour-based violence and forced marriage are challenged.	15
It is important to increase awareness of domestic violence and abuse among staff in local services, community and faith groups, and members of the public.	15
It is important that services supporting people who experience and carry out domestic violence and abuse collect data (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity) to make sure that services meet the needs of the local population.	15
It is important that people who carry out domestic violence and abuse are supported to help change their behaviour.	15

People were invited to provide additional comments about what the strategy should consider. These included the importance of responding appropriately to complaints; recognising repeat offenders; understanding the underlying reasons behind domestic abuse; ensuring that children feel they will be believed; and making an appropriate assessment of risk; providing support based on need and not finances (i.e. one service user felt that decisions around their support were influenced by finances).

Equalities

What is your age?

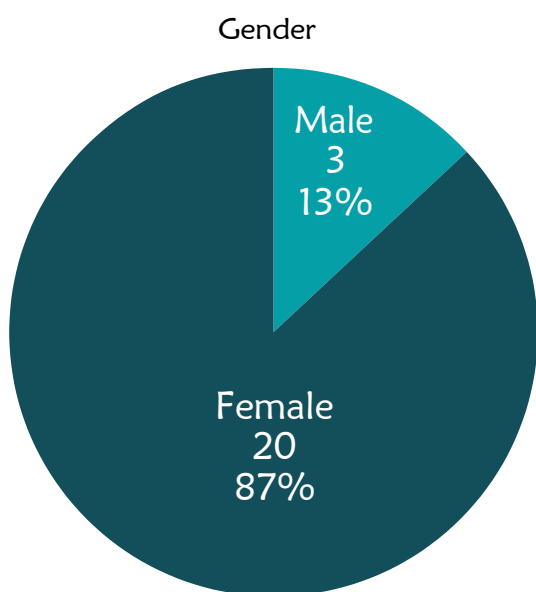
23 responded out of a possible 47 service users responded.

Age groups	Count
16-24	0
25-34	4
35-44	3
45-54	8
55-64	5
65+	3

Gender

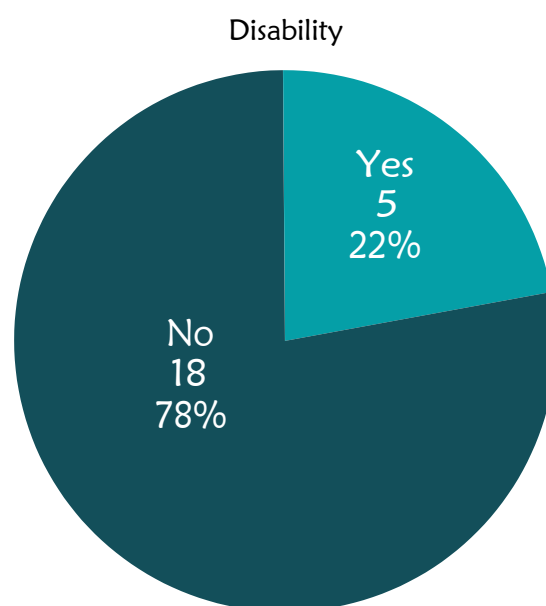
23 responded out of a possible 47 service users responded.

The majority of service users that responded were women. Further information from male service users is required to understand more about their needs and priorities.



Disability

23 out of a possible 47 service users responded. 5 considered themselves disabled and 18 had no disability.



Sexuality

23 out of a possible 47 service users responded. 19 identified as heterosexual, and 4 either selected other or preferred not to say.

Sexuality	Count
Heterosexual/straight	19
Prefer not to say	3
Other	1
Gay man	0
Gay woman/lesbian	0
Bisexual	0

Ethnic background

22 people out of a possible 47 services users responded. The majority (18) identified as White British.

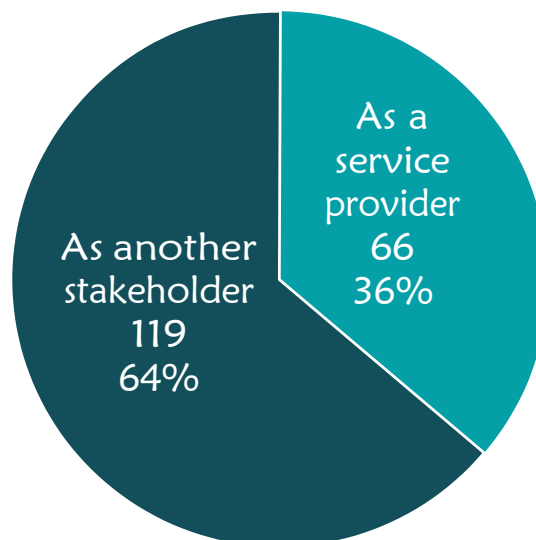
Ethnic groups	Count
White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	18
Asian/Asian British: Indian	1
Asian/Asian British: Other	1
Black/Black British: African	1
Any other ethnic group	1
White Irish	0
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	0
Mixed White and Black African	0
Mixed White and Asian	0
Other Mixed	0
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	0
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	0
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	0
Black/Black British: Caribbean	0
Black/Black British: Other	0
Other ethnic group: Arab	0

Stakeholders

In relation to this question a stakeholder refers to anyone other than a service user who has an interest or influence on the provision of services for victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse in the city, such as a commissioner, councillor, healthcare worker, social worker, police etc.

Out of a total of 248 people who responded to the survey, 201 were stakeholders. Out of those 201, 66 were service providers and 119 were other stakeholders.

How are you responding to this survey?



Service Providers

49 out of a possible 66 service providers specified their organisation

Organisations	Count
Whitefriars	1
Coventry City Council/ Social Care	4
Route 21	1
Criminal Justice Liaison & Diversion Team NHS	1
Safeguarding	1
Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (CRASAC)	1
NHS child and family services	1
NSPCC	2
Early Help and Protection	1
Unite the union	1
President Kennedy School	1
Cafcass	1
West Midlands Police	1
Coventry CRC	1
CDVASS	1
uhcw	1
Probation	1

45 out of a possible 66 stakeholders specified the services they provide.

Services Provided	Count
General advice and information for victims of domestic violence and abuse	41
Case management	34
Advice and information on benefits	25
Advice and information on homelessness and housing	24
Support for court proceedings	24
Accommodation	23
Aftercare support	22
Counselling	19
Advice and information on legal issues, including immigration	17
Debt advice	17
Peer support	14
Home security installations	7
Support for perpetrators	7

Other Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Count
Specified (see table below)	71
Other (see table below)	40
Social worker	22
Other health care worker	17
Teacher	15
Commissioner	5
Police	4
Councillor	3
GP	0
Practice nurse	0

Specified and other stakeholders
Independent Reviewing Officer
Adult Commissioning
Housing association
Coventry safeguarding Adults Board
Physiotherapist
Personal Advisor
Operational Lead
MENTAL HEALTH NURSE
Staff nurse
Mental health support worker
IRO
Student social worker
Health visitor
CP chair
Headteacher
Manager
Charity supporting women at risk of sexual exploitation in Coventry
Safeguarding officer
Physiotherapist
Specialist lead nurse LD/CAMHS
Physiotherapist
Support worker
Work within safeguarding
Health
Public health Officer
Charity that, amongst other things, supports migrant/refugee victims of DV
CWPT
Charity
NSPCC
Charity Worker (Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre)

Partner voluntary sector agency
Pastoral Team
Worker at Refugee Centre
Welfare Rights adviser
Voluntary sector team manager
Principal
Mental health and community provider
Grants provider
Family Support based in a school
School pastoral and family support manager
Safeguarding Children and Adult Boards
Counsellor
Administrator in a school
Safeguarding Lead at school
School
Designated Safeguarding Officer
Headteacher
Employment worker
Occupational Therapist
Early help manager
Community worker
Alternative education
Safeguarding Nurse
Justice of the Peace
Named nurse safeguarding children
Trustee community organisation
School Governor
Family court advisor Childrens guardian
Childrens guardian family court advisor
Caseworker
Family Court Advosor, CAFCASS
Healthwatch volunteer
Foster Carer providing care to children who have witnesses DV
Safeguarding Nurse
EHPCo

EHPCo
Cafcass
Adult Commissioning
Guardian/Family Court Advisor
Safeguarding Nurse
Lecturer at university
Manager of 2 different staff members that confided they were victims of domestic abuse

Priorities

108 out of a possible 201 stakeholders ranked their top 10 priorities. There were 20 priorities listed and stakeholders were asked to list their top 10 priorities in order of importance.

A weighting methodology was applied to the analysis of this question. There were 20 priorities and each was ranked from 1 to 20. A weighted

score was applied to each rank. For example 20 points were applied to each first rank vote, 19 points to each 2nd rank vote, 18 points to each 3rd rank vote, etc. The total points were summed and divided by 20 (the number of priorities) to get an average score. The results are presented in the table below.

Rank	Priorities	Average Score
1	Children and young people who live in homes with domestic violence and abuse are protected from harm.	73
2	Staff working with the public (e.g. GPs, teachers) can spot the signs of domestic violence and abuse (including honour-based violence and forced marriage).	64
3	Services consider the needs of the whole family to try to break the cycle of abuse that can continue between generations.	61
4	Services work in partnership to make sure that people who experience or carry out domestic violence and abuse are referred or signposted appropriately.	53
5	To increase awareness of domestic violence and abuse among children and young people.	53
6	People who experience domestic violence and abuse know where to find help.	52
7	People with additional needs (e.g. a mental health condition, drug and alcohol problems) who experience domestic violence and abuse are offered appropriate support.	52
8	Cultural attitudes and religious beliefs that give rise to honour-based violence and forced marriage are challenged.	49
9	Services work in partnership to make sure that people who experience domestic violence and abuse don't have to tell their story more than once.	45
10	People who carry out domestic violence and abuse are supported to help change their behaviour.	42

The stakeholder's top three priorities were that children and young people who live in homes with domestic abuse are protected from harm; that staff working with the public can spot the signs of domestic abuse; and that services consider the needs of the whole family to try to break the cycle of abuse that can continue between generations.

Survey Results from Grapevine

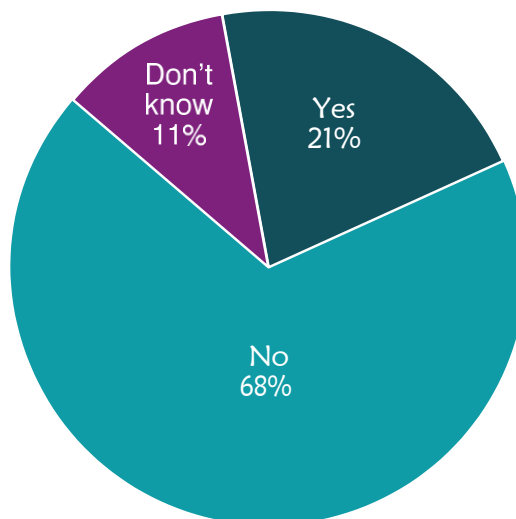
Who is Grapevine?

Grapevine is an organisation that operates throughout Coventry and Warwickshire helping people experiencing isolation, poverty and disadvantage to build better lives. It offers practical person-centred guidance, advocacy and support.

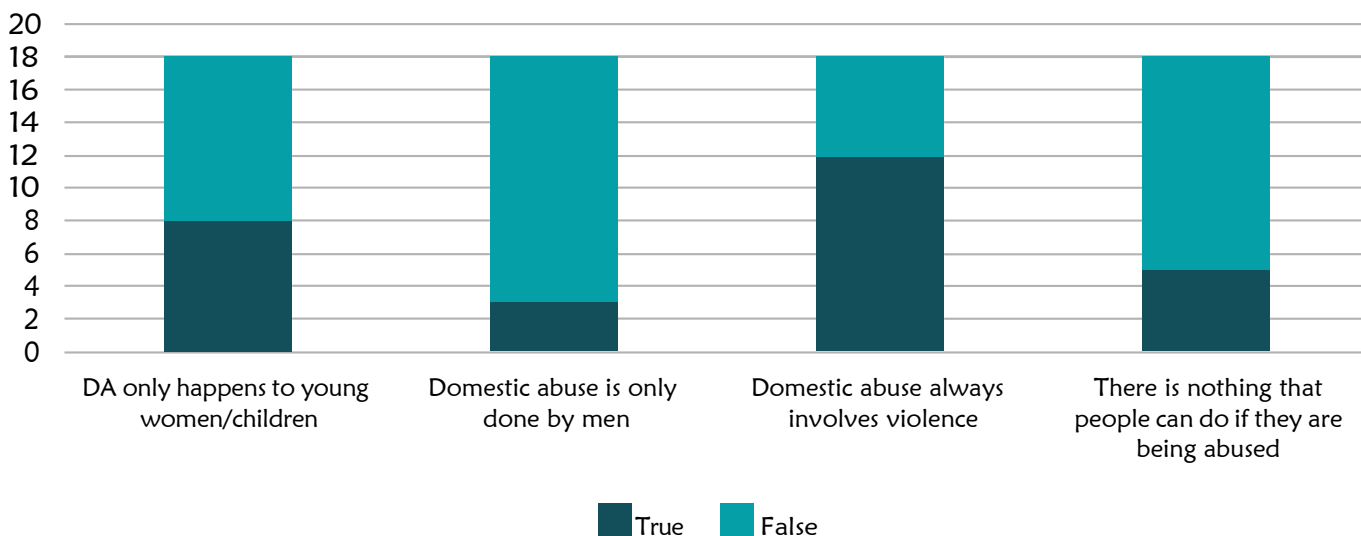
Consultation

Grapevine surveyed 18 adults with care and support needs to explore their understanding of domestic abuse and their attitudes towards seeking help. The results were as follows:

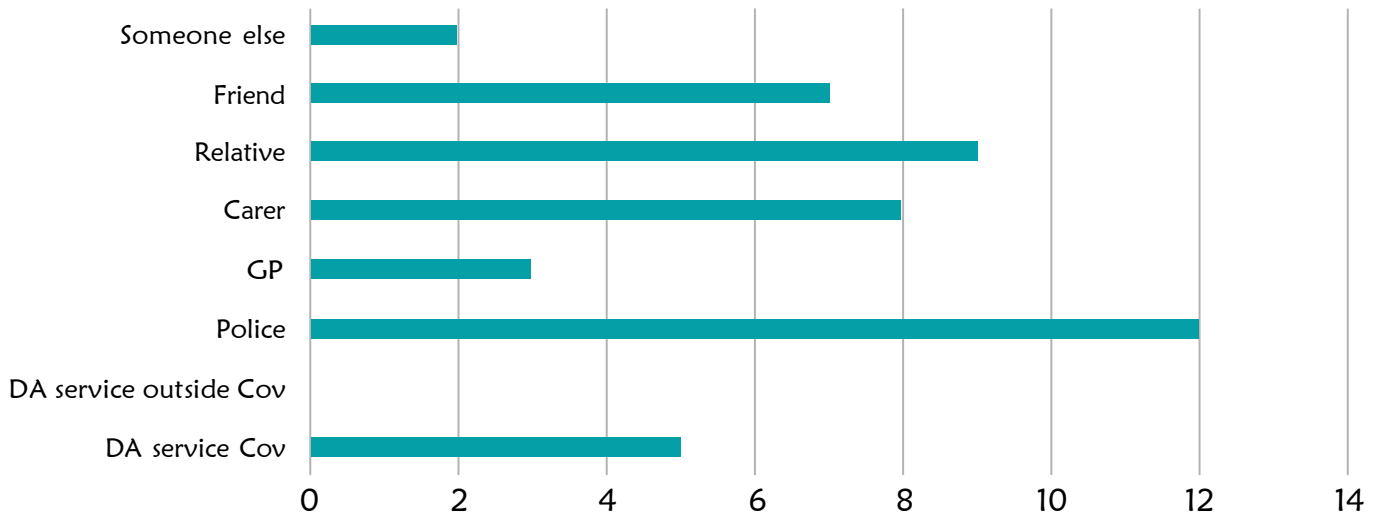
Have you been abused by a partner or family member?



11% of respondents did not know whether they had been abused. This helps to demonstrate some of the complexities of providing services to groups who may be more vulnerable to certain types of domestic abuse and the importance of those around them being able to identify early warning signs.

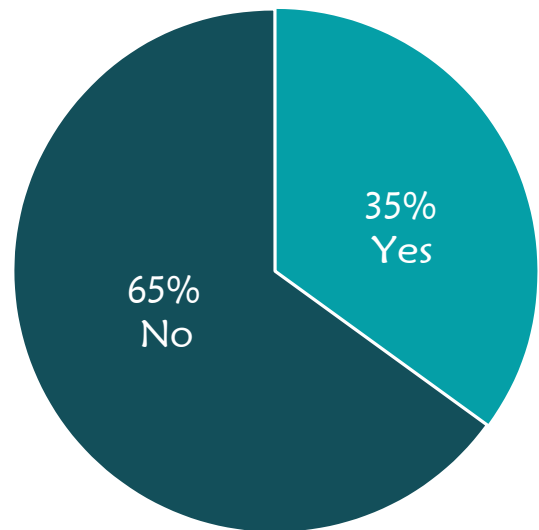


The survey also explored some of the beliefs about domestic abuse held by respondents. They were presented with a series of questions to which they were asked to respond true or false. The results indicate a strong belief that domestic abuse always involves violence; and almost 50% of respondents thought that domestic abuse only happens to young women and/or children.



When asked where help could be sought from if you were experiencing domestic abuse the majority of respondents identified the police. Relatives, friends or a carer were other frequent responses.

When asked if they felt if there was enough information about domestic abuse almost two-thirds of those surveyed said no. This would seem to suggest that there is more work to do in promoting information to those with care and support needs. Research has suggested that as a group they are more vulnerable to abuse of all types.



Positive Youth Foundation Focus Group

Focus group with children and young people

Positive Youth Foundation, a non-profit organisation that supports children and young people, was approached to hold a focus group on domestic abuse. The group was facilitated through the regular Positive Young Thinkers group that the organisation runs to discuss a variety of issues; and took place on 6/12/17. The group comprised 5 females and 5 males, aged 15 to 18. Two were Black British African, one was Black British/Irish African and the remainder were British Asian. All attended school or sixth form in the postcode area of CV1; one person attended college in CV2. They were initially split into three groups, all consisting of two females and one male, to discuss the following:

- What domestic abuse is, who the victims of domestic abuse are and who carries it out.
- Where they have received information on domestic abuse from.

As a whole group they were asked about:

- Whether they feel they have received enough information on domestic abuse.
- Where they think their information on domestic abuse should come from and what other information they would like to receive.
- Whether they would seek help if they experienced domestic abuse or witnessed it in the family; and who they would seek help from.
- What would stop them from seeking help and the kind of help they would like to receive.

The key themes from the discussions are summarised below:

What things come to mind when you hear the term domestic abuse?

Participants recognised that domestic abuse can happen outside of the context of a partner relationship, and that children and young people can be affected. They understood that as well as physical abuse it could include verbal, sexual and mental abuse and forced marriage. The intergenerational nature of domestic abuse was also recognised.

They acknowledged that both men and women can be victims. Although it was recognised as being more common in women, participants felt that men were not taken seriously as victims and were not talked about as much.

The young people referred to culture, ethnicity, stress, anger, mental illness and alcohol as triggers for domestic abuse. Some felt that individuals from certain ethnic backgrounds or who held quite 'orthodox' views considered it acceptable to hit their children and therefore would not consider this behaviour abusive. Where domestic abuse was triggered by stress or alcohol it was felt that this was accidental.

Domestic abuse was acknowledged as something that is not widely discussed, and it was stated that no-one ever truly knows what happens in the home. It was raised by one person that victims of abuse may feel that they have done something wrong, and because they love their abuser they allow the abuse to take place.

Where do you get your information from about domestic abuse?

Participants got the majority of their information from TV (BBC iPlayer, Hollyoaks, the news, Jeremy Kyle) and social media (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube). Some expressed the view that the media manipulated how domestic abuse was presented and did not always show the whole story. They felt that it was biased towards women as no-one wanted to hear about female on male abuse.

One girl reported that her class had been shown 'Murdered by my Father', and cited it as a good resource for learning about domestic abuse. One girl also reported that her class was taught about domestic abuse, but that the class was only for girls; the boys were taught about terrorism instead.

Some of the young people said that they had learned about domestic abuse from witnessing incidents in their local area and noted that people generally did not want to intervene.

Do you feel that you have received enough information? What other information would you like to receive?

The young people did not feel that there was enough information about domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage. None of them knew that there were services available to support victims.

Where do you think information about domestic abuse should come from?

It was generally felt that school was not the right place to be educated about domestic abuse. Reasons for this included: fear of developing a reputation and being bullied for being a 'weak person', the formality of the setting, and feeling uncomfortable talking to teachers.

There was a consensus that information should be delivered by young people (under 30) with lived experience, as they felt that they had more knowledge and credibility than professionals. It was also suggested that education should be delivered on an ongoing basis, and in the community (e.g. youth centres).

They felt that if information was to be delivered in school or by professionals it should be informal.

What are the barriers to asking for help (as a victim or witness of domestic abuse)?

The barriers that the young people reported to seeking help were not knowing where to go to ask for help, and a fear of getting involved because of the potential repercussions.

Links

- 1 [Office for National Statistics \(2016\) Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#)
- 2 [National Institute for Health and Care Excellence \(2014\) Domestic violence and abuse: multi-agency working](#)
- 3 [Home Office \(2016\) Domestic violence and abuse](#)
- 4 [Ministry of Justice \(2018\) Transforming the response to domestic abuse](#)
- 5 [Crown Prosecution Service \(2017\) Controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship](#)
- 6 [The Guardian \(2017\) Coercion and control: fighting against abuse hidden in relationships](#)
- 7 [Home Office \(2015\) Controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship - statutory guidance framework](#)
- 8 [The Crown Prosecution Service \(2017\). Honour based violence and forced marriage](#)
- 9 [Home Office and AVA \(2013\) Information for local areas on the change to the definition of domestic violence and abuse](#)
- 10 [HM Government \(2016\) Ending violence against women and girls strategy 2016-2020](#)
- 11 [Department for Education \(2017\) Schools to teach 21st century relationships and sex education](#)
- 12 [Ofsted et al \(2017\) The multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse](#)
- 13 [Coventry City Council \(2017\) 2017/2018 half-year performance report - April to September 2017](#)
- 14 [Coventry Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2017-2020](#)
- 15 [Coventry health and wellbeing strategy 2016-2019](#)
- 16 [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)
- 17 [West Midlands Violence Prevention Alliance \(2015\) West Midlands domestic violence and abuse standards](#)
- 18 [West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime \(n.d.\) Domestic abuse manifesto](#)
- 19 [Office for National Statistics \(2017\) Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2017](#)
- 20 [Office for National Statistics \(2016\) Intimate personal violence and partner abuse](#)
- 21 [Office for National Statistics and Home Office \(2010\) Homicides, firearm offences and intimate violence 2008/09: supplementary volume 2 to crime in England and Wales 2008/09](#)
- 22 [AVA \(n.d.\) Complicated matters: a toolkit addressing domestic and sexual violence, substance misuse and mental health. AVA toolkit](#)
- 23 [Domestic abuse and your physical health \(2015\)](#)
- 24 [Local Government Association and Safer Portsmouth Partnership \(n.d.\) The cost of domestic abuse: the financial cost to Local Government](#)
- 25 [Criminal Justice Inspectorates \(2015\) The depths of dishonour](#)
- 26 [Forced Marriage Unit Statistics \(2016\)](#)
- 27 [Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(2015\) The depths of dishonour: Hidden voices and shameful crimes](#)

- 28 Insight, Coventry City Council (2017) Coventry's Population Estimate 2016
- 29 [Public Health England \(n.d.\) Domestic abuse – public health profiles](#)
- 30 Corporate Research (2011) Foleshill Ward Profile
- 31 [Coventry City Council \(n.d.\) English indices of deprivation reports](#)
- 32 Walby (2009) The cost of domestic violence: update. Costs have been pro-rated for Coventry.
- 33 [Women's Aid \(2015\) Domestic abuse is a gendered crime](#)
- 34 [Office for National Statistics and Home Office \(2010\) Homicides, firearm offences and intimate violence 2008/09: supplementary volume 2 to crime in England and Wales 2008/09](#)
- 35 [Victims of crime \(n.d.\)](#)
- 36 [Royal College of Psychiatrists \(2017\) Domestic violence and abuse – its effects on children: the impact on children and adolescents: information for parents, carers and anyone who works with young people](#)
- 37 [Parenting and domestic violence \(n.d.\)](#)
- 38 [Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Safe Newcastle \(n.d.\) Safeguarding children abused through domestic violence - practice guidance \(barriers to disclosure, enabling disclosure\)](#)
- 39 [Penny \(2015\) Supporting B&ME victims – what the data shows \(blog\) Safe Lives](#)
- 40 [Equality and Human Rights Commission \(2010\) How fair is Britain? The First Triennial Review Executive Summary](#)
- 41 [Gill and Banga \(2008\) Black, minority ethnic and refugee women, domestic violence and access to housing \(2008\). Race Equality Foundation](#)
- 42 [Office for National Statistics \(2016\) Intimate personal violence and abuse](#)
- 43 Hughes et al (2012) Prevalence and risk of violence against adults with disabilities: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies [abstract only] Volume 379, no. 9826, p1621-1629
- 44 [Hague et al. \(2007\) Making the links – Disabled women and domestic violence](#)
- 45 [Alzheimer's Society \(2011\) Short changed: protecting people with dementia from financial abuse](#)
- 46 [O'Keefe et al. \(2007\) UK study of abuse and neglect of older people. Prevalence survey report. National Centre for Social Research and King's College London](#)
- 47 [Safe Lives \(2016\) Spotlights Report #Hidden Victims. Safe later lives: older people and domestic abuse](#)
- 48 [Mahmud \(2016\) It's our right to be safe at any age. How can we make it easier for older victims to get help \(blog\) Safe Lives](#)
- 49 [Safe Lives \(2015\) Practice briefing for Idvas - engaging and working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender \(LGBT\) clients](#)
- 50 [Dempsey \(2013\) Men's experience of domestic abuse in Scotland](#)
- 51 [Hogan \(2016\) Men's experiences of female-perpetrated intimate partner violence: a qualitative exploration DCounsPsych, University of the West of England](#)
- 52 [Children's Improvement Board et al. \(n.d.\) Commissioning for families with complex needs](#)
- 53 [Department of Health \(2011\) Striking the balance: Practical Guidance on the application of Caldicott Guardian principles to domestic violence and MARACs \(Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences\)](#)
- 54 [MacRoberts LLP \(n.d.\) The Data Protection Act, the GDPR and the UK Data Protection Bill](#)

- 55 [GDPR Portal: Site Overview](#)
- 56 [Home Office \(2016\) Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme \(DVDS\) guidance](#)
- 57 [Department for Communities and Local Government \(2014\) Supplementary guidance on domestic abuse and homelessness](#)
- 58 [Department for Communities and Local Government \(2017\) Improving access to social housing for victims of domestic abuse – consultation](#)
- 59 [Local Government Association and Directors of Adults Social Services \(2015\) Adult safeguarding and domestic abuse](#)
- 60 [Operation Encompass \(n.d.\) Supporting children and young people exposed to domestic abuse](#)

Notes



