

Brighton & Hove City Council  
**Domestic Violence:**  
**Intelligent Commissioning Pilot**

Spring 2011



Brighton & Hove  
City Council

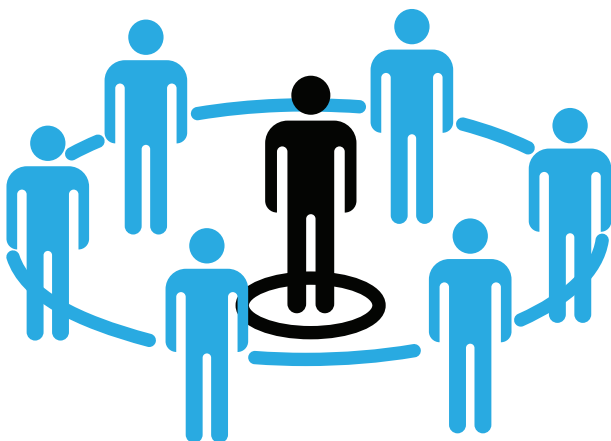
# Domestic Violence

## Purpose of the Report



- Present the outcome of using the intelligent commissioning framework to develop commissioning outcomes for preventing and reducing domestic violence in Brighton & Hove.
- Summarize the outcomes of the domestic violence needs assessment.
- Explain the new partnership outcomes for domestic violence.

## Context



Delivering better outcomes for residents during a time of reducing and limited resources requires innovation and partnerships to provide services at the right time, the right way, for the people that need them.

In spite of this time of austerity, the council seeks to maintain its reputation as a high performing, cutting edge authority. To this end the council has adopted a new intelligent commissioning framework.

This framework will deliver a more informed understanding of the current and future needs of residents and local communities, the demand for services, what works and what needs to change. With regards to domestic violence, it will specifically deliver new shared outcomes to achieve a more co-ordinated community response to preventing and reducing domestic violence.

# Domestic Violence Needs Assessment



**The starting point of the pilot is understanding domestic violence and its impact on individuals, families and communities in Brighton & Hove.**

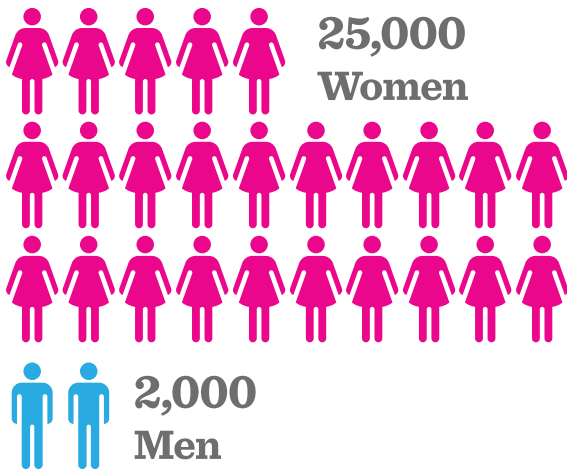
Domestic violence takes place between adults, in families and in relationships. The behaviours can involve psychological, emotional, financial, physical and sexual violence, threats, stalking and harassment. In accordance with national guidance, this includes forced marriage, so-called 'honour-based violence' and female genital mutilation.

Domestic violence in the city, as elsewhere, can happen to anyone, irrespective of a person's ability, education or place in life, their sexuality or ethnicity. Most domestic violence is experienced by women and perpetrated by men. If not prevented, it often escalates in intensity and severity, and can lead to the victim's death. Nationally, two women a week are killed by a current or former male partner.

There are factors that increase risks. They include the gender of the victim and perpetrator; the presence of rape, stalking and controlling behaviour; the co-occurrence of child abuse; isolation and barriers to accessing services; separation and child contact disputes.

We also know domestic violence causes significant health problems, like physical injuries, self-harm, eating disorders, attempted suicide, depression, anxiety and other mental health problems, sexually transmitted infections and substance misuse. Women experiencing domestic violence, for example, are 15 times more likely to misuse alcohol and nine times more likely to misuse drugs than non-abused women.

The consequences of domestic violence include poverty, unemployment and homelessness. It impacts on employers and the local economy by limiting victims' ability to access education, training and employment. It decreases the productivity of employees and increases absenteeism and staff turnover.



**experience repeat domestic violence**



**10,984 women experienced physical and emotional violence**  
**2,763 women experienced sexual assault**  
**6,682 women were victims of stalking**

We also know domestic violence harms children and young people. Three quarters of children living with domestic violence witness it, and half are directly abused. Teenagers also experience domestic violence in their own relationships, which impacts disproportionately on girls. There are also links between domestic violence, youth offending and teenage pregnancy.

The cost of domestic violence to local residents is significant. It has a serious and lasting impact on a victim’s sense of safety, health, well-being and autonomy, and can severely restrict their ability to fully participate in society.

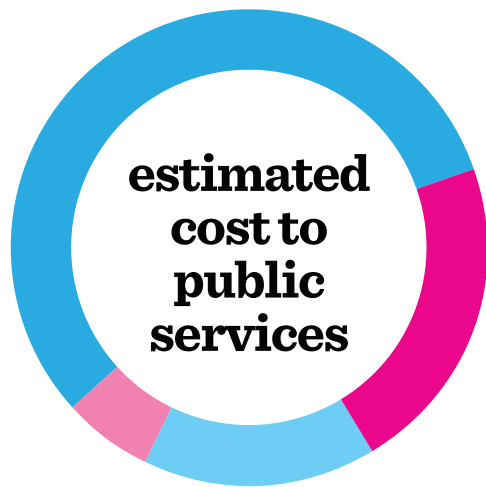
**Statistics**

**In Brighton & Hove:**

- Over 25,000 women and nearly 2,000 men will experience repeat domestic violence as adults (based on British Crime Survey data).
- Since 2007, we have had four domestic violence related homicides, estimated to cost over £4m to public services.

**Last year in the city:**

- 10,984 women experienced physical and emotional violence, 2,763 women experienced sexual assault and 6,682 women were victims of stalking (based on British Crime Survey data).
- One in three child protection plans identified domestic violence as the primary reason.
- There is a strong correlation between domestic violence, child abuse and safeguarding, and the presence of one should always trigger enquiry into the other.
- 277 people sought housing advice and 102 homeless applications were made due to domestic violence.



**£18m** housing, civil, legal employment and other costs

**£7m** physical and mental healthcare costs

**£5m** criminal justice costs

**£2m** housing and social services costs



**Of 326 finalised domestic violence prosecutions, 234 were successful**

- 2,292 calls were made to the local domestic violence helpline, 488 local survivors and 110 local children received direct support by Rise.
- 3,359 domestic violence crimes and incidents were reported to the police (8 in 10 against women), 1,132 were crimes, 321 were charged. This represents a 6% increase on 08/09.
- Of 326 finalised domestic violence prosecutions, 234 were successful.
- 44% of 264 young people assessed by the Youth Offending Service in 2009 had been abused, 42% had experienced domestic violence at home.
- 77% of domestic violence offences committed against women, are committed 'under the influence' of either alcohol or drugs.
- 125 adult victims were identified as at 'very high-risk' of homicide by local agencies.
- The estimated cost to local residents and public services of responding to domestic violence was up to £132m:
  - £7million physical and mental healthcare costs.
  - £5m criminal justice costs.
  - £2m housing and social services costs.
  - £18m housing, civil, legal employment and other costs.
  - £100m in human and emotional costs.
- Domestic violence frequently co-exists with substance abuse and mental health problems. Although rarely causal factors, the frequency of their co-existence means that risk assessments should always screen for all three issues.



**Service users welcome and highly value the support offered by specialist domestic violence services in the city**

**BUT**



**said public services failed to identify and respond to their needs, made them feel excluded, isolated, judged and blamed for the violence, and further hampered their ability to seek help**

## Voice

### What local professionals and service users said.

#### Service Users

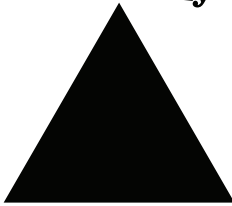
While service users welcome and highly value the support offered by specialist domestic violence services in the city, they have little trust or confidence in public services response to domestic violence. Those surveyed said public services failed to identify and respond to their needs, made them feel excluded, isolated, judged and blamed for the violence, and further hampered their ability to seek help.

#### Professionals

The city has a well-established network of partnership, strategic and operational groups which direct and manage work on domestic violence. The views of professionals have, quite rightly, shaped the outcomes of the pilots. They identified the following as priority issues:

- establishing the principal of preventing and reducing domestic violence as core business for all public agencies.
- workforce development to enable frontline staff to identify early on when domestic violence is happening, when delivering services to individuals and families.
- focusing on increasing safety of victims whilst also challenging and holding perpetrators to account.
- more awareness raising about domestic violence and reducing social tolerance through work in schools and communities.
- getting the balance of investment right between dealing with high risk cases and prevention and early intervention.
- improving our understanding of, and response to, domestic violence in Black and minority communities and disabled communities.

**Getting the balance of investment right  
between dealing with high risk cases and  
prevention and early intervention**



## Services

### What works? What doesn't?

The Community Safety Partnership had already laid the foundations for good practice models of working. The Co-ordinated Community Response Model, which includes an accredited 'Specialist Domestic Violence Court Programme' are the arrangements through which the Partnership aims to enable all local services to identify domestic violence early and respond appropriately. This is in order to increase victim safety, hold perpetrators to account and deliver criminal justice solutions.

The pilot has confirmed that both of these partnership models of working are effective and essential to continue. However, multi-agency working cannot be undertaken at the expense of service improvements in individual agencies.

### **This model has minimum requirements which include:**

- Multi-agency partnerships with safe information sharing protocols.
- Multi-agency risk assessment and risk management procedures for victims, perpetrators and children, involving a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference to reduce the risk to victims.
- Routine enquiry procedures across agencies to improve identification of cases.
- Independent, specialist domestic violence support services (including refuges, independent advocacy and outreach services for adult and child victims) that adhere to national minimum service standards.
- Improved workforce skills and knowledge across city services using domestic violence national occupational standards and accredited training materials.

- A Specialist Domestic Violence Court that clusters and fast-tracks cases.
- Systems to address equality and diversity issues.
- Consistent data collection and monitoring systems to monitor agencies' performance, which includes data to measure success from victims' perspectives.
- Safe court facilities and links between the criminal and civil/family justice systems.
- Specialist services for children and young people.
- Programmes to manage and reduce the risk of perpetrators in line with national standards.
- Other wrap-around services that can identify and respond to victims, perpetrators and children affected by domestic violence at an early stage. This includes Primary Care Trusts, substance misuse services, safe housing options, safeguarding adults and safeguarding children's services.

The pilot has confirmed that:

- Domestic violence continues to be under-reported, possibly only a quarter of incidents being reported to the police. Whilst there are many victims and perpetrators in contact with services other than the justice system, many do not feel safe to disclose that domestic violence is taking place and professionals do not feel confident to ask about domestic violence.
- Specialist domestic violence services are unable to meet demand, but are effective in meeting survivors' holistic needs.
- Some statutory services do not know how many or the extent to which their service users are experiencing or perpetrating domestic violence. They do not have adequate systems in place to identify, record, and respond effectively, particularly if survivors have complex needs or if the abuse involves sexual violence, emotional abuse, forced marriage or female genital mutilation.





**In sharp contrast to the significant cost of domestic violence to the city, the level of direct investment in the prevention of domestic violence is very low.**

- Few services know if they are successful in increasing survivor and child safety and in holding abusers to account when they work with individuals and families affected by domestic violence.
- In order to prevent and deal with the high level of domestic violence in the city, a partnership response is required from all the main statutory public services working with the voluntary sector and local communities.
- Domestic violence must be regarded as 'core business' for all city services and partnerships.

## Resources

### How much does it cost?

The cost of domestic violence is very high, both in terms of human suffering and financial cost to services. The estimated annual cost to public services is £32 million and rises to between £118 and £132 million if we include human cost.

In sharp contrast to the significant cost of domestic violence to the city, the level of direct investment in the prevention of domestic violence is very low. This means that we are less likely to be able to identify and respond at an early stage to support and protect victims and get perpetrators to stop their violence. Instead the money spent across universal and mainstream services is on picking-up the pieces after domestic violence has happened, and responding to expensive high-risk cases.

We need to increase pooling of resources and prioritise investment in prevention and early intervention services, alongside those which respond to crisis and high-risk circumstances.

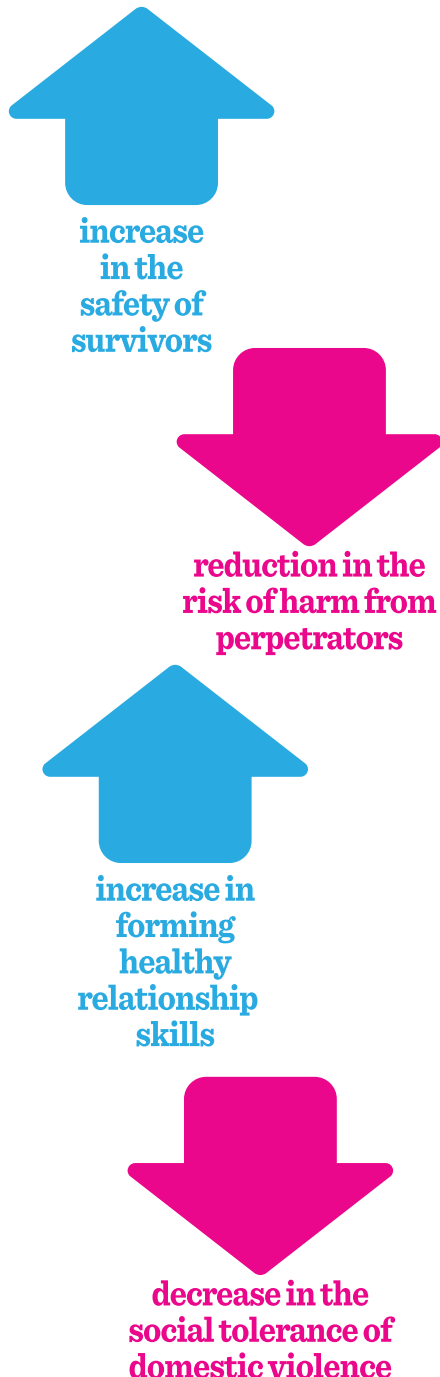
**Estimate cost to public services**

**with and without human cost**

**£32m**  
without human cost

**£132m**  
with human cost

## Proposed Change



Based on the findings of the needs assessment, the steering group has developed four strategic, city-wide outcomes for domestic violence:

- **An increase in the safety of survivors** (adults and children) through an approach that maximises safe choices available and reduces the harm caused.
- **A reduction in the risk of harm from perpetrators** through deterrence, holding them to account and bringing them to justice where appropriate.
- **A decrease in the social tolerance of domestic violence**, through awareness raising and challenging inaction by individuals, communities and organisations.
- **An increase in the knowledge and skills of children, young people and adults about forming healthy relationships**, through prevention education and learning. This will mean that they are better equipped to form relationships based on equality and respect, mutual understanding, shared power and a commitment to non-violence.

Embedding these four strategic outcomes across city services and partnerships will provide a framework of accountability, that in future, will focus on how well we are creating positive change for local people.



Underneath the strategic outcomes the steering group has also developed a set of service level outcomes for key stakeholders across three types of service activity-prevention, early intervention and provision of ongoing support. These capture the required shift in emphasis to:

- embed the prevention and reduction of domestic violence as core business for all city services and partnerships.
- improve workforce skills and improve accessibility and responsiveness of services.
- redesign services to also focus on prevention and early intervention as well as responding to high risk cases.

Whilst maintaining the city's specialist domestic violence services and the Co-ordinated Community Response Model.

**Below is more detail on activity to achieve these outcomes:**

### **Prevention:**

- Increased awareness and knowledge of the impact of domestic violence, and of the services and options that are available to deal with domestic violence.
- Reduced tolerance and social acceptance of domestic violence by individuals and communities and an increased capacity and confidence to respond.
- Roll out workplace domestic violence policies across the private, public and voluntary sector, and all agencies to publicise the help available to deal with domestic violence.
- Increased knowledge and skills about forming healthy, equal and violence-free relationships.
- Adopt 'whole school' approaches to addressing gender equality and prevention education on domestic violence, peer mentoring and support, and work to increase the resilience of survivors, children and young people.



### Early intervention:

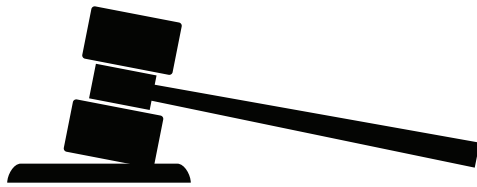
- Fully accessible services so that survivors, children and young people and perpetrators face minimal barriers to seeking help and to accessing the support they need.
- Agencies to create safe environments and provide training for staff to be equipped to spot early signs of domestic violence, to encourage disclosure.
- City services to integrate early identification and response procedures into existing work, which involves routine, selective and safe enquiry and an improved initial response to disclosure by survivors, children and perpetrators.
- Targeted early identification and response work with groups who possess certain risk factors, across all forms of domestic violence.

### Provision of ongoing support and risk management:

- City services to have trained, skilled staff, complying with national occupational standards, equipped to provide effective support and referral for all forms of domestic violence, including supporting survivors and families with complex needs.
- Provision of independent, specialist domestic violence services for survivors, perpetrators, children and young people that ensure safe separate provision for men and women, and are accessible to deal with all forms of domestic violence.

As a minimum this requires:

- Helpline service (including effective links with national helpline services).
- Refuge, resettlement, access to safe housing options, and a Sanctuary Scheme.
- Independent citywide domestic violence advocacy service, irrespective of perceived risk.



## **Specialist Domestic Violence Court programme**

- Community outreach – individual and peer support for survivors and children.
- Specialist domestic violence group work for survivors and children.
- Specialist domestic violence support services for children and young people growing up with domestic violence and in their own teen abusive relationships.
- Sexual violence support services.
- Programmes for perpetrators and related women's safety services.
- Specialist Domestic Violence Court programme and integrated systems across other court services, including support for survivors using the criminal, civil and family court services.
- Multi-agency risk management systems for survivors perceived to be high-risk of homicide.
- Methods of ongoing involvement and feedback from survivors/service users.

### **Core Business:**

- Agreed recording and reporting against citywide minimum data sets on domestic violence within and across partner agencies.
- Adherence to national minimum standards for domestic violence services.
- Compliance with statutory, legislative and good practice requirements in relation to domestic violence, including forced marriage, female genital mutilation and safeguarding adults and children.



Report of the Chief Executive