Crime and Disorder (Domestic Abuse)

The cross Government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: ‘any incident of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been intimate partners or family members\(^1\), regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- 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.’

This definition, which is not a legal 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. (Home Office, 2013)

Why is domestic abuse a public health issue?

Whilst both men and women may perpetrate or experience domestic abuse, it is more commonly inflicted on women by men. Women are also more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of violence, including sexual violence and are also more likely to have sustained psychological or emotional effects. At its extreme, domestic abuse can result in death.

Women who experience domestic abuse present more frequently to health services. They are admitted to hospital more often than their non-abuse counterparts and are issued with more prescriptions. There is evidence of a linear relationship between the severity of domestic abuse and the use of health services (Povey D. et al, 2009, cited in Smith et al, 2011).

A high proportion of women attending A&E, primary care, family planning, reproductive and sexual health settings are likely to have experienced domestic

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\(^1\) Family members are: mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister & grandparents; directly-related, in-laws or step-family.
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abuse at some point (Alhabib, S. el al, 2010). 30% of domestic abuse starts or will intensify during pregnancy (Department of Health, 2004).

People who have experienced domestic abuse can have chronic health problems including: gynaecological disorders, chronic pain, neurological symptoms, gastrointestinal disorders, and self-reported heart disease. (Feder et al, 2011).

The most prevent effect is on mental health including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, and substance misuse (Coid, J et al, 2003).

In families where there is domestic abuse, children witness about three-quarters of the abusive incidents. 62% of children in households where domestic abuse is happening are also directly harmed by the perpetrator of the abuse, in addition to the harm caused by witnessing the abuse of others (Caada, 2014). These children have an increased risk of developing acute and long term physical and emotional health problems (Felitti VJ, Andrea RF, Nordenberg et al, 2002). Many will be traumatised by what they witness, whether it is the violence itself or the emotional and physical effects the behaviour has on someone in the household.

Impact of domestic abuse on the wider determinants of health

Homelessness: Research carried out by the homeless charity Shelter, found that domestic violence is “the single most quoted reason for becoming homeless”. The study found that 40% of all homeless women stated domestic violence as a contributor to their homelessness (Cramer H and Carter M, 2002).

Loss of income or work: The British Crime Survey showed that more than one fifth of women (21%) who were employed and who had suffered domestic violence took time off work as a result of the worst incident (British Crime Survey, 2009/10).

Emotional/psychological: Feelings of isolation can also occur during, and after leaving an abusive relationship since victims might have had to move to a new area away from friends and family. Building new social networks and pursuing new work or educational opportunities whilst recovering from the effects of an abusive relationship can be very hard especially where the victim has experienced mental health issues.

Risk factors associated with domestic abuse

The following have been identified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (Harvey A et al, 2007) and the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2014) risk factors associated with becoming a victim of domestic abuse. It is important to note that domestic abuse results from the interaction of a number of factors:

- Being female
Having a long term illness or disability (this almost doubles the risk) (Smith K (ed) Osborne S, Lau I et al 2012).

Age (women in younger age groups, in particular those aged 16-24 years old and men aged 16-19 are at greatest risk (Smith K, Coleman K, Eder S et al, 2011).

Pregnancy – the greatest risk is for teenage mothers and during the period just after a woman has given birth (Harrykissoon SD, Vaughn IR, Wisemann CM, 2002).


A woman who is separated (Harrykissoon SD, Vaughn IR, Wisemann CM, 2002).

Alcohol consumption (alcohol use is associated with a fourfold risk of violence from a partner and is commonly present where sexual violence has occurred) (Gill-Gonzales, D et al, 2006).

Alcohol or drug misuses – 21% of people experiencing partner abuse in the past year though the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol and 8% under the influence of illicit drugs (Smith K ed), Osborne S, Lau I et al., 2012).

Poverty, economic stress and unemployment.

**What do we know?**

- Two women are killed every week in England and Wales by a current or former partner (Office of National of National Statistics 2015) 1 woman killed every 3 days
- One in 4 women in England and Wales will experience domestic violence in their lifetimes and 8% will suffer domestic violence in any given year(Crime Survey of England and Wales, 2013/14)
- Globally, 1 in 3 women will experience violence at the hands of a male partner (State of the World’s Fathers Report, MenCare, 2015)
- Domestic violence has a higher rate of repeat victimisation than any other crime (Home Office, July 2002)
- Every minute police in the UK receive a domestic assistance call – yet only 35% of domestic violence incidents are reported to the police (Stanko, 2000 & Home Office, 2002)
- The 2001/02 British Crime Survey (BCS) found that there were an estimated 635,000 incidents of domestic violence in England and Wales. 81% of the victims were women and 19% were men. Domestic violence incidents also made up nearly 22% of all violent incidents reported by participants in the BCS (Home Office, July 2002)

**Children**

- 20% of children in the UK have been exposed to domestic abuse (Radford et al. NSPCC, 2011)
In 90% of domestic violence incidents in family households, children were in the same or the next room (Hughes, 1992)

62% of children in households where domestic violence is happening are also directly harmed (SafeLives, 2015)

Health

30% of domestic violence either starts or will intensify during pregnancy (Department of Health report, October 2004)

Foetal morbidity from violence is more prevalent than gestational diabetes or pre-eclampsia (Friend, 1998)

Cost to society

In November 2009, Sylvia Walby of the University of Leeds estimated the total costs of domestic violence to be £15.7 billion a year. This is broken down as follows:

- The costs to services (Criminal Justice System, health, social services, housing, civil legal) amount to £3.8 billion per year
- The loss to the economy – where women take time off work due to injuries – is £1.9 billion per year
- Domestic violence also leads to pain and suffering that is not counted in the cost of services. The human and emotional costs of domestic violence amount to almost £10 billion per year

Facts, Figures, Trends

The main indicator as to the level of known domestic abuse in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is the number of incidents reported and recorded by Thames Valley Police. These can be broken down into recorded crime (where a crime has been committed e.g. assault) and a non-crime occurrence (where a crime has not taken place but the incident has been reported to police e.g. verbal argument).
Table 1: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Domestic Abuse Incidents Recorded Crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>Per 1000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>508</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>4.74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Domestic Abuse Incidents Non Recorded Crime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>Per 1000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,397</td>
<td>1,386</td>
<td>1,623</td>
<td>11.01%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reference:

National & Local Strategies

Collecting reliable data on domestic abuse is often difficult due to the hidden and underreported nature of domestic abuse. Unlike approaches with other types of crime, one of the key objectives in tackling domestic abuse is to encourage the reporting of incidents. The Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) asks respondents about their experiences of crime, regardless of whether or not it was reported to the police, therefore offers the best estimates of actual prevalence of crime.

- On average two women are killed by their partner or ex-partner every week in England and Wales. [1]
- In 2013/14, 85 women were murdered by their partner or ex-partner in England and Wales. This accounted for just under half (46%) of all murders or women aged 16 or over. In comparison, 7% of men murdered were killed by their partner or ex-partner. [2]
- Domestic abuse-related crime is 8% of total crime. [3]
- On average the police receive an emergency call relating to domestic abuse every 30 seconds. [4]

[1] Office for National Statistics citing Homicide Index, Home Office (Published Online: Office for National Statistics, 2015 – Go to the first bulletin table and click on the tab labelled Figure 2.5)
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- It is estimated that 8.2% of women and 4.0% of men have experienced any type of domestic abuse in the last year, equivalent to an estimated 1.3 million female victims and 600,000 male victims aged between 16 and 59. [5]
- 130,000 children live in homes where there is high-risk domestic abuse. [6]
- 62% of children living with domestic abuse are directly harmed by the perpetrator of the abuse, in addition to the harm caused by witnessing the abuse of others. [7]
- On average high-risk victims live with domestic abuse for 2.6 years before getting help. [8]
- 85% of victims sought help five times on average from professionals in the year before they got effective help to stop the abuse. 8
- Approximately 42% of domestic violence victims have been victimised more than once. Victims experience an average of 20 incidents of domestic violence in a year, which can often increase in severity each time. [9]

Local delivery in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Violent crime is a key priority in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Community Safety Partnership Plan 2014-17 with domestic abuse being highlighted as a particular crime/area to be tackled.

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead also has a Domestic Abuse Strategy and annual action plan with five strategic priorities: prevention; early intervention; provision of services; justice outcomes and risk reduction; quality assurance and commissioning.

Awareness raising and publicity campaigns are carried out throughout the year to raise awareness in the community regarding domestic abuse issues.

Training for anyone working in the Borough is available to ensure staff are well equipped.

The nearest refuge accommodation is in neighbouring borough’s. Often, due to safety victims may have to travel to further parts of the country for refuge accommodation to help protect their safety.

PICADA (Positive Intervention for Children Affected by Domestic Abuse) is a 12 week support group for children affected by domestic abuse (post abuse). The group

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aims to provide children with an opportunity to tell their story – to be heard, validated and believed and to begin to heal from exposure to domestic abuse. A parallel group for mothers also runs to assist women to create links and build bridges between themselves and their children. The group runs approx. once a year and is normally aimed at 8-12 year olds.

The Dash Charity provide an IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) Service. The IDVA will address the safety of ‘high risk’ domestic abuse victims, acting as a primary point of contact, working with the victim from the point of crisis in the short to medium term. They are proactive in implementing short term safety plans, as well as longer term solutions. These plans will include actions from the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference).

The Dash Charity provide an Outreach service. The Outreach workers support ‘medium risk’ and ‘standard risk’ domestic abuse victims on a longer term basis. Many will have been referred following IDVA intervention once the risk has reduced.

The Freedom Programme is a 12 week support group for women who are or who have experienced domestic abuse. The programme aims to help women identify abusive behaviours and beliefs held by abusive men, gain self esteem and confidence, show how domestic abuse affects children and helps women recognise future abusers and move on to lives free from abuse. 2 programmes are run in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, both from confidential locations, one in Maidenhead and on in the Datchet area.

What is this telling us?

Domestic Abuse is not gender or culturally specific, however more women than men experience this type of abuse.

What are the key inequalities?

Violence and its risk factors can be both the consequence of, and the cause of, social inequalities. Violence disproportionately affects the most deprived individuals across society.

Disabled people experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic abuse. They also experience domestic abuse for longer periods of time, and more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people. They may also experience domestic abuse in wider contexts and by greater numbers of significant others, including intimate partners, family members, personal care assistants and health care professionals. Disabled people also encounter differing dynamics of domestic abuse, which may include more severe coercion, control or abuse from carers.

Public Health England, Disability and Domestic Abuse
What are the unmet needs/service gaps?

 Honour’ based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage 
A number of incidents often go un-reported; there is a need for early identification 
and better access to early intervention services,

Recommendations

- A current Domestic Abuse gap analysis is being written which will inform a 