



# **Southampton Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy**

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**2022 - 2027**

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Our partnership approach to tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls in Southampton.

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## Partners

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**Local service providers**



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# Introduction

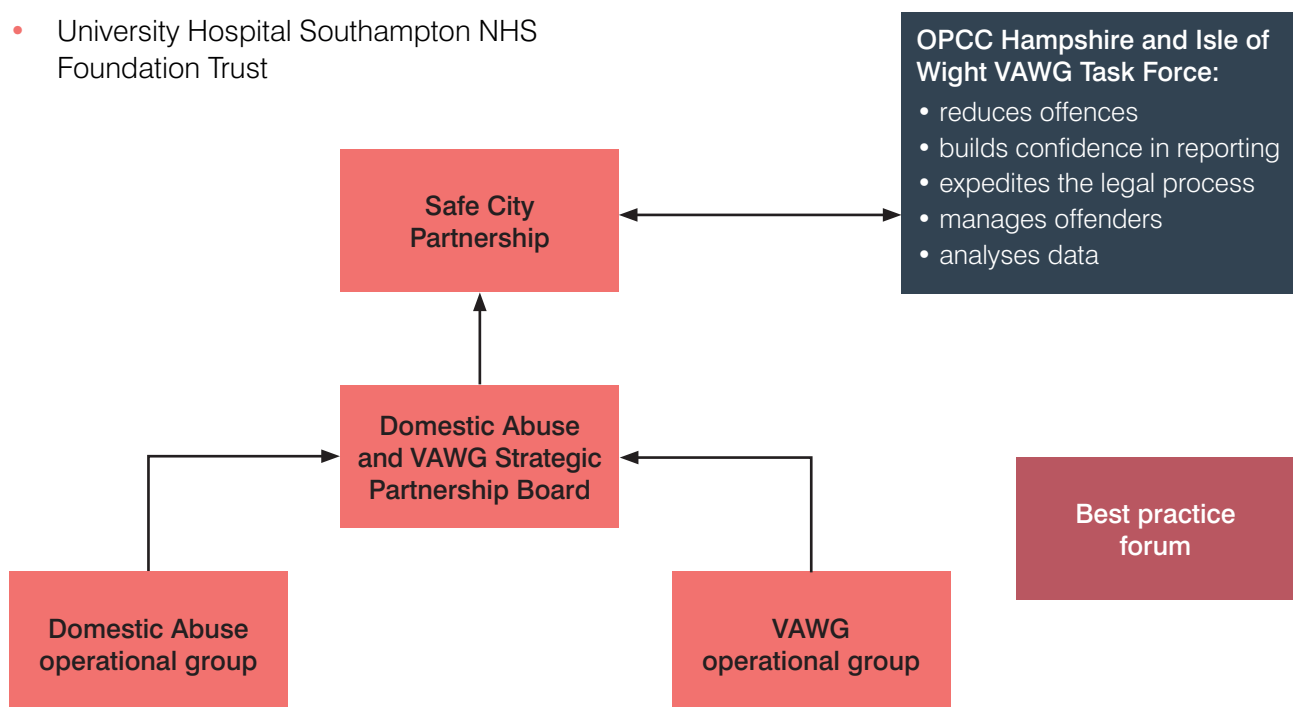
## The Southampton Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership

In Southampton, key public services and agencies have joined up to take action to prevent violence against women and girls (“VAWG”) and to find better ways to support victims/survivors of abuse.

The partnership has the following members:

- Hampshire Constabulary
- Local service providers
- NHS Hampshire, Southampton and Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.
- Probation Service
- Solent NHS Trust
- Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Southampton City Council
- Southampton Local Safeguarding Boards (represented jointly)
- University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

Partner representatives (senior leaders with the power to make decisions about how resources are used) meet as a ‘Board’ every three months. The Board is provided with the latest intelligence around VAWG in Southampton and decides how best to respond. The Board is supported by two tactical groups assigned to carry this strategy into effect. A report on the partnership’s progress is provided to the Safe City Partnership (a group of agencies required by law to work together to make Southampton safer) every three months. The Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Southampton Local Safeguarding Adults Board also monitor the partnership’s progress.



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# The value in working together

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- We will work in partnership to make Southampton safer for women and girls.
- We will improve the connections between the services we provide so victims/survivors get the support they need, in the right place at the right time.
- We will join up our training and communications to ensure our services are reliable, consistent and known by everyone who needs them.
- We will collect robust data across our systems and use it to improve decision making by our practitioners and to inform decisions about how we use our money and resources to achieve our aims.
- We will pool our intelligence and hear the voices of survivors, service providers and our residents to learn about gaps in our services and barriers to accessing our support.
- We will own up to our mistakes and learn from them.
- We will hold each other to account as partners, and we will be held accountable by the people we exist to support.
- We will work together to tackle inequalities in our service provision and to promote equality, diversity and inclusion across our workforces and the workforces of our service providers.

Together we will make improvements that we can **only** make together.

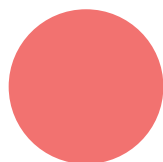
## Our decision-making is evidence informed

This strategy tells you how the partnership will work together over the next five years (2022-27) to make Southampton safer for women and girls and to support the victims and survivors of violence and abuse. The work is split into actions ('what we will do') in four priority areas which have been identified by careful review of the following evidence about local needs and service performance, along with the views of survivors, practitioners, senior commissioners, public health experts and residents who have guided us in producing this strategy.

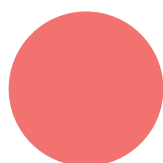
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# Our priorities

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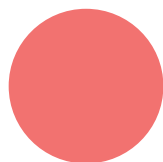


## Prioritising prevention

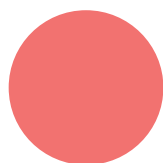


## Support for survivors

(early intervention and support)



## Building an accountable community and changing perpetrator behaviour



## A stronger coordinated response

*A Domestic Homicide Review is a multi-agency review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person*

- Preventing perpetrators of intimate partner abuse in Southampton: A needs Assessment (Public Health, Southampton City Council, June 2019).
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment (Standing Together on behalf of Southampton City Council, August 2021).
- Reducing Violence against women and girls in Southampton City (Safe City Partnership, Making Southampton safer, 2021).
- A rapid joint strategic needs assessment of Women Selling Sex “On Street” (Southampton City Council, July 2020).
- Southampton Violence Against Women and Girls Problem Profile (Southampton City Council Data Observatory 2022).

This strategy also reflects our commitment to address the comments and recommendations in reports published following Domestic Homicide Reviews carried out in Southampton.





*Women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse and other acts of violence, what we do will focus on making them safer.*

## **What do we mean by violence against women and girls?**

Violence against women and girls, as set out by the United Nations, is any act of gender-based violence which results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, mental harm or suffering to women and girls.

Crimes of violence against women and girls include **domestic abuse, rape and other sexual offences, stalking, 'honour-based' abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and 'honour' killings), 'revenge porn', 'upskirting'** and many others. There is a dictionary in Appendix 2 of this document which explains all the crimes in bold.

## **What do we mean by domestic abuse?**

Domestic abuse is when a person or a group of people use controlling or violent behaviours towards a family member, partner, or ex-partner. There are specific interventions and support services needed for people who experience domestic abuse so and this strategy is named "The Southampton Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy" to acknowledge this.

In 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act made some changes to the definition of domestic abuse. Children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse towards their parent, guardian or relative are now treated as victims/survivors of domestic abuse in their own right. This means they can get support from domestic abuse services. This strategy sets out how our partnership will act to ensure children receive the extra services and support this new definition requires.

## **Why are we focusing on violence against women and girls?**

When violence and abuse happens, women and girls are usually the victims/survivors, and men are usually the ones causing the harm. Men and boys, and other people who do not identify as women or girls, are victims/survivors of violence and abuse too.

The services we provide must meet the needs of all victims/survivors, and what we do between 2022 and 2027 must bring about improvements for everybody. As evidence shows that women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse and other acts of violence, what we do will focus on making them safer.

## How we will respond to changes in the way the NHS works

Big changes are taking place across the health and care system. The changes will affect how the organisations that make up the NHS (including the local NHS Trusts and commissioners who are members of our partnership) work in a joined-up way to deliver health and wellbeing and the health services we all access every day. We will work with Southampton's primary care networks (our GP services) and support Hampshire's new integrated care system (funded mainly by NHS England) to plan and provide health and care services in the way that effectively addresses the needs of victims/survivors of abuse, whether adults or children. This strategy will inform Southampton's next Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Southampton Integrated Care Partnership's new integrated care strategy (which will cover health, social care and public health needs).

### What area does our strategy cover?

Our strategy deals with services provided by partners and their service providers in Southampton. Services provided across Hampshire and England are also available in Southampton.

The actions in this strategy support work by services in Southampton to become a 'Child Friendly City'. Child Friendly City status is awarded by UNICEF to cities where children's rights are put into practice and children have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.







# Domestic abuse and VAWG: how our joint service works

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## **Victim/Survivors**

### **[List of relevant services and contact details to be appended for publication]**

If a member of the public experiences or becomes aware of domestic abuse or VAWG they can phone the police (dial 999 in an emergency) and/or contact one of the specialist services in the city.

For domestic abuse, including harmful practices such as forced marriage and honour-based violence, the PIPPA helpline is open to practitioners and members of the public and is staffed by trained specialists to provide initial guidance, support, and safety advice and, with consent, undertake a risk assessment (DASH, an evidence-based risk assessment used nationally).

Victims/survivors who are assessed as medium risk will be referred, with consent, to appropriate community-based support in the city. Those assessed as high risk are referred, via the Children's Resource Service (formerly the MASH), into the High-Risk Domestic Abuse ("HRDA") process. This is a multi-agency process where relevant information is gathered and shared between partner agencies to inform appropriate support and safeguarding actions. When professionals identify a high level of risk to victims, they can refer directly to the HRDA process.

Victims/survivors who are assessed as being at standard/medium risk are offered outreach community support from a specialist domestic abuse worker (including specialist workers for harmful practices, disability advocacy and for those victims who need support for mental health, or with drugs or alcohol). Those assessed at high risk are referred to the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy service. Via either route, victims/survivors are offered support and advocacy that focuses on increasing safety and reducing harm. Independent Domestic Violence Advisors ("IDVAs") and outreach workers can support victims to access services e.g., housing, benefits, health, Children's Services, legal advice and navigate complex systems e.g., criminal and civil court processes. They are there to advocate on their behalf and ensure that support is victim-centred and focused on safety.

For those who have experienced any form of sexual abuse, there is a specialist helpline, open to the public, provided by a specialist service, which provides advice, support and referrals to appropriate advocacy (Independent Sexual Violence Advisors "ISVAs"), and one-to-one and group therapeutic support.

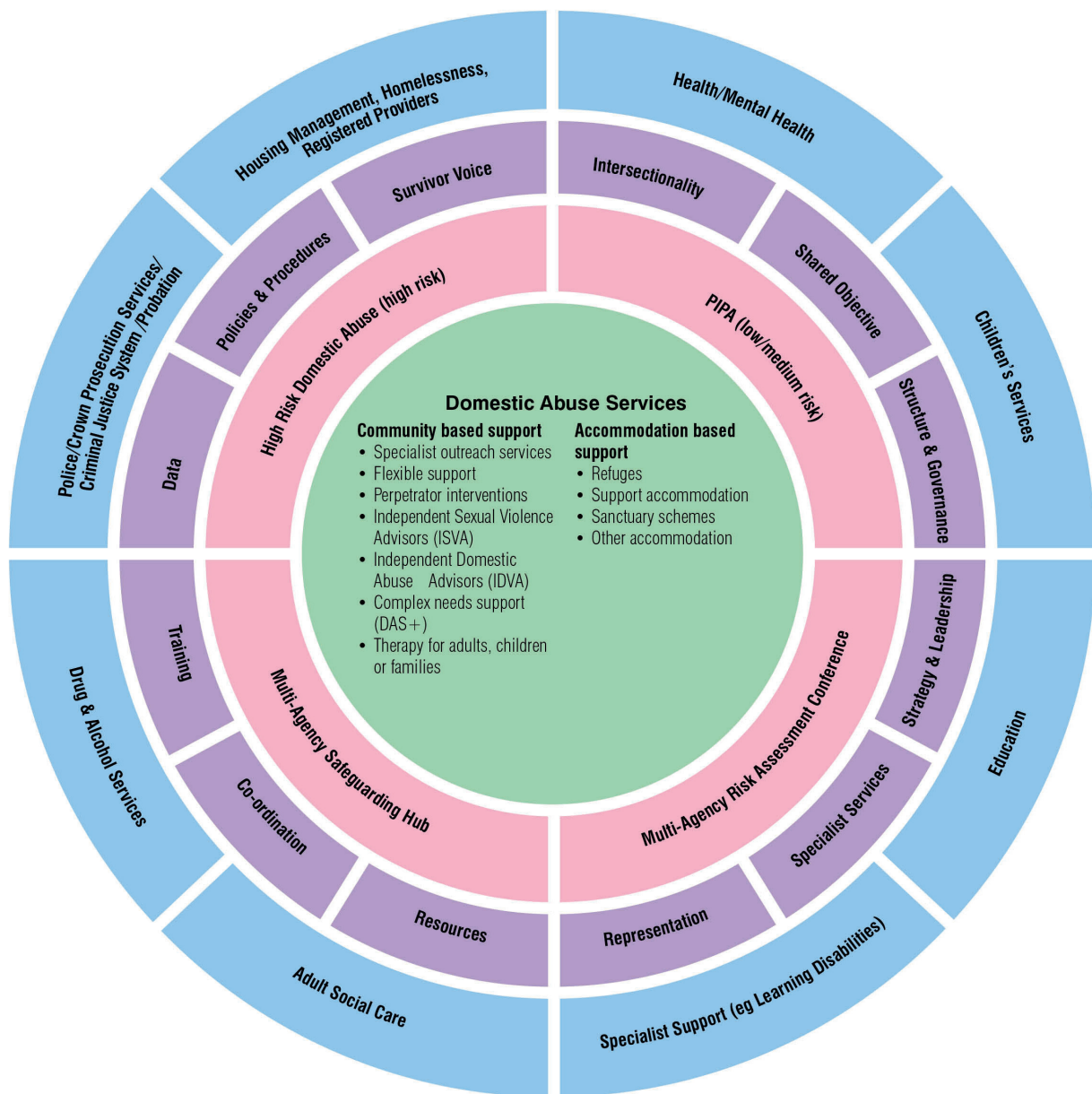
For victims of stalking, there is a specialist stalking service (operating across Hampshire) that offers support, advice, and guidance, regardless of involvement with the criminal justice system. Referrals to this service can be made directly by the victim/survivor, or on their behalf by any service provider who is working with them.

The city provides accommodation-based support in specialist refuges (and has access to a nationwide network of refuge provision) and supported accommodation. There are also 'sanctuary schemes' which provide additional security such as lock changes to allow victims/survivors to remain in their homes where safe to do so.

## **Domestic abuse prevention and behaviour change**

There is a specialist commissioned service within Southampton that provides support for men who wish to understand and change their abusive and controlling behaviour. This service can be accessed directly by any man who is concerned about his behaviour and the impact it is having on his family. Referrals can also be made by any practitioner who has gained consent. Men can access group and one-to-one support to build skills for better, non-abusive relationships. Support is also offered to the partners/ex-partners of those who undertake this work to ensure safeguarding is in place for the whole family. In addition to this work, a Male Engagement Worker (“MEW”) has been added to the IDVA service. The MEW works with fathers who are using abusive behaviours in their relationships and whose children are receiving support from Children’s Social Care. The MEW works with fathers on a one-to-one basis to help them to acknowledge their abusive behaviours and understand the harm they have caused.

# Tackling domestic abuse in Southampton



## KEY

**Domestic Abuse and VAWG Partnership Board Partners**  
ensuring that the

**Coordinated Community Response**  
**Components** provide

**Domestic Abuse Pathways** to  
**Domestic Abuse Services**





# Priority one: Prioritising prevention

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## Outcomes



There will be fewer incidents of domestic abuse and VAWG in Southampton.



Southampton's residents will be better able to identify and respond appropriately to domestic abuse and VAWG.



Southampton's local environment will be changed to make it safer.

# What we are doing already



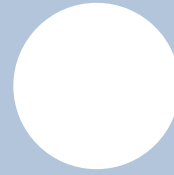
## **STAR project in schools and community settings**

For children and young people to raise awareness of issues surrounding domestic and sexual abuse, to develop skills around negotiating respect and consent within relationships and to provide information about how to access guidance and support.



## **White Ribbon Day**

White Ribbon Day awareness-raising event in Guildhall Square.



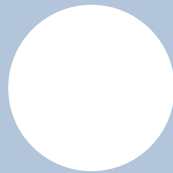
## **Identification and Referral to Improve Safety project**

IRIS project supports early identification and referrals for support within primary health settings.



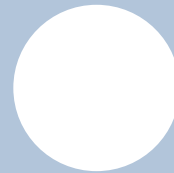
## **Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight VAWG Task Force**

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight VAWG Task Force unites key partners to improve the response to VAWG across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.



## **The Violence Reduction Unit VRU interventions**

The Violence Reduction Unit ("VRU") is working on VAWG-specific interventions in the city including collaborating with the Cyber Ambassadors to assist with tackling sexual harassment and online abuse and working in partnership with Southampton's universities and services in the night-time economy to improve student safety.



## **VRU funding**

The VRU is continuing to bid for Home Office funding to improve the safety of women and girls in the night-time economy and in public places. £190,000 was secured via the Safer Streets 3 Fund to improve education, enhance LED Lighting, implement CCTV in known hotspots, and to expand awareness campaigns for support services for survivors/victims of VAWG.

## What are the issues we need to address?

Across the city, we need to raise awareness and understanding of what VAWG and domestic abuse look like in everyday life. Over a third of respondents in the Southampton Community Safety Survey (2021) answered 'don't know' when asked about the following issues in the city that are known to disproportionately impact women and girls: VAWG, domestic abuse, sexual offences and stalking and harassment.

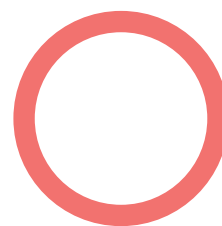
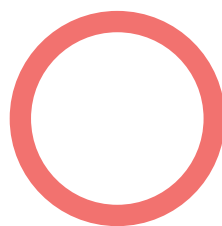
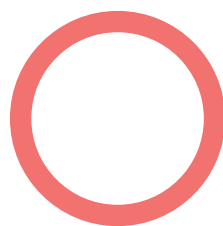
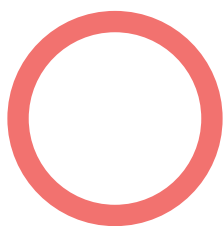
Socially and culturally, domestic abuse and VAWG are normalised. Sexism and disrespect towards women and girls are often tolerated and/or minimised which, in turn, lays the groundwork for more serious acts of VAWG to be justified, and makes it harder for abusive behaviour to be 'called out' and for perpetrators to be held accountable. Responsibility for safety is often placed on women and girls, rather than with the perpetrators and others in positions of authority.

To end domestic abuse and VAWG in Southampton, we must prevent it from happening. This means better education for everyone, but especially boys and men, about domestic abuse and VAWG and the harms it causes. By doing this, we want to empower more people to challenge VAWG and the misogynistic attitudes that enable it.

Domestic Homicide Reviews and the needs assessments carried out within Southampton demonstrate that there are areas of weakness in understanding of domestic abuse and VAWG by practitioners as well as the public. We also need to develop a better understanding across all organisations of how differences in physical and mental health (for adults and children) impact on, or are caused by, experiences of VAWG.

# Priority 1

## What we will do 2022-2027



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1

Staff and volunteers working for partner agencies will be trained to identify domestic abuse and other forms of VAWG and respond sensitively and intervene appropriately with all family members.

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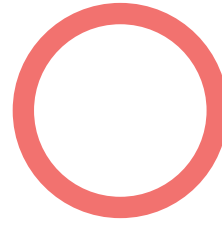
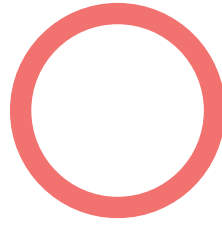
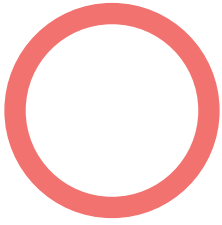
Professionals will be supported to educate children and young people about equality, respect, gender roles and the harmful effects of gendered expectations. We will explore the development of a city-wide 'whole school approach' to VAWG, with genuine engagement across the entire community: staff, pupils, governors, parents, and external services.

3

The relationships and sex education (RSE) and personal, social, health and economic education (PHSE) curriculums in Southampton's schools will be changed to raise awareness and understanding of the continuum of VAWG – including domestic abuse – and the support available to victims/survivors in Southampton.

4

City-wide awareness raising campaigns – under the 'Safe City' brand – will challenge harmful attitudes towards domestic abuse and VAWG and support and encourage active bystander intervention whether in public places (including on-line spaces), at home, in the workplace, education or social settings.



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We will work with primary healthcare providers to intervene to prevent VAWG by identifying and supporting high risk groups (adults and children) before violence and abuse occurs.

More organisations and businesses in the city will be encouraged to join the 'Safe Place Network', where they will receive training about how to respond appropriately to VAWG.

Data gathered by partners will be used to improve safety, and feelings of safety, for women and girls in Southampton by informing changes to the local environment (for example street lighting and CCTV) and improving safety on public transport.





## Priority 2: Support for survivors (early intervention and support)

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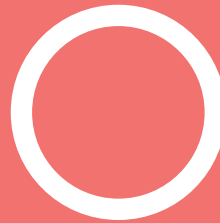
### Outcomes



Access to domestic abuse and VAWG services in Southampton will be straightforward and on an equal footing for everyone, regardless of their characteristics and residential circumstances.



Survivors with no recourse to public funds ('NRPF') will be able to access the support they need.



Children will be supported as victims/survivors of domestic abuse.



There will be sufficient provision of safe accommodation in Southampton to meet need.

# What we are doing already



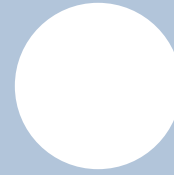
## **Community domestic abuse services**

There are a range of community domestic abuse and VAWG services within the city, including: PIPPA, a dedicated domestic abuse helpline for professionals and the public; women's refuges; Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy ("IDVA") for high-risk survivors; Independent Sexual Violence Advocates ("ISVA"); outreach workers; specialist therapeutic support and recovery groups for adults and children; and a dedicated 'floating support' service for women who experience multiple disadvantage.



## **Diversity and Inclusion Advocacy service**

There is a specialist Diversity and Inclusion Advocacy service to support victims of Harmful Practices (such as FGM and Forced Marriage) and to raise awareness within communities.



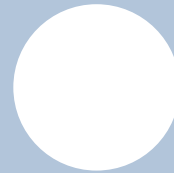
## **IRIS**

The IRIS project supports early identification and referrals for support within primary health settings.



## **DAHA**

Southampton City Council Housing is Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance ("DAHA") accredited and shows examples of good practice and positive partnership working.



## **Healthcare for homeless team**

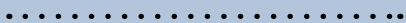
There is a dedicated Healthcare for Homeless Team who proactively visit victims/survivors and their children in refuges/ temporary accommodation, rather than wait for referrals.





### **New service**

A new service has been commissioned for women selling sex on street.



### **Voice of the Child**

Voice of the Child” is an expected area of domestic abuse response for Hampshire Constabulary and Child Centred Policing champions provide scrutiny and feedback to officers attending incidents and their line managers to further develop best practice.

## **What are the issues we need to address?**

There is evidence that victims/survivors in Southampton are not being identified and supported early enough. There are significant numbers of victims who are assessed as being at high risk, which suggests that opportunities to intervene earlier are being missed by professionals who may be working with families.

We need to improve awareness in the city of the support that is available for victims/survivors (adults and children). Feedback from survivors in Southampton has told us that earlier awareness of, and access to, services would have improved their experience.

National data shows that higher rates of domestic abuse and VAWG are experienced by Black and Minoritised women, LGBT+ people, migrant women, disabled victims/survivors, women who sell sex and women experiencing multiple disadvantage (substance-use, mental health, poverty). Victims/survivors from these groups experience additional barriers to safety. In Southampton, there are low numbers of people recorded as accessing services from these groups, we need more information about what the barriers are, and better recording of data so that we can improve our services. In the absence of local, specialist ‘by and for’ services, generic domestic abuse services in the city need to be equipped to meet the needs of a diverse range of survivors.

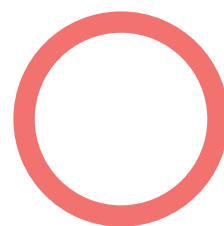
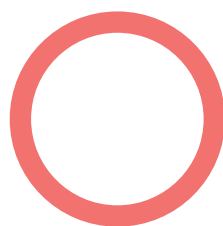
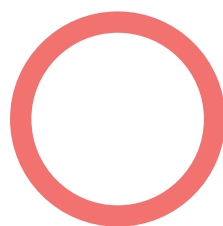
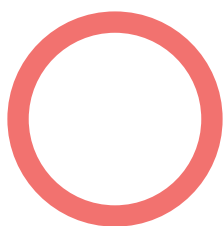
Nationally, domestic abuse is a leading cause of homelessness for women. Approximately 10% of presentations to Southampton Housing Needs are related to domestic abuse and a homelessness hostel in Southampton reported that 90% of female residents had experienced domestic abuse. Currently, Southampton does not have any single-sex supported accommodation provision.

Local data from Southampton’s refuges mirrors the national picture, showing that provision cannot meet demand. In Southampton, there is evidence of unmet need for disabled survivors (especially those who require wheelchair accessible accommodation), those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and those who experience multiple disadvantage (especially drug and alcohol use).

The 2021 Act requires agencies and service providers to treat children who are impacted by domestic abuse as victims in their own right. At present, not all agencies/providers in Southampton record information about the dependent children of adult victims/survivors accessing their services so there is no reliable information about how many children are victims of domestic abuse in the city.

# Priority 2

## What we will do 2022-2027



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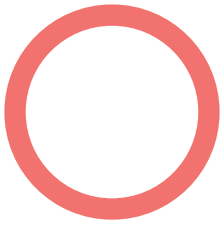
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A 'Whole Housing Approach' to domestic abuse will be implemented across Southampton. The Whole Housing Approach (WHA) is a framework for addressing the housing and safety needs of victim/survivors across all housing tenure types (social, private rented and private ownership).

Access to our services by people with protected characteristics will be reviewed and services changed to improve equality of access.

Children who see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse will be treated by agencies and service providers in Southampton as victims of domestic abuse in their own right and data will be recorded to inform the development of appropriate support and intervention.

New collaborative approaches to assessing and supporting families where children are victims of domestic abuse will be developed.



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## 12

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The identification of and response to standard and medium risk cases of domestic abuse will be improved by consistent high-quality training for service providers in identification of DA and VAWG and the pathways to support. This will mean that support can be offered to families as early as possible.





## Priority 3: Building an accountable community and changing perpetrator behaviour

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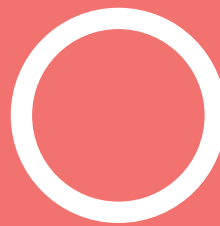
### Outcomes



There will be more voluntary self-referrals to community based behaviour change programmes for those who are using harmful behaviours and who are outside of the criminal justice system.



There will be an increase in the numbers of those completing behaviour change programmes and a reduction in reoffending.



Systems and processes will withstand manipulation by those who are using abusive behaviours.



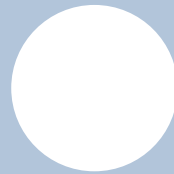
There will be more referrals from social care and health-related services (e.g., community mental health teams and drug/alcohol support services) to specialist support and behaviour change programmes.

# What we are doing already



## **MEW**

There is a dedicated Male Engagement Worker (“MEW”) in the IDVA team and a local behaviour change service, providing community interventions, including a group work programme. A Public Health Grant and funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has been secured to recruit an additional Young Person’s MEW to the team.



## **Community Perpetrator Programme**

Southampton has a commissioned community behaviour change programme provided by The Hampton Trust. The programme provides group and one-to-one work to support behaviour change for those people whose behaviour is not addressed within the criminal justice system.



## **Drive Project**

Hampton Trust and Hampshire Constabulary are working in partnership to deliver a focused response to high risk/high harm perpetrators of domestic abuse. This is a pilot funded by the Home Office and an independent evaluation has recently been published (July 2022).



## **DARE**

The commissioned perpetrator service has developed a routine enquire model – Domestic Abuse Routine Enquiry Model (“DARE”) – to support practitioners to identify domestic abuse perpetrators, to explore the risks and context associated with domestic abuse perpetrators and to support them into specialist services. This model will subject to an independent evaluation.



## Operation Foundation

Within Hampshire Constabulary, Southampton Neighbourhoods High Harm Team have delivered a pilot project “Operation Foundation” in relation to serial and repeat perpetrators of domestic abuse, providing targeted management of those identified as posing the highest risk of causing further harm.

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## What are the issues we need to address?

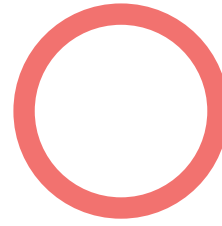
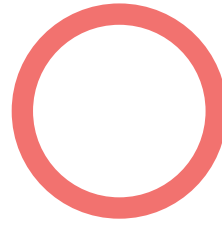
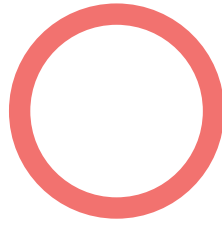
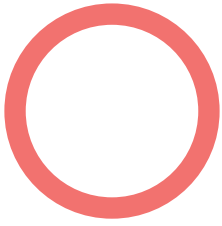
Rates of charging, prosecution and conviction for sexual offences, domestic abuse and stalking are disproportionately low. This means that the majority of those using harmful behaviours do not have any contact with the court-mandated behaviour change programmes provided by the National Probation Service. In addition to this, re-offending is a significant issue: there were 2,853 domestic flagged crime offenders identified in Southampton in 2020/21, of these 31.4% were repeat offenders. There is a need to raise awareness of, and improve referrals to, the community behaviour-change programmes by organisations outside of the criminal justice system. Service providers are often not sufficiently confident in identifying abusive behaviours or equipped with the skills to safely have challenging conversations to support perpetrators into specialist services.

The focus of professionals (as with society more widely) can still often be on the victim (adult and/or child) taking decisions to ‘keep safe’ and not on the behaviour of the person causing the harm who can become ‘invisible’ and therefore they can become unaccountable and free to continue their harmful behaviour.

There is manipulation of systems/services by perpetrators of abuse to bolster their own power and abuse (for example by making malicious reports about the victim/survivor to professionals). This is a critical problem which legitimises the power of the person behaving abusively and reinforces survivors’ sense of their own powerlessness.

# Priority 3

## What we will do 2022-2027



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13

Services provided by partner agencies in response to domestic abuse will enable children and young people to remain 'Safe and Together' with their non-abusive parent/guardian wherever this will help to achieve the best outcomes for them.

14

Male perpetrators of violence towards women and girls and domestic abuse will be supported to understand the impact of their actions and to take responsibility for and change their behaviours.

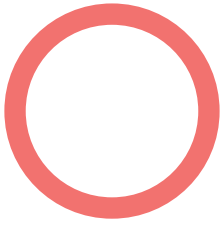
15

Wider services in Southampton, for example Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Mental Health and drug and alcohol services, will reliably identify risk arising from domestic abuse and VAWG and take appropriate steps to enable access to the right support.

16

Agencies and service providers in Southampton will identify and respond to those using harmful behaviours consistently and effectively, including making early interventions which prevent the escalation of abusive behaviours.



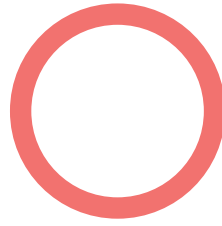


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Practice in the family courts will be improved by sharing best practice and information about local domestic abuse and VAWG services and pathways with judges, advocates, solicitors, CAFCASS and other stakeholders in the justice system.



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18

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Systems and services in Southampton will be safeguarded against manipulation by perpetrators.



# Case study

*...as Paul progressed through the course, he has expressed how valuable he has found the support.*

## Paul

Paul has been assessed as a high-risk perpetrator of domestic abuse, both in relation to an ex-partner and his current partner. In both relationships he has used coercive controlling behaviours, as well as physical and sexual violence.

Paul's unborn child was referred to Children's Services after he was arrested for assaulting his current partner who was in early stages of pregnancy at the time. When Male Engagement Worker ("MEW") first worked with Paul, he minimised and denied his abusive behaviours. He was focused on the impact that being arrested and having children's services involved with his family had had on him as opposed to being able to think about the impact that his abuse had on his partner, or their unborn child.

The MEW was able to support Paul onto a Hampton Trust behaviour change programme. Paul initially felt that he was not going to learn anything, thinking that it was more of a punishment rather than an opportunity for him to reflect on his abusive behaviour (both violent and non-violent) and learn how to make better parenting choices. However, as Paul progressed through the course, he has expressed how valuable he has found the support. He has started to reference what he has learned and can provide examples of how he has used the tools he has been introduced to so that he can make more pro-social choices rather than becoming verbally or physically aggressive.

Whilst he is still on his behaviour change journey, Paul has made progress such that the core group of professionals working to safeguard his child have agreed that the safety plan can be adapted for him to return to the family home whilst child protection planning is on-going. The MEW continues to provide a dynamic risk assessment to support the social worker's decision making and safety planning for the family.



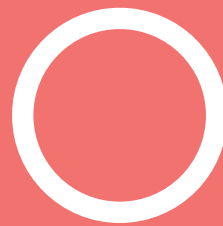
## Priority 4: A stronger coordinated response

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### Outcomes



The voices of survivors will be reflected in decisions about system design and improvement



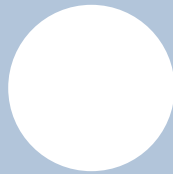
Agreed standards of data collection and information sharing will be developed by partner organisations in order to drive system improvement.

# What we are doing already



## **New partnership**

Establishment of the Southampton Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Partnership Board.



## **Domestic Abuse Coordinator**

A Domestic Abuse Coordinator was appointed in January 2021 to support the work of the partnership.



## **New ICU service**

New ICU – commissioned domestic abuse services (July 2022), with flexibility to vary service in line with emerging need.



## **DAHA accredited**

One local registered housing provider is DAHA accredited. Three are working towards accreditation.



## **Life-limiting illness**

Southampton City Council is collaborating with a Public Health researcher to develop better understanding of domestic abuse and life-limiting illnesses.



## **HRDA evaluation**

An evaluation of HRDA and system pathways by the University of Southampton has been commissioned.



### **VAWG problem profile**

Prevalence data is very robust. The VRU has developed a VAWG Problem Profile to collect data on VAWG offences reported across the city. There are further opportunities to develop data and intelligence through new systems, such as Care Director, following the appointment of a dedicated Domestic Abuse Data Lead post in January 2021.

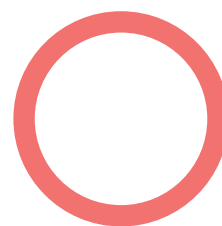
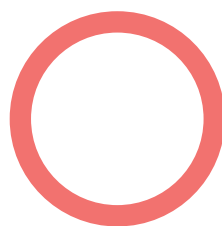
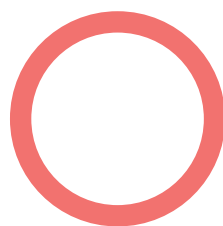
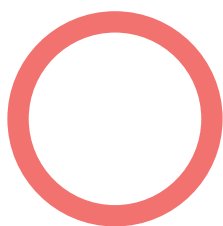
### **What are the issues we need to address?**

There is no embedded approach to survivor engagement/consultation/co-production in the city, limiting the voice of the survivor in this report. Addressing this will support future needs assessments and strategies and inform practice and service development.

Some key data metrics are not captured by data holders and there are significant differences in the way data holders define, capture and report on data, with a wide variety of case management systems used. This undermines analysis of system performance.

# Priority 4

## What we will do 2022-2027



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Data will be shared appropriately between agencies/services in our system to protect victims/survivors.

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Multi-agency arrangements for assessing and responding effectively to high-risk cases of domestic abuse will be evaluated and improved.

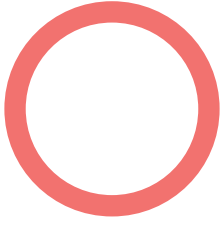
- Multi-agency safeguarding hub (“MASH” – now part of the Children’s Resource Centre).
- High-risk domestic abuse arrangements (“HRDA”).
- Multi-agency risk assessment conference (“MARAC”).

21

Decisions about service provision will be evidence-informed by knowledge from research, practice and people accessing services.

22

The voices of victims/survivors will be heard and will inform the design, development and implementation of local services.



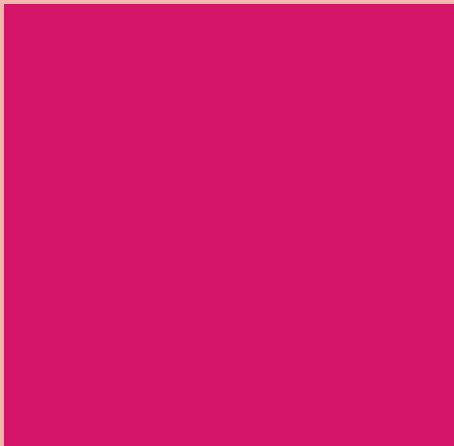
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## 23

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Key data about the performance of individual services and the system as a whole will be gathered reliably and used to inform improvements to practice.

# Case study



## Susan

Susan was a European Economic Area (EEA) national with pre-settled status who had lived in the UK for over 10 years. She had three children, one of whom was disabled with complex needs. The family were open to the specialist disability team in Children's Services.

Susan's husband had subjected her and their children to physical assaults, emotional abuse (shouting and swearing) and controlling behaviour around finances and day-to-day decision making for several years and Susan had become increasingly fearful for her safety and that of the children. One afternoon, when her husband was at work, she fled with the children to the local Sure Start centre to seek help. The Health Visitor at Sure Start contacted the PIPPA helpline and the family's allocated social worker, and a risk assessment was completed with Susan. This identified a high level of risk, and a referral was made into the HRDA process.

The immediate need for the family was access to a place of safety. They were unable to remain in the family home as Susan's husband was due to return later that day. The IDVA service and Children's Services worked together to liaise with the local authority homelessness team to arrange emergency accommodation which the family moved into within a matter of hours.

Susan was clear that she needed to remain in the city with access to the specialist support networks for her disabled child.

Working together – with the family at the centre of the plans – IDVA, social services and Southampton Housing Needs coordinated to ensure that Susan and her children had a continuity of support from professionals they knew and trusted, and that Susan was not having to 'manage' communications between each system (housing needs, social care needs, safety planning). This was crucial at a time when they were all traumatised, frightened, and dealing with the stresses of insecure housing, immigration processes, and the criminal and civil justice systems



# Appendix 1

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## Domestic abuse

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### **Nationally**

- 2.3 million adults in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse in 2019-2020.
- There was a total of 1,288,018 DA-related incidents in the UK (2019/2020).
- Domestic abuse has links to levels of deprivation. Safe Lives highlights those women in households with an income of less than £10,000 were 3.5 times more at risk than those in households with an income over £20,000.
- Domestic abuse is a leading cause of homelessness for women, with 32% of homeless women stating domestic abuse contributed to their homelessness.
- There is a 30% shortage of refuge spaces nationally, with 64% of refuge referrals being declined largely due to a lack of space.
- 62.5% of women in refuges had children and children make up most survivors in refuge.
- In 2020, police recorded crime data showed that almost half (46%) of adult female homicide victims in England and Wales (81 women) were killed in a domestic homicide.

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# Domestic abuse

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## Locally (within Southampton)

- Domestic violence is a driver of overall violent crime in Southampton. 35.5% of all violent crimes in Southampton were flagged as domestic in 2020/21.
- There were 4,804 domestic flagged crimes reported in Southampton during 2020/2021, which is a 2.6% increase compared to the previous year.
- Domestic flagged crime accounted for 17% of all recorded crimes in Southampton during 2020/21, a significantly higher proportion than in 2019/20 (14.5%).
- Domestic flagged crime continues to have strong links to deprivation, with rates approximately 5 times higher in the most deprived neighbourhoods compared to the least deprived. The rates of domestic flagged crime were highest in some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the city; with notable hotspots in the wards of Bitterne, Redbridge and Woolston.
- Domestic abuse is a leading cause of homelessness for women, and a Southampton homelessness hostel reported that 90% of female residents experienced domestic abuse.
- 66% of referrals to refuge in Southampton are declined, with lack of space being the most common reason (20%).
- Over 50% of women in Southampton refuge had children, with 115 children supported in one refuge (2018-2021). Furthermore, over half (54.3%) of Southampton High Risk domestic abuse (“HRDA”) Referrals in Southampton have children or young people in the household (2019/2021). The Safe City Strategic Assessment highlights that domestic abuse is a key Adverse Childhood Experience (“ACE”), whether it is experienced or witnessed, and children who experience ACEs more are more likely to have poorer outcomes, in relation to health, education and crime than those who experience fewer ACEs.

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# Violence against women and girls

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## **Nationally**

- The Crime Survey for England and Wales 2019 estimated 25% of women aged 18 to 74 years, around 5.1 million women, had experienced some form of abuse before the age of 16 years.
- 1 in 20 children in the UK have experienced sexual abuse involving physical contact. That is at least 1 in every school classroom.
- Harassment offences have increased to 221,000 offences recorded by the police in England and Wales in 2020/2021, from 214,000 in 2018/2020.
- OFSTED reports that 92% of girls and 74% of boys said sexist name-calling happens a lot or sometimes to them or their peers.
- The Crime Survey for England and Wales (2020) estimated that 3% of women aged 16 to 74 years in England and Wales experienced sexual assault (including attempts) and 5% experienced stalking.
- 618,000 women and 155,000 men experienced rape or sexual assault in 2019-2020.
- There were 5,395 women and girls who had attendances at National Health Service (“NHS”) trusts or General practitioner (“GPs”) in England where female genital mutilation was identified.

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# Violence against women and girls

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## Locally (within Southampton)

- The Southampton Community Safety Strategic Assessment has consistently highlighted the following three priority crime groups over the last three years in Southampton: violent crime (all forms), domestic crimes and sexual offences. These crime types are also known to disproportionately impact on women and girls.
- Southampton is an outlier for violent and sexual offences, with Southampton ranked among the worse 10% of Community Safety Partnerships nationally for the rate of violent and sexual offences in 2020/21.
- Southampton is the third highest among comparators and significantly higher than the national average for the rate of stalking and harassment offences. This has increased by 22.3% in Southampton between 2019/2020 and 2020/2021. However, this increase, in part is still being driven by changes in counting rules for stalking and harassment offences introduced in 2018. Nonetheless, this is something that should continue to be monitored as stalking and harassment can be a precursor for more serious offending.
- Rape is the crime group that causes the most harm in Southampton, accounting for 1.4% of recorded offences, yet 24.5% of the harm (relative severity) caused by crime in Southampton.
- Domestic rape continues to cause significant harm in the city, with a 4.1% increase in the number of domestic rapes between 2019/2020 and 2020/2021. Moreover, domestic rape accounted for 45.3% of the harm (severity) caused by domestic flagged crime in 2020/2021.
- There were 18,920 incidents of overall VAWG during April 2018 – March 2021, 8,177 incidents of domestic VAWG and 3,526 incidents of public place VAWG.
- There is a strong relationship between VAWG (all definitions) and deprivation, with the rate of VAWG over five times higher in the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the city, compared to the 20% least deprived neighbourhoods.
- VAWG shows a link with the night-time economy, which is evidenced through hotspot mapping highlighting concentrations of VAWG incidents occurring in parts of the city centre where a large number of night-time economy venues are located.
- Additionally, temporal profiling highlighted peaks of incidents occurring late at night and on weekends. Analysis of associated factors highlighted that 14% of overall VAWG, one in five (20.4%) domestic VAWG and 13.4% of public place VAWG incidents had alcohol recorded as a factor. Alcohol is a known driver of violence, particularly intimate partner violence, which would explain levels of alcohol related domestic VAWG incidents.
- Victim profiling highlighted that VAWG can affect women and girls of any age and from all walks of life.

## Appendix 2

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# Sexual offences and crimes of violence against women and girls.

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### What do the words mean?

- **Coercive control:** When a person with whom you are personally connected, repeatedly behaves in a way which makes you feel controlled, dependent, isolated or scared. Coercive control is not the same as emotional abuse, not all emotional abusive is coercive control, but coercive control is always emotionally abusive.
- **Cyber flashing:** Sending sexual or rude photos to another person's phone to shock and embarrass them.
- **Domestic abuse:** Controlling, bullying or violent behaviour, including sexual violence, by a partner or ex-partner. Women are usually the victims/survivors and men are the abusers. But men can also be victims/survivors, and the abusers can be any family members.
- **Female genital mutilation or female genital cutting:** When a young girl or teenager has part of their private parts cut off for cultural or religious reasons and not medical reasons. It is against the law.
- **Forced marriage:** When someone is made to marry a person they have not chosen themselves.
- **Harassment:** Behaving in a way that frightens or upsets another person or makes them feel stupid.
- **Honour based abuse:** Violence or threats done by someone in a person's family or community to protect the name of the family or community. Sometimes it is a punishment for breaking the family or community's rules. It can be physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.

## What do the words mean?

- **Honour killings:** When someone in the family or community kills a woman for breaking the rules of the family.
- **Perpetrator:** A person who commits a crime against someone else.
- **Rape:** This is when a person forces someone else to have sex. It could be by using physical force or by frightening them. Rape can be perpetrated by a stranger, or by someone the victim knows and/or is/has been in a relationship with (also known as 'domestic rape').
- **Revenge porn:** Sharing private rude or sexual messages, photos or videos to others to cause embarrassment. Often the photos or video were made with the person's agreement but are shared later to upset them.
- **Sexual harassment:** unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can take place anywhere, including the workplace, schools, streets, public transport, and social situations. It includes flashing, obscene, and threatening calls, and online harassment
- **Sexual violence:** sexual contact without the consent of the woman/girl. This can be perpetrated by anyone from total strangers to relatives and intimate partners, but most are known in some way. It can happen anywhere – in the family/household, workplace, public spaces, and social settings.
- **Sex worker:** Someone who earns money by doing sexual acts.
- **Sexting:** Text messages that use sexual words, photos or videos.
- **Stalking:** Repeated (i.e. happening on at least two occasions) harassment causing fear and/or distress. For example, when someone keeps bothering someone else and won't leave them alone. They may keep calling them or turning up where they know the person will be. It can also include threatening phone calls, texts or letters; damaging property; spying on and following the victim.
- **Upskirting:** Taking a secret photo of another person under their clothes to see their private parts or underwear.



