

PLYMOUTH MULTI-AGENCY STRATEGY FOR TACKLING DOMESTIC ABUSE

2009-2012



Plymouth Multi-Agency Strategy for Tackling Domestic Abuse 2009-2012

Version dated 200309

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1. Executive Summary

Domestic abuse is physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour.

It is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power, and has important implications for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

This multi-agency Strategy marks the beginning of a fresh approach to tackling domestic abuse in Plymouth. It provides the necessary framework and impetus for effective partnership working and the delivery of well co-ordinated services for people affected by domestic abuse.

Plymouth's Strategy for Tackling Domestic Abuse has been developed in consultation with a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including service providers, people who have been affected by domestic abuse, and the commissioners of services.

Section 2 sets out the commitment which has been made by the multi agency domestic abuse partnership, to improve services, achieve the objectives of this strategy and deliver a coordinated and effective multi agency response to domestic abuse in Plymouth.

Section 3 contains the definition of domestic abuse we are using for the purpose of this strategy.

Section 4 sets out our key priorities for Plymouth: improving agencies response; ensuring appropriate access to services for children and young people; developing targeted prevention initiatives; ensuring an appropriate civil and criminal justice response; developing appropriate accommodation options; establishing appropriate access to services for people with diverse need.

Section 5 summarises our achievements so far, demonstrating our commitment as a partnership to 'delivery' and also acknowledges that we still have a great deal more to do.

Section 6 provides a summary of who is affected by domestic abuse and who are the abusers emphasising that domestic abuse is truly diverse and affects all sections of society regardless of age, sex, culture, gender or lifestyle with profound and far reaching results.

Section 7 describes the inclusive way in which this strategy has been developed taking account of the views of service users, providers and stakeholders whilst ensuring continuity with our previously published domestic abuse strategy 2007/09. In addition the strategy has taken account of national and local strategic requirements and will be used as a pathway for partners to join together to effectively commission and deliver domestic abuse services.

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Section 8 describes the way in which this strategy will be implemented.

Section 9 sets out the domestic abuse action plan, demonstrating the commitment of the partnership to delivery in support of this strategy.

Appendix A summarises the key priorities in the Government's National Action Plan for domestic violence.

Appendix B lists the key national and local performance indicators and strategic targets affecting the development and delivery of domestic abuse services in Plymouth.

Appendices C and D presents the finding from a number of sources which describes the nature, prevalence and impact of domestic abuse within the national and local context.

Appendix D sets out the estimated cost of domestic abuse nationally and for Plymouth, including the cost of services, Economic output lost and the human and emotional cost.

Appendix F provides details of the national coordinated community response model developed by government to provide a tiered approach to planning for services for survivors, children and perpetrators.

Appendix G lists the members of the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership and the agencies which they represent.

Appendix H is a list of the references used throughout this strategy.

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The Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership is a multi agency group, our aim is:-

‘TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO PROVIDE THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC ABUSE WITH CONSISTENT, HIGH QUALITY ADVICE, HOUSING AND SUPPORT.’

2. Our Commitment

Domestic abuse is a complex problem that requires a range of complex responses. It is hard to address, because the abuse is rarely witnessed by other adults and the victim is likely to have family, financial and emotional links with the perpetrator.

Most domestic abuse occurs in what should be a safe and supportive relationship, and often in the presence of children. This is an extreme violation of trust and causes immeasurable pain and suffering to victims and their children.

As domestic abuse champions for the organisations we represent, we are committed to improving services, achieving the objectives of this strategy, and delivering a co-ordinated and effective multi-agency response to domestic abuse in Plymouth.

3. What is Domestic Abuse?

Although domestic abuse can be defined in a number of ways, we have adopted the following definition for the purpose of this Strategy:

Domestic abuse is physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. This can include forced marriage and so-called 'honour crimes'. Domestic abuse may include a range of abusive behaviours, not all of which are in themselves inherently 'violent'.

We prefer to use the term 'domestic abuse' (rather than 'domestic violence') because it encompasses all forms of domestic abuse, and is not restricted to incidents of physical violence.

Domestic abuse is a pattern of behaviour, characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power. For this reason, there must be effective partnership and statutory involvement to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in accordance with agreed procedures.

4. Our Key Objectives

The key objectives of this Strategy were agreed in 2007 following an analysis of local needs, extensive consultation with stakeholders about priorities for service delivery and development, and consideration of how local services can best meet local and national strategic aims and contribute to the delivery of the Government's National Action Plan for Domestic Abuse.

The partnership intends to retain these previously agreed key objectives in order to ensure continuity as we move forward with this refreshed strategy for 2009/2012.

- (a) Developing appropriate accommodation options
- (b) Ensuring an appropriate civil and criminal justice response to domestic abuse incidents
- (c) Developing targeted prevention initiatives
- (d) Ensuring appropriate access to services for children and young people affected by domestic abuse
- (e) Improving agencies' responses to families affected by domestic abuse
- (f) Establishing appropriate access to services for people with diverse needs

5. Achievements to date

(a) Improving Agencies' Responses to Families Affected by Domestic Abuse

In May 2008 the partnership commissioned a new specialist domestic abuse service which combined the Plymouth Women's Refuge and Plymouth Women's Aid under a single non-gender specific contract. This represents a significant milestone in the development of specialist services for the city with secure funding for the minimum of a three year period.

A multi-agency information sharing protocol has been introduced which allows key agencies to share personal information relating to repeat victims and high risk cases.

Domestic Abuse has now been included as a critical issue within the Plymouth hidden harm strategy, teenage pregnancy strategy and family support strategies.

(b) Ensuring Appropriate Access to Services for Children and Young People Affected by Domestic Abuse

Working together with the new specialist service provider and Plymouth City Council Children's Services we have identified additional funding which has enabled us to increase the number of specialist support workers for children and young people. This will enable specialist children's support work to take place not only within the refuge environment but also within the children's centres across Plymouth.

Together with the Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board and accredited Level 2 one day domestic abuse training course and a Level 3 two day training course has been developed.

This training is offered free of charge providing two Level 2 courses and one Level 3 course each month.

(c) Developing Targeted Prevention Initiatives.

The established Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference which reviews high and very high risk cases fortnightly has been the subject of national inspection and judged to be performing well.

Working together Plymouth City Council and the Police have funded a free service offering advice and support for people suffering domestic abuse through the civil court process enabling a person to obtain a non molestation order or occupation order providing additional protection

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through the civil courts free of charge. This scheme has not been implemented anywhere else in England and Wales.

(d) **Ensuring an Appropriate Civil and Criminal Justice Response to Domestic Abuse Incidents**

A specialist domestic abuse violence court operating to national standard has been introduced and a specialist independent domestic violence advisor has now been introduced on a full time basis providing one-to-one support for all victims going through the court process.

Now that this specialist court has been established, the partnership will be working hard to ensure that we achieve national performance standards.

(e) **Developing Appropriate Accommodation Options**

A range of options has been introduced for those fleeing domestic abuse, and in addition to the refuge, 13 homes have been provided by social landlords across the city which are available in domestic abuse cases with out-reach support being provided through our specialist domestic abuse service provider.

Plymouth has now signed up to the Devon wide protocol for the provision of a sanctuary scheme which is designed to provide practical support for those affected by domestic abuse within their own homes. This includes the free installation of more secure locks for doors and windows and in some cases reinforcement to existing doors.

(f) **Establishing Appropriate Access to Services for People with Diverse Needs**

Working with the Plymouth and district Race Equality Council the partnership has established a reference group and commenced consultation with women from black and minority ethnic communities to help inform our work.

The new contract commissioned in May 2008 is non gender specific and the specialist domestic abuse service has started accepting referrals from male victims of domestic abuse with new working practices being established to support them.

Other Initiatives Include:

- A comprehensive multi agency communication plan aimed at raising awareness of domestic abuse and increasing reporting

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- A directory of local and national domestic abuse services has been produced
- The domestic abuse partnership has refreshed and provided up-dated information and guidance relating to domestic abuse on its web-site www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/communityandliving/csu/domesticabuse.htm
- A city wide domestic abuse conference was held in November 2008 attended by over 300 delegates who were consulted on the development of this strategy
- A series of events were undertaken during November 2008 in support of national domestic abuse awareness week, including a silent march, articles in the media and a display stand in the Drake Circus shopping mall which attracted nearly 1000 people over 5 days

Finally and significantly the domestic abuse partnership has funded for the first time a domestic abuse survivor's forum known as SEEDS (Survivors Empowering and Educating Domestic Abuse Services).

The SEEDS group provides a representative voice of the views of women and children who are survivors of domestic abuse to partnership agencies to help inform the development of our services. The action plan found later in this strategy has been designed for the first time with direct input from survivors of domestic abuse.

6. Understanding the Issue

Who is Affected?

Domestic abuse affects women, men and children in all sections of society. It is hugely under reported, widespread and has no boundaries, affecting anyone regardless of age, sex, culture, gender or lifestyle. It can also be intergenerational, for example between parent and child, where the child is the abuser.

The impact on a victim can be profound and far-reaching resulting in risk to life and limb and even death. It can also lead to serious mental health issues as well as stress and homelessness.

Domestic abuse is strongly linked to child abuse with the existence of one form of abuse being an indicator of the other. Children living with domestic abuse suffer significant stress, which can be displayed in a number of ways including, bed wetting, poor health, loss of concentration, and poor communication skills.

Children are sometimes used as a tool to coerce partners into reconciliation or in participating in the abuse. The long-term affects are profound leading some children to become the next generation of perpetrators and victims.

Who Are The Abusers?

Abusers can be men, women and in some cases children. Statistically however domestic abuse disproportionately affects women with in excess of 90 per cent of cases being perpetrated by men.

Techniques used by abusers can be subtle and include violence and coercion as a means to exercise power and control over the victim. Much of the abuse takes place in private, behind closed doors, and often others, including professionals, regard the abuser as a model person even when confronted with evidence to the contrary.

Abusers will attempt to justify their behaviour as being caused by stress, substance misuse, low self-esteem, unemployment, over work or insecurity. However the real reason is the desire to exercise power and control.

7. Development of Plymouth's Strategy for Tackling Domestic Abuse

In drawing together this strategy the Domestic Abuse Partnership has ensured the following:-

- Continuity has been provided with the previously published interim Domestic Abuse Strategy 2007/2009. In particular, the key objectives have been retained and a similar consultation process adopted for the preparation of the Strategy 2009/2012.
- The requirements of the Governments National Domestic Abuse Action Plan have been taken into account as this has a significant bearing on domestic abuse services locally (Appendix A).
- This strategy will be used to provide a pathway for partners to join together to effectively commission and deliver domestic abuse services and prioritise resources, in order to achieve national and locally agreed targets (Appendix B).

We have also undertaken a review of the finding from a number of sources including the latest British Crime Survey and Women's Aid factsheet 2008, which provides a picture of the incidence, prevalence and impact of domestic abuse (Appendix C).

We have also sought to include the views of those who are or have used domestic abuse services in the city, provide front-line services with the opportunity to shape our priorities and to involve a wide variety of stakeholders.

A Learning from Service Users

Since the publication of the strategy 2007/2009 we have established a survivors reference group based on a model first introduced in Somerset in 2002 known as SEEDS (Survivors Empowering and Educating Domestic Abuse Services).

The first of Plymouth's SEEDS meeting was held in October 2008 and the members have been actively involved in contributing to this strategy and the key deliverables within our action plan.

In addition, the SEEDS co-ordinator is a member of the partnership and has been actively engaged in the prioritisation process.

B Consultation with Service Providers

A similar consultation exercise to that with the SEEDS group was undertaken with all of the staff engaged in delivering our specialist domestic abuse service, PDAS, (Plymouth Domestic Abuse Service) to assist in our understanding of needs and access issues.

C Stakeholder Consultation

As part of the annual domestic abuse conference in November 2008 over 300 delegates from a wide variety of organisations and projects working directly or indirectly within the field of domestic abuse were invited to address a series of questions.

These questions related to the aims within this strategy in order to identify:

- What would success look like for each aim
- What specific pieces of work did we need to undertake to ensure success
- What contribution could those consulted make to the achievement of the aim

This methodology followed on from that used in the previous multi agency strategy and in particular a similar event which was first held in 2004 where a similar set of questions had been asked.

In addition to the consultation at the annual conference, in September 2008 the Crime and Disorder Partnership undertook consultation in preparation for developing the City's Community Safety Strategy. This included consultation specific to domestic abuse, the results of which have been integrated into our strategic objectives and delivery plan.

D Needs Analysis

Information relating to levels of access and demand for services was compiled from the following sources:

- Devon & Cornwall Constabulary Reporting and Brought to Justice data
- Supporting People client record statistics
- Homelessness P1E data (recording homelessness applications resulting from domestic abuse)
- Housing Association CORE Statistics relating to lettings and transfers
- Plymouth City Council records relating to the letting of social housing and the use of management transfers to meet the needs of people who are experiencing domestic abuse
- A multi agency monitoring form, piloted by Plymouth Women's Aid between March – August 2006
- Health Visitor Caseload Profile – January 2006
- Information provided by individual agencies dealing with domestic abuse
- Information available from national data and research was also collated and utilised where appropriate

The results of the review of these sources are attached (Appendix D).

E The Cost of Domestic Abuse

For the first time we have provided an estimate of the cost of domestic abuse to Plymouth using established methodology developed by the 'Women and Equality Unit' and a framework for costing the impact of crime used by the 'Home Office'.

This estimates the annual cost of domestic abuse nationally to be £23Billion and the cost to Plymouth to be £110million (Appendix E).

F Priority Actions

A wide range of priority actions were identified as a result of the various consultation exercises needs, analysis and supply mapping. These were collated and clustered under themes for each of our current aims.

Members of the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership then met to carry out a multi agency prioritisation process that considered the following:

- Identification of priority actions as high, medium and low
- Identification of priority actions which were in the control of the partnership, partially in control or not in control
- Agree the key statutory performance targets and strategic requirements of each agency and the local area agreement

As a result of the decisions made by the partnership, an action plan has been produced, designed to deliver the necessary improvements to meet the objectives of this strategy for the next 12 months when the action plan will be the subject of an annual review and refresh.

8. Implementing the Strategy

As part of the development of the strategy the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership has reviewed its current structure and as a result decided to make changes to the way in which we have organised ourselves to deliver the commitments set out in this strategy.

Existing sub-groups will be replaced by a performance driven project management approach supported by a dedicated domestic abuse manager who will work closely with identified lead individuals for each of the objectives within our action plan.

The domestic abuse manager will assist the lead individuals in the development of action plans designed to ensure that we can clearly demonstrate delivery when we conduct our review of the plan in March 2010.

Responsibility for ensuring the successful implementation of this strategy as a whole will rest with the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership who will also be responsible for managing the delivery against national and local domestic abuse related targets.

The Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership is accountable through the Plymouth Crime Disorder and Reduction Partnership. In addition we provide a crucial link to the local Criminal Justice Board and Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board ensuring a joint approach to tackling the broader issues associated with domestic abuse.

In terms of operational delivery of services, we intend to adopt the 'Co-ordinated Community Response Model' (Appendix F) which although still under development as part of the governments National Action Plan does provide a tiered approach to plan services for survivors, children and perpetrators.

As a result of our consultation, supply mapping and prioritisation exercises, the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership has developed a delivery plan for the forthcoming year.

The objectives contained within this plan were deemed through the prioritisation exercise to be the most critical at this point in time.

For each objective a lead partner has been identified and an action plan prepared which will enable the partnership to focus on delivery in support of the key aims of this strategy, in doing so demonstrating that we are intent on making a tangible difference to survivors of domestic abuse and their families.

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9. Domestic Abuse Action Plan 2009/2010

| Strategic Aim | Objective | Completion Date | | Milestones | Lead | Measure of Success |
|--|--|--------------------|----------------|--|----------------|--|
| | | Start | Finish | | | |
| Developing appropriate accommodation options | Re-provision of the existing Plymouth Refuge | Already started | March 2011 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Site identified 2 Specification agreed 3 Landlord appointed 4 Planning consent obtained 5 Building work completed | Kate Lattimore | Re-provision completed and residents in occupation |
| | Develop plans to expand existing provision of accommodation and provide a broader range of options | April 2009 | September 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Task and finish group established 2 National best practice reviewed 3 Consultation with service users completed 4 Plan to expand existing provision produced 5 Plan implemented | Matt Garrett | An increase in the number of safe houses/ accommodation being provided (base-line: 13 safe houses) |
| Appropriate Civil and Criminal Justice responses | Carry out consultation with survivors of domestic abuse in relation to quality of service provision by criminal and civil justice agencies | May 2009 | November 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Two consultation events with survivors undertaken 2 Report of findings produced 3 Report presented to domestic abuse partnership | Kerry Whincup | Report produced which contains firm recommendations for actions |
| | Increase reporting of domestic abuse incidents (based on Police recording) | Started April 2007 | March 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Third party recording arrangements introduced 2 Domestic Abuse specific Crime-stoppers campaign completed 3 Retrospective review of police date completed 4 Performance monitored monthly | Andrew Bickley | 7,241 domestic violence incidents recorded by the police by March 2010 |

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| | Increase domestic abuse offences resulting in a 'brought to justice outcome' | April 2007 | March 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Specialist domestic violence court performance reviewed 2 Action plan produced 3 Actions implemented | Andrew Bickley | Minimum of 31.2% of domestic violence crimes recorded by the police which result in a brought to justice outcome |
| | Reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse | April 2009 | March 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Baseline established and agreed with Government Office South West 2 New monitoring procedures introduced 3 Performance monitored monthly | Andrew Bickley | Reduction in repeat cases through MARAC to 25% by March 2010 (base-line 31%) |
| | Improve first response by police patrol officers to incidents of domestic abuse | April 2009 | January 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Initial investigation procedures by police patrol officers reviewed 2 Analysis of current performance in respect of NFA's discontinuances and acquittals completed 3 Training plan to address performance developed 4 Supporting material/aide memoire produced 5 All patrol officers trained | Andrew Bickley | Reduction in cases resulting in NFA's, discontinuance and acquittal due to quality of the evidence provided by the police (target to be agreed) |
| | Develop appropriate options to support children of victims involved in cases progressing through the criminal justice system | May 2009 | September 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Task and finish group established 2 Consultation completed 3 Action plan produced 4 Plan presented to domestic abuse partnership | Andrew Bickley | Plan with firm recommendations presented to domestic abuse partnership |
| | Extend the scope of the civil advocacy project providing a service for survivors of domestic abuse seeking civil court orders | April 2009 | March 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business case produced 2. Funding secured 3. Pilot scheme expanded 4. Performance monitored monthly | Morris Watts | Increase in number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the Police and clients accessing the service |

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| Targeted Prevention | Provide a community based perpetrator programme | April 2009 | December 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Specification for a Plymouth based programme developed 2 Funding secured 3 Procurement completed | Kerry Whincup | Perpetrator programme established |
| | Implement the national co-ordinated community response model | April 2009 | December 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Conduct gap analysis completed 2 Action plan produced 3 Action plan implemented | Morris Watts | National co-ordinator community response model adopted in Plymouth (awaits National guidance) |
| | Pilot systems of routine enquiry within health, children and adults social services | April 2009 | January 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Pilot sites agreed 2 Staff trained 3 Pilot undertaken 4 Evaluation report produced | Karen Howard | An increase in the number of service users in pilot sites who have been the subject of routine enquiry questioning (base-line to be established) |
| | Increase the availability of the Freedom programme for survivors of domestic abuse within neighbourhoods | April 2009 | July 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Proposal written 2 Funding identified 3 Proposal presented to Children Centre managers 4 Facilitators trained 5 Working practices and referral pathways agreed 6 Programmes delivered | Nicola Scutt | A minimum of 12 programmes delivered |
| | Strengthen linkages between the Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board and Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership | June 2009 | September 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Presentation to Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board completed 2 Joint analysis of children and young people subject of child protection plans as a result of domestic abuse completed 3 Action plan to reduce the level of | Morris Watts | The publication of an action plan with firm recommendations with agreement to implement those recommendations |

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| | | | | <p>risk to children and young people caused by domestic abuse produced</p> <p>4 Action plan presented to Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board and the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership</p> | | |
| Access to Services for Children and Young People | Increase availability of support workers for children and young people | April 2009 | May 2009 | <p>1 Additional funding secured to increase the number of dedicated children support workers</p> <p>2 Contract variation with Plymouth domestic abuse service completed</p> <p>3 Additional workers recruited</p> <p>4 New working practices to deliver support by children's workers through city wide children centres designed</p> | Debbie Hall | A minimum of one additional worker in post and new working practices in place |
| | Strengthen links between schools and domestic abuse services | April 2009 | March 2010 | <p>1 Specialist domestic abuse study day for schools undertaken</p> <p>2 Appropriate support material for use in schools produced</p> <p>3 Information sharing protocol for use between schools and domestic abuse services agreed</p> | Karl Sweeny/ Brian Could | New working practices established in all schools |
| | Implement a free city wide programme of multi agency training for front line staff and managers responsible for dealing with people affected by domestic abuse | April 2009 | March 2010 | <p>1 Training delivery plan published for 2009/10</p> <p>2 Funding to support plan secured</p> <p>3 Two Level II and three Level III training sessions delivered each month</p> | Tony Staunton | 50 training events delivered |

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| Improving Agencies Responses to Domestic Abuse | Establish appropriate planning and strategic linkage with the other key strategies being developed in the city | April 2009 | September 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Domestic abuse is written into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hidden Harm Strategy • Teenage Pregnancy Strategy • Parenting and Family Support Strategy 2 Consultation by domestic abuse manager with lead officers in relation to the above completed | Morris Watts | Specific actions in relation to domestic abuse have been established in each strategy |
| | Implement a city wide campaign to raise awareness of domestic abuse | April 2009 | March 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Communication and marketing plan produced 2 Delivery of actions monitored monthly | Morris Watts | Increase in reported incidents of domestic abuse |
| | Ensure that the comprehensive directory of services and associated marketing material is made widely available to all service providers in Plymouth | April 2009 | July 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Publication produced 2 Distribution list agreed 3 Material distribute | Morris Watts | The number of directories and associated marketing material circulated in Plymouth |
| | Develop a basic two hour domestic abuse awareness road show presentation which can be used in all partnership organisations and the community | April 2009 | March 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Road show presentation written 2 Supporting material produced 3 Road show presenters trained 4 Road show plan produced 5 Plan implemented | Morris Watts | The number of road show presentations undertaken (target to be agreed) |
| | Ensure that all members of the domestic abuse partnership have internal HR policies which are sensitive to the domestic abuse agenda | May 2009 | March 2010 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Task and finish group with relevant HR leads established 2 Draft policy based on Devon County Council existing policy prepared 3 Multi agency implementation plan produced 4 Policy implemented | Karen Howard | HR policies have been established in all organisations which are members of the Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership as a minimum |

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| Establishing Appropriate Access to Service for People with Diverse Needs | To publish all information and marketing material in the top ten most frequently used languages in Plymouth | April 2009 | June 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Languages identified 2 Quotes for translation obtained 3 Material translated 4 Distribution plan written 5 Information published | Morris Watts | All partnership information and marketing material is available in the ten most frequently used languages |
| | Explore the need for specialist provision for BME women, | September 2008 | July 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Task and finish group established 2 Consultation undertaken 3 Plan produced | Sharon Soper | A plan with firm recommendations for action that has been presented to the Plymouth domestic abuse partnership for consideration |
| | Explore the need for specialist provision for men | May 2009 | August 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Task and finish group established 2. Consultation undertaken 3. Plan produced | Andrew Bickley | As above |
| | Explore the need for specialist provision for LGBT | June 2009 | September 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Task and finish group established 2. Consultation undertaken 3. Plan produced | Morris Watts | As above |
| | Explore service provision for survivors of domestic abuse with complex needs: ie: alcohol, and drug use | July 2009 | October 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Task and finish group established 2 Consultation with service users and providers undertaken 3 Evidence of need established 4 Referral protocols between relevant agencies agreed | Christine Little | As above |
| | Explore service provision for survivors of domestic abuse with complex needs: ie: mental health | August 2009 | November 2009 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Task and finish group established 2 Consultation with service users and providers undertaken 3 Evidence of need established 4 Referral protocols between relevant agencies agreed | Karen Howard | As above |

The National and Local Strategic Context

In June 2006, the Government published a progress report in respect of the National Action Plan, setting out progress made to-date and identifying the following key objectives in relation to domestic violence:

- (a) To increase the early identification of, and intervention with, victims of domestic violence earlier by utilising all points of contact with key frontline professionals
- (b) To build capacity within the domestic violence sector to provide effective advice and support to victims of domestic violence
- (c) Promote a co-ordinated community response to domestic violence
- (d) To increase reporting and arrest rates for domestic violence
- (e) Increase the rate at which sanction detections are converted into offences brought to justice, particularly in high incidence areas and/or communities as well as in areas with high attrition rates
- (f) To support victims through the criminal justice system and manage perpetrators to reduce risk
- (g) Develop the evidence base to close key knowledge gaps, particularly around:

Understanding the nature and scope of domestic violence; and
Understanding what works in reducing the prevalence of domestic violence.

At the heart of the National Delivery Plan is the work of the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts Programme, the implementation of which forms a major basis for our action planning within this Strategy.

In addition to the National Delivery Plan, there are a series of other key strategic targets which have significant bearing on the domestic abuse services commissioned by Government and statutory agencies.

National and Local Performance Targets

This strategy will be used to provide a pathway for partners to join together to effectively commission and deliver domestic abuse services and prioritise resources, in order to achieve national and locally agreed targets as follows:

| National Indicators | |
|---|--|
| <i>Indicator</i> | <i>Target</i> |
| NI 18 | Adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision |
| NI 20 | Assault with injury crime rate |
| NI 26 | Specialist support to victims of a serious sexual offence |
| NI 32 | Repeat incidents of domestic abuse: % reduction in repeat victimisation for those domestic abuse cases being managed by a MARAC |
| NI 34 | Number of domestic homicide (murder) offences per 1,000 population |
| NI 64 | Child protection plans lasting two years or more |
| NI 72 | Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation |
| NI 87 | Secondary school persistent absence rate |
| NI 110 | Young people's participation in positive activities |
| NI 115 | Substance misuse by young people |
| NI 117 | 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, training or employment |
| Local Area Agreement 2008-11 | |
| <i>Priority</i> | <i>Target</i> |
| H1 | Reduce health inequalities between neighbourhoods and communities of interest |
| H2 | Prevent illness and promote health and well being by tackling the underlying causes of ill health |
| SSC2 | Improve community involvement and engagement in decision making and service delivery |
| SSC3 | Ensure equality of access to services |
| SSC4 | Safeguard and improve the life chances of vulnerable children |
| SSC5 | Reduce criminal damage, re-offending rates, violence and acquisitive crime |
| SSC6 | Improve levels of confidence in local agencies to tackle community concerns of crime and anti social behaviour |
| Wi 2 | Improve opportunities for young people to make a positive contribution |
| Wi3 | Increase the numbers of young people participating in higher level education and skills training |
| Local Area Agreement Stretch Targets 2007-10 | |
| <i>Priority</i> | <i>Target</i> |
| ST1 | Improve the life chances of looked after children |
| ST3 | Reduce re-offending rates |
| ST4 | Reduce violent crime |
| ST5 | Reduce the harm caused by domestic violence:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of domestic incidents recorded by the Police • Increase the percentage of domestic abuse crimes resulting in a brought to justice outcome |
| ST8 | Decrease the harm caused by alcohol in young people |
| Specialist Domestic Violence Courts Performance | |
| Achieve the national target for conviction rates in specialist domestic violence courts | |

National Fact Sheet

The following section presents findings from a number of sources, including the British Crime Survey 2007/08 and the Women's Aid factsheet 2008.

Incidence and Prevalence

- Domestic abuse accounts for between 16 per cent and 25 per cent of all recorded violent crime ¹
- On average the Police in the UK receive one call every minute requesting assistance in dealing with domestic abuse ²
- 45 per cent of women and 26 per cent of men had experienced at least one incident of inter-personal violence in their lifetimes ³ however when there were more than 4 incidents (i.e. ongoing domestic or sexual abuse) 89 per cent of victims were women ⁴

The true level of domestic abuse is likely to be much higher since victims are often reluctant to contact the authorities. This requires a change in attitudes so that all victims have the confidence to disclose the abuse they have experienced.

Repeat Victimization

- On average female victims will experience domestic abuse on 35 occasions before approaching the Police ⁵
- Repeat victimisation is common. 44 per cent are victimised more than once in any year, and almost one in five (18 per cent) are victimised more than three times ¹. An earlier British Crime Survey showed a higher rate of repeat victimisation of 57 per cent ⁶
- In most cases domestic violence escalates over time ⁷

Types of Violence

- Since the age of 16, partner abuse (non-sexual) was the most commonly experienced type of intimate violence among both men and women. 28 per cent of women and 17 per cent of men reported having experienced such abuse ⁸
- In the last 12 months stalking was the most commonly experienced type of intimate violence with 9 per cent of women and 7 per cent of men reported having experienced it in the last year ⁸

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- Nearly half of women (48 per cent) who had experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 16 had experienced more than one type of intimate violence. Men were less likely to have experienced multiple forms of intimate violence (33 per cent) ⁸
- Serious sexual assault was most likely to be committed by someone known to the victim (89 per cent of female and 83 per cent of male victims). Just over half (54 per cent) of female victims reported that a partner or ex-partner had been the offender ⁸
- Just under a quarter of women (23 per cent) reported having experienced stalking since the age of 16. Obscene or threatening phone calls or letters were the most common types of stalking behaviour experienced ⁸

Impact on Children and Young People

- At least 750,000 children a year witness domestic violence ⁹
- Children who live with domestic violence are at increased risk of behavioural problems and emotional trauma, and mental health difficulties in adult life ¹⁰
- Nearly three quarters of children on the 'at risk' register live in households where domestic violence occurs and 52 per cent of child protection cases involving domestic violence ^{9; 11}
- In 75 per cent to 90 per cent of incidents of domestic violence, children are in the same or the next room ¹²
- Living with violence creates stress and tensions for children that can be displayed in a number of ways. Bed-wetting, poor health and the loss of concentration or language skills are common reactions to domestic abuse. Children may also become emotionally withdrawn, run away from home, become disruptive or, conversely, try to rescue the situation and make everything right. There can also be longer term effects, caused by fear, confusion, trauma and the feeling that they are in some way responsible for not being able to protect their parent from being abused
- Perpetrators will sometimes use children to control their partner. After separation, they will often use the children to find their former partner or to coerce them into reconciliation. They may also try to undermine their former partner's parenting and blame the children for the family's problems. The children may be forced into participating in the violence or may get caught up in the violence and become injured
- Living with, or experiencing, violence in the home is one of the main causes of homelessness amongst teenagers and, in the longer term, affects the relationships that teenage girls subsequently form with men

Domestic Abuse and Child Abuse

- The link between child physical abuse and domestic violence is high, with estimates ranging between 30 per cent to 66 per cent depending upon the study ¹³
- An association of 45 to 70 per cent has been found between a father's violence to the mother and his violence to the children ¹⁴
- 70 per cent of children living in UK refuges had been abused by their father ¹⁵

Health Consequences

- Violence has serious consequences for physical and mental health, and those who have experienced abuse from a partner may suffer from chronic health problems of various kinds ¹⁶
- Victims are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, psychosomatic systems, eating problems and sexual dysfunction. Violence may also affect their reproductive health ¹⁷
- 70 per cent of incidents of domestic violence result in injury, (compared with 50 per cent of incidents of acquaintance violence, 48 per cent of stranger violence and 29 per cent of mugging.) ¹⁸
- 75 per cent of cases of domestic violence result in physical injury or mental health consequences ¹⁹
- Between 50 per cent and 60 per cent of women mental health service users have experienced domestic violence, and up to 20 per cent will be experiencing current abuse ²⁰
- Domestic violence and other abuse is the most prevalent cause of depression and other mental health difficulties ²¹
- Domestic violence commonly results in self-harm and attempted suicide: one-third of women attending emergency departments for self-harm were domestic violence survivors; abused women are five times more likely to attempt suicide; and one third of all female suicide attempts can be attributed to current or past experience of domestic violence ²²

Women are particularly vulnerable during pregnancy

- 30 per cent of domestic violence starts in pregnancy ^{23, 24}. Between 4 and 9 women in every 100 are abused during their pregnancies and/or after the birth ²⁵
- Domestic violence has been identified as a prime cause of miscarriage or still-birth ²⁶, and of maternal deaths during childbirth ²³

The Situation in Plymouth

There is every reason to believe the situation locally reflects that born out by national and international research. However domestic abuse in Plymouth has not been the subject of any specific research and analysis.

As a result we have utilised data and information on local needs by learning from the experiences of service users, frontline service providers and other stakeholders in the city and trawling through data held by statutory and community voluntary organizations.

Incidence and Prevalence

- From January to December 2008, 5802 incidents of domestic violence were reported to the police²⁷. The British Crime Survey 2008 suggests that only 40 per cent of incidents are actually reported which would bring the true figure closer to 15000
- Domestic Abuse accounts for 7 per cent of all crime and 30 per cent of all violent crime in Plymouth²⁷
- Peak Time Analysis reveals that domestic abuse offences are spread throughout the week, although the weekends have slightly more offences than other days. The most common time for offending is between 18:00 and 00:00hrs²⁷
- Plymouth Domestic Abuse Service (PDAS) receives an average of 259 referrals per month predominantly from the police with approximately 17 per cent engaging with the service²⁸
- 10 per cent of referrals to Plymouth Domestic Abuse Service are at high risk or very high risk on Independent Domestic Violence Advisers assessment, 4 per cent of referrals are male, 3 per cent have identified themselves as having a disability, whilst 93 per cent of referrals are white²⁸
- Various campaigns are driving to increase the number of people reporting domestic abuse to the police and in 2008 Plymouth saw an 8 per cent increase in reporting compared to 2007²⁷

Types of Violence

- The most common crimes associated with Domestic Abuse are assault (making up 68 per cent) and criminal damage offences (making up 14 per cent)²⁷

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- The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Plymouth operates a sexual violence service from a single location enabling victims to be supported by specialist advisors and allowing access to counselling services situated on site. Since opening in July 2008, the centre reports at least 14 per cent of cases were perpetrated by a partner or ex partner of the victim ²⁹

Impact on Children and Young People

- Domestic abuse is a significant factor in relation to Child Protection issues. There are currently 189 children on the child protection register – 69 (36 per cent) of these are due to domestic abuse ³⁰
- The findings of a number of serious case reviews into deaths of children in Plymouth have identified domestic abuse as a significant factor
- 11 per cent of the perpetrators of domestic violence in Plymouth are under 19 years of age ³¹
- Some parents are experiencing violence at the hands of their children, but are reluctant to speak out ³²
- Police statistics show that children are resident in 45 per cent of households where domestic abuse was reported ²⁷

Health Impact

- The NHS Health Visitors Survey reveals that of over 10,000 families with children in the city, 9 per cent of households have violence in the family, the worst neighbourhoods showing up to 22 per cent ³³
- Reports of domestic abuse are higher in the more deprived neighbourhoods of Plymouth. Violence in the family was reported at 14.5 per cent of the most deprived households compared to only 3.5 per cent of the least deprived ³³
- Domestic abuse is a significant issue for vulnerable adults in Plymouth. 39 per cent of adult protection alerts in 2005 related to incidents 'at home', and 30 per cent of alleged perpetrators were relatives/family or partner/spouse of the victim ³⁴
- 44 per cent of Domestic Abuse incidents involve drugs or alcohol ²⁷
- Accident and Emergency treatment for individuals reporting their injuries as domestic abuse show 83 per cent are female and 17 per cent male

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Enforcement

- 33 per cent of Domestic Abuse Crimes result in 'Brought to Justice' outcomes²⁷
- 17 per cent of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers clients receive injunctions
- Detection Rates for Domestic Abuse in Plymouth Currently stand at 42 per cent based on data²⁷

Accommodation Issues

- 'Supported' and 'General Needs' housing was allocated to 2004 households (Apr 07-Mar 08). 137 cited domestic violence as the main reason for leaving their last settled home (about 7 per cent). Of these 89 (or 65 per cent) had at least one child under the age of 16 in the household, and 41 (or 30 per cent) were either homeless or threatened with homelessness³⁵
- The average age of adults being re-housed due to domestic violence is 31 years old. 98 per cent of adults are female, 2 per cent male³⁵

Appropriate Access for People with Diverse Needs

- In Plymouth, specialist service providers report, that domestic abuse is a major issue within diverse communities. The domestic abuse monitoring form piloted over six months showed 2.49 per cent of those who approached Plymouth's domestic abuse service for support were from black and minority ethnic communities.
- In 2006, local authorities in Devon carried out a Gypsies and Travellers Needs Assessment that highlighted the fact that some gypsies and travellers felt "trapped in violent relationships due to the travelling way of life".

Women felt trapped for a number of reasons, but mainly because of the lack of a driving licence, the shortage of suitable and safe accommodation that is accessible and available to people who have a transient lifestyle, and apprehension about having to make the transition from a caravan to a house or flat if they decide to apply to the Council for refocusing.

Stakeholders agreed that more information is required in respect of the needs of diverse, same sex, and complex needs groups and this could be achieved, in part, through effective consultation with diverse communities to establish their needs and preferences in relation to the way in which they access services.

The Cost of Domestic Abuse

In 2004 the Women & Equality unit published 'The cost of Domestic Violence'³⁶ which represents the most detailed research to date.

The methodology used was based on the Home Office framework for costing crime³⁷, and developed so as to include the specific costs related to domestic violence.

Information on the extent of domestic violence was taken from various sources³. This includes not only physical domestic violence, but also rape, sexual assault and stalking by intimates.

Information on the costs (e.g. services) was derived from a Home Office study, the British Crime Survey Interpersonal Violence (BCSIPV), or identified from reports by services on their own expenditure, or from other recent research.

Information on the actual level of service use was gathered from reports by service providers and the British Crime Survey Interpersonal Violence.

The following table gives sets out the estimated cost of domestic abuse in England and Wales in 2001.

| Type of Cost | Cost £ Billions |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Criminal Justice System | 1.017 |
| Of which police | (.49) |
| Health care | 1.396 |
| Of which physical | (1.22) |
| Of which mental health | (.176) |
| Social services | .228 |
| Housing | .158 |
| Civil legal | .312 |
| All services | 3.111 |
| Economic output | 2.672 |
| Sub-total | 5.783 |
| Human and emotional | 17.086 |
| Total | 22.869 |

This estimated cost of £22.869 billion of domestic violence (for persons aged between 16-59) is borne by 52 million people, the population of England and Wales in mid 2001³⁸. This is an estimated £440 per person.

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Applying the same methodology the following table sets out estimated cost of domestic violence in Plymouth for one year, based on Plymouth City Council statistics 2007. (Plymouth Population 250,700).

| Type of cost | Cost per person £'s | Cost £ millions |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Criminal Justice System | 20 | 5.014 |
| Of which police | (9) | (2.256) |
| Health care | 27 | 6.768 |
| Of which physical | (23) | (5.766) |
| Of which mental health | (4) | (1.002) |
| Social services | 4 | 1.002 |
| Housing | 3 | .752 |
| Civil legal | 6 | 1.504 |
| All services | 60 | 15.040 |
| Economic output | 51 | 12.785 |
| Sub-total | 111 | 27.825 |
| Human and emotional | 329 | 82.229 |
| Total | 440 | 110.054 |

An important feature which is not accounted for in the above tables is the cost to Plymouth in terms of its reputation if our multi agency response to domestic abuse is poor and the knock on this has in terms of the confidence of those experiencing domestic abuse to speak out.

The Co-ordinated Community Response Model

This model which is still under development nationally takes into account the inter-relationship of agencies and levels of response for tackling domestic abuse recognising that no one agency can deal effectively and safely with the effects of domestic abuse.

It was originally developed within the Home Office, however was seen to be heavily biased towards the criminal justice system. As a result a multi-departmental action group was formed and the model developed to be more inclusive and to take account of all strands of work associated with domestic abuse.

The model sets out a tiered approach to plan for services for survivors, children and perpetrators to achieve our objectives which we have adopted:

Tier 1 - All Families

- Universal services – promote awareness
- Primary prevention campaigns / media
- Public Information directories/ websites etc
- Health – screening / identification
- Education – PSHE
- Children’s services – identification
- DV forums, media awareness and training etc
- Housing services & tenancy agreements

Tier 2 – Vulnerable

Adults and children who are vulnerable as a result of abuse, where the abuse is occurring but not at a “serious” level of risk /not defined as such by the victim/ victim not actively seeking help /wants relationship to continue. Victim from diverse community or has additional needs with limited access to services:

- Information about services/options
- Advocacy Service – information, safety planning, support
- Police response to 999 calls
- Assessment of needs Identified within universal services – health, education, early years, housing management
- Support & advice from Specialist Domestic Abuse voluntary sector

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Tier 3 – Complex

Adults and children whose lives are seriously disrupted by domestic abuse. Co-existing substance misuse and/or mental health issues, pregnancy, victim has no recourse to public funds:

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Centre & Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
- Housing options – Refuge, homelessness, transfer Sanctuary project
- Sexual assault and rape crisis service
- Police intervention – arrest, investigate, charge/perpetrator – Specialist domestic violence court/criminal court
- Legal advice/protection (Family law/Civil Court injunction immigration)
- Child and adult protection assessment & services
- Probation – perpetrator programmes/supervision, voluntary perpetrator programmes
- Drug & Alcohol services, counseling & psychology services, mental health service
- Forced marriage, female genital mutilation, prostitution

Tier 4 - Acute/Restorative

Risk of death or serious harm:

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Centre & Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
- Police intervention – arrest, investigate, charge perpetrator
- Legal protection – Specialist domestic violence court/criminal and family courts
- Child/adult protection intervention
- Refuge/emergency accommodation

The Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership intends to deploy this model in promoting a co-ordinated community response together with the Community Safety Partnership, Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board, Local Criminal Justice Board and other strategic level groups once the national guidance has been published.

Members of Plymouth Domestic Abuse Partnership

| Member | Representing |
|------------------|--|
| Nicola Alder | Accident & Emergency - Derriford Hospital |
| Lorraine Allen | Government Office for South West |
| Andrew Bickley | Police Superintendent Plymouth Basic Command Unit |
| Mark Collings | Children's Fund Programme Manager Plymouth City Council |
| Alison Davey | Vulnerable Adults Lead – Derriford Hospital |
| Matt Garrett | Housing Options Manager Plymouth City Council |
| Debbie Hall | Plymouth Domestic Abuse Service |
| Claire Hodgkins | Supporting People Plymouth City Council |
| Sarah Hopkins | Community Safety Partnership Manager Plymouth City Council |
| Karen Howard | Plymouth Teaching Primary Care Trust |
| Kate Lattimore | Supporting People Plymouth City Council |
| Christine Little | Harbour Drug and Alcohol Services Plymouth |
| Clive Malone | Assistant Director (Operations) Plymouth City Council |
| Susan Oates | Government Office for South West |
| Charles Pitman | Detective Inspector Plymouth Public Protection Unit |
| Susan Roesner | Devon & Cornwall Probation Service |
| Nicola Scutt | Family Support Service Manager Plymouth City Council |
| Sharon Soper | CAMHS Team Childrens Services Plymouth |
| Tony Staunton | Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board |
| Morris Watts | Domestic Abuse Partnership Manager Plymouth |
| Heather Welch | Victim Support Services |
| Kerry Whincup | SEEDs (Survivors Forum) |
| Anne Yates | Devon & Cornwall Probation Service |

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