

**Bridgend Violence Against Women, Domestic
Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy
2018-2019**

Introduction

To live a life free from violence and abuse is a human right that applies to everyone. There is a collective responsibility for society to be a safe place for everyone. No one deserves to be abused and it should never be acceptable or normalised. Abuse is not a naturally occurring phenomenon within societies and by focusing on primary prevention approaches to the reduction of risk and the promotion of protective factors this can be changed.

For those subjected to violence and abuse, the effects can be long term.

This violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence strategy focuses on three main areas.

These are -

- Protection
- Prevention and
- Support

Focusing on the above will improve physical, psychological and social outcomes for the residents of Bridgend.

The strategy has been compiled by the **Domestic Abuse Steering Group** and is based on consultation with statutory and third sector partners and also reflects the views of the community and victims/survivors of the aforementioned violence.

The vision for Bridgend is

Vision: All citizens living free from fear, abuse and violence. There is no excuse for violence and abuse.

It is important to note, although the Act could appear to focus more on 'violence against women', the Act and this strategy encompasses any victim irrespective of age, gender, (dis)ability, sexuality, social status, etc. Nobody should suffer abuse or violence and it will not be tolerated in Bridgend.

Legislative Context

Definitions

Home Office 2012



Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour. Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Welsh Government Right to be Safe



A form of discrimination against women and a violation of human rights and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological, or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 includes the definition for violence against women and girls



'Gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence where the victim is female.'

It defines sexual violence as:

'sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or threats of violence of a sexual nature.'

The Welsh Government's Strategy definition is supported by the current internationally accepted definition of 'violence against women' used by the United Nations, World Health Organisation, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Crown Prosecution Service, UK Government and other international governments. These contextualise violence against women as:

'violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or that affects women disproportionately' and further define this as:

'Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation
- b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution
- c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.'

Welsh Government also says:

'If a person is pressured to do something sexual against their will, it is a form of sexual abuse, whether or not it takes place within marriage or a relationship. Sexual assault, sex with children under the age of 16, incest, rape by a stranger or inside marriage, is all crimes and matters for the Police. Sex without a person's consent due to drugs, alcohol or unconsciousness is rape.'

The **Crown Prosecution Service** defines violence against **women** within crime typologies, some of which can also be suffered by **men**.



This includes:

- Domestic violence/abuse
- Forced marriage
- So called 'honour' based violence
- Female genital mutilation
- Rape and sexual offences
- Stalking and harassment
- Prostitution
- Human trafficking/slavery, with a focus on trafficking for sexual exploitation
- Child abuse
- Pornography
- Coercive control

Rape Crisis, England and Wales



'Any unwanted sexual act or activity. There are many different kinds of sexual violence, including but not restricted to: rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment, rape within marriage/relationships, forced marriage, so-called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation, trafficking, sexual exploitation, and ritual abuse.'

Other Complimentary Legislation



The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out seven wellbeing goals which are relevant to prevention of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and support of survivors, including an equal Wales, a healthy Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities, that public sector bodies have to take action to achieve.



The **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014** provides a legal framework for improving the well-being of people (adults and children) who need care and support, carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales. This requires local population needs assessments to inform the development of local strategies (with the first due no later than 1 April 2017).



The **Housing (Wales) Act 2014** enshrines in legislation the role of the local authority in preventing and alleviating homelessness. This Act specifies that whether a person or a member of that person's household is at risk of abuse, including domestic abuse, is a factor in determining whether it is reasonable to continue to occupy accommodation.



The **Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016** sets out a new approach to joint contracts which will help survivors by enabling perpetrators to be targeted for eviction.



UK Context

Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-2020

Crime and Security Act 2010

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

Serious Crime Act 2015

In 2014, the **National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE)** issued “**Domestic violence and abuse: how health services, social care and the organisations they work with can respond effectively**”. This guidance, which applies across England and Wales, highlights that domestic abuse is a complex issue that needs sensitive handling by a range of health and social care professionals. The cost, in both human and economic terms, is so significant that even marginally effective interventions are cost effective.

In 2016, **NICE** issued further **Domestic Abuse Quality Standards** for healthcare providers. The Welsh Government has an agreement in place with NICE covering the Institute's guidelines, and there is an expectation that NHS bodies in Wales take full account of the recommendations made by the Institute when commissioning and delivering services to patients.

The NICE guidance is for everyone working in health and social care whose work brings them into contact with people who experience or perpetrate domestic violence and abuse. This includes: people working in criminal justice settings and detention centres, health and social care commissioners, including clinical commissioning groups and local authorities, and staff working for specialist domestic violence and abuse services. The latter could be working in local authorities, Local Health Boards and other organisations in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. The guidance is also aimed at local strategic partnerships.





Principles of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence ('Istanbul Convention'), to which the UK is a signatory. This sets out minimum standards to prevent violence against women, protect victims and prosecute perpetrators including:

- a) protecting women against all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence;
- b) contributing to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and promote substantive equality between women and men, including by empowering women;
- c) designing a comprehensive framework, policies and measures for the protection of and assistance to all victims of violence against women and domestic violence;
- d) promoting international co-operation with a view to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence;
- e) providing support and assistance to organisations and law enforcement agencies to effectively co-operate in order to adopt an integrated approach to eliminating violence against women and domestic violence.

Continued ...

This Strategy further strengthens our commitment to the principles of the Convention by setting out further measures which are directly relevant to the provisions of the Convention. The purpose of the Act is to prevent, protect and support which links with the purposes of the Convention as noted above. By working to fulfil the purposes of the Act, this Strategy is directly linked to a number of the provisions of the Convention, including:

- a) by teaching and educating our children and young people about healthy relationships (articles 12 and 14);
- b) by training professionals and other public sector workers via the National Training Framework (articles 12 and 15);
- c) by raising public awareness (articles 12 and 13);
- d) by supporting and encouraging collaborative approaches between relevant authorities and other providers and by publishing commissioning guidance (article 7);
- e) by developing work on perpetrator programmes (articles 12 and 16)
- f) by supporting relevant authorities to provide immediate, short and long term support services to all women victims and their children based on local and regional needs (articles 22 and 25);
- g) by continuing to provide specialist support including refuge and floating support provision and support for victims of sexual violence (article 23 - 25); and
- h) by recognising children and young people as victims and witnesses and the provision of support (article 26).

Internationally, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has provided a platform for addressing discrimination against women. Work to fulfil the purposes of the Act links to the Convention purposes in that:

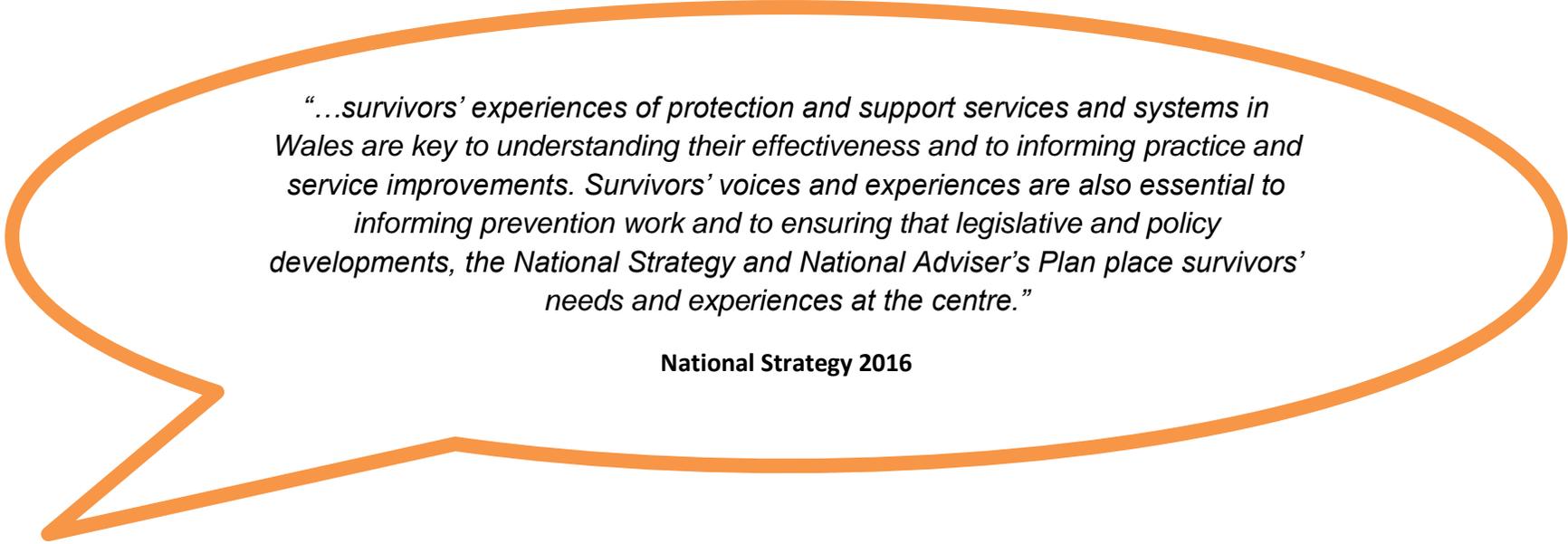
raising awareness of healthy relationships, and public awareness campaigns to combat violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence will help to reduce discrimination against women; b) the National Training Framework will offer proportionate training to strengthen the response provided across Wales to those experiencing these issues, including women. It will formalise the requirements of those offering specialist and universal services and raise awareness and understanding of such violence and abuse.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Section 81(1) of the Government of Wales Act 2006

Welsh Ministers are also under a duty to have regards to the requirements of Part I of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Act, this Strategy and our wider policy programme supports victims and acknowledges violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence as issues for children and young people. The actions and principles contained in this Strategy have been identified and developed in the spirit of the principles of all these international instruments and where possible to further embed those principles in the measures that have been adopted in Wales to combat violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.



“...survivors’ experiences of protection and support services and systems in Wales are key to understanding their effectiveness and to informing practice and service improvements. Survivors’ voices and experiences are also essential to informing prevention work and to ensuring that legislative and policy developments, the National Strategy and National Adviser’s Plan place survivors’ needs and experiences at the centre.”

National Strategy 2016

Survivors

Overview of Bridgend

	1 prison
	20 GP surgeries
	2 hospitals
	1 college
	51 primary schools 14 secondary schools
	Central Basic Command Unit (BCU)

Population of Bridgend - 139,178 ¹

 **70,943**



0-4 – 3,938
5-15 – 9,104
16-24 – 7,651
25-44 – 18,117
16-64 – 44,786
65+ - 12,898

 **72,234**



0-4 – 4,155
5-15 – 8,568
16-24 – 7,651
25-44 – 17,533
16-64 – 44,167
65+ - 15,561

¹ <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Estimates/Local-Authority/populationestimates-by-localauthority-year>

HIGH RISK ONLY				
Measure	2017	2016	2015	2014
No. of cases heard at MARAC	366	346	246	270
No. children attached to high risk cases (living in situations of domestic abuse)	638	605	381	396
No. of repeat cases	227	170	63	54
No. victims aged 16-17	10	8	11	5
No. 17 and under harming others	5	7	**	**

** This information was collected from 2016 onwards.

Target Hardening	Gender of Victim		Housing Status			Fire Risk	Children	Risk Level	
	Male	Female	RSL	Private Rent	Owner Occupier	Referral to SWFRS	No. of children	High Risk	Medium Risk
April 2017 - June 2017	0	17	6	9	8	3	42	7	10
July 2017 - September 2017	0	19	6	11	8	3	31	17	2
October 2017 – December 2017	1	11	8	7	5	0	12	7	5
Totals	1	47	20	27	21	6	85	31	17

Jan 2017-Dec 2017	
No. of presentations	358
Female	332
Male	26
No. PPNs received	873
Disability (registered and non-registered) Chronic Illness	122
CYP Referrals	22
Pregnant at time of contact	18
No. children not with mother	43

2017	
No. PPNs	3220
Victims	3349
Perpetrators	2521

2017	
Ex-partner	808
Partner	634
Son/daughter	251
Parent	108
Sibling	68
Other family member	37
Child living at premises	17
Step parent	16
Step son/daughter	16

Objective 1

Increase awareness and challenge attitudes of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across the Welsh Population.

Rationale	<p>Domestic Homicide Reviews have highlighted that domestic abuse was not identified by those surrounding the victim – family and friends.</p> <p>Bridgend Local Authority wants to ensure that as many people as possible are aware of local and national services relating to the VAWDASV agenda and know how and where to seek the help and support for all affected. This may be help for perpetrators, victims, children or concerned others.</p> <p>Service user engagement exercises undertaken in February 2018 highlighted the needs of the community and how they want the Local authority to disseminate information to them in regards to raising awareness.</p> <p>Recent engagement has raised issues of ‘whataboutery’ where people are concerned about the men and services and support for men. Whilst these services exist in Bridgend and are available to any victim this is not widely known.</p> <p>It is important to foster good relationships between groups for the future and dispel any myths that exist through awareness raising and challenging ideologies that maintain inequality.</p>
Where?	<p>Within the communities as highlighted within the following documents and intelligence which will be taken into consideration when planning the information :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health Wales Violent Crime Incidents where the incident relates to the VAWDASV agenda. • South Wales Police data – hot spots and not spots.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assia Suite data. • MARAC data. • DHR actions.
Target	<p>Two events will take place per month:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. #OrangeDay 2. General VAWDASV information into the communities. <p>Ad hoc events that are planned after submission of the delivery plan will also be undertaken (minimum of 4).</p>
What?	This will consist of information stands in strategic places as identified above.
Responsible Agency/Officer	Bridgend County Borough Council – Domestic abuse Co-ordinator

Objective 2

Increased awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong.

Rationale	<p>Children are the future of Wales. Domestic abuse is one of the ACEs that can impact on a person's future if not addressed as soon as possible.</p> <p>To ensure equal access to information every child in Wales deserves to have access to information that will keep them safe and help them make safe decisions. In order to do this they require information consistently throughout their childhood years. Through the medium of education will be the most effective way to reach children.</p> <p>Children displaying abusive behaviour to an adult and who may have witnessed abuse are able to receive an intervention through Calan DVS and the Respect toolkit. This will assist in breaking the cycle of ACEs.</p>
How?	Calan will deliver sessions to schools as requested and through promoting the sessions. Hafan will continue to deliver within schools.
Where?	This will take place within school, community settings and within specialist service venues.
Reporting intervals?	Quarterly.
Targets	12 sessions to schools will be delivered 2018-2019 by Calan. 24 sessions to be delivered by Hafan Cymru Spectrum Programme. 100 children to undertake 1-2-1 or group support via Calan – Respect Toolkit, Star Programmes; etc.
Responsible Agency/Officer	Hafan Cymru – Locality Officer Calan DVS – Bridgend Locality Manager

Objective 3

Increased focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety.

Rationale	<p>Without perpetrators there would be no victims. Whilst it is paramount to have services in place for victims, it is as equally vital to have services for perpetrators to help and support those who truly want to change to make that change. MARAC repeat incidents are on the increase and repeat perpetration at standard and medium risk needs an intervention to prevent escalation.</p> <p>Perpetrators may have been exposed to ACEs, did not grow up with positive role models and may be victims themselves.</p> <p>This programme is aimed at heterosexual males and is based on gender inequality, patriarchy and hegemony. It will be introduced at the beginning of this financial year.</p> <p>This service will not detract any funding away from victims.</p> <p>The duration of the course is 32 weeks and will be delivered by Calan DVS.</p>
Where?	The intervention will take place in a community setting.
Reporting Intervals	Annually (due to the programme duration of 32 weeks).
Targets	<p>This year (as a minimum):</p> <p>30 perpetrators assessed for suitability to be accepted onto the intervention.</p> <p>20 to complete the 32 week intervention.</p> <p>Short term</p>

	<p>Completion rate of the 32 week programme. Number of initial assessments undertaken.</p> <p><u>Long term</u> How many occurrences of violence and abuse 3 months after the end of the intervention. How many occurrences of violence and abuse 6 months after the end of the intervention. (baseline data)</p>
<p>Responsible Agency/Officer</p>	<p>Calan DVS – Area Business Manager</p>

Objective 4

Make early intervention and prevention a priority.

Rationale	<p>Prevention of abuse is the primary aim and where abuse is already a factor, intervention at the earliest stage is vital.</p> <p>There is a huge impact on children witnessing domestic abuse and the impact of other ACEs that can have a detrimental effect on life expectancy, illnesses and the cyclical effects of abuse. With this in mind, early intervention is key to preventing escalation.</p> <p>In order to reduce the impact on children, perpetrators should be supported (where appropriate and safe) to change their behaviour.</p> <p>Victims and children are the innocent parties and to ensure as little disruption as possible and where safe to do so, target hardening is offered.</p>
Targets	<p>This year (as a minimum):</p> <p>365 victims receive support from the Assia Suite. 500 consenting PPNs victims contacted offering advice and support. 60 victims receive support from the Assia Suite including support in the community. 100 PPN victims contacted offering advice and support. 60 victims to receive target hardening via Care and Repair. Every victim is offered personal safety advice and where practicable, target hardening measures.</p>
Reporting Intervals	<p>Quarterly.</p>
Responsible Agency/Officer	<p>Calan DVS – Bridgend Locality Manager. Bridgend CBC – IDVA Team.</p>

Objective 5

Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors.

Rationale

The National Training Framework is a key element of the VAWDASV Act 2015 to ensure professionals and staff are equipped with knowledge of abuse and how to report it depending on their involvement with service users.

Senior staff such as Chief Executive, Directors and Cabinet receive Group 6 presentation and Welsh Government 'Strengthening Leadership Series'.

Targets

Explore delivery process of the NTF – Ask and Act Group 2 by end of Quarter 2.

All staff have undertaken the Group 1 – E-learning module by 2019 (April).

Training provided to all those identified at Group 6 by Quarter 4.

Reporting Intervals	Quarterly.
Responsible Agency/Officer	Calan DVS – Bridgend Locality Manager.

Objective 6

Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services.

Rationale	<p>Local commissioning will be undertaken for a Domestic Homicide (DHR) Author for the interim period of a year. Bridgend will explore opportunities to regionalise the DHR process over the coming year depending on the commissioning cycle of other local authorities.</p> <p>On a regional basis, a male refuge/housing/support provision will be scoped with Cardiff and Vale Local Authority areas to ensure we have services in place for all victims proportionate to need.</p> <p>IDVA/IDSVVA Service and MARAC Co-ordinator brought in house from the third sector.</p>
Targets	<p>DHR commissioning – plan produced for 2019 onwards (Quarterly update).</p> <p>DHR consortia to be explored with other local authority areas (quarterly update).</p>

	Scoping exercise for male provision with Cardiff and the Vale (update in Quarter 1).
Responsible Agency/Officer	Bridgend CBC – Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator.

Supporting Information

Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence disproportionately affects women

There are significant differences in the frequency and nature of abuse experienced by men and that experienced by women. The gender of both victim and perpetrator influences behaviour, risk and the severity of harm caused. Abuse perpetrated by men against women is a quantitatively and qualitatively distinct phenomenon. Women and girls experience violence and abuse in their every day lives at higher rates.

Women are more likely to be killed by a partner/ex-partner

Over three-quarters (77%) of female domestic homicide victims were killed by a partner/ex-partner, with the remaining 23% killed by a family member. For male homicides, there was a much more even split, with around a half (51%) of victims killed by a partner/ex-partner and the other half (49%) killed by a family member².

²

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/compendium/focusonviolentcrimeandsexualoffences/yearendingmarch2015/chapter2homicide> (2016)

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<p>Men are significantly more likely to be repeat perpetrators and significantly more likely than women to use physical violence, threats, and harassment</p>	<p>Men's violence tends to create a context of fear and control; which a study found was not the case when women are perpetrators.</p>
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<p>Women may experience different and multiple forms of abuse in their lives</p>	<p>For example, some BME women may be experiencing forced marriage, domestic abuse and sexual violence simultaneously.</p>
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<p>Lesbian and bisexual women experience domestic violence and abuse at a similar rate to women in general (1 in 4)</p>	<p>A third of this is associated with male perpetrators and the rest with female perpetrators.</p>
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**Inequality
Hegemony
Patriarchy**

Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence as a cause and consequence of inequality between men and women, causes harm, vulnerability and disadvantage in a number of overlapping ways. It impacts on physical and mental health, damages self-esteem and confidence, and can cause isolation, homelessness, and reduced economic prospects. Not all women have equal access to safety and freedom or the means or ability to leave a context of violence. For many women and girls, their experience of violence and abuse can be **compounded by multiple, intersecting inequalities and a broader context of social exclusion and marginalisation** which are more conducive to violence, and in which empowerment routes may be more restricted.

Who can experience abuse?	Victim	Men Women Children Young people
	Perpetrate	Men Women Children Young people

Any form of violence and abuse is unacceptable and every case must be taken seriously and each individual given access to the appropriate support they need

Service User Involvement

Survivors and their experiences of services and support are a key component and should be used to shape services and strategies going forward.

Survivors identified 10 key recommendations for Welsh Government:

1. Dedicated specialist services for children and young people impacted by or experiencing domestic abuse, sexual violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, sexual exploitation or harassment.
 2. Specialist domestic abuse and sexual violence services for survivors that is accessible and resourced to meet the needs of specific survivor groups.
 3. Improvements in family court and CAFCASS Cymru practice and safe child contact for children in cases of domestic abuse and sexual violence.
 4. Accessible 'refuge service' support in every area, accompanied by safe, affordable, longer-term housing options to provide flexibility and choice.
 5. Women's groups and peer support that reduce isolation and maximise independent spaces to increase confidence, esteem, and empowerment.
 6. Equal access to safety, support, protection and justice, and finances to live independently, irrespective of survivors' immigration status.
- 2 Are you listening and am I being heard? Survivor Consultation: A report of the recommendations of survivors of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales, March 2016: Cymorth i Ferched Cymru / Welsh Women's Aid
- 3 Are you listening and am I being heard? Survivor Consultation: A report of the recommendations of survivors of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales, March 2016: Cymorth i Ferched Cymru / Welsh Women's Aid
7. Counselling and therapeutic services for survivors that is available when needed and is age-appropriate, and helps build resilience and recovery.

8. Greater focus on stopping perpetrators' behaviour and, where coercive control is a feature, on getting perpetrators to leave and end abusive relationships.

9. Improved training for all services on all aspects of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, informed by survivors' experiences.

10. Preventing violence against women from happening in the first place, through compulsory prevention education in all schools and increasing awareness of the issues and help available in local communities.

These recommendations and the principles outlined by survivors are key to underpinning this Strategy and will further inform the development of the Delivery Framework. Where matters fall outside responsibilities of Welsh Government we will identify and work with relevant partners to address the recommendations made.

Survivors' voices and experiences must be central to informing the continued development and delivery of legislation, policy and strategy in order to ensure systems and services best meet survivors' needs. It is important that we listen to survivors, and act upon what they tell us. We need to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are developed so that we can engage with all survivors, including individuals with complex, multi-faceted needs, men, LGBT+ individuals and children and young people. Survivor engagement should be a continuous process that informs the development of policies and services.

To ensure that survivor's voices and experiences continue to inform this work in Wales we will develop a sustainable national survivor engagement framework to ensure that the needs and experiences of the most marginalised survivors, those who face multiple disadvantage in accessing help and support are understood. A national engagement framework will ensure the voices of survivors are heard in the delivery and review of this Strategy and accompanying delivery framework and the design and delivery of services from their earliest stages.

The scale of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

There is now a substantial body of evidence about the far-reaching nature and impact of violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence. Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence includes different types of abusive and controlling behaviours which are often used together intentionally, to control another person or to have power over them. Incidents are rarely one-off and usually get worse over time. Perpetrators are most likely to be known to the survivor.

Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence can happen to people of all ages, sexualities, gender, abilities, cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds.

Intersecting inequalities increase barriers to protection and help-seeking. It is essential that services are designed with this awareness. For example, research has found that:

'BME women are disproportionately affected by different forms of abuse e.g. forced marriage, "honour-based" violence, female genital mutilation, sexual exploitation in the form of commercial sex work, trafficking etc. The multiple vulnerabilities arising from these overlapping Disabled people experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic abuse, and also experience domestic abuse for longer periods of time, and more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people. Disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic violence as non-disabled women (1995 British Crime Survey, also confirmed by data from other countries). They are also likely to experience abuse over a longer period of time and to suffer more severe abuse and injuries as a result of the violence, than disabled men.'

NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guidance on how services can respond effectively to domestic abuse states:

'Domestic violence and abuse is a significant public health problem. People of all ages, from all sectors of society, may experience it. The effects can last a long time after the final incident. For example, childhood exposure can disrupt social, emotional and cognitive development. This can lead to the adoption of risky behaviours such as alcohol misuse or illicit drug use which, in turn, can cause poor health, disease, disability and early death.'

Evidence shows that **women disproportionately experience repeat incidents of domestic abuse, all forms of sexual violence and other forms of violence and abuse such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation.** All governments have a responsibility to work to eliminate such gender-based violence under international directives upheld by the United Nations. This is of utmost importance in part due to the sheer scale of the problem:

- In 2014-2015, the Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 1.3 million women and 600,000 men (aged 16-59) experienced any type of domestic abuse in that year; with **over 1 in 4 women** (4.5 million women) reporting having experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16.

- Walby et al, 2015, has shown that **violent crime against women is in fact rising**, and most violent crime against men is falling; domestic violent crime has a different trajectory from other forms of violent crime and has been rising since 2009. This is often not shown by statistics such as the Crime Survey for England and Wales, which cap the number of incidents which can be recorded.
- 137,000 girls and women in the UK are living with consequences of FGM and 60,000 girls in the UK, under the age of 15, are at risk of FGM. It is estimated there are 140 victims of FGM a year in Wales.
- Nearly one in three (31%) pregnant teenagers at intake to one targeted early intervention programme had experienced domestic violence and abuse.
- 82% of cases dealt with by the Forced Marriage Unit involved female victims; 18% involved male victims. It is estimated there are up to 100 victims of forced marriage a year in Wales.²³
- **In a workplace with 4,000 employees, between 800 and 1,000 of the staff will have directly experienced domestic abuse at some point in their lives.**
- In a street made up of 100 houses, 20 of the women residing there will have been the victim of a sexual offence.
- Approximately 124,000 women, men, boys and girls over the age of 16 in Wales, have been the victim of a sexual offence.
- In November 2009, Sylvia Walby estimated the **total costs of domestic violence to the UK economy to be £15.7 billion a year.**

This is broken down as follows:

- o The cost to services (Criminal Justice System, health, social services, housing, civil legal) is estimated at over £3.8 billion per year
- o The loss to the economy – where women take time off work due to injuries – equates to more than £1.9 billion per year

o Domestic violence also leads to pain and suffering that is not counted in the cost of services. The human and emotional costs of domestic violence amounts to almost £10 billion per year.

▪ In Wales, the cost of domestic abuse is estimated to be £303.5m annually:

£202.6m in service costs and £100.9m in lost economic output. These figures do not include any element of human and emotional costs, which research estimates costs Wales an additional £522.9m; taking the costs of sexual violence and other forms of abuse into account would increase this amount even more.

2. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TACKLE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is a fundamental violation of human rights, a cause and consequence of inequality and has far reaching consequences for families, children and society as a whole.

Since the enactment of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, public bodies are required to think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and to adopt a strategic approach to improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

Objectives

The Welsh Government 6 objectives. These are as follows:

- Objective 1 – increase awareness and challenge attitudes of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across the population (of Bridgend County Borough Council)
- Objective 2 – Increased awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong
- Objective 3 – Increased focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety
- Objective 4 – make early intervention and prevention a priority

- Objective 5 – relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors
- Objective 6 – Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services (across Bridgend County Borough)

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 (Wales) Act Indicators directly or indirectly related to domestic abuse

Indicator 6 – measurement of the development of young children

Indicator 17 – gender pay difference

Indicator 24 – Percentage of people satisfied with their ability to get to/access the facilities and services they need

Indicator 25 – Percentage of people feeling safe at home, walking in their local area, and when travelling

Indicator 27 – percentage of people agreeing that they belong to the area; that people from different backgrounds get on well together; and treat each other with respect.

The Social Services and Wellbeing 2016 (Wales) Act

Protection from abuse and neglect	I am safe and protected from abuse and neglect	Incidence of domestic abuse and sexual offences
	I am supported to protect the people that matter to me from abuse and neglect	Percentage of re-registrations of children on local authority child protection registers
	I am informed about how to make my concerns known	Percentage of people reporting they feel safe

Percentage of adults at risk of abuse or neglect reported more than once during the year

There are other indicators under this Act (indirectly relating) relating to services that could go under the heading of 'Service User Engagement'