

Bridgend County Borough
Violence against Women, Domestic
Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy
Annual Report 2019 to 2020





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Introduction

Welcome to the second annual report on the Bridgend County Borough Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy. 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 all. 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.

The Bridgend Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy focuses on three main areas.

- **Protection**
- **Prevention**
- **Support**

It is important to note, although the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act 2015 (the Act) could appear to focus more on 'violence against women', the Act, the Bridgend Strategy and this report 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.

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



Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the Wellbeing Plan for Bridgend

The implementation of the VAWDASV strategy in Bridgend is firmly embedded in the Wellbeing Plan for Bridgend and the Bridgend Community Safety Strategy through the Wellbeing Objective - Support Communities in Bridgend to be Safe and Cohesive.

Wellbeing Objective:
Support communities in Bridgend
County to be safe and cohesive.



This year saw the creation of the new Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board, which has meant Bridgend County Borough Council VAWDASV services have begun to regionalise in line with the Act 2015. The Cwm Taf Regional Commissioning partnership has been established and a significant amount of work has been done through a joint strategic needs assessment across the region and an in-depth review of services in Bridgend County Borough.

The global Corona virus pandemic and subsequent lockdown meant a focus shift to operational matters, which delayed some of that work. As the initial crisis management is subsiding there it will be now possible to further develop our regional strategy.

An Overview of Bridgend County Borough

Bridgend is situated between the two main cities of Swansea and Cardiff. In 2017, it had an estimated resident population of 144,300 of which 70,943 were female and 72,234 male. This is an estimated increase from 2011 when the Census reported the population as 139,178.

Like much of Wales, this increase is due to an ageing population. Produced in 2009, the Adult Social Care Commissioning Plan 2010 – 2020 Living Independently In Bridgend In The 21st Century projected there would be a 143% increase in the number of people aged 85 and over by 2030. This trend,



in particular, is of most concern to the provision of social services, as in the region of 50% of people aged 85 and over currently receive a service.

Bridgend Resident Population

Total population (2018)			
	Bridgend (Numbers)	Wales (Numbers)	Great Britain (Numbers)
All People	144,900	3,138,600	64,533,900
Males	71,800	1,547,300	31,864,000
Females	70,943	1,591,300	32,689,900

Diversity

The ethnic breakdown of the Bridgend population is as follows:

- 94.6% are white British
- 0.4% are white Irish
- 1.8% are white other
- 0.8% are mixed
- 1.2% are Asian or Asian British
- 0.4% are Black or Black British
- 0.3% are Chinese
- 3.1% are from non-white backgrounds

Ninety-eight percent of Bridgend population use either English or Welsh as their main language, slightly more than for Wales as a whole (97.14%). Behind English or Welsh, the next most common main language spoken in Bridgend is Polish - the main language of just 0.54 per cent of residents - followed by Tagalog/Filipino - the main language of 0.1 per cent of the residents.

Christianity is by far the most dominant religion, and those that practice other religions make up just 1.2% cent of Bridgend's population, a smaller proportion



than for Wales as a whole (2.7%). As in Wales, the second most practiced religion in Bridgend is Islam, though Muslims only account for 0.4 per cent of the population. Other minority religions include Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism.

Based on the 2011 census, 13.4% of the Bridgend population considered they had a physical, sensory or learning disability or long-term illness and there are approximately 2,650 adults with learning disabilities in Bridgend. Bridgend Social Services knows about 522 adults with learning disabilities.

There is no data on the number of transgender people in Bridgend. There also is no reliable data on the number of people that identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. In 2016, 95.2% of people in Wales identified as heterosexual/straight, 1.0% as gay/lesbian, 0.7% as bisexual, and 0.4% as other; 2.7% of people did not know, answer or respond to the question.

Bridgend has 88 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), of these 10% were ranked as the most deprived 10% in Wales but poverty and employment rates are fairly similar. Twenty-two-point-seven percent of children live in poverty in Bridgend, the Welsh national average is 22.2%; 75.4% of the Bridgend population are economically active compared to the Welsh average of 76%.

Mental Health

In Wales, one in four adults will experience some kind of mental health problem or illness within their lifetime. It is projected that 27,095 people in Bridgend had at least one mental disorder in 2015, and this number will increase to 27,289 in 2035.

Economy and Employment

The number of people in employment in Bridgend is slightly higher than the Welsh average with 77.2% of people in employment compared to a Welsh average of 76.4%

Whilst 22.8% of the Bridgend population are economically inactive compared to 23.6% across Wales, there are more workless households in Bridgend than



the Welsh average. 22.3% of households in Bridgend are workless compared with a Wales average of 17.2%.

Households are defined as in fuel poverty if they need to spend more than 10% of their income on all household fuel use, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime. 13.4% (6,826) of private sector households in the County Borough are in fuel poverty rising to 30.7% of households in the private rented sector. In terms of household type, lone parent households are particularly likely to be fuel poor with almost 40% of these households in fuel poverty.

VAWDASV Services in Bridgend County Borough 2019/20

- **First point of contact:** a first contact, advice and advocacy service for people affected by domestic abuse provided on a drop-in basis or via the phone or text and flexibly across outreach locations where required.
- **Floating support:** 20 floating housing-related support units for *both men and women* experiencing domestic abuse in the community. The Service supports transition of refuge service users into more independent living and/or supports people in the community experiencing domestic abuse.
- **Refuge/temporary supported emergency housing:** eight accommodation-based units of emergency housing-related support with access to 24 hour on-call emergency response for women and children.
- **Move-on/supported accommodation:** five self-contained units of housing-related supported accommodation provided as a move-on from emergency temporary accommodation-based support.
- **On Call/Out of Hours:** a 24-hour On-Call system.
- **Target hardening:** preventing homelessness by enabling victims of domestic abuse to remain in their own home where it is their wish and where it is safe for them to do so.
- a dedicated **children and young people's support service** to support children, young people and their parents who have been affected by domestic abuse
- **High Risk Crisis Intervention Service** – Independent Domestic Violence Advocate supports high risk victims of domestic abuse through the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process.



- **Choices** – 32 week programme for perpetrators of domestic violence

Increase awareness and challenge attitudes of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across Bridgend County

During the White Ribbon Campaign in Nov/Dec 2019, 7 Public Awareness tables were held in Bridgend, Maesteg and Porthcawl and a total of 56 persons engaged. Events relating to the 'Orange Day', theme, held in April attracted 182 local people who were given general advice and information on how to seek support and advice.

During the period from April 2019 to Mid-March 2020 a further 82 Public Awareness Tables were held at locations across the County Borough including Bridgend town centre, Garw Valley, Ogmere Valley, Porthcawl, Pyle, Brackla, Maesteg, Caerau, Pencoed, Sarn, Ynysawdre and Bryntirion. The total number of persons reached at all the Awareness tables held during the period from April 2019 to mid-March amounted to 1,881.

Joint sessions with CALAN DVS were held at the Crisis Café set up in Bridgend town centre to support vulnerable individuals who are reluctant to engage with services.

A range of partners attended or supported the events including, South Wales Police, CALAN DVS, WCADA, Victim Support, BCBC Housing, Mental Health and Employability Teams.

As the lockdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic stretched into weeks further awareness raising campaigns were posted via social media and partner websites. A poster and banner campaign was also launched with information available at supermarkets, A&E departments and other locations where residents are allowed to gather.

The Bridgend VAWDASV service is now represented on all regional and local strategic partnerships including the Cwm Taf VAWDASV Partnership Board, Safeguarding Board and Area Planning Board.

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

28 safe, equal and healthy relationship sessions held in schools
509 children and young people attended the Spectrum healthy relationships programme
317 children and young people supported by CALAN DVS
On line and social media resources for children and young people have been developed for use during the current lockdown.

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

An in depth analysis of current perpetrator programmes was carried out by the Centre for Health and Justice at Nottingham University. The study aimed to review the existing domestic abuse perpetrator programmes and the identification of services required for perpetrators of VAWDASV across Cwm Taf and Bridgend. The recommendations from the review will be used to inform future perpetrator provision.

The South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner is fully funding the roll out of the DRIVE perpetrator programme to start in July 2020. Drive is an intensive case management based approach for working with perpetrators. The approach entails three main elements: Support, Disruption, and Behaviour Change.

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

Our Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate Service supported total of 509 high risk victims through the MARAC process during the year.
A total of 2519 contacts were made to the Assia one stop shop.
107 victims accessed a space in a refuge.
250 medium risk victims were supported in the community.

Make early intervention and prevention a priority

Early Help hubs have supported a total of 1203 families.
Forty four delegates attended a multi agency workshop in the Western Bay area to develop a consistent approach to support for children and families.

CALAN DVS have supported 317 children and young people. CALAN DVS is the Bridgend Specialist 3rd sector provider.

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

Four thousand nine hundred and seven members of frontline staff in Bridgend have now been trained to identify domestic abuse. Ask and Act train the trainer programme has been rolled out in Bridgend during the year. The first cohort of candidates completed their training in February. Further roll out has been a little delayed due to the COVID 19 crisis but will be resumed during the year. A regional action plan to implement the National Training Framework across the Cwm Taf Morgannwg footprint is in development. On line training programme has been developed by CALAN DVS to support front line staff to recognise and deal victims disclosing abuse via telephone contacts. MARAC members have undertaken Safe Lives training.