

Isle of Wight Strategic Domestic Abuse Forum

Annual Report 2014/15

Spiralling in a black hole,
Losing every part of your soul,
It's out of your control.

But then you dare
to feel aware
That you're worth
more than you think.

And you edge back
from the brink.

From the anthology of poems 'Singing in the Storm' written by anonymous victims and survivors of domestic abuse. For more information visit: www.wight.com/domesticabuse

END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

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Introduction

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic violence or abuse is defined by the government as:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- 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.¹

Sexual Violence

In January 2013, the Ministry of Justice, Office for National Statistics and Home Office released the first ever joint Official Statistics bulletin on sexual violence, entitled **An Overview of Sexual Offending in England and Wales**.

It reported that:

- Approximately 85,000 women are raped on average in England and Wales every year
- Over 400,000 women are sexually assaulted each year
- 1 in 5 women (aged 16 - 59) has experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 16.

¹ This definition includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

1. Isle of Wight Strategic Domestic Abuse Forum

The Multi Agency Strategic Domestic Abuse Forum meets bi-monthly, chaired by the Director for Adult Social Care. Membership consists of senior staff from partnership agencies with a strategic role in relation to domestic abuse (see Appendix 1 for Terms of Reference and membership). This forum provides leadership to the issues of domestic abuse through the engagement of key agencies and oversight of the provision of services with the ultimate aim being to reduce the incidences of domestic abuse on the Island.

The Strategic Forum links into the Health and Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership, Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Local Safeguarding Adults Board, providing reports as required. We also work closely with the Pan-Hants Domestic Abuse Management Group.

Core to the work of the Strategic Forum is the government guidance 'Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls' (2010).

Aim

To reduce domestic abuse and gender based violence on the Isle of Wight, to protect and support victims through a co-ordinated multi-agency approach and to hold perpetrators to account for their actions.

To achieve this aim, the forum is working towards three priority areas:

Prevention and Early Intervention

Aim: to change attitudes and prevent violence

How: Raising awareness through campaigns; safeguarding and educating children and young people; early identification and intervention and training

Provision

Aim: to assist victims to get on with their lives:

How: Provide effective provision of services, advice and support; emergency and acute services; refuge and safe accommodation

Protection

Aim: Risk Reduction and Justice:

How: Effective investigation; prosecution; victim support and protection; perpetrator interventions.

Prevention and Early Intervention

Bestival 2014

Data from the British Crime Survey has shown that teenage girls aged between 16 – 18 years old are most at risk of domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault and stalking. With this in mind, the forum had a stall at Bestival for the third year to raise awareness of violence against women and girls amongst our target high risk groups (16-21 year olds).

This year we also had an additional yurt space to enable us to provide a quiet space for discussion, support and sign posting for anyone affected who wished to talk in privacy. Volunteers included staff from Children’s Services, Barnardos and the Hampton Trust.



Photo shows IWDAF Bestival stall with festival goers Sept 14.

This initiative builds on work that we did at the Bestival last year and ties into the Serious Sexual Offences plan for the Island. Feedback from young people and the organisers is positive and we have been invited back to Bestival 2015.

‘Singing in the Storm’ an Anthology of Poetry and Prose by Victims and Survivors of Domestic Abuse

On the 25th November 2014, the Isle of Wight Domestic Abuse Forum launched an anthology of poetry: ‘Singing in the Storm’ by victims and survivors of domestic abuse and by those who have supported them and worked alongside them. The team were overwhelmed by the volume of submissions and the quality of the work. Some authors sent notes in with their poems stating that they were still living with the abuser and requesting that their details were not released, for this reason all the poems were published anonymously.



Copies of the anthology were sent to partner agencies to display in public waiting areas, including to all the GP surgeries on the Island. Excerpts from some of the poems were used in the accompanying poster campaign. The poems from the anthology are available to view on the DAF webpages on iwight.com alongside posters to download, information about domestic abuse and the details of support services.

Sex without Consent is Rape

In July members of the Island's Serious Sexual Offences sub group launched a campaign to raise awareness of rape and serious sexual offences and to challenge rape myths. The campaign is based on Rape Crisis Scotland's Campaign 'This is Not an Invitation to Rape me' and aims to show that no matter how someone dresses, how much they have drunk, or what their relationship is to the perpetrator, sex without consent is rape – and rape is never the victim's fault.

The campaign aims to improve knowledge around consent and rape and to expose rape 'myths'. For example, there is a myth that most rapes are perpetrated by strangers in dark alleys when the reality is that most victims are raped by someone they know. It is hoped that the campaign might help to increase reporting rates by increasing victims' confidence in the system and in the support that they will receive. It is also hoped that the images might help inform wider public understanding of the issues.

The images chosen for the campaign reflect the fact that the majority of rapes and sexual assaults on the Island (as nationally) are between young people aged 16-25 and those in relationships.



Provision

Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs)

Independent Domestic Violence Advisors are specialist case workers who work with high risk victims of domestic abuse - those who are at risk of significant harm or murder - and they are a key part of the Murder Prevention Strategy. The IDVA is a key component of the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) and SDAC (Specialist Domestic Abuse Court) processes and their involvement has been shown to decrease victimisation, increase notification of children at risk and reduce the number of victims unwilling to support a prosecution. The IDVA service is independent of statutory services and run by the Island Women's Refuge (IWR).

The IDVA works with both male and female victims at high risk of harm. In 2014 **285** cases deemed to be at high risk of murder were taken to MARAC, including **396** children. The service has been working at capacity but has been maintained through Public Health funding.

Refuge

The Island Women's Refuge provides emergency accommodation for women and children at immediate risk of harm through domestic abuse. Demand continues to outstrip supply with an increase in numbers accommodated in the refuge in 2014 and difficulties relating to the move on of single women due to the lack of housing available for single women and changes to housing benefit.

Outreach

The Island Women's Refuge Outreach Programme works with victims of domestic abuse in the community. This is the largest part of IWR's work, with over 400 outreach contacts in 2014. The client group includes those who have left an abusive relationship and are rebuilding their lives and those who are still within an abusive relationship who need specialist support to remain safe. Children in these families will be defined as Children in Need (CIN), many will be on a child protection plan or will be Looked After by the Local Authority. The service also deals with high numbers of women who have associated health issues, for example mental health and drug and alcohol misuse.

Freedom Programme

Freedom is a 12 week, two hour a week rolling group work education / empowerment programme for women who have experience of an unequal relationship. Freedom courses are frequently cited by the women who attend them as the single most effective intervention for domestic abuse.

ADAPT

The ADAPT perpetrator programme run by the Hampton Trust ended on the Island in 2014. ADAPT had been running for approx. 4 years on the Island however despite promotion of the service by the Hampton Trust and by forum members take up remained too low to make continuation of the programme viable. The Isle of Wight does need an effective intervention for perpetrators and this requirement will be included in the integrated commissioning strategy.

Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Service

The ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Adviser) provides a support and advice service to male and female victims of sexual abuse over the age of 18 years. The ISVA works in partnership with Criminal and Civil Justice agencies, health services, the voluntary sector and Victim and Witness Services in providing support and a single point of contact to both victims who access the criminal justice process and those who do not.

Protection and Justice

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

Every month, the cases of approximately 20 – 25 victims determined to be at the highest risk of murder are considered at the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). The MARAC is chaired by the police and attended by a wide range of agencies (children's social care, health, housing, etc.). The aim of the meeting is to share information to enable a safety plan to be compiled for the victim and any children, and to consider the risk to staff from any agency that may have contact with the family.

Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC)

The SDAC is a court convened specially to hear domestic abuse cases, in which the aim is that all staff, from magistrates to the ushers, will have received training on domestic abuse. Special measures for victims can be provided if required. The SDAC steering group, chaired by probation, did not meet for much of this financial year due to the significant changes to key partner organisations – including probation, the police and the CPS. Following the withdrawal of attendance at the SDAC steering group by the CPS Isle of Wight data on trials, conviction rates etc has not been available to the group making it difficult to deliver on its remit. It is planned that the SDAC steering group will reform in 2015.

2. Who is at risk?

National Picture:

- In 2010/2011, an average of 2 women a week were killed by a male and/or former partner: this constituted around one-third of all female homicide victims (Smith, Osborne, Lau, & Britton, 2012). This finding is consistent with previous years (Department of Health, 2005; Home Office, 1999; Povey, 2004, 2005).
- Approximately 100,000 individuals are currently (2011/2012) at high risk of serious harm or murder as a result of DA (CAADA, 2012).
- In 2010/2011, domestic violence accounted for 18% of all violent incidents reported in England and Wales (Chaplin, Flatley, & Smith, 2011) .
- 7% of women and 5% of men reported DA in 2010/ 2011. This is equivalent to approximately 1.2 million female and 800,000 male victims of DA (Smith, Osborne, Lau, & Britton, 2011) .
- In 2010/2011, repeat victimisation accounted for 73% of all incidents of domestic violence, 44 % were victimised more than once and 24% of victims had been victimised three times or more (Chaplin et al., 2011).
- Approximately 130,000 children are currently (2011/ 2012) living with DA (CAADA, 2012).
- Since the age of 16, almost 30 % of women and 17 % of men in England and Wales have experienced some form of domestic abuse (Chaplin et al., 2011).
- Not only are women more likely to have experienced domestic abuse (see above), they are also more likely to have experienced multiple incidents of abuse. Indeed, 89% of those individuals who have been subject to 4 or more incidents of DA (same perpetrator) since the age of 16 are women (Walby & Allen, 2004).
- The average length of the abusive relationship is 5 years (CAADA, 2012).
- 1 in 5 women in the UK (aged 16 - 59) has experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 16 (Ministry of Justice, Office for National Statistics & Home Office, 2013)

Local Picture:

Measuring domestic violence and abuse and rape / serious sexual offences is difficult due to the complex nature of the issues and the fact that the majority of such abuse is never reported; there are no definitive figures for the scale of the problem on the Island, or anywhere else in the UK.

The Government's 'Ready Reckoner' tool provides a means of estimating the scale of domestic abuse in a particular area using regional data from the British Crime Survey and Census data, using this tool it is estimated that over 4,000 women and girls aged 16-59 will have been victims of domestic abuse in the past year and over 2,000 women and girls aged 16-59 will have been victims of a sexual assault in the past year.

Isle of Wight Data

Police figures for reported domestic abuse on the Island 2014 – 15 (13/14 figures in brackets)

Total number of domestics – 2,282 (1416)

High Risk – 346

Total number of children – 2,129

Island Women’s Refuge Figures for 2014

Outreach contacts – 452

Accommodated in the Refuge – Adults 23 Children 33 (Adults 29 Children 38)

MARAC figures for 2014 (SafeLives data)

Number of cases – 281 (225)

Number of Children – 396 (249)

Police Figures for reported rape and serious sexual offences on the Island 2014

Total offences – 91 (146)

Recent – 48

Non –recent (reported 6 months or more after the offence) - 43

NB. the significant increase in police figures is likely due to the change to recording this year.

Funding

Our providers of specialist domestic abuse services are charities, dependant in the main on grant funding, and we are fortunate as a community that we have access to excellent, high quality services delivered by highly trained staff.

Partnership funding of our specialist domestic abuse services has always been found predominantly from underspends and short term grants. The Forum is grateful to Adults Social Care and Public Health for providing additional funding to our providers this year. However, short term, unstable funding makes it incredibly difficult for charities to provide sustainable services to vulnerable victims. The forum is working towards a partnership agreement for a pooled budget for commissioning domestic abuse services in the future.

Cost and benefits

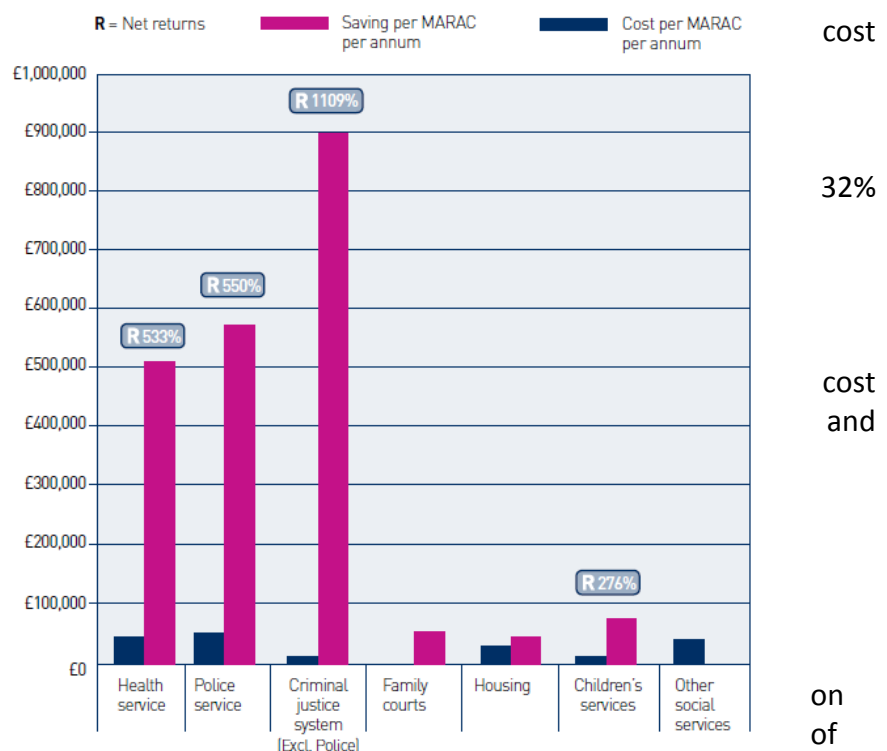
Nationally, it is estimated that a domestic abuse case in the 'high risk' category costs the public sector an average £20k per person per annum, if there is no specialist domestic abuse intervention (such as MARAC or IDVA).

The most recent data on the costs and benefits of early intervention in domestic abuse cases are provided by CAADA (Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse). They estimate that the MARAC process saves public services, on average, £6,000 per case in direct costs and that the NHS receives 20% of this saving, with the police and the wider criminal justice system receiving and 40% respectively.

Without a MARAC process, the most complex cases can cost £43,000 per annum, even the lowest risk cases that go to MARACs cost public services £4,000 per annum.²

For every £1 spent on MARACs, at least £6 of public money can be

saved annually on direct costs to agencies such as the police and health services. MARACs are saving money now and will go on to save more in future if properly resourced.³



² Commissioning services for women and children who experience violence or abuse – a guide for health commissioners (Feb 2011).

³ Saving lives, Saving money: MARACs and high risk domestic abuse. CAADA

3. Progress Against Domestic Abuse Priorities for 2014/15

The following were the key priorities for the Forum:

1. Work with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner on the integrated commissioning of specialist services.
2. Maintain, and where possible increase, the current levels of informed and knowledgeable support for survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse.
3. Ensure information on domestic abuse, rape and the services that can help are more widely available to the general public and to professionals.
4. Bring a specialist counselling service for survivors of rape and sexual assault to the Island.
5. Continue our focus on working with partners to improve access to education for all children and young people on domestic abuse / sexual violence.

Priority 1: Integrated Commissioning

Work commenced with the OPCC on the integration of commissioning but was not completed due to a lack of capacity. The forum now has a dedicated domestic abuse coordinator (in post Oct 15) and a target date for integrated commissioning has been set for April 2017. Existing funding streams from the OPCC, Adults Social Care, Public Health and Supporting People have been extended for the next financial year.

Priority 2: Maintain / Increase current levels of support

All services, with the exception of the ADAPT perpetrator programme remain in place

Priority 3: Information

Two public awareness campaigns were launched this year: 'Sex without Consent is Rape' focusing on rape myths and the 'Domestic Abuse Poetry campaign'. Posters from both campaigns are displayed across the Island in public buildings, health settings and on the buses. The DAF webpages also contain information on the campaigns and ways to access support. 5,000 more Domestic abuse 'z-card' contact cards which are printed to look like receipts were also distributed to partner agencies.

Priority 4: Specialist counselling for Rape / Sexual Violence

A successful bid to the OPCC by the DAF meant that Southampton Rape Crisis were able to launch this service on the Island providing specialist counselling for adult victims of rape and sexual abuse on-Island rather than victims travelling to SRC offices in Southampton.

Priority 5: Education

This remains an on-going project. In 2014 / 15 it was agreed that Public Health would lead on supporting and encouraging schools to provide a holistic PHSE programme including domestic abuse, sexual health and healthy relationships. Forum members have supported these attempts and provided information and links for schools to Home Office approved evidence based programmes that can be used in primary and secondary schools.

Future Objectives:

Victims/survivors of Domestic Abuse are currently supported by excellent specialist services on the Isle of Wight. The commitment and passion of the Island's voluntary sector ensures that the highest level of urgent and essential support is provided to women, men and children suffering Domestic Abuse. The MARAC also functions very well with a high level of agency attendance, support and interaction. This ensures that effective action plans are set to support survivors with clear care pathways to minimise the risk of further harm or repeat victimisation. However, there are gaps in provision – most notably in dedicated support to children and young people and perpetrator programmes.

Over the last 18 months it has become apparent that the loss of a dedicated Domestic Abuse Coordinator has impacted on the effectiveness of the Forum. Forum meetings have been sporadic and poorly attended, the strategy requires an urgent update and TOR require reviewing. In addition a dedicated lead is required to deliver the Integrated Commissioning of Domestic Abuse services on the Island. At the end of March 2015 the LSAB agreed to fund a dedicated Domestic Abuse Coordinator post to support the Domestic Abuse Forum.

Actions set for the new domestic abuse coordinator for the next financial year include:

- Review the current structure and membership of the DAF and who the forum should report to.
- Prepare a 3-5 year Strategic Plan for the delivery of DA services to the Island.
- Introduce 'Integrated Commissioning' to ensure that the most effective service is delivered and maximise VFM
- Review the current performance framework and introduce KPI's which are consistent with the strategic delivery plan
- Ensure joined up working between IWC Departments, statutory and VSO partners to deliver single delivery approach
- Ensure that VAWG training/awareness is a common thread through the strategy.

References

Isle of Wight Domestic Abuse and Gender Based Violence Strategy (2012 – 15) for a copy email: fleur.gardiner@iow.gov.uk

Call to End Violence against Women and Girls” (H.O Nov 2010):

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/call-end-violence-women-girls/vawg-paper?view=Binary>

Saving Lives Saving Money: MARACs and high risk domestic abuse (CAADA 2010):

http://www.caada.org.uk/policy/Saving_lives_saving_money_FINAL_VERSION.pdf

British Crime Survey: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/research-statistics/crime/crime-statistics/british-crime-survey/>

Appendix 1








ISLE OF WIGHT DOMESTIC ABUSE FORUM

TERMS OF REFERENCE (Revised September 2013)




VISION

Our vision is for an Island that is a safe place for all residents to live; where acts of domestic abuse and gender based violence are not tolerated and where victims are supported and perpetrators held to account for their actions.

AIMS

-  To reduce the incidence of domestic abuse and gender based violence on the Island.
-  To achieve a policy of co-operation and co-ordination of services between agencies.
-  To ensure that each agency plays an integral role in providing a response that is strategic in the prevention of domestic abuse and gender based violence.
-  To identify gaps in service provision and make recommendations for the development of future services on the Island.
-  To achieve successful sustainable provision of services that is meaningful to the individual seeking help.
-  To identify mechanisms and subsequent support systems for perpetrators which hold them accountable for their behaviour.
-  To raise awareness and understanding of domestic abuse and gender based violence amongst the general public

CORE PRINCIPLES

-  The views and experiences of service users and carers will be actively sought and used to inform service planning and delivery.
-  An annual report will be produced in relation to activities on the Island.
-  Implementation of the Domestic Abuse and Gender Based Violence Strategy will take into account the full continuum of services, regardless of differences in the way services

are commissioned or provided.

- ✚ Safeguarding is a fundamental principle.

OBJECTIVES

- ✚ To have a common understanding and definition of domestic abuse.
- ✚ To define the role and responsibilities of the individual agency in the multi agency process.
- ✚ To promote and maintain co-operation and joint action to increase awareness of domestic abuse.
- ✚ To develop practices and procedures that are relevant to coordinated service provision.
- ✚ To ensure training is available to develop a consistent response and approach.
- ✚ To identify and promote the creation of new services and preventative measures.
- ✚ To participate in the development of the domestic abuse action plan from year to year.
- ✚ Through a performance framework ensure that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are implemented.
- ✚ To agree priorities and make recommendations.
- ✚ To ensure that priorities are based on clearly identified need, for example Joint Area Strategic Need Assessment.
- ✚ To ensure that service users and carers are consulted and involved in service planning and delivery.
- ✚ To ensure that development of domestic abuse services takes account of research and best practice and is responsive to national as well as local objectives and priorities.
- ✚ To seek opportunities to increase resources through influencing policy, commissioning and planning mechanisms including applying for national and international grants.
- ✚ Review spend against domestic abuse services.
- ✚ Maintain and evaluate outcomes on any projects funded by the Forum.

FORMAT AND GOVERNANCE

The Isle of Wight Domestic Abuse Forum will meet on a quarterly basis in the first instance and will report to the Safer Communities Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board and the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

Specific pieces of domestic abuse work requested by the Forum will be undertaken by the operational group or time limited task and finish time groups.

ORGANISATIONAL MEMBERSHIP OF STRATEGIC GROUP

NHS Trust
Clinical Commissioning Group
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults representatives
Education Representative
Voluntary Sector
Housing
Community Safety
Police - PPD
Elected Member
Crown Prosecution Service

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Agreement with terms of reference of the Strategic Domestic Abuse Forum as outlined.

Agreement with the Terms and Conditions of membership as outlined.

ATTENDANCE ON THE FORUM









Members of the Strategic Forum are required to attend the full Forum meetings once every quarter.

Members are required to forward their apologies or appoint a substitute representative to attend on their behalf when they are unable to attend Forum Meetings.

On three consecutive non attendances membership of the Forum will be terminated and the organisation will have to apply for a new member. A letter will be sent informing the organisation of this.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ORGANISATION REPRESENTATIVE

The representative has a duty to ensure that:

-  Information on domestic abuse is distributed to all relevant staff in their organisation.
-  Domestic abuse posters and information are displayed in public areas belonging to their organisation.
-  Domestic abuse information is included on their organisation website.
-  Their organisation has in place a specific personnel policy on domestic abuse for staff experiencing or perpetrating domestic abuse.
-  There is a specific individual within the agency with lead responsibility for domestic violence.
-  The organisation has in place mechanisms to monitor their agency's response to domestic abuse.
-  Their organisation shares relevant data with the Forum.
-  Reporting back to senior management in their organisation to ensure they are kept up to date with the work of the forum.

It is also the responsibility of the representative to inform their own senior management of any implication resulting from decisions made around interagency workings.

The representative is expected to seek approval and agreement from the relevant officers in their organisation to progress any developments in multi agency working undertaken by the Forum.

Agreements made by the representative at Forum meetings and any resulting sub group meetings will be taken as agreements from the organisation as a whole.

