

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 19 October 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Homes and Safe Communities
Report Title:	Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategy 2023-2028
Purpose of Report:	To seek adoption of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategy 2023-2028 and to agree the funding that supports the delivery of the VAWDASV Strategy.
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Public Sector Housing and Tenant Engagement
Responsible Officer:	Miles Punter – Director of Environment and Housing Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Head of Service for Housing and Building Services Accountant Senior Lawyer Elected Champion for Domestic Violence in the Vale of Glamorgan
Policy Framework:	This report is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) is a fundamental violation of human rights, and both a cause and consequence of inequality. Tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence has far-reaching consequences for women, men, children, families, communities, and society as a whole. Tackling these enduring social problems requires a distinct and proportionate approach to all victims and perpetrators in order that everyone can live fear free in safe, equal and violence-free communities. • The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015 laid out a requirement for Local Authorities and health boards to jointly prepare regional strategies to tackle this issue. • Over the last five years, the Vale of Glamorgan Council has worked successfully with Cardiff to deliver actions against the VAWDASV 2018-2023 strategy. This delivery has resulted in significant improvements to the prevention and protection of victims of domestic and sexual abuse and their families.

- Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Council have worked together to create a new strategy that reflects the needs of those who are affected by VAWDASV. This draft strategy “it’s in our hands” presents a vision that all who live, work, study in and visit Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan can live positive, independent lives without being affected by violence and abuse.
- This new strategy is accompanied by an implementation plan that sets out a series of commitments to deliver this vision.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet adopts the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan VAWDASV Strategy 2023-2028 (Appendix 1).
2. That Cabinet approves the allocation of Welsh Government funding to support the Council's response to the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act 2015.
3. That the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services is authorised to draft and execute the necessary form of contract with the providers of VAWDASV services.
4. That further reports on the Council's actions in satisfying our duties under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act 2015 are provided in due course.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To demonstrate the Council's commitment to the region's response.
2. To demonstrate the Council's commitment to provide support to vulnerable victims of domestic and sexual abuse.
3. To continue with existing strategic support which has already proved successful and enabled the Council to implement new ways of working and ensure compliance with the Council's Financial and Contract Standing orders.
4. To ensure compliance with the Council's legal duties under the Act.

1. Background

- 1.1 Domestic and Sexual abuse is a priority for the Safer Vale Partnership which is chaired by the Director of Environment and Housing Services. The Safer Vale Partnership is the Strategic Board responsible for reducing Crime and Disorder. The work of the Safer Vale Partnership feeds into the Public Service Board.
- 1.2 Vale of Glamorgan Partners represented on the Board are; Vale of Glamorgan Council, South Wales Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue, Cardiff and Vale Health Trust, National Probation Service, Police and Crime Commissioner and the Voluntary Sector. The Board reviews performance and identifies opportunities for improvements.
- 1.3 Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is a fundamental violation of human rights and both a cause and consequence of inequality. Tackling VAWDASV has far reaching consequences for women, men, children, families, communities, and society. Tackling these enduring social problems requires a distinct and proportionate approach to all victims and perpetrators in order that everyone can live fear free in safe, equal and violence free communities.

- 1.4** The revised national Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2022-2026 was published on 24th May, 2022. This new national strategy outlines a proposed blueprint approach to delivery of the commitments and objectives, drawing together different organisations to jointly deliver a whole system approach to address an issue; this will be undertaken through a number of workstreams. It also includes functions across the range of public policy, such as Education and Health, which have a role in contributing to and delivering VAWDASV policy. It involves policy makers, commissioners and delivery agencies in a partnership which will formalise the culture of collaborative working which already exists in Wales.
- 1.5** The VAWDASV Act (Wales) 2015 laid out a requirement for Local Authorities and Health Boards to jointly prepare regional strategies to tackle this issue.
- 1.6** Welsh Government has also required Authorities work regionally on VAWDASV in terms of a national approach towards funding and commissioning. Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Council agreed to co-operate as a region for this purpose due to a shared Health Board and policing footprint, natural travel to work patterns, service access migrations for residents across the area and the pre-existence of some services.
- 1.7** Over the last five years, the Vale of Glamorgan Council has worked successfully with Cardiff to deliver actions against the VAWDASV 2018-2023 strategy. This delivery has resulted in significant improvements to the prevention, protection and support of victims of domestic and sexual abuse and their families.
- 1.8** Some of the successes of the last strategy include the recommissioning of the specialist support provider for domestic and sexual abuse, the establishment of twice weekly meetings that improve the speed and efficiency with which high risk cases of domestic abuse are dealt with through a multi-agency response, the implementation of new perpetrator interventions, the roll out of campaign and educational materials and training within schools and private businesses across the Vale and developed and significantly furthered awareness training for public sector professionals through the Welsh Government's National Training Framework. It is vital that the momentum that has been established in this field is continued and continued improvements to the lives of survivors and their families.
- 1.9** A further positive outcome is the target hardening service which provides additional security to the houses of victims of abuse across the Vale. The security includes window and door locks, CCTV and intruder alarms and enables victims to remain safe in their homes where refuge might otherwise be the only solution. This service in the Vale is identified as exemplar in terms of its partnership arrangements, data recording and outcomes.
- 1.10** The purpose of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 is to improve prevention, protection and support for

people affected. The resulting national strategy provides the leadership and direction which promotes consistency and best practice in the way in which violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is prioritised and tackled across Wales, with the aim of “making Wales the safest place to be a woman.” The second edition of the national strategy contains the following objectives: challenging public attitudes, increase awareness of healthy relationships, holding perpetrators to account, make early intervention a priority, relevant professionals are trained, provide responsive services. A regional response and implementation plan is required to enable these objectives to be driven throughout the region.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Council have worked together to create a new strategy that reflects the needs of those who are affected by VAWDASV.
- 2.2** This draft strategy “it’s in our hands” (shown at Appendix 1), presents a vision that all who live, work, study in and visit Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan can live positive, independent lives without being affected by violence and abuse.
- 2.3** The draft regional strategy aligns with local and national policy and strategic action plans, and it overlaps with the requirements of the national VAWDASV strategy and its six objectives. It is informed by a population needs assessment and the expert voices of survivors and professionals.
- 2.4** The Strategic approach changes the narrative on VAWDASV by putting accountability on perpetrators. Cardiff and the Vale are the only region in Wales offering a seamless step up/step down provision of interventions for those who cause harm within their intimate relationships and the draft strategy emphasises the importance of a continued focus on this strategic response.
- 2.5** The Strategy intends to achieve this through the following aims:
 - Aim 1 – PREPARE - Improve strategic planning and commissioning of VAWDASV services through a more coordinated partnership approach across the region.
 - Aim 2 – PURSUE - Address perpetrators of VAWDASV by improving intelligence sharing across services and the use of legal powers to disrupt and convict.
 - Aim 3 – PREVENT - Proactively address negative attitudes and behaviours that have the potential to result in VAWDASV, recognising this as everyone’s business.
 - Aim 4 – PROTECT - Improve the multi-agency response and support to all victims and their children regardless of risk level and needs.
 - Aim 5 – SUPPORT - Ensure that innovative, flexible, and evidence-based services are available to meet the needs of victims experiencing any form of VAWDASV.

- 2.6** A draft implementation plan has been developed alongside this strategy that sets out the commitments, actions, and evidence of achievement that Cardiff and the Vale commit to delivering over the next five years.
- 2.7** Some of the commitments include establishing robust governance, continually improving data collection and analysis and developments to the region's understanding of the barriers affecting access to services for those with disabilities. There is a focus on improving education, training, the roll out of campaigns to embed culture change, challenge misogynistic attitudes and create a more consistent approach to VAWDASV training throughout the whole education system.
- 2.8** For those who are already victims, improvements will be made to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACS) through the implementation of recommendations that have emerged because of the review of the MARAC that took place at the end of the life of the preceding strategy.
- 2.9** Both the implementation plan and the Strategy were developed with the input of survivors and a wide range of partners during consultation events and one-to-one meetings.
- 2.10** The Welsh Government's blueprint approach, outlined in the national strategy, is being managed through several workstreams concentrating on specific areas of activity:
- Gender-based Harassment in all Public Spaces
 - Workplace Harassment
 - Tackling Perpetration
 - Sustainable Commissioning
 - Children and Young People's Needs
 - Older People's Needs In addition,
- 2.11** There is an over-arching Survivor Voice Scrutiny and Involvement Panel that will be represented at each workstream and the national boards that will ensure the milestones set out in the Blueprint Programme are being delivered through overseeing progress being made through the six Workstreams, informed by input from members of the Partnership Board and other stakeholders as required.
- 2.12** The implementation plan delivering the work of this strategy is a living document that will be amended to include and reflect any changes that arise from these Welsh Government blueprint workstreams.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Long Term: The VAWDASV strategy focuses on improving outcomes now to create a benefit for the long-term future of victims of domestic abuse. The strategy commits to a holistic approach that allocates resources to prevention, early intervention, crisis, and ongoing support. This approach demonstrates an understanding of the complexity of the effects of VAWDASV and the need to have a focus on the entire cycle of VAWDASV to create long term solutions.
- 3.2** Preventative: The strategy places a strong emphasis on the importance of prevention through the development of educational programmes within schools and universities as well as training for professionals in both the private and public sectors.
- 3.3** Integration & Collaboration: The strategy is a regional piece of work, developed in partnership with Cardiff and commits to working in partnership with other partners to provide a holistic and appropriate response to those who need support. The regional executive VAWDASV board integrates with the regional Safeguarding, Safer Vale, and Area Planning Boards to ensure channels of communication are clearly defined.
- 3.4** Involvement: The strategy consulted with victims, survivors, stakeholders, and partners to gain as broad an input into the strategy as possible. An important commitment from the implementation plan is the development of ways to promote involvement of survivors during the development and running of services.
- 3.5** The proposal evidences a contribution to the wellbeing objective "Providing decent homes and safe communities" by addressing the needs of victims of VAWDASV.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** The VAWDASV strategy will support the Council's response to the climate and nature emergencies and will contribute to the delivery of Project Zero.
- 4.2** All Strategy development enabled online participation to help promote a more environmentally friendly way of working.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** Whilst there is no additional funding available to support the strategy, Welsh Government has confirmed that the region will continue to receive VAWDASV funding for which Cardiff is the regional banker which was agreed at the time of

the previous strategy. The annual regional funding allocated for 2023-24 is £669,814. Within the Vale the funding from VAWDASV supports the following:

- Advocacy Support
- MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)
- VAWDASV Manager

5.2 To date, VAWDASV funding is awarded on an annual basis which makes it difficult to plan and commission services.

5.3 All other actions that support the implementation of this strategy will need to be met from existing Council funding as well as any approved external grant allocations.

Employment

5.4 There are 2 Local Authority employed staff that are funded via the VAWDASV funding stream, both of whom are on fixed term contracts.

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.5 The Welsh Government must prepare a national strategy for the purposes of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. Local Authorities and health boards must in turn jointly prepare local strategies. The details relating to the requirements of the Act appears in the text of the report.

5.6 The Strategy is intended to cover the years May 2023 – May 2028 and must be reviewed no later than May 2028.

5.7 The decision on whether to adopt the Strategy in accordance with the recommendation in this report must be made in the context of the Council's Equality Act public sector duties. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the Council has properly understood and assessed the potential impacts of the proposal in terms of equality so that it can ensure that it is making proportionate and rational decisions having due regard to its public sector equality.

6. Background Papers

None.

It's in our hands

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan

**Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy
2023-2028**

Statutory Partners



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



De Cymru
Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throsedd
Police and Crime Commissioner
South Wales



BRITISH
TRANSPORT
POLICE

National
Probation
Service



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Ymddiriedolaeth GIG
Gwasanaethau Ambiwllans Cymru
Welsh Ambulance Services
NHS Trust



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Ymddiriedolaeth
GIG Felindre
Velindre NHS Trust



ynys saff
safe island

South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Third Sector Partners



Colleges / Universities



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Executive Summary

Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) is a human rights violation with far-reaching consequences for families, children, communities and society as a whole and requires a distinct and proportionate approach by public bodies. In Wales, we have acknowledged this through the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015 and the National VAWDASV Strategy 2022-26.

This regional strategy aligns with local and national policy and strategic action plans and it overlaps with the requirements of the national VAWDASV strategy and its six objectives. It is informed by a population needs assessment and the expert voices of survivors and professionals. The strategy is a 'living document' and it is accurate at the time of writing. The strategy will continue to be updated to reflect the most relevant policy drivers and developments. The delivery of its key commitments is overseen by strong regional governance.

LEADING ON QUALITY AND INNOVATION

This strategy outlines the strategic priorities for all partners over the next five years and celebrates our achievements thus far. Our region leads on innovation in a number of areas:

- Our strategic approach changes the narrative on VAWDASV by putting accountability on perpetrators at the forefront of our strategic response. We are the only area in Wales to offer a seamless step up/down provision of interventions for those who cause harm within their intimate relationships that includes: early response for men who are using harm (CLEAR), a therapeutic treatment programme for men who have been violent (Driving Change) and an intensive intervention that works with high-harm and serial perpetrators (Drive).
- Cardiff has declared itself to be a City for CEDAW (United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) to progress the rights of women and children and ensure equality to all Cardiff citizens.

- The region is piloting a bespoke service to support male victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.
- In addition to a range of well-established health-based support services for survivors of VAWDASV such as IRIS+, health-based IDVAs and the Wellbeing Centre for FGM survivors, we have a Young Person's IDVA provision for 11-16 year olds. This provision is the first of its kind in the health sector in Wales.
- Cardiff is the only area in Wales to have piloted the 'Safe and Together' model to bring radical change to Social Work practice in making perpetrators visible in safeguarding responses, addressing the needs of the whole family.
- A range of services are available to survivors of all forms of VAWDASV including: sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, honour-based abuse and forced marriage.
- We prioritise women's safety in public spaces, especially in the night-time economy.
- Partners in the region have been supported to develop their workplace policies addressing VAWDASV. Cardiff Council has recently produced a Dignity at Work policy which also strengthens the response to VAWDASV, addressing all forms of harassment in the workplace.
- We continue to strive for excellence and in 2022 we commissioned Safe Lives to undertake an independent review into the operation of MARACs in the region to ensure that we continue to provide the best support and protection to survivors.

Tackling VAWDASV requires the input, insight, collaboration and support of all those that deal with these issues on a daily basis, including victims. We continue to fight for equality and safety for all and to seek an end to this damaging and costly scourge on our society.

'It's in our hands' VAWDASV Strategy - Summary of Commitments



Introduction

WE WILL

- Assist the Welsh Government to implement the actions arising from the Blueprint approach and workstreams.
- Ensure this strategy aligns with relevant policy and related action plans, as these are reviewed and renewed.
- Assist with developing and implementing a City for CEDAW action plan.



Prepare

WE WILL

- Work with partners across the region to continually improve data collection and analysis.
- Ensure the lived experiences of survivors informs ongoing service development and delivery.
- Continue to learn from experts.
- Support the Welsh Government's Blueprint work to ensure that survivors of all ages receive the support that they need.
- Seek to understand the distinct needs and barriers to support that disabled survivors experience, in order to improve access.
- Continue to pilot the Cedar Project for male victims to inform formal procurement of a bespoke service.
- Support the regional implementation of the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curriculum to promote children and young people's understanding of consent, healthy and respectful relationships.



Pursue

WE WILL

- Improve our understanding of sexual violence to develop and enhance our response.
- Support partners to implement the new powers originating from legislative changes.
- Raise awareness of legislative changes to encourage appropriate reporting, signposting and support.
- Continue to place accountability for abuse on those who cause harm.
- Tackle perpetration by supporting the Welsh Government's relevant Blueprint workstream.
- Explore accredited and evidence-based programmes that address harmful behaviours related to all forms of VAWDASV and support efforts to secure interventions.

'It's in our hands' VAWDASV Strategy - Summary of Commitments



Prevent

WE WILL

- Encourage more schools to embrace the whole school approach to VAWDASV.
- Continue to work with universities and colleges to strengthen their response to students experiencing VAWDASV.
- Use every opportunity to challenge victim-blaming attitudes and raise awareness of support services.
- Continue to ensure the workforce is skilled to identify, refer and support victims and perpetrators.
- Support partners to continue to reapply for the White Ribbon status.



Protect

WE WILL

- Implement the agreed recommendations from the review of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs).
- Strengthen our safeguarding response to honour-based abuse and female genital mutilation by developing clear pathways of support.
- Continue to ensure that children subject to safeguarding are given specialist support to recover from the abuse and trauma they have suffered.
- Work with the Regional Safeguarding Board to implement recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) report.
- Assist partners to update workplace policies to include workplace sexual harassment.
- Work with the Welsh Government to implement actions arising from the workplace harassment Blueprint workstream.
- Ensure there are more safe spaces throughout Cardiff, involving women and girls in their creation.



Support

WE WILL

- Ensure children and young people continue to have access to age-appropriate specialist support.
- Gather data and experiences of BME communities to better understand their needs.
- Implement recommendations from the Complex Needs Task and Finish Group.
- Review the accommodation pathway, community support and prevention elements of service delivery to ensure that they continue to meet need.

Introduction

This regional strategy does not disregard violence and abuse directed towards men and boys, or violence and abuse perpetrated by women. This strategy recognises that whilst anyone (women, men, children and young people) can experience and be affected, it is women and girls who are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, rape and sexual violence, sexual exploitation (including through the sex industry), modern day slavery, forced marriage, honour-based abuse, female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation and abuse, stalking and sexual harassment. This can happen in any relationship regardless of sex, age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, religion or belief, income, class, geography or lifestyle.

Definitions



The **United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women** defines this as:

“all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”

This encompasses, but is not limited to:

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

The **Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015** defines specific forms of VAWDASV:

"**Abuse**" means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse;

"**Domestic abuse**" means abuse where the victim of it is or has been associated with the abuser;

"**Gender-based violence**" means—

- violence, threats of violence or harassment arising directly or indirectly from values, beliefs or customs relating to gender or sexual orientation;
- female genital mutilation
- forcing a person (whether by physical force or coercion by threats or other psychological means) to enter into a religious or civil ceremony of marriage (whether or not legally binding);

"**Sexual violence**" means sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or threats of violence of a sexual nature;

"**Harassment**" means a course of conduct by a person which he or she knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other; and for the purpose of this definition—

- a person ought to know that his or her conduct amounts to or involves harassment if a reasonable person in possession of the same information would think the course of conduct amounted to or involved harassment of another person, and
- “conduct” includes speech.

The partners (outlined on p.2) responsible for this strategy have agreed to adopt the widest definition, acknowledging that not all abuse is perpetrated within intimate partner or familial relationships, but can also be committed by strangers.

Scope

Some forms of abuse disproportionately affect those with protected characteristics. Issues of gender identity (including transgender), race, religion, culture, disability and sexuality can exacerbate vulnerability and can also shape attitudes and behaviours within relationships from both the victim's and the perpetrator's perspectives.

This regional VAWDASV strategy reflects the strategic and policy framework in force and will be amended as national or local policy changes. A number of crime types and issues are naturally referenced in this strategy. These include:

- Coercive control
- Domestic abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking – people trafficking; domestic servitude; labour exploitation
- Sexual violence – Child Sexual Exploitation; Child Sexual Abuse; rape, sexual assault
- Stalking
- Street harassment
- Workplace harassment
- Perpetrators of all of the above

Our Vision

People who live, work, study in and visit Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan have the opportunity to live positive, independent lives without being affected by violence and abuse.

Our Aims

This regional Strategy outlines how all partners will shape and deliver responses to all forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across the region over the next 5 years.

A separate implementation plan will take forward the issues identified as a living document that can be amended as new activities are identified. These actions will be continually monitored with partners to inform a report of progress published annually as has been the case over the past five years. This will ensure that the Strategy remains focused and relevant.

This is the second regional Strategy and all partners have agreed that the following key aims remain appropriate. These aims reflect the requirements of the revised Welsh Government national strategy (see page 12). Each of these aims will be addressed in a separate chapter, although it is acknowledged that many issues are cross-cutting.

Aim 1 - PREPARE

Improve strategic planning and commissioning of VAWDASV services through a more coordinated partnership approach across the region.

Aim 3- PREVENT

Proactively address negative attitudes and behaviours that have the potential to result in VAWDASV, recognising this as everyone's business.

Aim 5 - SUPPORT

Ensure that innovative, flexible and evidence-based services are available to meet the needs of victims experiencing any form of VAWDASV.

Aim 2 - PURSUE

Address perpetrators of VAWDASV by improving intelligence sharing across services and the use of legal powers to disrupt and convict.

Aim 4 - PROTECT

Improve the multi-agency response and support to all victims and their children regardless of risk level and needs.

Regional Partners



This strategy has been developed with the cooperation and collaboration of the statutory partners across the region as listed on p.2. Third sector partners throughout the region have been involved in the development of this strategy as key stakeholders in the delivery of the frontline response to victims and are listed on p.3.

Most importantly, this strategy has been developed with the input and insights of survivors of VAWDASV, through direct consultation and activities that have informed the development of the action plan.

Victim or Survivor?

The words 'victim' and 'survivor' have very different connotations. Being a 'victim' can imply helplessness and pity, being trapped and having something done to you that you are not in control of, which might not adequately describe some people's experiences of VAWDASV. However, the term 'survivor' recognises that people are able to take control of their own lives; it implies progression over stagnancy, and many choose it because it serves as a term of empowerment. Some people exclusively use the term 'survivor' over 'victim', and vice versa. People are neither 'survivors' or 'victims' because it's equally possible to be both, depending on the context of the experience.

However, for simplicity and clarity to a wide-ranging audience, this strategy has used the term 'victim' to refer to those that have recently, or are currently experiencing VAWDASV and for those who are not aware or accepting that what they are experiencing is abuse.

'Survivor' is used to refer to those that have overcome their abusive situations, whether as a result of their own actions and/or following engagement with statutory or other support services.

What about Men?

"I left with only the work clothes I was wearing and £200 but actually with the biggest smile on my face ever. I was free!" - Male victim



All partners in the region know that men can be victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, forced marriage, trafficking and honour-based violence and this has been acknowledged throughout the strategy and is highlighted at all public events and during staff training.

The VAWDASV Act addresses domestic abuse and sexual violence perpetrated against all people in Wales, while recognising that women and girls are disproportionately impacted by much of the violence and abuse covered by the Act.

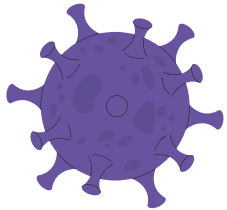
This strategy aligns itself with the Act by recognising that, for this reason, a sex-based and gendered approach is required.

Work continues to ensure that our communities recognise that violence and abuse perpetrated by anyone is unacceptable and does not have a place in our society. With our specialist partners, we will continue to address any gaps whilst continuing to support services that are already in place, targeting additional resources where there is greatest need. The views of victims will be integral to this.

Finally, this strategy champions the Welsh Government Live Fear Free Helpline which provides information and advice for **anyone** affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence including men who are victims of abuse, friends and professionals who may be looking for advice on how best to support them.

Our Journey so Far...

The previous 2018-2023 strategy was developed at a time of challenges: new legislative duties on statutory bodies, continuing austerity leading to unprecedented budget cuts and an increasing demand for services. This was further impacted through the unique position of managing demand and service delivery during a global pandemic and an ongoing cost of living crisis. Despite these challenges, partners in the region have ensured that victims have continued to have access to specialist services that have been sensitive in their response during this difficult time. Some of the region's successes that have been highlighted in annual progress reports, are shown below:



Responded to the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Increased refuge provision
- Extended the Health-based IDVA service
- Creatively used all available funding - both capital and revenue
- Offered a blended delivery model (both in person and online)
- Highlighted need for extra vigilance for all employees/volunteers working online

Opened a new One Stop Shop in Cardiff



Commissioned specialist provision



Specialist Domestic Abuse Service



Specialist Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service (Women)

The Cedar Project is a specialist provision for men impacted by domestic abuse and/or sexual violence



Gave input to formal consultations

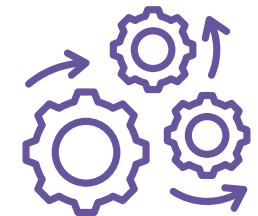
- Welsh Government Relationship and Sexuality Education Guidance
- Police and Crime Commissioner's Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy
- Single Unified Safeguarding Review
- Domestic Abuse (2021) Act & Guidance
- Welsh Government VAWDASV Strategy
- Gloucester University Target Hardening Survey



Communications campaigns

- Annual White Ribbon Calendar of Events
- Over 300 packs sent to schools and universities
- Over 800 information packs to businesses in the beauty industry and over 300 packs to gyms, and related fitness centres and clubs
- 1,848,000 bus tickets advertising Live Fear Free helpline

Implemented new processes and services



- Established Daily Discussions (in addition to MARACs)
- Established the Higher & Further Education VAWDASV group
- Implemented elements of Change That Lasts
- New perpetrator programmes delivered
- Developed a regional Ask & Act Policy
- Implemented a regional model for children and young people at the SARC
- Rolled out IRIS to GP surgeries

Policy and Legislative Context

World:

VAWDASV has been acknowledged by the Council of Europe, in the form of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence also known as the **Istanbul Convention**. The Convention was adopted by the Council of Europe on 7 April 2011 and came into force on 1 August 2014. There is recognition from the United Nations, in the form of their Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, and most recently in the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 that prioritises gender equality through goal 5. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls is celebrated globally on 15th November each year.

The **Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** provides a framework for states to take responsibility for tackling discrimination against women through a comprehensive set of rights for women in a variety of areas including civil, political, social and cultural rights.

Wales:

The purpose of the **Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015** is to improve prevention, protection and support for people affected. The resulting national strategy provides the leadership and direction which promotes consistency and best practice in the way in which violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is prioritised and tackled across Wales, with the aim of “making Wales the safest place to be a woman.” The second edition of the national strategy contains the following objectives:

- 1 - Challenging public attitudes
- 2 - Increase awareness of healthy relationships
- 3 - Holding perpetrators to account
- 4 - Make early intervention a priority
- 5 - Relevant professionals are trained
- 6 - Provide responsive services

These will be brought together under a blueprint for action detailing activity required to realise these goals.

United Kingdom:

In November 2022, the UK became the 37th State to ratify the **Istanbul Convention** but reserved article 59 which sets out state obligations to provide protection to migrant women.

The UK Government's **Domestic Abuse Act (2021)** introduced a number of legislative changes outlined in page 34. The Act creates a statutory domestic abuse definition that emphasises emotional and financial abuse, controlling and coercive behaviours. It establishes in law the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner and set out the Commissioner's functions and power. It also provides for a statutory domestic abuse perpetrator strategy.

Serious Violence Duty - the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act (2022), places a new statutory duty on a number of public sector agencies including the police, health and education to work together to prevent and tackle serious violence.

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Region:

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 placed a number of duties on local authorities and statutory organisations to

- develop regional strategies,
- comply with the National Training Framework, including a duty to Ask and Act, and
- ensure that this agenda is referenced across Education services.

This regional Strategy therefore identifies how these duties are being tackled in the region and how it will support the national strategy to prevent, protect and support those affected by VAWDASV.

Policy and Legislative Context

The **2022-26 Welsh Government VAWDASV Strategy** sets out a vision to make Wales the safest place in Europe to be a woman, focusing both on the private sphere and public spaces. The strategy's blueprint creates a whole system, multi-agency, multi-disciplinary approach that brings together different organisations and voices including:

- Statutory, third sector and private sector
- Devolved and non-devolved bodies
- Experts by experience and representative voices (e.g. Older People's Commissioner).

The Blueprint approach will implement a shared governance structure led by a new co-chaired, Ministerial-led National Partnership Board that will oversee the work of regional boards to ensure they deliver the all-Wales approach whilst reflecting regional difference. This regional strategy will support the delivery of the Blueprint's workstreams:

1. Gender-based harassment in all public spaces
2. Workplace harassment
3. Tackling perpetration
4. Sustainable whole system approach
5. Older people's needs
6. Children and young people's needs
7. Survivor voice

It is informed by the following principles that underpin the National Strategy:

- A comprehensive understanding of VAWDASV
- Tackling male violence
- An equalities approach
- Survivor's voice
- Trauma-informed
- Collaborative working and co-production

It will also align its commissioning and service expectations to the Welsh Government's National Framework of Standards.

The ways that the regional strategy overlaps with the requirements of the national strategy and its six objectives are set out in the diagram below:



We will:

Assist the Welsh Government to implement the actions arising from the Blueprint approach and workstreams.

Policy and Legislative Context

In addition to the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015, and the national VAWDASV Strategy 2022-2026, there is a range of other Welsh legislation and policy that impacts on the delivery of this regional strategy:

The **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014** reformed social care in Wales, ensuring that those with care and support needs achieve improved outcomes.

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** set out seven wellbeing goals that aim to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act also established Public Service Boards for each local authority area in Wales who must prepare and publish a Local Well-being Plan.

The **Cardiff Well-being Plan for 2023-2028** specifically highlights the following priorities to:

- Tackle all forms of VAWDASV, and take action to strengthen the support available to victims, including agreeing an implementing an updated VAWDASV Strategy.
- Work in partnership to identify vulnerability and prevent harm in the evening and night-time economy.
- Safeguard those at risk of exploitation and those who have been a victim of crime. This includes embedding a contextual approach to safeguarding across Cardiff.
- Respond to the new statutory Serious Violence Duty, underpinned by a public health-based approach to violence reduction.

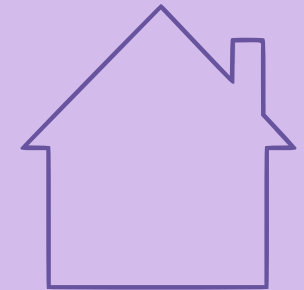
We will:

Ensure this strategy aligns with relevant policy and related action plans, as these are reviewed and renewed.

The **Housing (Wales) Act 2014** reformed homelessness duties for local authorities.

This is further supported by the Welsh Government's **Ending Homelessness in Wales: A high level action plan 2021-2026** which identifies actions that will be taken to ensure that homelessness is brief, rare and non-repeated.

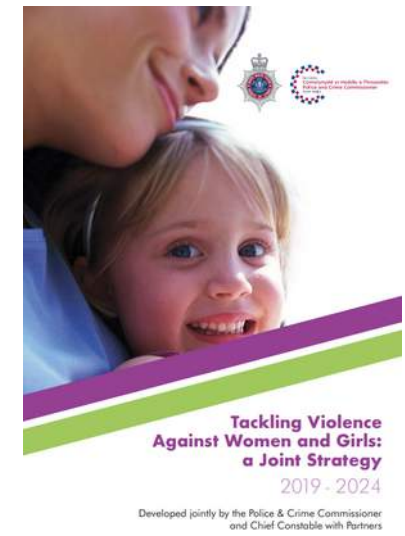
Furthermore, the Welsh Government's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan guidance outlines the steps for local authorities and partners to take to work towards the model whereby homeless people are provided with permanent housing as quickly as possible, rather than spending long periods of time in hostels or temporary accommodation. The **Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016**, implemented from 1st December 2022, focuses on improving the process of renting and managing residential properties in Wales. It provides new occupation contracts for tenants of private and social rented properties and those in supported housing, including refugees.



The **Tackling Violence against Women and Girls: a Joint Strategy 2019 – 2024** developed by the South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable and partners identifies four priority areas for action: Enhanced Collaboration, Prevention and Early Intervention, Safeguarding and Perpetrators.

The strategy also makes a clear commitment to holding perpetrators and those who cause harm to account, whether this is through the criminal justice system or through programmes and interventions that aim to give them the necessary skills to change their behaviour.

This strategy, therefore has cross-cutting impact on a number of regional strategic priorities, as these have been identified by the Regional Safeguarding Board, the Regional Partnership Board and the Regional Area Plan.



Policy and Legislative Context

At the time of writing, the Vale of Glamorgan Council are developing their Community Safety Partnership Strategy. VAWDASV is included in the Corporate plan and the Community Safety and Wellbeing service plans that make a commitment to the development and delivery of this regional VAWDASV Strategy.

The priorities identified for the **Regional Safeguarding Board Annual Plan for 23/24** arose from their 2023 Development Day, which included a review of progress against the previous Annual Plan for 2022-2023, an overview of safeguarding themes emerging from recent Adult and Child Practice Reviews and broader horizon scanning. The three identified priorities and related outcomes are:

- 1. Safeguarding Fundamentals** - The regional safeguarding board supports strategic improvement, effective partnerships and workforce development to ensure safeguarding fundamentals are strengthened across the region
- 2. Effective Safeguarding Reviews** - The Regional Safeguarding Board ensures there are effective review processes and review learning is implemented across the partnership.
- 3. Responding to Safeguarding Themes** - The Regional Safeguarding Board responds effectively to emerging safeguarding themes and supports the coordination of an effective multi-agency response.



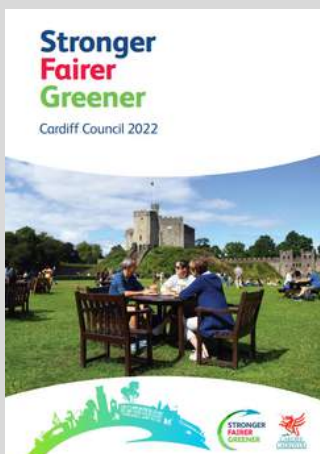
The cost-of-living crisis has again highlighted that women are impacted more negatively than men as their relative economic and social power is less than most males. For example, according to the 2021 ONS figures, despite there being more women than men living in Cardiff (all ages), fewer women are in employment, women are paid less, more women are (unpaid) caregivers and run fewer companies or SMEs.

At its Full Council meeting on 30th March 2023, Cardiff Council adopted a Motion to declare the capital a **City for CEDAW**. CEDAW is the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women which provides a framework, actions and principles that Cardiff Council can take that align and support the goals of the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015.

The Council's corporate plan has a commitment to adopt the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women by October 2023. Cardiff's City for CEDAW commitments will be integrated into the Council's revised Strategic Equality Plan and Workforce Strategy and through these mechanisms actions and developments will be undertaken. A full action plan will be developed to deliver on this commitment.

We will:

We will assist with developing and implementing a City for CEDAW action plan.

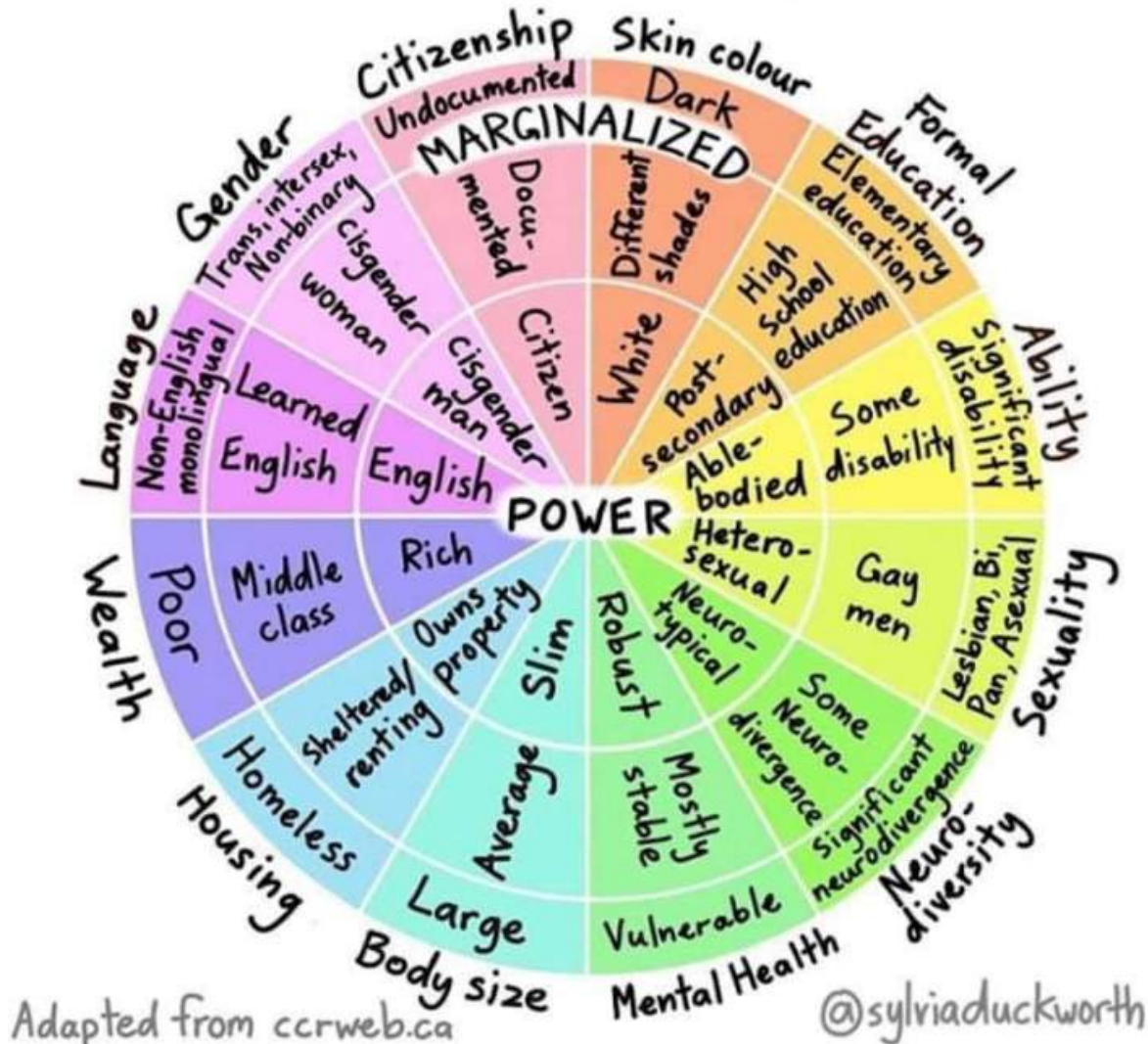


Cardiff Council has identified the following specific objectives in its five year strategic plan, '**Stronger, Fairer, Greener**' 2022:

- Work with partners to tackle all forms of VAWDASV and take action to strengthen the support available to victims, including agreeing an updated Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy and undertaking a full review of refuge accommodation in the city.
- Implement a Whole School Approach to preventing gender-based violence and abuse in education and other youth settings.
- Protect vulnerable young people from exploitation and address the recent rise in serious youth violence through developing a robust, integrated, data-led approach across Council and partner services that work with young people.

Intersectionality

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



Survivors' experiences and needs are shaped by different aspects of their identities and how this positions them in society's power structures. In 1989, Kimberley Crenshaw[1] coined the term **Intersectionality** to describe the experiences of sexism and racism that Black women experience. Recognising that Black women's experiences of racism differ significantly to those of Black men and equally their oppression as women differ to that of white women, she calls attention to the different way that their identities interact. Since then, intersectionality has been a useful lens in understanding and addressing the needs of other marginalised communities and the complexity of the discrimination and disadvantages that they experience.

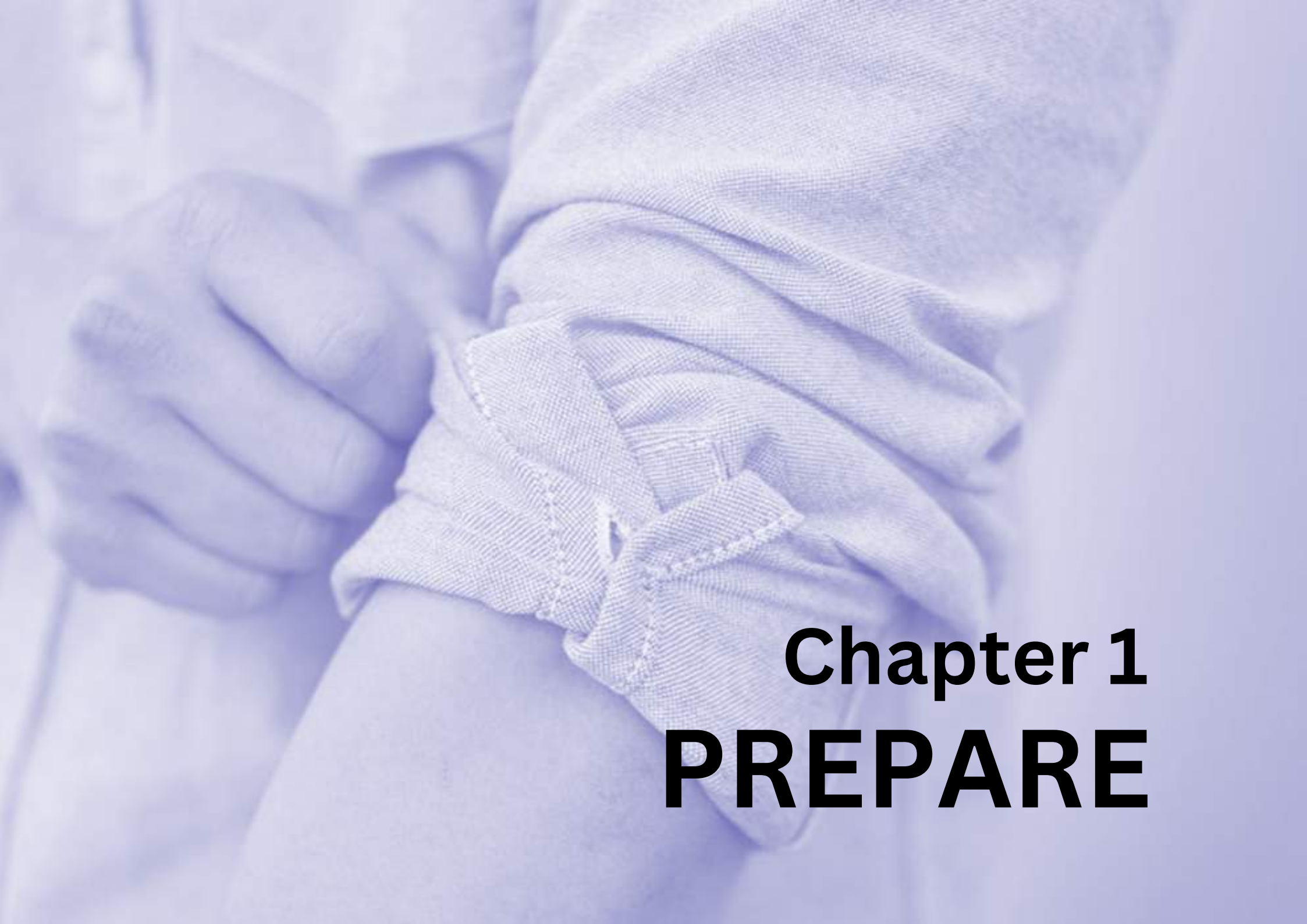
The Ecological Model

VAWDASV is not inevitable and our strategy places equal significance on working upstream to prevent VAWDASV from happening, as it does on dealing with the aftermath of abuse, supporting survivors and pursuing perpetrators.

We apply the ecological model that outlines how individual beliefs and attitudes that condone VAWDASV are shaped by wider societal structures, and social expectations that perpetuate harmful stereotypes and inequalities. These attitudes are shaped in families and peer groups and are influenced by societal expectations about the role of men and women in society. They are further reinforced by the policy and legislative framework.

In order to tackle a VAWDASV, a multi-agency and multi-level strategic response is required at individual, interpersonal, community and societal levels:





Chapter 1

PREPARE

One Region - Two Communities

Whilst both areas are geographically close, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan differ in their individual geography and their population. Since the last census in 2011, the population of Cardiff grew by 4.7% (2nd largest population growth in Wales) and by 4.3% in the Vale of Glamorgan (4th largest population growth).

As a region, we recognise the needs of our different communities and acknowledge the hard work of partners in responding to these unique differences.

Cardiff

Cardiff alone has the highest population and highest population density in Wales at 2,572 residents per km², with the Vale over twice the Wales average (150) at 398 (Census 2021).

It has a thriving night-time economy, a large student population, Black and minoritised communities (86,019 individuals) and LGBTQ+ population (21,851 individuals). As a result, many of the victims and perpetrators of VAWDASV may be new arrivals or visitors to the city and be unaware of local services and interventions making them vulnerable to extended trauma and re-victimisation.

The presence of different communities may result in higher prevalence of certain forms of abuse such as Honour-Based Abuse (HBA) including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, human trafficking and modern slavery, sexual harassment and sexual abuse linked to the night-time economy.

This has resulted in targeted services that respond to need but also engage with communities to raise awareness.



Vale of Glamorgan

The Vale of Glamorgan has seen the second largest increase in the over 65 population since the last census. Older people may have additional vulnerabilities such as cognitive impairment; and face barriers such as a perception that services are not for them; stigma; and fear of consequences.

The population in the Vale of Glamorgan tends to be more dispersed in rural communities. Research by the National Rural Crime Network suggest that rurality and isolation are weaponised by perpetrators to isolate their victims. This results in abuse lasting on average 25% longer and increasing the risk of harm - "*the more rural the setting, the higher the risk of harm.*"

It's crucial to understand the local population to plan services and interventions with their distinct needs in mind. It is worth acknowledging though that survivors of domestic abuse may be fleeing from any area of the country and their support networks. As a result, they may experience barriers and isolation and may require additional support.

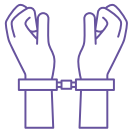
Similarly, the local population may travel for work and leisure to Cardiff. Their experiences of abuse in those settings may be missed from local crime statistics even though survivors rely on local services for support.



This is a broad analysis of population needs in the region and should not ignore that pockets of different communities occupy both regions.

Regional Overview

The Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan region covers some 475 square kilometres and comprises 41 separate wards (13 in the Vale of Glamorgan and 28 in Cardiff).



1 prison



189 schools



10 hospitals



12 colleges/
universities



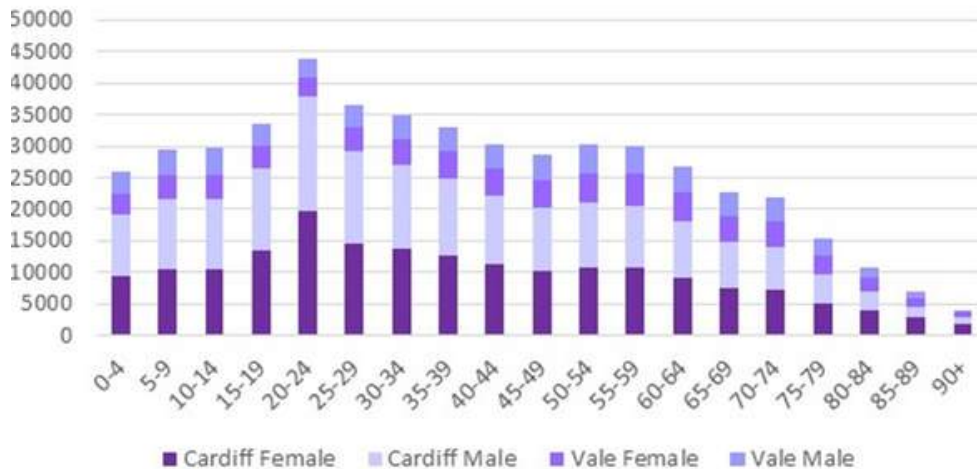
14 police
stations



2 Gypsy/Traveller
sites (80 pitches with
400 individuals)

As at the 2021 Census, there was a total population of 494,200; comprising 352,100 households. The following breakdown are for adults (19+) and children and young people (under 19).

Age and Gender of Resident Population



We will:

Work with partners across the region to continually improve data collection and analysis.

Planning and commissioning services relies on robust data that informs our understanding of survivors needs so that we can target resources appropriately and reduce duplication. This includes:

- Population data
- Service users' background and needs
- Services delivered
- Gaps in provision
- Trends and changes
- Input from experts by experience and professionals



Regional Data

SEX

The sex split in the region is relatively equal with women making up 51% of the population and men 49%.

AGE

Whilst the 20-24 age group remains the largest, the region has an ageing population with an upward trend in all groups over the age of 50. The 70-74 age group has seen the most significant increase (34% increase in Cardiff and 41% increase in the Vale of Glamorgan) since the 2011 Census. The growth of the 65+ population in the Vale of Glamorgan has been particularly prevalent in the Western Vale. The current and projected growth in the region's older population will lead to a growth in the numbers of older people with complex care needs and a greater demand for health and care services.

SEXUALITY/ GENDER IDENTITY

Cardiff has the largest population in Wales that identifies as LGBTQ+ at 5.34% whereas the figure for the Vale of Glamorgan is 3.07% (Census 2021).

DISABILITY

Approximately 1 in 5 people in the region are disabled. Almost 1 in 10 (8.6% in the Vale of Glamorgan and 9.5% in Cardiff) are disabled under the equality act and their 'day-to-day activities were limited a lot' (Census 2021).

WELSH LANGUAGE

The number of Welsh speakers in Cardiff aged 3 and above has increased significantly in recent years. According to the 2022 Annual Population survey, Cardiff has the highest number of Welsh speakers in Wales (102,400). This is 28.5% of the Cardiff population. The number of people over the age of 3 who can speak Welsh in the Vale of Glamorgan is 25,900 (20.7%).

ARMED FORCES

In 2011, the Vale of Glamorgan had the largest Armed Forces population in Wales. 1,102 males and 41 females aged 16+. The population is linked to the St Athan MOD base.

ETHNICITY

The ethnic make-up of the population in the region has changed significantly over the last decade.

According to the 2021 census, 21% of the population in Cardiff are from a Black and minoritised background (up from 15% in 2011).



More than 1 in 3 (36%) children in Cardiff are from an ethnic minority background.

The Black and minoritised population in the Vale of Glamorgan increased by 50%. It rose from 3.6% of the overall population in 2011 to 5.4% of the population in 2021. There have also been notable changes in residents' stated religion. In 2001, the majority of respondents (73%) said that they were Christian. In 2011, the proportion fell to 58.1%.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

The number of those economically active in the region has risen marginally but due to the simultaneous population growth, the percentage has fallen. (Census, 2021). The definition of 'economically active' in this instance includes those in employment and full-time students.

Economically Active Residents (Cardiff & Vale)					
Area	Active 2011	Active 2021	Active 2011	Active 2021	% change
Cardiff	160,377	160,440	56.6%	54.1%	-2.5%
Vale of Glamorgan	59,274	59,915	57.8%	55.8%	-2%

Regional Data

A SNAPSHOT

South Wales police recorded 11,347 domestic abuse related incidents in 2018/19 and 10,138 in 2021/22. A total of 1,127 crime offences for modern day slavery, rape, sexual assault and stalking (non-domestic) were recorded in 2018/19 and 1,436 in 2021/22.

The RISE service in Cardiff, Vale Domestic Abuse Services (formerly known as Atal y Fro) and the DYN project for male victims in the region received referrals for 7,313 survivors of domestic abuse in 2019/20 and 7,975 in 2020/21, a 9% increase.

Referrals	2019/20	2020/21
Number of Public Protection Notices (PPNs)	unable to verify	9,636
Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	897	1,003
RISE	6,263 referrals 1,158 high risk	6,725 referrals 1,475 high risk
Vale Domestic Abuse Services	843 referrals 427 high risk	1,054 referrals 553 high risk
DYN Project	207	196
Health Independent Domestic Violence Advocate	259	453

MALE VICTIMS

Men can be victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. Based on Public Protection Notice (PPN) submissions in 2020/21 in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, approximately 20% (2,021) are male and 80% (8,609) are female. Note that PPNs are submitted when there is concern, and may not constitute a crime. Additionally, these figures may contain repeat victims and so should be interpreted cautiously. In 2017, 4% of cases discussed at Cardiff's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and 5% of cases discussed in Vale of Glamorgan MARAC were male. The Health Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) service at Cardiff and Vale UHB received 66 referrals for men alleging abuse in 2020/21. Men are the perpetrators in the majority of cases.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In 2019/20, the sexual assault referral centre (SARC) received 465 referrals which increased to 737 in the following year. This included 19 children for 2019/20 and 118 children in 2020/21. The number of children on Cardiff's Child Protection Register due to sexual abuse increased from 25 in 2019/20 to 54 in 2020/21 representing a 116% increase. The proportion of the overall numbers with this factor has also increased from 2.64% of all registrations to 7.61% of all registrations due to sexual abuse.

CHARACTERISTICS CONFERRING INCREASED RISK

Individuals with specific characteristics may be at disproportionate risk of abuse and may experience additional and overlapping barriers with seeking help. This may include Black and minoritised women, asylum seekers and refugees, disabled people and older people.

- Every year the RISE service supports around 400 Black and minoritised survivors.
- In Cardiff, the StreetLife project has worked with over 150 individuals exploited through the sex industry, but this is likely to be an underestimation given that many will not come to the attention of the authorities and services.
- Approximately 10% of sexual violence survivors who access the regional sexual assault referral centre (SARC) are LGBTQ+ with an upward trend in the number of trans survivors.

Equality and Diversity

Working to the Equalities Act 2010 and the Welsh Language Act 1993 which has been further amended by the Welsh Language Measure 2011, all partners in the region are mindful how they respond to the diverse needs of victims including how they engage with, and meet the needs of, victims (including children) with protected characteristics. Partners share the values of being open-minded and respectful and have a commitment to equality and diversity, acknowledging individuality and recognising that people are not a homogenous group of victims.

Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge and understand the impacts of VAWDASV on older people seeking support and tailor services appropriately. Deliver a range of age-appropriate therapeutic interventions for children and young people.
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure equitable access to services, especially information and advice and in accommodation-based support. Develop referral pathways into other specialist support such as mental health and substance misuse services.
Gender Reassignment	Have clear policies and procedures in place for delivering services to transgender victims, especially in shared accommodation-based settings and in group work – both in terms of keeping the victim safe and managing any impact.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Service provision should acknowledge and understand how VAWDASV is impacting on a survivor's own wellbeing and on their capacity to form positive attachments and effectively parent their children.
Race	Provide sensitive and appropriate services for all survivors but specifically for those from a Black and minoritised background who may experience additional barriers that may affect their ability to seek help and support and who may have additional needs.
Religion/ Belief	Have an awareness of the different requirements of a survivor's religion/belief and meet these needs wherever possible, for example the use of prayer/contemplation rooms in the accommodation-based support settings.
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver services that are informed by a gendered understanding of VAWDASV to reflect the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) 2015 Act. Ensure that children of any sex or gender accompanying a victim are provided with appropriate support and positive mentoring.
Sexual Orientation	Acknowledge and understand the effects of sexual orientation on the abuse experienced by LGBTQ+ survivors.
Welsh Language	Facilitate response to initial enquiries in the Welsh language as a minimum and ensure that all publicity materials regarding services are bilingual.

An overview of equality and diversity



Equality is everyone getting a pair of shoes.



Diversity is everyone getting a different type of shoe.



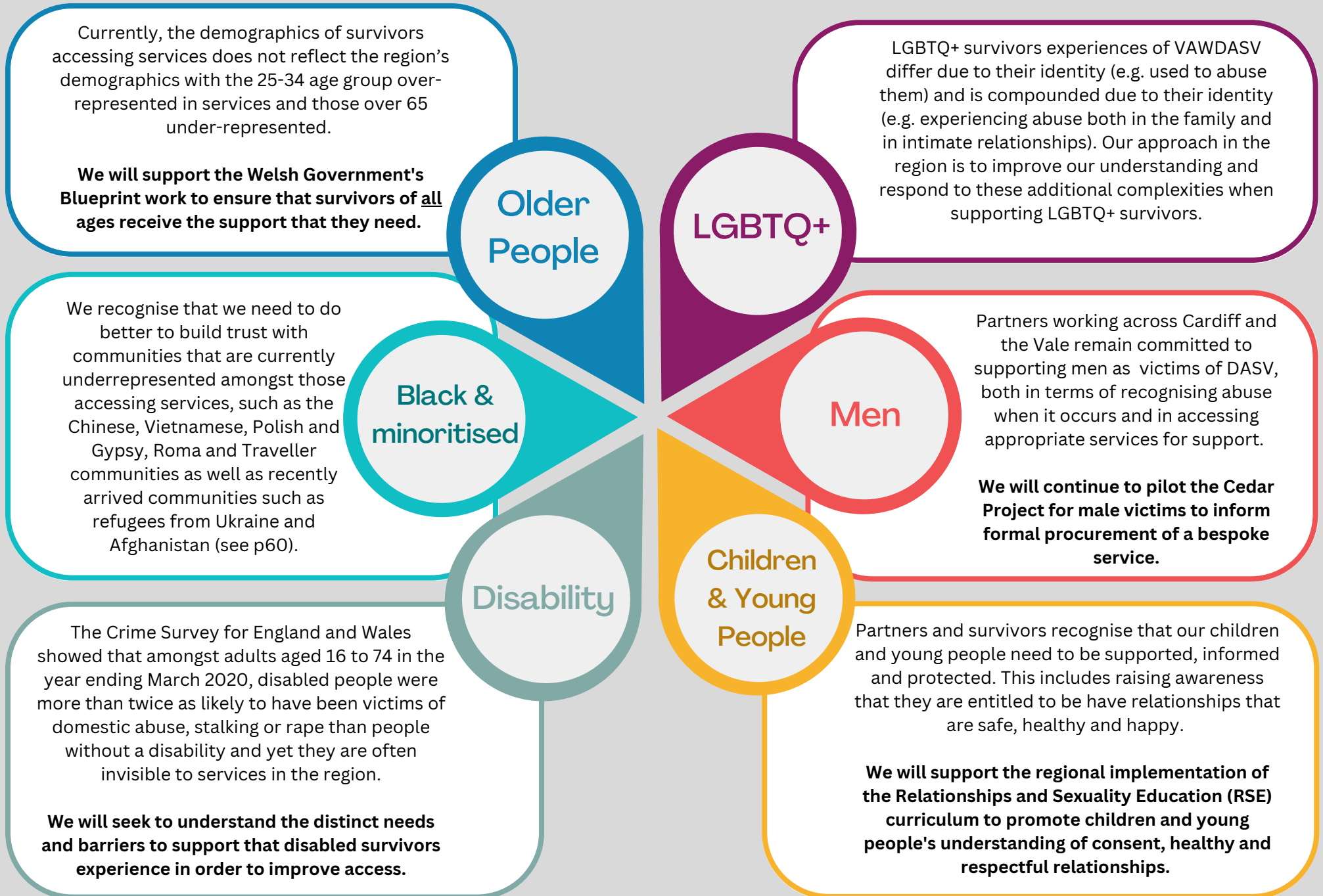
Equity is everyone getting a pair of shoes that fits.



Acceptance is understanding we all wear different kinds of shoes.



Belonging is wearing the shoes you want without fear of judgment.



Available Regional Specialist Services

Mapping of services available across the region shows that there are currently:

- 1 One Stop Shop (Cardiff only)
- 62 Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) and 12 Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs)
- 89 units of specialist accommodation
- 1 provider of 2 community perpetrator interventions and
- 3 providers of 3 early intervention programmes for those who harm
- 3 remote evidencing suites
- IRIS+ training, advocacy support and referral programme for 57 GP practices

RISE delivers the VAWDASV service for female victims including One Stop Shop, a range of crisis accommodation/refuge, floating support, specialist children and young people support, IPAs and therapeutic work

Vale Domestic Abuse Services provides static and dispersed refuge, IDVA support, domestic abuse response team, range of services for children and young people and the Vale Wellbeing Centre that leads on community and survivor engagement.

Safer Wales

- Dyn national male victim helpline/service
- Streetlife project for street sex workers
- Safer Wales and Probation Women's Pathfinder service

New Pathways delivers current and non-recent sexual abuse counselling for women, men and children

Cardiff and Vale Health-based IDVAs
5 staff including provision for young people

Cedar Project
Regional male victims' accommodation and support service

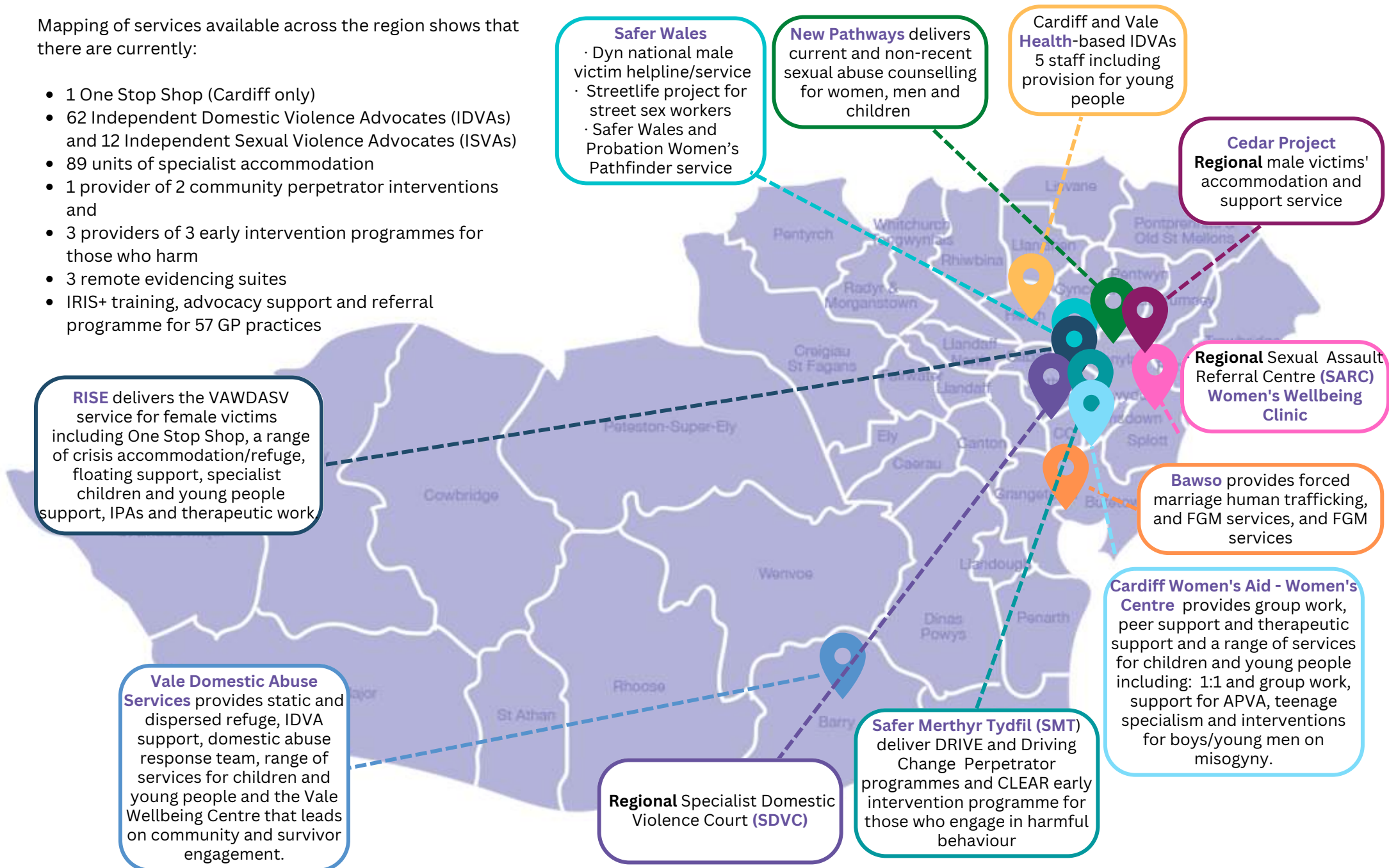
Regional Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
Women's Wellbeing Clinic

Bawso provides forced marriage human trafficking, and FGM services, and FGM services

Cardiff Women's Aid - Women's Centre provides group work, peer support and therapeutic support and a range of services for children and young people including: 1:1 and group work, support for APVA, teenage specialism and interventions for boys/young men on misogyny.

Safer Merthyr Tydfil (SMT) deliver DRIVE and Driving Change Perpetrator programmes and CLEAR early intervention programme for those who engage in harmful behaviour

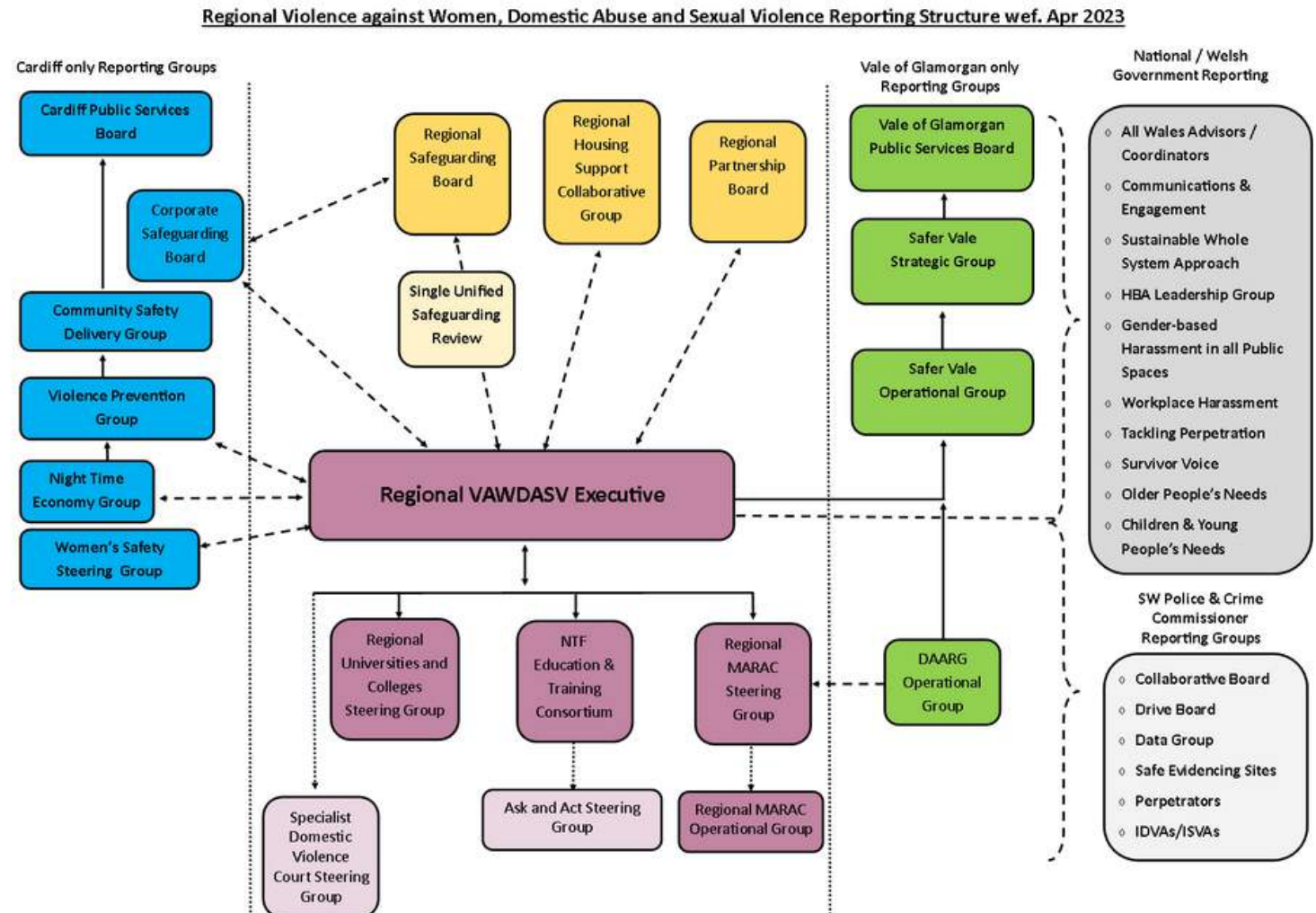
Regional Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC)



Governance

The below diagram provides the proposed governance structure to be adopted in the region. There will continue to be a degree of reporting through local authority governance and oversight arrangements. This regional structure will be continually monitored and reviewed to remain in line with other relevant structures. Each sub-group will have responsibility and lead on different elements of the delivery plan and report to the Executive Group on a quarterly basis.

- We are implementing our agreed recommendations from the Safe Lives review and have a single MARAC Steering Group for the Region.
- The Domestic Homicide Review Panel will be replaced by the Single Unified Safeguarding Review Panel feeding to the Regional Safeguarding Board.
- Partners will continue to support work to tackle VAWDASV across South Wales through the South Wales Police and Crime and Commissioner's Reporting Groups.
- We will support the Welsh Government's implementation of the national VAWDASV strategy through the blueprint approach, workstreams and leadership groups.
- VAWDASV issues will continue to be fed into other regional and overarching governance arrangements (Regional Safeguarding Board, Regional Partnership Board and Regional Housing Support Collaborative Board).



Regional Commissioning Approach

People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. – Maya Angelou



The region is fortunate to have a range of funding sources to help with testing new ways of working and to offer meaningful contracts for the delivery of key services.

The majority of the funding used for VAWDASV services is from the Welsh Government’s Housing Support Grant which funds staffing for refuges and floating support services. The South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner similarly makes a large contribution to the region through control of his own and, more recently, Home Office/Ministry of Justice funding.

Any capital funding is usually made available from Welsh Government and the region has benefited from a variety of awards over recent years. Cardiff Council acts as the Regional Banker for Welsh Government and Police and Crime Commissioner funding and is responsible for managing subsequent onward grants or contracts with specialist providers.

Quality of support

Survivors have the right to quality support across the region, no matter which commissioned service they approach to get support. We are committed to ensuring that the services that we commission are accredited through the relevant sector standards for specialist VAWDASV services that act as an independent quality assurance mechanism. It is worth noting that currently there are no quality standards for services working with survivors of sexual exploitation.

Accreditation	Domestic Abuse	Sexual Violence	BAME	Male victims	Perpetrators
Welsh Women’s Aid’s National Quality Service Standards	✓				
Imkaan Safe Minimum practice standards	✓		✓		
National Service Standards (Rape Crisis England and Wales)		✓			
Lime Culture Quality Standards for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Services Services Supporting Male Victims 		✓		✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Respect Standard (Perpetrators) Respect Male Victim's Standards 				✓	✓
Welsh Government Perpetrator Service Standards					✓
The Survivor Trust (TST) National Service Standards		✓			

Consultation with Survivors

WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?

1. PURSUE

YOUR EXPERIENCES OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE & SPECIALIST SERVICES

FAMILY COURTS - WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE SOMEONE WITH ME THEY SHOULD BE MORE UNDERSTANDING & SUPPORTIVE.

DECIDED NOT TO PROSECUTE - DIDN'T WANT TO GO THROUGH COURT TO DRAG THINGS UP

2. PREVENT

HOW WE CAN CHANGE SUPPORT SERVICES & IMPROVE SERVICES FOR VAWDASV.

AWARENESS RAISING EVERYWHERE! BUS STOPS... GP... HOSPITAL SHOPS...

EDUCATE MEN ABOUT HOW TO TREAT WOMEN & THE LAWS IN THIS COUNTRY

THIS INFORMAL EVENT WILL HELP YOU TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOP DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVISED CARDIFF & VALE OF GLAMORGAN REGIONAL VAWDASV STRATEGY



VAWDASV
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
DOMESTIC ABUSE & SEXUAL VIOLENCE
IMPROVING HOW WE SUPPORT YOU

CONVERSATION CAFE

INCIDENTS LINKED BY THE POLICE - MINE WERE DOCUMENTED SEPARATELY



TO BE LISTENED TO, AND BELIEVED

999 CALL FANTASTIC RESPONSE FROM FEMALE OPERATOR - TALKED TO ME & CHILDREN

MORE REPERCUSSIONS THROUGH C.T. SERVICES

DIDN'T THINK I WOULD BE BELIEVED

POLICE & BAUSO HELPED ME - THEY UNDERSTAND US. EVERYTIME I NEED SOMETHING I CALL MY SUPPORT WORKER, NOT MY FAMILY.



IMMIGRATION SOLICITORS DON'T WANT TO TAKE ON LEGAL AID CUSTOMERS MAKES IT HARD FOR SURVIVORS OF TRAFFICKING.

HOUSING LISTS & WAITING LISTS TOO LONG FOR SUPPORTED LIVING - WENT INTO PRIVATE HOUSING

DOCTOR & POLICE EXPLAINED WHAT WAS HAPPENING - WOULD ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO TELL SOMEONE IF THEY'RE BEING HURT

POEL HELPED ME MOVE & CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ME - FANTASTIC



HOLD PERPETRATORS TO ACCOUNT, ALSO GIVE SUPPORT FOR THEM, NOT JUST AT **CRISIS**

ENSURE ALL AGENCIES ARE AWARE OF THE LIVE FEAR FREE HELPLINE:

0800 80 10 800 CALL TEXT LIVE CHAT EMAIL

REFERRAL TO THE SUPPORT THEY CAN OFFER.

VAWDASV NEED TO BE NORMALISED - SAME AS MENTAL HEALTH

ENSURE EVERY REGION IN WALES FOLLOWS/AUGNS TO



HOISTIC - TREAT EACH CHILD AS AN INDIVIDUAL READILY AVAILABLE

ONE LITTLE PARAGRAPH ON THE W.G. WEBSITE - THEY STILL DON'T GET IT RIGHT

COURSE FOR POLICE TARGETED AROUND ♀ - ONLY AT END MENTIONED ♂ MEN???

TELL US YOUR STORIES...

THANK YOU FOR SHARING

OUR VISION

OUR VISION IS THAT PEOPLE WHO LIVE, WORK, STUDY IN & VISIT CARDIFF & THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE POSITIVE, INDEPENDENT LIVES WITHOUT BEING AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE AND ABUSE.

29 NOVEMBER 2022
AM SESSION - WOMEN
PM SESSION - MEN

Pafiliwn Grange Pavilion



Consultation with Survivors

3. PROTECT

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU TO FEEL SAFER, & ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES OF SUPPORT.

REFUGE
WELCOMED NOT QUESTIONED.
I FELT **SAFE** WITH SURROUNDINGS AND STAFF

ROOM WAS CRAMPED FOR ME & 3 CHILDREN

FRIGHTENED WITH REFUGE LOCATION - HIGH CRIME AREA

PHENOMINAL SUPPORT FOR MY **CHILDREN** STRAIGHT AWAY ☺

SOCIAL SERVICES - TOLD NOT TO SAY ANYTHING IN CASE MY CHILDREN GET TAKEN AWAY FROM ME.

LEGAL ADVICE - 30 MINS WITH SOLICITOR

CARDIFF COUNCIL SUPPORTED ME WITH ALARMS FITTED ON DOORS & PROPERTY

I AM **FREE** AND MORE CONFIDENT TO SPEAK TO OTHERS

AT REFUGE
NICE PLACE TO MEET NEW PEOPLE - LEARN FROM THEM

DAYS LIKE THESE ARE REALLY NEEDED TO GIVE SURVIVORS A SAFE SPACE TO TELL THEIR STORY

POLICE DON'T COME ACROSS MALE ABUSE, IF THEY DID, WOULD THEY BELIEVE? WHY I DIDN'T REPORT IT...

NOT IDEAL FOR CHILDREN

NEW PATHWAYS

THE THERAPY & COUNSELLING SO EMPOWERING IN EVERY WAY...

FIRST TIME I FELT **HEARD**

CPS: REALLY LET ME DOWN AS THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE ME. LISTEN TO LIVED EXPERIENCES, UNDERSTAND VICTIM'S

JOURNEY

VALIDATE THEIR EXPERIENCES

TAKE BREACHES OF BAIL SERIOUSLY & REALISING THIS IS ESCALATING RISK... PERPETRATOR HAS LOST CONTROL, NO REGARD FOR SERVICES.

4. SUPPORT

HOW WE CAN IMPROVE WHAT WE DO & PROVIDE THE BEST SUPPORT POSSIBLE.

NO WAITING LIST FOR COUNSELLING

M.H. & SUBSTANCE & MISUSE SPECIALISTS

TALK ABOUT **EMOTIONS** COUNSELLING

REFUGE

REHOUSING (BEEN IN REFUGE 2 YEARS)

INTERNET IN REFUGE!

SAFETY IN REFUGE: NO MEN, NO DRUGS.

SCHOOL TIMES/LOCATIONS MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO GET TO ENGLISH/ESOL CLASSES. NEED COMMUNITY BASED CLASS FOR EVERYONE

MAKE FRIENDS

SHE COULDN'T SEE THAT WHAT SHE'D DONE WAS WRONG

BETTER KNOWLEDGE OF REFUGES WILL BE SENT TO... (HOW MEDICAL ISSUES WILL BE DEALT WITH WHEN SENT OUT OF AREA.)

SUPPORT FOR HOMEOWNERS

EDUCATION

UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE STAY/RETURN

6000 PEOPLE ON VAIL WAITING LIST, YET EMPTY HOUSES NEAR ME.

WHEN I GOT SUPPORT, THERE WAS ONLY ONE PERSON COVERING

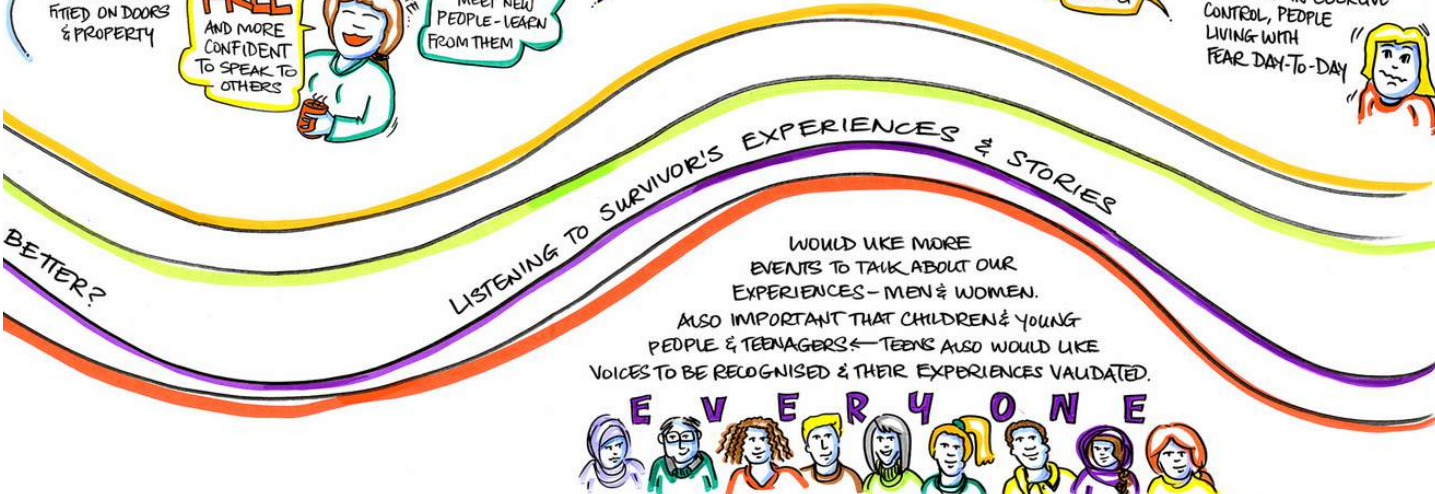
THE WHOLE OF WALES - IT'S JUST NOT ENOUGH!

HOUSING SUPPORT EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

SURVIVORS WHO HAVE FAMILY ABROAD NEED INTERNET ENABLED PHONES TO CONTACT THEM - OUR PHONES ARE ON LOAN. STARTING IN A NEW COUNTRY - **HARD!**

PLAY OR ART THERAPY

CHILDREN: BETTER SPACES FOR THEM TO SPEAK
TRAINING IN CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOURS, & EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.
TRAINING IN COERCIVE CONTROL, PEOPLE LIVING WITH FEAR DAY-TO-DAY



The authentic voice of victims and survivors has been central to the development of this strategy and will feature throughout future work. A 'Conversation Café' attended by male and female victims and survivors from across the region provided an opportunity for feedback to be incorporated across each of the 5 Aims. The day was a powerful reminder of the need to centralise the authentic voices of victims and survivors and this visual was created reflecting their feedback.

Expert Voices



In addition to the strategic leaders in the region, our strategy and ongoing work is informed by expert voices, both from professionals, academics and those with lived experience expertise.

Lived experience expertise

Survivors are at the heart of everything that we do. Survivor input was crucial in the development of this strategy and their authentic voice is included in the commitments are more visibly in the form of quotes throughout the document. We will continue to ensure that appropriate frameworks and mechanisms are in place to ensure that survivors' voices are integral in the delivery of the strategy.

Diverse voices and representation are key in making sure that we deliver responses that are tailored to individual needs and reach those most disadvantaged and marginalised. This includes children and young people, the LGBTQ+ community and older people, but will expand as and when appropriate.

"Hold more events to listen to the survivors as they have not been listened to and silenced for many years" -

VAWDASV Survivor

Professional and academic expertise

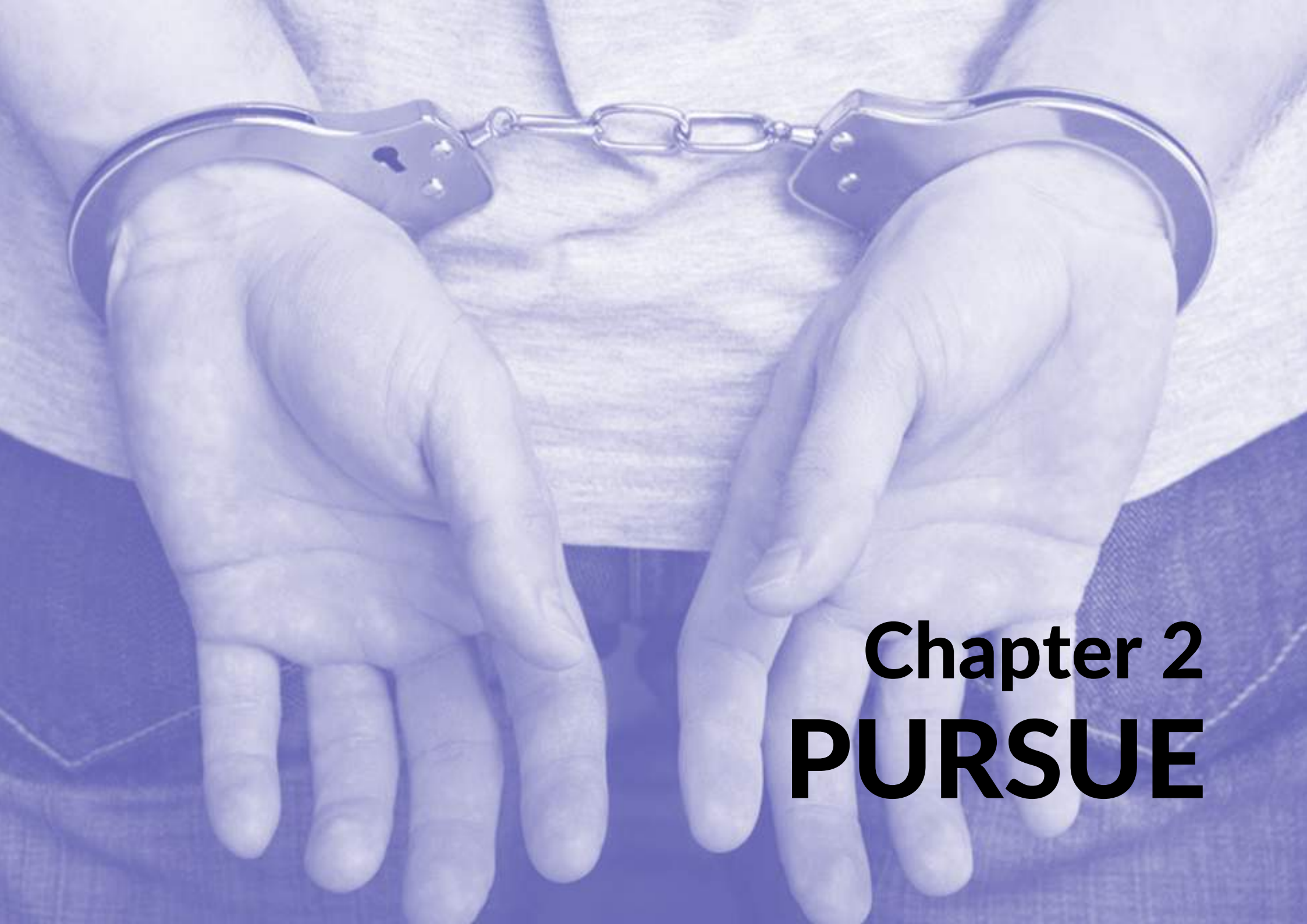
This strategy is a collaborative effort between statutory and third sector partners. In addition to survivors with lived experience of VAWDASV, we will continue to call on expert professionals in the field to provide training, guidance and specialist advice on new tools, methodology and learning.

Similarly, we ensure that our understanding of VAWDASV is underpinned by strong evidence based research and we have called upon academic expertise in order to upskill the workforce in the region. For example, in 2022, we invited Dr Jane Monkton-Smith to provide presentations on the Domestic Homicide timeline, including specific considerations for homicides that happen in the context of honour-based abuse and understanding domestic abuse related suicides.

We are kept informed of any emerging academic research and development. The region is also represented at the VAWDASV Research Network Wales, which was launched in 2021 by the Minister for Social Justice, Jane Hutt MS. We have used the most relevant and current research and evidence in the development of this strategy.

We will:

- Ensure the lived experiences of survivors informs ongoing service development and delivery and
- Continue to learn from experts.



Chapter 2
PURSUE

Criminal Justice Response (Domestic Abuse)

"We talk about how many women were raped last year, not about how many men raped women. We talk about how many girls in a school district were harassed last year, not about how many boys harassed girls. So you can see how the use of this passive voice has a political effect. It shifts the focus off men and boys and onto girls and women. Even the term **violence against women** is problematic. It's a passive construction. There's no active agent in the sentence. It's a bad thing that happens to women, but when you look at that term **violence against women**, nobody is doing it to them. It just happens. Men aren't even part of it!"

Jackson Katz, PhD, from his Ted Talk "Violence Against Women: It's a Men's Issue"

"The attention needs to be on the perpetrator not the victim. We concentrate on the victims too much. The perpetrator walks around entitled and the victim is scared." - VAWDASV survivor

The intention of our strategic approach is to make perpetrators visible and accountable for the harm that they cause. This includes interventions through the criminal justice system such as arrests, prosecutions, imprisonment and interventions through the Probation Service. It also includes programmes and interventions in the community to break the cycle of perpetration by changing attitudes and behaviour.

999 CALL
FANTASTIC
RESPONSE
FROM FEMALE
OPERATOR - TALKED
TO ME & CHILDREN



We have received mixed feedback from survivors and partners, which suggest that victim-blaming and unhelpful attitudes prevail in organisations such as the police. South Wales Police have also responded to reports of police perpetrated abuse by commissioning an independent service to meet survivors' needs. Cultures of misogyny, sexism and victim-blaming, however, are not limited to the police and a number of public bodies and services have come under scrutiny in recent years.

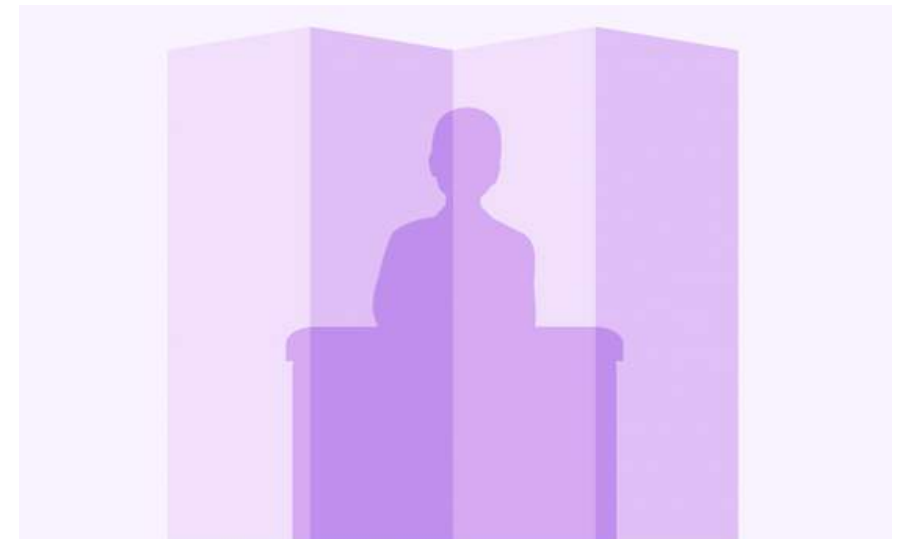
"Clearly there was a long history of DV and I felt as though I was being questioned and interrogated." - VAWDASV survivor

Every month, there are a number of requests to the CPS for charging advice. Of those charged, the conviction rate in the region runs between 75-77%. Guilty please are approximately at 70%.

In order to achieve best outcomes for victims through criminal justice proceedings, we have implemented the following measures:

- There are three evidencing sites where victims can provide evidence without having to physically present at the court.
- The Probation Stakeholder Engagement Team has conducted a thorough needs analysis to ensure that all probation staff servicing the courts are fully trained and equipped in all aspects of domestic abuse with key priorities to ensure victim safety, especially when bail is being considered in remand courts.
- Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates (IDVAs) will provide specialist advocacy and support to survivors.

In addition, the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) prohibits perpetrators and alleged perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person (and vice versa) in family proceedings.



Criminal Justice Response (Sexual Violence)

Nationally, over the last five years the number of victims approaching the police has increased significantly and yet at the same time, the number of offenders charged has decreased. Below are the Home Office data collected by the Rape Monitoring Group.

Crime Type / Activity	2015/16	2019/20
England and Wales		
Rape of a female (16+)	22,792	37,500
Charged/Summoned	2,384	493
Rape of a male (16+)	1,295	2,520
Charged/Summoned	67	15
South Wales		
Rape of a female (16+)	364	826
Charged/Summoned	66	25
Rape of a male (16+)	22	52
Charged/Summoned	2	0

"I reported the physical & sexual abuse to the Police. He was arrested but not charged. There were huge delays in the process due to COVID. The male DC assigned to the case was extremely unprofessional and unsupportive towards me." - VAWDASV Survivor

Failure to secure justice for victims of sexual violence has prompted the UK Government to undertake a review, known as the *Rape Review* and produce recommendations for the Government, the Police, the CPS and Courts that will increase the number of cases pursued, improve timelines and victim engagement. Part of the improvement plan is **Operation Soteria**, an ambitious, joint police and CPS programme of work to transform the way that rape investigations and prosecutions are handled and progressed, with a focus on investigating the suspect rather than the victim.

Whilst charging outcomes are low, South Wales Police has the highest percentage across the police forces in England and Wales of all rape offences resulting in a charge or summons.

South Wales Police is also part of the first phase of the Operation Soteria pilot, making a commitment to improve outcomes for survivors. The pilot involves bringing together policing and academic experts to transform how investigations into rape and sexual offences are handled by the police through a series of intensive research deep dives that inform findings and recommendations.

However, year 1 findings show a number of challenges including that staff lack sufficient specialist knowledge about rape and other sexual offending and disproportionate effort being put into testing the credibility of a victim's account.

We will:

Improve our understanding of sexual violence to develop and enhance our response.

Legislative and Policy Changes



“Educate the men about how to treat women and the laws in this country.”- VAWDASV survivor

The **UK Government Domestic Abuse Act (2021)** introduced a number of legislative changes:

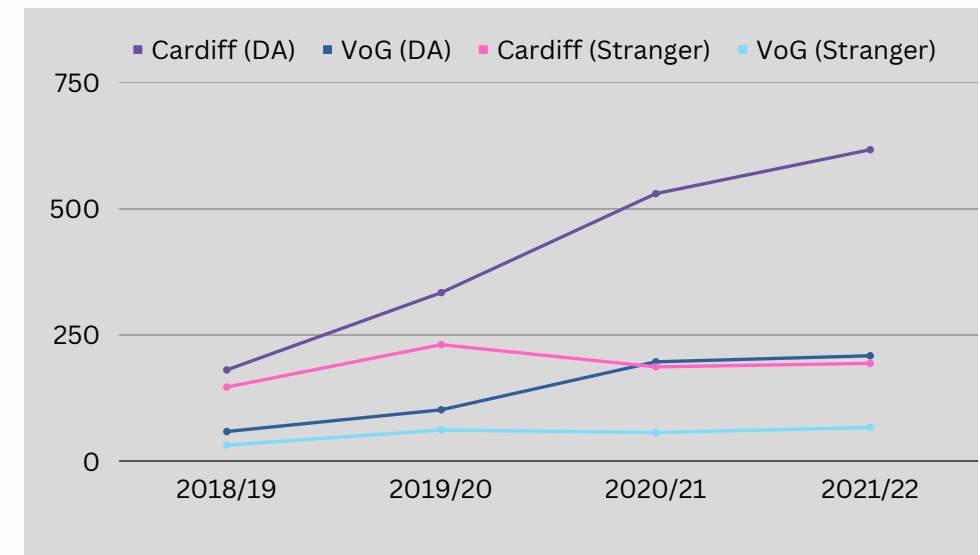
- It creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse that emphasises that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive and includes economic abuse.
- It provides for new Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders.
- It extends the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse.
- It extends the offence of disclosing private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress to cover threats to disclose such material.
- It recognises children who see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse as victims in their own right.
- It creates a new offence of non-fatal strangulation or suffocation of another person.

The **Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Act 2020** makes illegal all types of physical punishment, such as smacking, hitting, slapping and shaking.

The **Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019** outlaws ‘upskirting’ where the purpose is to obtain sexual gratification, or to cause humiliation, distress or alarm.

The **Health and Care Act 2022** made illegal virginity testing and hymenoplasty.

Stalking is a serious crime and can be part of escalating behaviours that is part of the eight stages that lead to domestic homicides[26]. In our last strategy, we acknowledged that stalking is rarely reported to the police, and we committed to raise awareness of stalking as a crime, including how to spot the signs, feel confident to report and record evidence to support the criminal justice process. Changes in police practice has had significant impact with reports to the police rising 3.5 times for stalking offences in the context of intimate partner abuse and 1.5 times for stalking offences perpetrated by strangers.



We will:

- Support partners to implement the new powers originating from legislative changes (e.g Domestic Abuse Act (2021)).
- Raise awareness of legislative changes to encourage appropriate reporting, signposting and support.

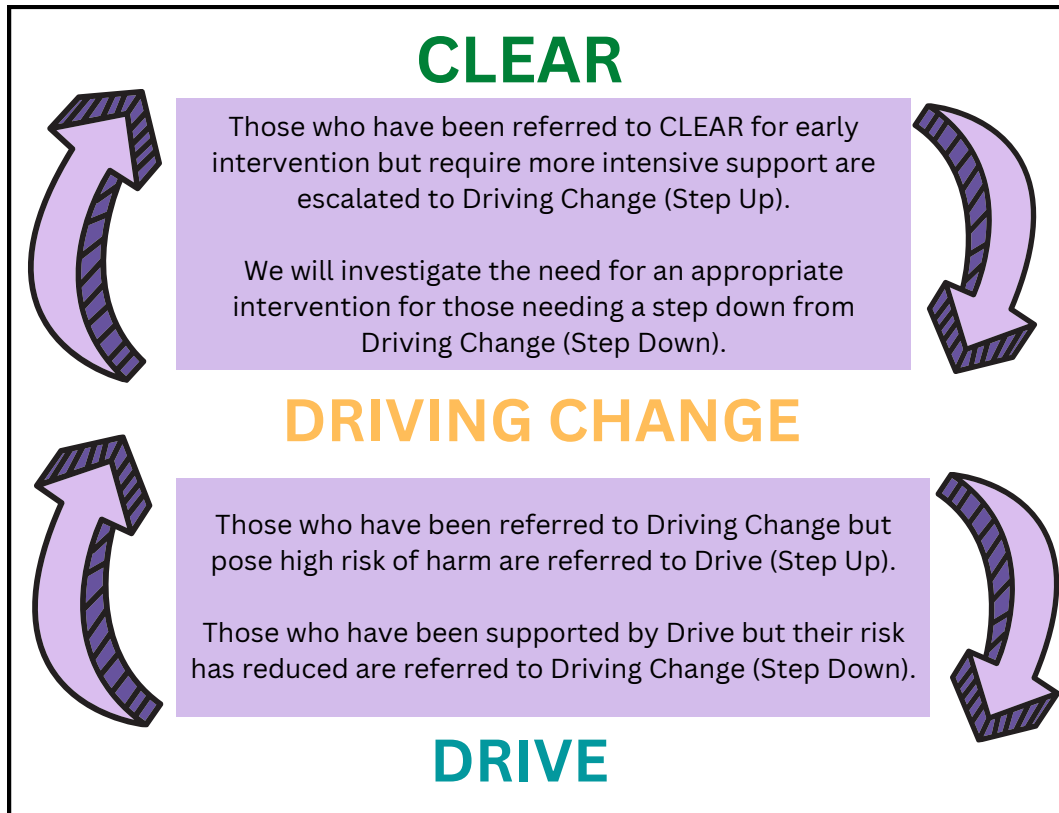
Community Perpetrator Programmes



In partnership with the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, we have commissioned Safer Merthyr Tydfil (SMT) to deliver a suite of interventions that hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour, by promoting attitudinal and behavioural change, and reducing the number of survivors.

Interventions are tiered based on the level of risk that the perpetrator presents to their victims, and they all have an integrated specialist support for the survivors of the men who engage with the interventions.

This innovative seamless community response is the first of its kind in the UK.



“[I] do not want children to grow up in an environment that promotes anger and violence against women” - VAWDASV survivor



CLEAR was developed by Respect in partnership with Welsh Women’s Aid as a complementary and integrated strand of the Change That Lasts model. It is a six week programme that is delivered on a one-to-one basis tailored to meet the individual’s needs.

Each session last approximately 1 hour- 1 ½ hours that focus on identifying the impact of abusive behaviours on others, using tools to promote healthier relationships and setting goals to promote wellbeing and healthier relationships.

"I used to think that was the way that women were treated – cooking cleaning and staying home." - Man who accessed CLEAR



Driving Change is a therapeutic treatment programme for men who have been violent towards an intimate partner. It provides challenge and also support to enable individuals to cease their violent and abusive behaviour with a view for them to develop respectful, loving and responsible attitudes towards not only those around them but also towards themselves.

It combines both one-to-one and group-based work, adopting a cognitive-behavioural and feminist approach within an explicit emotional and feeling framework rooted in psychotherapeutic and spiritual practice.

“Doing this is fantastic work for anyone in a similar situation, me and my partner have noticed how much better our communication has improved.” - Man accessing Driving Change Programme

Community Perpetrator Programmes

Drive is an intensive intervention that works with high-harm and serial perpetrators to challenge abusive behaviour and prevent abuse by providing a robust multi-agency response to perpetrators whose victim's cases are referred to MARAC. This is achieved by assigning a specific case manager to each perpetrator in order to manage the risk they pose and to work alongside support services for survivors, sharing information about perpetrators' engagement, behaviour and risk level to promote survivor safety. This includes engagement and disruptive tactics.



Since its inception in 2018, the DRIVE Project has worked with 308 perpetrators in Cardiff and 88 perpetrators in the Vale of Glamorgan. Domestic abuse is a gendered crime and 97% of these 396 perpetrators were men. 458 adult victim/survivors (95% female) and 823 children were harmed by the behaviour of these perpetrators. This accounts for more than two children for every perpetrator. Many perpetrators victimise multiple individuals; for example, 49.7% of the perpetrators in Cardiff were serial perpetrators and 12% had multiple victims. Perpetrator interventions therefore also form part of a preventative response as they break the cycle of further perpetration.

“Since working with CM I have decided not to enter new relationships and focus on myself. I now have my driving license and a car which opens up more job opportunities, I train with the football team twice a week and saving to buy my own home.” Man supported by DRIVE

We will:

- continue to place accountability for abuse on those who cause harm
- tackle perpetration by supporting the Welsh Government's relevant Blueprint workstream.

The **Probation Service** in Wales has a priority focus on domestic abuse which incorporates National and Welsh Government priorities. It introduced a Domestic Abuse Board in January 2022 to set direction and ensure that the Domestic Abuse Strategy is implemented in Wales.

It continues to deliver interventions for perpetrators of VAWDASV and specialises in working with victims, many of whom are victims of Domestic Abuse. There are trained staff who specialise in working with victims to provide information, access support and ensure that the voice of victims is heard. Victim Liaison Officers provide a key role in multi-agency forums and engagement with practitioners to ensure victim safety.

Domestic Abuse Audit

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, a joint initiative between the police and the probation service in South Wales was undertaken to ensure robust assessment and management of domestic abuse perpetrators in our community. This led to an audit of over 500 DA cases assessed as high and very high risk of serious harm and resulted in an all-Wales action plan to enhance the management of VAWDASV perpetrators. The plan aimed to improve the work in courts, developing processes and guidance for staff with a focus on:

- The importance of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and ensuring that High/Very High Risk DA perpetrators are referred into MAPPA.
- Ensuring safeguarding and increasing education, guidance and training for staff, particularly around acute and emerging risk factors when working with DA perpetrators.
- Approximately 300 high risk men who had been convicted of DA related offences were reviewed by the Wales Offender Personality Disorder Pathway (OPDP) team to identify the factors associated with DA offending in Wales, treatment needs and a service that is informed by the needs of the population.

Funding has been put in place to recruit Domestic Abuse Intelligence Officers/ Safeguarding Enquiries Officers across Wales.

Holding Perpetrators to Account - Other Forms of VAWDASV

Perpetrator interventions are currently primarily delivered where abuse occurs within a domestic abuse context of an intimate relationship. We need to do more to address all forms of VAWDASV.

Sexual Exploitation

"Sometimes we see men who are violent who started off with violence against a sex worker, because that's seen as less serious, or easier."

– Call for Evidence, Focus Group (2021 Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy consultation)

Women exploited through the sex industry experience high levels of violence and abuse. The National Ugly Mugs (NUM) Project, delivered in Cardiff by the StreetLife Project and safeguarding partners, has been receiving and sharing reports of violence and harms amongst sexually exploited women in order to alert them of any potential dangers. Since being established, NUM reports have risen from 166 in 2013 to nearly 1,000 in 2019. [4]

There is an overlap between buying sex and sexual violence, as sex buyers are likely to express beliefs that "*normalise narratives of sexual violence and violence against women*" [5]. For example, areas with high levels of visible prostitution often report anti-social behaviour including kerb-crawling and sexual harassment of all women who live in the area. Yet, early intervention responses rarely consider the harmful attitudes that underpin the beliefs of sex buyers and those who exploit and abuse women. Police clampdowns on kerb-crawlers alone are often temporary and have little impact on detection and behaviour change[6]. Evaluations of re-education programmes have shown an attitudinal change amongst kerb crawlers but these fail to equip them with the necessary skills to change their behaviour [ibid].

Multi-agency interventions are required that coordinate:

- A better understanding of the prevalence and changing nature of sexual exploitation including online spaces, home and social media;
- Awareness raising activities about the law relating to paying for sexual services;
- Police operations against kerb crawlers;
- Re-education programmes for kerb-crawlers;
- Support for women to share intelligence on violent men, report crime and support prosecutions.
- Better understanding of online sex-work.

Sexual violence

There are no programmes in the community for perpetrators of sexual abuse and violence. Perpetrators are dealt with through the criminal justice system (CJS) and programmes are delivered primarily in prisons. However, evaluation[3] of the Core Sex Offender Treatment Programmes (SOTP) found small changes in behaviour that would suggest either that they do not reduce sexual re-offending or that its true impact was not detected.

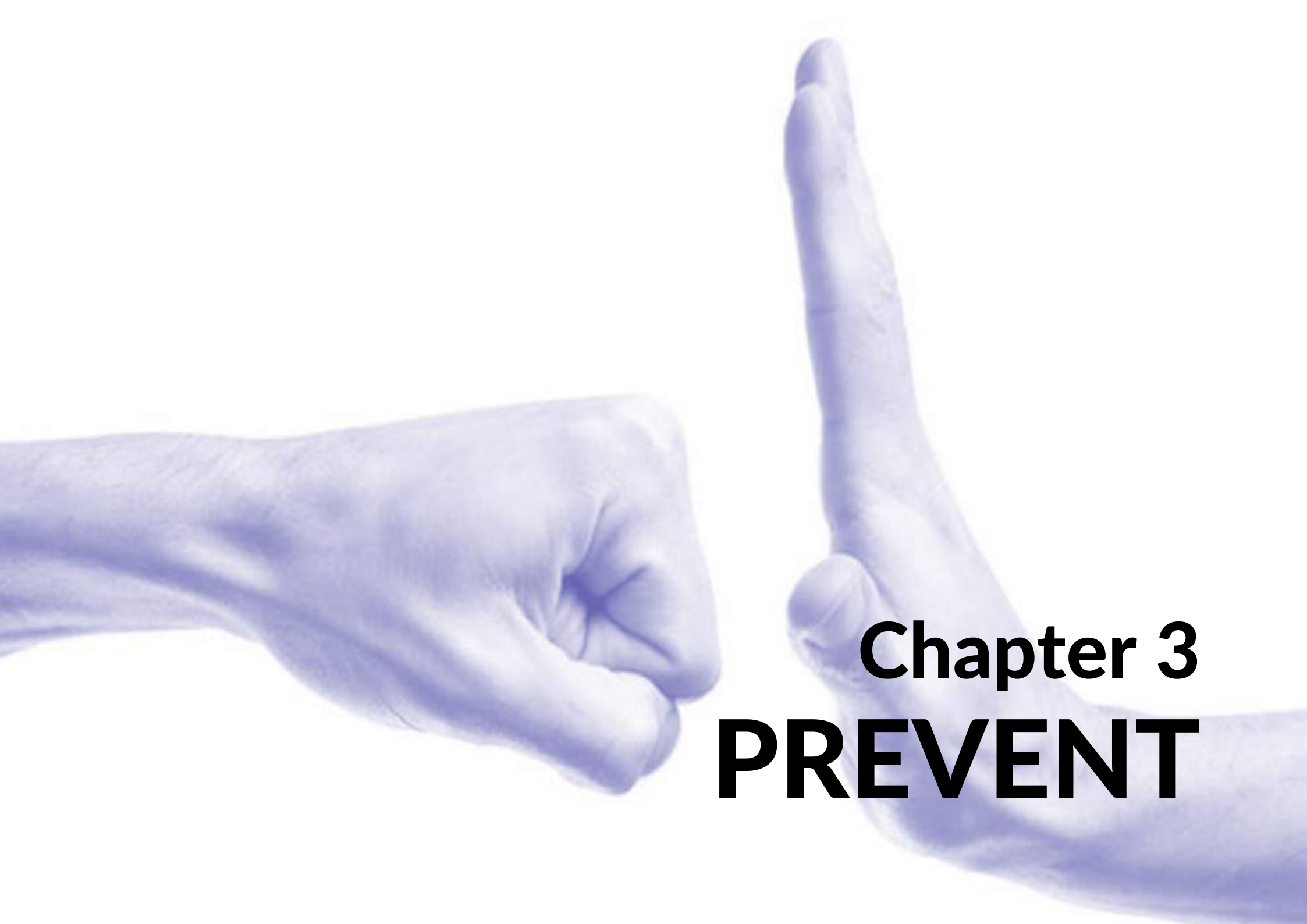
Honour-based abuse

Similarly, preventative work with communities to tackle the attitudes that perpetuate abuse in the name of 'honour' is often missed from perpetrator interventions.

In comparison to other forms of VAWDASV, Forced Marriage, so called honour-based abuse and FGM may involve whole families and communities and any approaches need to consider how interventions are designed and delivered with the whole family and community in mind and meet their specific needs.

We will:

Explore accredited and evidence-based programmes that address harmful behaviours related to all forms of VAWDASV and support efforts to secure interventions.



Chapter 3
PREVENT

Children and Young People

Early Years

Sexual abuse and living in a household with domestic abuse are considered adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), which are strongly associated with poorer life outcomes for children.

The harmful impact of VAWDASV on children and young people can include acute feelings of betrayal, powerlessness and guilt resulting in mental health and physical health difficulties such as suicidal thoughts, depression, difficulties with sleeping, increased likelihood of negative coping strategies such as use of alcohol and substances (Welsh Women's Aid, 2019), engagement with criminal behaviour and incarceration (Public Health Wales, 2015). The estimated annual financial cost that is attributed to ACEs in Wales is £2.2 billion (ACEs Hub).

The Review of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Policy: Report – Welsh Government (2021) calls for the awareness and understanding of ACEs to translate into action to prevent ACEs from happening in the first place and to provide a strength-based and trauma-informed response to those who have already experienced adversity in their lives. It also calls for individual adverse experiences to be considered in the wider context of inequality and deprivation and should not be seen as deterministic and stigmatising. ACEs Police Community Support Officers across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan are working with relevant support services.

Education

Reports to "Everyone's Invited"[7] suggests that sexual harassment is endemic across schools in the UK. The website was created to provide a space for survivors to share their stories anonymously and it has sparked a conversation about rape culture in schools and reviews into safeguarding policies and practices in educational settings. The 2022 report includes 300 schools and universities in Wales.



“The change and attitudes needs to start at a young age, primary school as this will have a better impact as high school is too late most children will have experienced something.” – VAWDASV survivor

Early education has the potential to create the transformational impact of preventing VAWDASV and other harmful behaviours such as homophobia and sexism blighting our communities. Educating children from a young age about how healthy relationships are formed, developed and maintained will ensure that respectful behaviours and relationships become the norm as they grow into adulthood.

Healthy relationships education has been delivered to schools in the region through Hafan's Spectrum Programme, which is funded by the Welsh Government. The programme delivers age-appropriate sessions to children and young people as well as teachers both in primary and secondary education. In the last five years, 8,546 children and young people (5,206 Cardiff & 3,340 Vale of Glamorgan) and 652 staff (377 in Cardiff & 275 Vale of Glamorgan) have received a session on healthy relationships.

The Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 aims to mainstream healthy relationships education by creating an obligation for all schools and educational settings to include developmentally appropriate provision for teaching and learning that encompasses Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE). It is expected that these cover the following themes: relationships; rights and equity; sex, gender and sexuality; bodies and body image; sexual health and well-being; and violence, safety and support. In primary schools it became mandatory in September 2022 and in secondary schools it will be rolled out over the next couple of academic years.

The Healthy Schools Teams provide support to schools through the development of a model RSE policy, staff training and a list of RSE resources Training is also provided by the Central South Consortium. The consortium is a Joint Education Service for five local authorities in South Wales. It is commissioned by, and acts on behalf of, the local authorities to provide a school improvement service that challenges, monitors and supports schools to raise standards.

Children and Young People

Some of the most vulnerable children and young people have a precarious engagement with formal educational settings and we have therefore commissioned programmes that raise awareness of healthy relationships in community settings accessed by children and young people. Between 2018/19 and end of 2021/22, the **Sexual Health Outreach Service (SHOT)** supported:

- 319 young people on a 1-1 basis - around 75% say they have improved emotional wellbeing and resilience in relation to healthy relationships on closure.
- 3,600 young people accessed Group Work - around 97% say they have improved knowledge and awareness at the end of this.

The **Safer Wales Inclusive Service (SWIS)** works with young women & girls aged between 12 and 25 years old. It provides one-to-one and group work focused on encouraging positive lifestyle choices. The activities are semi-structured and include; healthy eating, arts and crafts and healthy relationships. These sessions are facilitated by Safer Wales staff to protect young women & girls from; exploitation, gang-related harm domestic abuse and violence.

The **Safeguarding Adolescents from Sexual Exploitation (SAFE)** delivery team work on policy development and a number of projects steered by the SAFE partnership group, such as embedding SAFE topics in the new curriculum for Wales, and consulting with practitioners to better understand patterns or exploitation across different areas of Cardiff. The team also offer 1:1 support to young people at high risk of, or have been victims of, child sexual exploitation through a range of models and interventions tailored to a young person's specific needs, including the Trusted Adult, trauma-informed and Strengths Based approaches.

Cardiff YMCA will deliver a **Safer & Healthy Relationships Programme** that will support young people, at an early intervention stage, to make informed and safe decisions regarding relationships including elements such as safe sex and use of contraception and consent. Young people have told us that they are more likely to approach their parents for advice. We will, therefore, integrate an additional element that will provide sessions and support to parents and link with specialist VAWDASV services to create a referral pathway for those who disclose.

Colleges and Universities



Students experience additional vulnerabilities to the general population, as they may not be aware of local services and may not have established support groups. In partnership with educational institutions, we have delivered, and will continue to deliver, campaigns to raise awareness of VAWDASV and available support routes, through a variety of languages acknowledging the multi-cultural make-up of our sixth form, undergraduate and postgraduate student population.

We will:

Continue to work with universities and colleges to strengthen their response to students experiencing VAWDASV.

Children and Young People - Preventing Harmful Behaviours

Adolescent to Parent Abuse and Violence (APVA)



Child to parent violence and abuse can affect all members of the family but son-to-mother abuse is the most common.

As with other forms of VAWDASV, reporting is significantly undermined by shame and stigma. Parents often carry a sense of guilt and self-blame about the abuse that they experience and are reluctant to report abuse to the police. Parents from a Black or minoritised background may have additional concerns with reporting their child to the authorities. It is worth noting that patterns of abusive behaviour may be directed from a grandchild towards their grandparents, or from children towards their stepparents.

Matters are further complicated by children and young people's additional needs such as learning disabilities, mental health and neuro-diversity. Agencies may fail to recognise the power and control dynamics that underpin child to parent abuse and attribute behaviours to the child's needs.

Break4Change is an accredited programme delivered in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan for families where young people are abusive towards their parent(s)/carer(s). It is offered to families where the child is 11-16. In the two years that it has been running, it has received 44 referrals for children and families.

Parallel Lives delivered by Media Academy Cardiff aims to prevent APVA. The 7-week intervention provides a therapeutic environment for those that have been subjected to APVA; be that parents, siblings, peers or extended family members. The programme aims to tackle APVA through recognising challenging behaviours and offering techniques that allow children/young people and their families to make positive change, repairing/building stronger relationships through expressing feelings and emotions without aggression.

As a region we recognise that:

- There is no excuse for any form of abuse.
- The Criminal Justice System does not always provide the best response to child to parent abuse. Nor is it desired by the victim(s).
- Holistic interventions that work with the whole family and address both the child's needs and behaviour should be utilised.
- Robust data collection in the region is needed to understand the true scale of the issue.
- Further evidence-based and accredited programmes are required to address the behaviour of children over the age of 16.

Problematic Sexual Behaviour

There is a clear need for intervention in the community at an earlier stage - when young people identified as exhibiting problematic sexual behaviour (PSB) or harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). The HSB Prevention Team is part of the Cardiff Youth Offending Service and they work with young people who have been referred to them because of their risky sexual behaviour. They are able to work with parents, professionals and schools in order to prevent the young person from entering the criminal justice system.

The trigger point for securing appropriate services is often following significant harm to others. Subsequent assessments tend to reveal those unaddressed indicators of future harm that would fall within the remit of PSB service. Delays in responding can result in the habituation and escalation of concerning sexual behaviour, significant harm to others and a trajectory of removal from the family home and mainstream school.

New Pathways have secured funding to begin a Problematic Sexual Behaviour intervention across their geographic footprint in 2023/24 and are in the process of applying to other funders to expand this initial funding.

Online Abuse, Misogyny and Extremism

Misogyny has, in recent years become prevalent online, especially due to the prominence of social media influencers, more awareness of the Incel ideology and the emergency of the 'manosphere'. This online space can be very damaging for vulnerable young men as well as girls particularly when used by extremists as a gateway into other violent ideologies and terrorist activities.

The **“manosphere”** is an umbrella term that refers to a number of interconnected misogynistic online communities and forums. It encompasses multiple types and severities of misogyny including Men's Right Activists (MRAs) and Incels.

Incels (involuntary celibates) are a community of men who believe that they are entitled to sex and their inability to get sex leaves them with feelings of bitterness and hatred towards women.

The hateful content of the discourse found in these spaces has increasingly been recognised as a form of extremism. Whilst most times it is maintained in online spaces, it can spill into real life violence directed at women and others in the community (as the example of the August 2021 shootings in Plymouth demonstrates.)

Cardiff's 'Prevent' Team are working with VAWDASV practitioners to develop a greater awareness around the issue via specialist training.

Misogynist attitudes are rooted on the dehumanisation of women. Responses should therefore:

- Centre women and girls' rights to safety and freedom;
- Challenge harmful attitudes and gender norms but also provide alternative positive male role models and positive world views;
- Inoculate the younger generation by warning them about individuals seeking to influence them with hateful messages.

Working with Communities

“All the perpetrator asks is that the bystander does nothing. He appeals to the universal desire to see, hear, and speak no evil. The victim, on the contrary, asks the bystander to share the burden of pain. The victim demands action, engagement, and remembering.” Judith Herman



Friends and family are often the first to know or suspect that their loved ones are experiencing abuse. They can play a crucial role in preventing VAWDASV in their communities by intervening as prosocial bystanders when they witness harmful behaviours and attitudes. More needs to be done to educate communities about the dynamics of domestic abuse and coercive control and ensuring that communities feel confident to provide a safe response to those who disclose.

Based on the premise that people can and should intervene to prevent and challenge VAWDASV, Bystander Programmes aim to train and equip individuals with the skills and confidence to safely intervene. The Bystander Initiative started as a programme for the prevention of sexual coercion and domestic abuse in university settings. Acknowledging the endemic nature of VAWDASV and the important role that all bystanders can play, Bystander Programmes have been rolled out to other community settings.

**“Do the best you can until you know better. When you know better, do better.”
- Maya Angelou**

We will:

Use every opportunity to challenge victim-blaming attitudes and raise awareness of support services.

Workforce Expertise and Development

VAWDASV is everybody's business from the person who greets people at reception to the CEO of the organisation. We all have a role to play to ending violence and abuse. The VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015 creates a framework of the type of learning that individuals within the Public Sector should undertake depending on their role within their organisation.

The below tables identifies the total numbers of relevant staff that need to be trained at each group within the Framework within each statutory organisation:

	Cardiff Council	Cardiff & Vale UHB	Vale of Glamorgan Council	Velindre NHS Trust
Group 1 - All staff employed by the relevant authorities	16468	16000	5004	1688
Group 2 - Professionals likely to be in relevant roles, for example, treating or working with someone as a result of violence and abuse ("Ask & Act")	7893	7769	3494	991
Group 3 - Individuals in "champion" roles within an organisation, supporting colleagues, and family members of those affected. Roles requiring more than "Ask & Act"	184	48	350	10
Group 4 - Specialist Professionals whose client group is specifically those affected by VAWDASV	n/a	20	n/a	n/a
Group 5 - Service Managers working in the 'VAWDASV' sector	n/a	10	n/a	n/a
Group 6 - Strategic leaders with responsibility of fostering a culture and infrastructure of acknowledging issues affecting a workforce, client group, friends and family	20	30	17	15

Survivors in the region should expect high quality support delivered by qualified and skilled staff who:

- have an understanding of the unique needs and risk different groups of survivors experience;
- apply trauma-informed approaches that build on survivors' strengths and expertise;
- understand risk, develop safety plans and provide accurate advice on survivors' options;
- understand the different forms of VAWDASV, their root causes and appropriate interventions;
- are aware of their legal duties and responsibilities;
- recognise the impact of their work and how to protect themselves from the adverse effects.

We will:

Continue to ensure the workforce is skilled to identify, refer and support victims and perpetrators.

Workforce Expertise & Development

The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 created a requirement for VAWDASV training across the public service and specialist third sector, through the introduction of the National Training Framework. The Welsh Government requires that anyone whose client group is made up of those affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, such as victims, children or perpetrators, have:

- access to appropriate training quickly following recruitment;
- appropriate qualifications;
- participate in Continuous Professional Development.



Local training continues to form an important way of ensuring that professionals are appropriately skilled to work with those affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. A training needs assessment has been undertaken with regional specialist organisations with a variety of training needs identified, reflecting the identified workstreams to deliver on the Welsh Government's Blueprint approach.

Partners across the region will work together to assist with identifying suitable opportunities to meet training needs identified and will seek to ensure that relevant knowledge gained through specialist training is embedded in frontline delivery. This will include engaging in training activity undertaken across the Regional Safeguarding footprint as well as the Community Safety and social care arenas.

Access to Rights

In order to change the culture of sexism and misogyny and make Cardiff a City for CEDAW, Cardiff Council has committed to undertake effective actions, including to:

- provide advice and information through the community Hubs and Libraries across Cardiff to help women and girls to access all benefits to which they are entitled, including a booklet of rights.
- create a programme of activities, informed by women and girls, to empower and engage women and girls, including a 'Rights Fest', 'Equalities Champions' and social impactful projects in Cardiff.

Children's Rights are enshrined in the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Cardiff is the first city in Wales to participate in the UK committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) national Child Friendly Cities and Communities initiative with the ambition for Cardiff to be recognised as a Child Friendly City (CFC): a city with children and young people at its heart, where the rights of children and young people are respected by all, a great place to grow up.

Our commitments to women will therefore be delivered in tandem with the Child Friendly City Team.



Societal Change

The White Ribbon Campaign is the largest global movement of men and boys working to end violence against women and girls, promoting gender equality and a new version of masculinity.

Cardiff Council has been awarded White Ribbon City status for the past 4 years. Since receiving its first White Ribbon City status in 2014 the local campaign has grown steadily with activities receiving national and international support and recognition including the flowerbed outside Cardiff Castle.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Cardiff and Vale University Health board will be assisted to reapply for the White Ribbon status and we will encourage partners in the Fire Service, South Wales Police, Probation and Velindre Health Board to apply/reapply.

As a region, we will continue to develop an annual calendar of public events around 16 days of action to tackle violence against women and girls. The calendar dovetails with the National Safeguarding week and we work with individuals and groups across all different levels. In previous years, during the 16 days of action, we have engaged with:

- Political leaders through a Cross Party Stakeholder event.
- The whole community during organised vigils, marches and faith services.
- Dedicated consultations with survivors such as the conversation café.
- Practitioners who were able to access training and awareness raising sessions on the most current subjects relevant to their professional development.



An aerial photo of children in the Vale of Glamorgan forming a human White Ribbon for International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women



Lord and Lady Mayoress for Cardiff receiving the White Ribbon plaque for the city



We will:

Support partners to continue to reapply for the White Ribbon status.

A close-up photograph of two hands held palm-up. The left hand has the word 'HELP' written on it in a blue, hand-drawn font. The right hand has the word 'ME' written on it in the same blue, hand-drawn font. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

HELP

ME

Chapter 4
PROTECT

Legal Remedies

Public Protection Notice (PPN) is an information sharing document which allows police officers to record safeguarding concerns when identified. The total number of PPNs in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan have increased by up to 50% since 2019. Equally, the proportion of PPNs relating to high risk cases has increased by 50%.

Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) is an emergency non-molestation and eviction notice which can be issued by the police to a perpetrator when attending a domestic abuse incident. Because the DVPN is a police-issued notice, it is effective from the time of issue, thereby giving the victim the immediate support they require in such a situation. Within 48 hours of the DVPN being served on the perpetrator, an application by police to a magistrates' court for a DVPO must be heard.

Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) is a civil order that fills a "gap" in providing protection to victims by enabling the police and magistrates' courts to put in place protective measures in the immediate aftermath of a domestic violence incident where there is insufficient evidence to charge a perpetrator and provide protection to a victim via bail conditions.

A **Restraining Order** can be made for the purpose of protecting the victim(s) from conduct which amounts to harassment or will cause a fear of violence and can be made on conviction or acquittal for any criminal offence.

Clare's Law, formally known as the **Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS)** is a police policy giving people the right to ask and right to know if their current or ex-partner has any previous history of violence or abuse. The number of requests is increasing.

In 2023, the UK Government announced a change in the law to include the most dangerous domestic violence offenders on the **Violent and Sex Offender Register**. Prison and probation services will have to jointly manage offenders with a sentence of at least a year, or a suspended sentence for controlling or coercive behaviour - putting the crime on a par with physical violence.

Similarly, **Forced Marriage Protection Orders (FMPOs)** can be granted by a court to offer a legal means to protect a person facing forced marriage or who has been forced into marriage. Just as FGMPOs it can be applied by:

- The person who has had or is at risk of Forced Marriage;
- a local authority; or
- any other person with the permission of the court

Female Genital Mutilation Protection Orders (FGMPOs) can be granted by a court to offer a legal means to protect victims and potential victims of FGM. Examples of conditions include surrendering a passport to prevent the person at risk from being taken abroad for FGM or requirements that no one arranges for FGM to be performed on the protected person. It can be applied for by:

- The person who has had or is at risk of FGM;
- a local authority; or
- any other person with the permission of the court

The **Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme (CSODS)**, also known as **Sarah's Law**, lets you formally ask the police whether someone who has contact with a child or children:

- has a record for child sexual (paedophile) offences
- poses a risk to the child or children for some other reason

In the region there were the following orders and requests:

- 439 Claire's Law requests in 2021 and 506 in 2022
- Sarah's Law requests peaked at 17 in 2018 and there are less than 10 requests annually.
- 39 FMPOs are still in place
- 23 FGMPOs are still in place
- 2 people have an FGMPO and a FMO

- Multi-Agency Responses to Domestic Abuse

The four aims of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) are to:

- safeguard victims of domestic abuse (adults and children)
- manage perpetrators' behaviour
- safeguard professionals
- make links with all other safeguarding processes



In 2022, we commissioned SafeLives to undertake an independent review into the operation of MARACs in the region to ensure that we continue to provide the best support and protection to survivors.

Areas of good practice

- Domestic abuse is seen to be prioritised by strategic leaders.
- The commitment to find better ways of addressing safeguarding issues, especially those cohorts of individuals who society often ignores, is commendable.
- There is a clear commitment to creative partnership working and strong implementation of good practice from commissioners and domestic abuse agencies.
- There is evidence of some highly knowledgeable and committed representatives locally and a wide provision of support available for staff responding to domestic abuse.
- Professionals appear confident with the MARAC process and referring into it.

Areas for improvement

- The governance needs to be reviewed to streamline processes both across the region and across the different multi-agency structures (daily discussions, MARACs, multi-agency meetings relating to sex workers, modern slavery and human trafficking).
- Survivors voice to be captured more explicitly and consistently.
- Representatives (and deputies) are identified for each agency who are trained about their role and responsibilities and are prepared for each meeting.

We will:

Implement the agreed key recommendations from the Safe Lives MARAC review.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) – Domestic Abuse cases account for around a third of MAPPA Level 2 cases in all four MAPPA arrangements across Wales. The Probation Service continues focus on the importance of ensuring that High/Very High risk DV perpetrators are referred into MAPPA. A multi-disciplinary approach to the management of DA perpetrators is essential.

In 2022, the MAPPA Guidance has been updated with a Domestic Abuse chapter which strengthens the multi-agency approach to manage persistent perpetrators.

Specifically, individuals who do not meet the automatic MAPPA eligibility but those who should be considered for management via MAPPA Category 3 due to the level of risk they present and the need for agencies to communicate and develop a shared risk management plan. Furthermore, the implementation of the MAPPA Level 1 Policy Framework provides clear guidance to practitioners on the management of MAPPA eligible nominals. There is a clear focus in MAPPA to strengthen victim safety plans.

The Domestic Abuse, Assessment and Referral Coordination (DAARC) Service is a coordination service managed by the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Community Safety Team.

The service provides a solution to dealing with individuals who present with complex needs by providing better, more integrated communication and coordination in the care and support for individuals who require multiple service input.

The service has actively helped victims feel safer, improved their home situation, improved their physical and mental health and their overall quality of life.

Target Hardening



For too long survivors have had to flee their homes to a place of safety from the abuser, uprooting themselves and their children. Refuge will continue to be a key housing option of support for survivors where they can access support and safety. Wherever safe and appropriate though, we will endeavour to apply target hardening measures to make the home safe for the survivor to remain living there.

High risk survivors and survivors who are assessed as needing additional measures are offered CCTV and burglar alarms. Additional measures can include window locks, hinge bolts, window shock and personal panic alarms. The following properties were made safer through target hardening measures:

Vale of Glamorgan	Cardiff
97 in 2020/21	209 in 2020/21
116 in 2021/22	157 in 2021/22

Economic case for target hardening

The average cost of a survivor's stay in a refuge is £4,879 - £6,500 (based on the local refuge cost and average length of stay). Comparatively, the average cost of target hardening is £300 per household.

Impact on survivors

Of those asked in a survey in the Vale of Glamorgan:

- 88% reported that they were happy with the service that they received
- 85% reported feeling safer following the extra security measures.
- 61% reported that having the extra security stopped them and their families from having to access refuge.

Adults at Risk

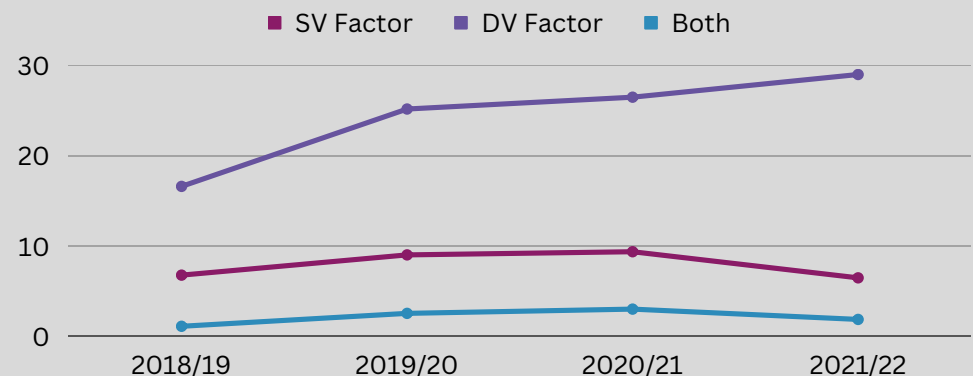
Some adult men and women do not have the basic skills to be able to take care of themselves and stay safe and this can make them more vulnerable to abuse. It is their vulnerability – and sometimes the lack of mental capacity – that makes these adults more susceptible to different types of abuse, as well as neglect. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 defines an 'adult at risk' as someone who:

1. is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect;
2. needs care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs); and
3. as a result of these needs is unable to protect themselves against abuse, neglect or the risk of either.

This may include people as identified in the Care and Support (Eligibility) (Wales) Regulations 2015. Factors that increase vulnerability include age, mental health problems, chronic illness, behavioural risk, lack of mental capacity, social and emotional problems, poverty, homelessness and substance misuse. Partners in the region have established policies and procedures for referring and managing Adults at Risk through the Regional Safeguarding Board.

Increased awareness, improved reporting as well as increased prevalence have resulted in more adults at risk experiencing VAWDASV being identified and safeguarded.

Percentage where the following factors were reasons for adult safeguarding referrals



Safeguarding Children and Young People

VAWDASV continues to be a significant safeguarding concern. In Cardiff, over the last five years, the percentage of child protection registrations where domestic abuse is a factor was on average 55%. Registrations where sexual abuse was a factor are much lower but have doubled from 3% to 6% over the same time period.

The specialist VAWDASV service for Black and minoritised survivors, Bawso, supported the following number of survivors of Forced Marriage (FM), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Honour-Based Abuse (HBA)	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	FM: 4	FM: 5	FM: 6
	HBA: 23	HBA: 35	HBA: 24
	FGM: 20	FGM: 26	FGM: 13

Honour based abuse can include:

- Physical abuse
- Coercive control (strict monitoring, threats)
- Emotional abuse
- Abandonment (leaving someone in their country of origin or sending them back there);
- Forced Marriage
- Forced abortion
- Virginity testing
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Murder (forced suicide, "honour" killing)

It is more likely to include multiple perpetrators and it affects a range of communities including the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.



SOCIAL SERVICES
-TOLD NOT TO SAY ANY-
THING IN CASE MY CHILDREN
GET TAKEN AWAY FROM ME.

Current safeguarding approaches, which have shaped professional cultures and embedded language, focus on the non-abusive parent and their responsibility to safeguard their child(ren). This approach fails to make the person causing harm accountable for their behaviour and for the safety of their children.

Professionals consulted through the SafeLives Review commented that Children's Services were often absent in multi-agency meetings such as MARACs and demonstrated victim-blaming attitudes through their practice.

*"Primarily with children's services... it always seems to be the **victim's responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their child** rather than the perpetrator's responsibility to not perpetrate... the responsibility is always on the non-abusive parent as opposed to the abuser" - Professional, Domestic Abuse Services (SafeLives Review)*

Cardiff's Children's Services have introduced the **Safe and Together model** that will bring radical change in cultural and institutional thinking by:

- partnering with the non-abusive parent as a default position;
- making the abuser visible within safeguarding approaches and intervening with them to reduce risk and harm to the child;
- moving away from incident-based responses and reframing domestic abuse as a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviours;
- working collaboratively with services that provide interventions both to victims/ survivors and to perpetrators;

The model has been piloted since 2021. Dedicated Domestic Abuse Social Workers have developed tools and resources that colleagues can use to explore harmful behaviours and their impact on children, and provide expert support and advice with individual cases.

We will:

Strengthen our safeguarding response to honour-based abuse and FGM by developing clear pathways of support.

We will:

Continue to ensure that children subject to safeguarding are given specialist support to recover from the abuse and trauma they've suffered.

Child Sexual Abuse

The below figures demonstrate the estimated number of children and young people who experience sexual violence in the region both annually and throughout their lifetimes (calculations are based on the prevalence estimates identified by an independent study commissioned by the NSPCC)[10].

Estimates	Cardiff	Vale of Glamorgan	Region
All sexual abuse offences (including non-contact)	6,693	2,368	9,061
All child sexual abuse offences in the last year (including non-contact)	2,973	1,154	4,127

Yet, a culture of stigma and shame on sexual violence prevails that silences survivors. **Only 1 in 8 of child sexual abuse cases come to the attention of authorities.** (statistics from the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse)[11]



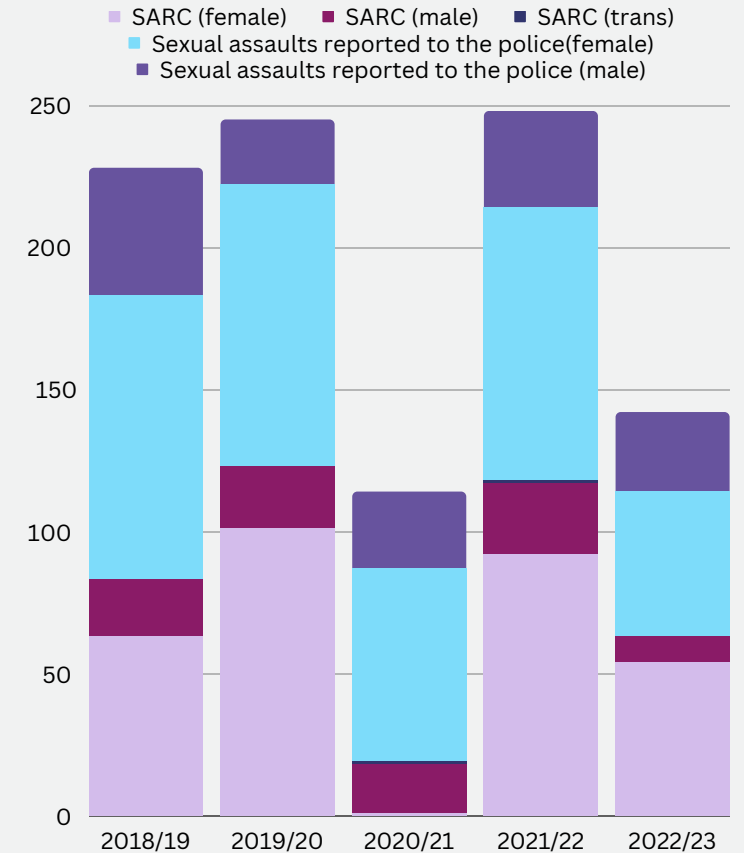
In the region, less than 250 children under the age of 13 come to the attention of authorities. In reality, the figure of reported abuse is much lower as there is anticipated to be cross-referrals between cases reported to the police and the referrals made to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). However, the actual figure of child sexual abuse will be significantly higher due to the number of case going unreported.

It is not the children's responsibility to disclose.

It is the institutions' responsibility to be proactive and vigilant.

The national Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)[8] has engaged with survivors who suffered sexual abuse as children at the hands of trusted and often professional adults including religious organisations, residential schools, custodial institutions and organised networks. The findings of the Inquiry demonstrated how societal attitudes of disbelief and victim-blaming have informed statutory responses or the lack thereof, failing thousands of children who have suffered as a result.

Number of children under 13 in the region who have come to the attention of the SARC and the police



We will:

Work with the Regional Safeguarding Board to implement the recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse report.

Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews (SUSRs)

The Femicide Census[12] shows that over the period of 2009-18, a woman in the UK has been killed by a man, on average, once every 3 days. This does not include those who died in suspicious circumstances, sudden and unexpected deaths or suicides in a domestic abuse context.

A 2019 Home Office review of 124 DHRs found that 80% of the victims were female and 20% were male whereas 83% of the perpetrators were male and 17% female. Of the 127 victims identified, 14 were, or appeared to have died by suicide.

The multi-agency statutory guidance for the conduct of domestic homicide reviews requires that where a victim took their own life and it emerges that there was domestic abuse, a Domestic Homicide Review should be undertaken. At the time of writing, the first review following suicide is being undertaken in the region involving a victim in the Vale of Glamorgan.

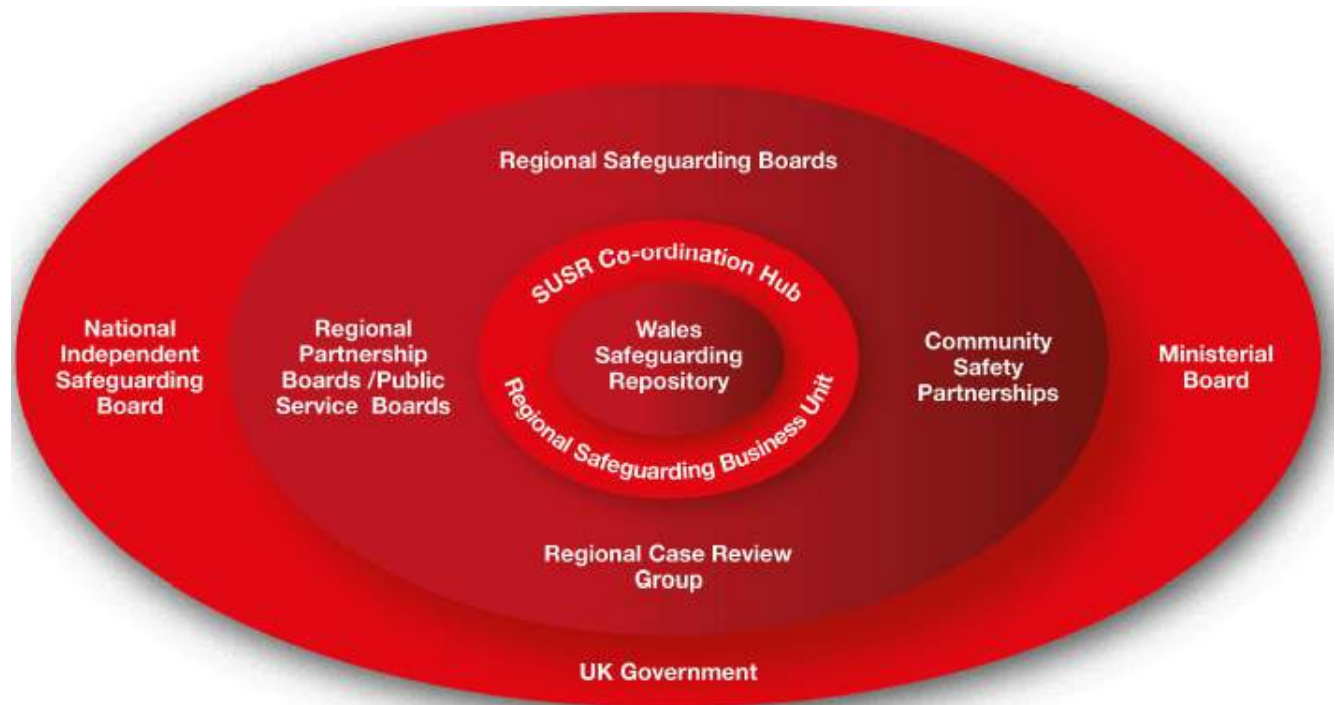


Transitioning from
**Domestic Homicide
Reviews to
Single Unified
Safeguarding
Reviews**

In 2022, a Welsh Government review found that Serious Case Review (SCR) and Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) processes were hindering a common-sense approach to reviews. Lessons learnt and recommendations identified through these processes were not shared or collated centrally, resulting in national and regional recommendations not being followed through. The review's recommendations include:

- The creation of a **Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR)** which is cross-agency, with a common framework, clear terms of reference, mapped in line with current frameworks.
- Governance of reviews to sit within Regional Safeguarding arrangements and not Community Safety Partnerships and chairs of the reviews should be independent but public servants.
- Creation of exceptional reporting process through a Ministerial Board.
- Central Repository for all reviews in Wales where key learning can be extrapolated and disseminated to prevent incidents and protect victims. Currently, this is managed by Cardiff University with plans for future transition to Welsh Government.
- National annual learning and training events for practitioners.

SUSR Overarching Support Network



VAWDASV in the Workplace

VAWDASV is everybody's business and every interaction with survivors is an opportunity to intervene, whether this is friend, family, service user, a colleague or an employee. Partners in the region have been supported to develop their workplace policies addressing VAWDASV. Cardiff Council has recently produced a Dignity at Work policy which also strengthens the response to VAWDASV and addresses all forms of harassment in the workplace.

According to research commissioned by the BBC: [13]

40 % of women had experienced some form of unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace

18 % of men had experienced some form of unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace

VAWDASV can have a significant impact on a survivor's emotional and physical wellbeing. They may need to take time off to recover and to deal with practical issues such as attending medical appointments, court hearings and specialist support. At the same time, it may be a place of emotional safety and stability. Equally, if the person causing harm is an employee, it is the employer's responsibility to take action to address their behaviour and hold them to account.

Professor Walby[16] estimates that domestic abuse costs UK businesses and workplaces over

£1.9 billion pa

Both sexual and sexist harassment are forms of sex-based discrimination under the **Equality Act 2010**. Article 40 of the **Istanbul Convention** requires states to *take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, is subject to criminal or other legal sanction.*

Support for survivors that could be offered by employers:

- Flexible working
- Paid leave
- Protective measures
- Employee support programme
- Peer support
- Signposting to specialist support including counselling

4 in 5 women in Wales had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace[14]



1 in 5 of employed women take time off work because of domestic violence.[15]



We will:

- assist partners to update workplace policies to include workplace sexual harassment
- work with the Welsh Government to implement actions arising from the Blueprint workstream.

Women's Safety in Public Spaces

Street-based sexual harassment includes catcalls, whistles, unwanted sexual comments or jokes in public spaces.

9 in 10



18-24 year old women across the UK report having experienced some form of harassment[17]

6 in 10



female pupils report having personal experience of peer-on-peer harassment [18]

Women and girls have a right to feel safe in public spaces and the responsibility for tackling sexual harassment sits firmly with those who perpetrate it.

It is not women's responsibility to keep themselves safe.

The fear of sexual harassment and assault runs deep in women's consciousness even if they haven't experienced it. The unconscious work that women already put into safety planning leaves them sacrificing their freedom for safety[19]

"My boyfriend can walk to the gym down that alley at 6pm in winter, I had to explain to him that I can't do that [...] in winter, life shouldn't stop for women at 4pm."

Women also described safety as: being recognised, having independence and the freedom to live their lives in the ways they want to, feeling safe that their actions, beliefs and voices would be believed and heard in the spaces they occupy.- Women's Perceptions of Safety findings (Cardiff Women's Aid)

The region has a thriving night-time economy but it can be associated with higher levels of anti-social behaviour, sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Whilst alcohol and substance use may exacerbate certain situations, we are clear that they are not responsible for individuals' behaviour and are not an excuse for abuse. As a region and as a partnership, we need to tackle the underlying culture of sexism and misogyny that allows VAWDASV to flourish in these spaces.



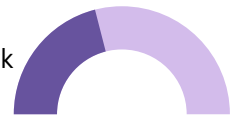
The night-time economy involves:

- Cardiff City Centre but also other areas of the region that residents use to socialise, as well as transport routes.
- Events that attract large crowds such as sporting events and concerts
- All women and men but special consideration should be given to the student population, individuals travelling to and from the area and population more vulnerable to VAWDASV such as sexually exploited women, rough sleeping women and the LGBTQ+ community.



82% of women felt unsafe walking alone after dark in a park or other open space.[20]

42% of men felt unsafe walking alone after dark in a park or other open space after dark in a park [20]



Vale of Glamorgan Council undertook a survey with residents and people working in the Vale about their feelings of safety. 132 people responded to the survey with two-thirds stating that they feel safe and only a third felt unsafe. Drug and alcohol, people hanging around and lack of visible police were cited as the main factors making people feel unsafe resulting in behaviour change including avoiding certain areas, driving/ getting a lift or booking a taxi or not going out alone.

Women's Safety in Public Spaces

In order to tackle sexual harassment in public spaces and the night-time economy, we have expanded our partnership work to include the private and business sector in order to create a region where women feel safe to live and socialise.

A number of initiatives have been created to ensure that women feel and are safe in public spaces including:

- **Environmental measures:** improved lighting and CCTV.
- **Street Safe:** an app that allows individuals to report geographical areas where they do not feel safe.
- **'Ask for Ani':** this is codeword scheme provides anyone at risk of abuse with support in accessing help and a safe space in which to do so. It was piloted in pharmacies but has since expanded to spaces such as the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP), including job centres.
- **'Ask for Angela':** an initiative that enables individuals who feel unsafe or threatened in clubs and bars to use this code-phrase so that a trained member of staff assists them by calling the venue security or the police, reuniting them with their friends or supporting them to get a taxi.
- **Safe Places:** an accessible, nationwide, network of support where anyone feeling intimidated, at risk or scared can take refuge. A list of these can be found on the Safe Places website. Physical locations also should have a sticker indicating that they are a 'Safe Place'.
- **Safe Spaces:** confidential, private and safe rooms for survivors who are experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence, where they can access resources for support, a phone to contact a relative or agency for support and plan their next move. These can be found in Boots UK, Morrisons, Superdrug and Well pharmacies, HSBC, TSB banks and independent pharmacies across the UK.
- **Railway Guardian:** a British Transport Police app that enables individuals to share their journey with trusted contacts and alert them if they need assistance. The app also has an incident reporting ability.

Whilst well intentioned and welcomed, the above measures fail to place responsibility for the abuse on those who cause it and ultimately will not bring lasting change in stopping harmful behaviours.

As a region our approach includes the following:

- Reframing the discourse to centre women's rights to access public spaces without fear and support them to reclaim public spaces through marches, vigils and sit ins.
- Ensure that perpetrators are apprehended and relevant legislative tools are utilised including intelligence gathering and sharing about dangerous men; use of Public Space Protection Orders, Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO) and Community Protection Notices (CPN)
- Work with men and boys to address their behaviour. Make women's safety everybody's business. From the bar staff and the bouncers to the British Transport Police (BTP) and bystanders everybody has a role to play in challenging attitudes and behaviours when they see them.
- Incorporate the above measures in campaigns and communication.



ASK FOR ANGELA



We will:

Ensure there are more safe spaces throughout Cardiff, involving women and girls in their creation.

VAWDASV and Technology

"It seems that the deeply ingrained societal shame and taboo around sex and our bodies allows some people to believe there is an automatic 'green light' to use any sexual content of an individual as a tool to attempt to ruin their life or exploit them in other ways." - Madison, survivor of image-based sexual abuse (VAWG Principles for the Online Safety Bill)[21]

Online Abuse/ Cyberviolence Against Women/ Tech or ICT facilitated VAWG

There is a clear link between misogyny and sexism, the sexist harassment that women experience online, and online violence against women.

What is online abuse?

- cyberstalking and tech-enabled abuse such as use of technology to gaslight in the context of domestic abuse and coercive control
- online harassment including sexual harassment
- grooming for exploitation or abuse
- image-based sexual abuse including so called 'revenge porn', upskirting, deepfake-porn, sexual extortion videos of sexual assaults and rapes
- rape threats
- doxxing of women's personal information

What is the impact?

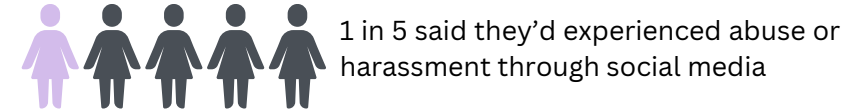
As the online world operates on a 24 hour basis, it is impossible for survivors to escape online abuse. It causes anxiety, anger, difficulty sleeping, mistrust of the world, depression, fear of harm and shame. Ultimately though it restricts women's sexuality and women's freedom to expression. Carnegie's research[22] into democratic wellbeing shows that 63% of women in the UK always or frequently self-censor when online, most commonly due to fear of abuse and not wanting to get into an argument.

Online Safety Bill

There has been immense public pressure to protect children and adults from the risks posed online. Some of the content children and adults encounter online is already illegal. The new Bill will force social media platforms to remove all illegal content and to give consideration to how they design their platforms to reduce the likelihood of them being used for criminal activity. Child sexual abuse, controlling or coercive behaviour, 'revenge porn' and sexual exploitation are some of the content that this Bill seeks to address. In addition, platforms will be expected to prevent children from accessing harmful content, including pornographic content and online abuse and harassment.

Prevalence

A 2017 Amnesty International online poll[23] asked 504 women aged 18-55 in the UK about their experiences of online abuse.



Women are 27 times more likely to be harassed than men.[24]



According to Amnesty International[25], Black women are 84% more likely to be abused online than white women.



Whilst as a region we cannot influence large tech companies to ensure that they use appropriate measures to prevent and address online abuse, we can, however, ensure that we routinely include online abuse in survivors' needs assessments, provide appropriate support, highlight these issues to the public and use available legislation to pursue perpetrators.



Chapter 5

SUPPORT

Support for Children and Young People

The below figures demonstrate the estimated number of children and young people who experience domestic abuse and sexual violence in Wales and in the region both annually and throughout their lifetimes (calculations are based on the prevalence estimates identified by an independent study commissioned by the NSPCC)[9]

Category	Cardiff	Vale of Glamorgan	Region
Estimated number of children exposed to domestic abuse during childhood	11,828	4,247	16,075
Estimated number of children exposed to domestic abuse in the past year	2,162	806	2,968

For every high harm perpetrator of domestic abuse who has engaged with the Drive Programme in the region, there are more than 2 children who have to live with the impact of the abuse. The number is higher when we include all forms of VAWDASV and levels of risk.

This strategy's section on Early Years outlined the economic, policy and ethical case for specialist service provision for children and young people who experience VAWDASV. There are an estimate **2,968** children in the region who have experienced domestic abuse in the past year alone. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises children affected by domestic abuse as victims regardless of whether they were present during violent incidents. In line with the new legislation, children have a right to access relevant support.

We will:

ensure that children and young people continue to have access to age-appropriate specialist support

“Somebody to ask the children other than Social Services to talk them or ask how they feel, as they felt apprehensive in answering questions.” – VAWDASV Survivor

There are a range of services in the region for children and young people. This includes:

- One-to-one support;
- Group support;
- Children and young people's IDVA delivered both through specialist services and in health settings;
- Mentoring programme for children and young people (5-11 years old);
- Male IDVA that helps young people to understand and break the cycle of misogyny and to provide a positive role-model;
- Parent bonding that supports families to recover from their experiences of abuse;
- Gender specific services (11-16) that build young people's confidence and assertiveness;
- Healthy relationships support;
- Specialist support for children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation.

PARENT
BONDING

HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS
PROGRAMMES

MENTORING
PROGRAMME

- GENDER SPECIFIC
- CHILD-LED
- SUPPORTED BY SPECIALISTS

IDVA



Support for Black and Minoritised Communities



Survivors in the region are left struggling to access VAWDASV support due to their immigration status that prevents them from accessing public services and public funds. No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF) is not an immigration status but a condition that can be imposed by the Home Office on individuals as part of their leave to enter or remain in the UK. These public funds are specified in legislation, under section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Some people subject to immigration control also face restrictions which limit their access to work, social housing, renting accommodation, health care and opening bank accounts. Perpetrators invariably use survivors' vulnerabilities including their insecure immigration status as a tool to instil fear and control them.

A lot more migrant workers and international students have come to Cardiff since the end of the COVID-19 restrictions and have been inevitably affected by the cost-of-living crisis. Their NRPF status prevents them from accessing VAWDASV services. In addition to survivors of domestic abuse, survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery also find themselves subject to the NRPF rule.

The current policy and legislative framework fails to provide equal support and protection to migrant survivors of VAWDASV, creating a two-tier protection system. The UK Government has ratified the Istanbul Convention but reserved article 59, which sets out state obligations to provide protection to migrant women. As a result, migrant victims and survivors are unable to access support and protection without discrimination regardless of their immigration or refugee status.

Whilst immigration is not a devolved policy area in Wales, the Welsh Government has made a commitment to making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary by using its devolved powers to implement measures towards this goal, such as funding immigration legal advice, promoting the Nation of Sanctuary concept across housing and homelessness sectors, developing accessibility to emergency accommodation options, and seeking to influence the Home Office to safeguard individuals from the most harmful outcomes. It has also committed to a Last Resort Fund for survivors with No Recourse to Public Funds.

In March 2023, the UK Government announced the pilot of a £300,000 fund to offer one-off payments to help survivors flee abusers. Survivors will receive £250, or £500 if they have children. The flexibility of the funding ensures that specialist services we be able to directly support survivors, regardless of their immigration status.

"For too long, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) victims and survivors have been left behind" - Domestic Abuse Commissioner

Evidence shows that:

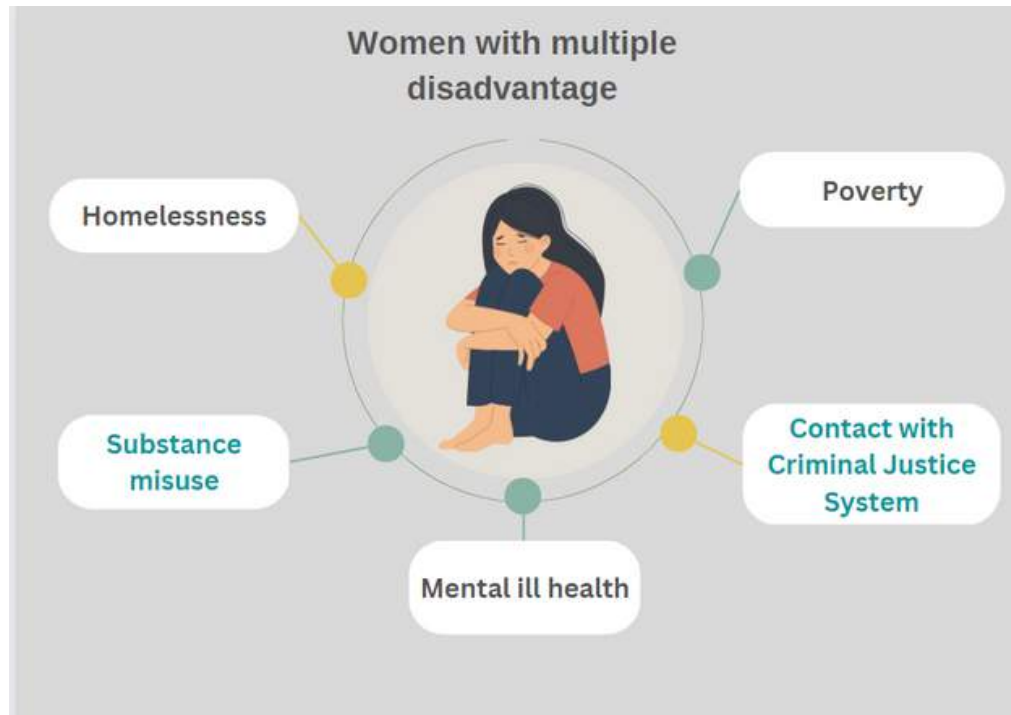
- According to the 2021 census, there are 1,340 people from the GRT community living in the region.
- Survivors from the GRT community are likely to be missed from ethnic monitoring statistics. 76% of GRT people have hidden their ethnicity to avoid discrimination or prejudice. [27]
- Some GRT survivors experience so-called 'honour-based abuse' but this not part of all GRT survivors' experiences.[28]
- The fear of Social Services leaves GRT survivors in fear of contacting the police. An increasing number of women are taking their lives after contact with Social Services. [28]
- Majority of GRT survivors are not aware of services because of lack of engagement with the communities.[28]

Similarly, the Polish community is invisible in statistics under the broad umbrella of 'white other' category despite 3,970 individuals in the region registering for settled status with the Home Office. The Femicide Census shows that Polish women are the second largest group murdered, after British nationals. Language barriers, lack of understanding of support available and the fear of Children's Services are a barrier to support.

We will:

Gather data and information on the experiences of BME communities to better understand their needs.

Women with Multiple Disadvantage



Women and girls associated with gangs are often missed from data collection and narratives regarding county lines[29]. Even though, increasingly, professionals report that young women are involved in gangs in same level roles as young men, there is a gendered aspect to women and girls' involvement. Some issues women and girls face include:

- Women and girls are recruited to gangs through coercion and sexual exploitation.
- Women and girls carry out the emotional labour within gangs.
- However, emotional connections and relationships in the gang mean that they are forced to escape both a relationship and the criminal network.
- Even though most county line activity involves drug dealing, women and girls are more likely to be subjected to sexual violence and exploitation.

- Women with multiple disadvantage (also known as complex needs) are less likely to present at specialist VAWDASV services.[30]
- More than a quarter of all support for women facing multiple disadvantage is offered around pregnancy (e.g. substance misuse specialist midwife & perinatal mental health support). [30]
- Women and girls' experiences of multiple disadvantage is further complicated by sexual exploitation and gang association.

Women's experiences of multiple disadvantage differ to men's experiences:

- Women and girls are more likely to be hidden homeless, sofa surfing, engaging in so-called 'sex for rent' and exploitative arrangements. [31]
- More than half of women in the criminal justice system have experienced domestic abuse and/or gender-based violence at some point in their lives [32].
- Women's mental health and substance misuse is strongly correlated with their trauma of abuse. Removal of children can be a major barrier to recovery.

The number of women with complex needs and associated risk presenting to housing services in Cardiff have been increasing year on year:

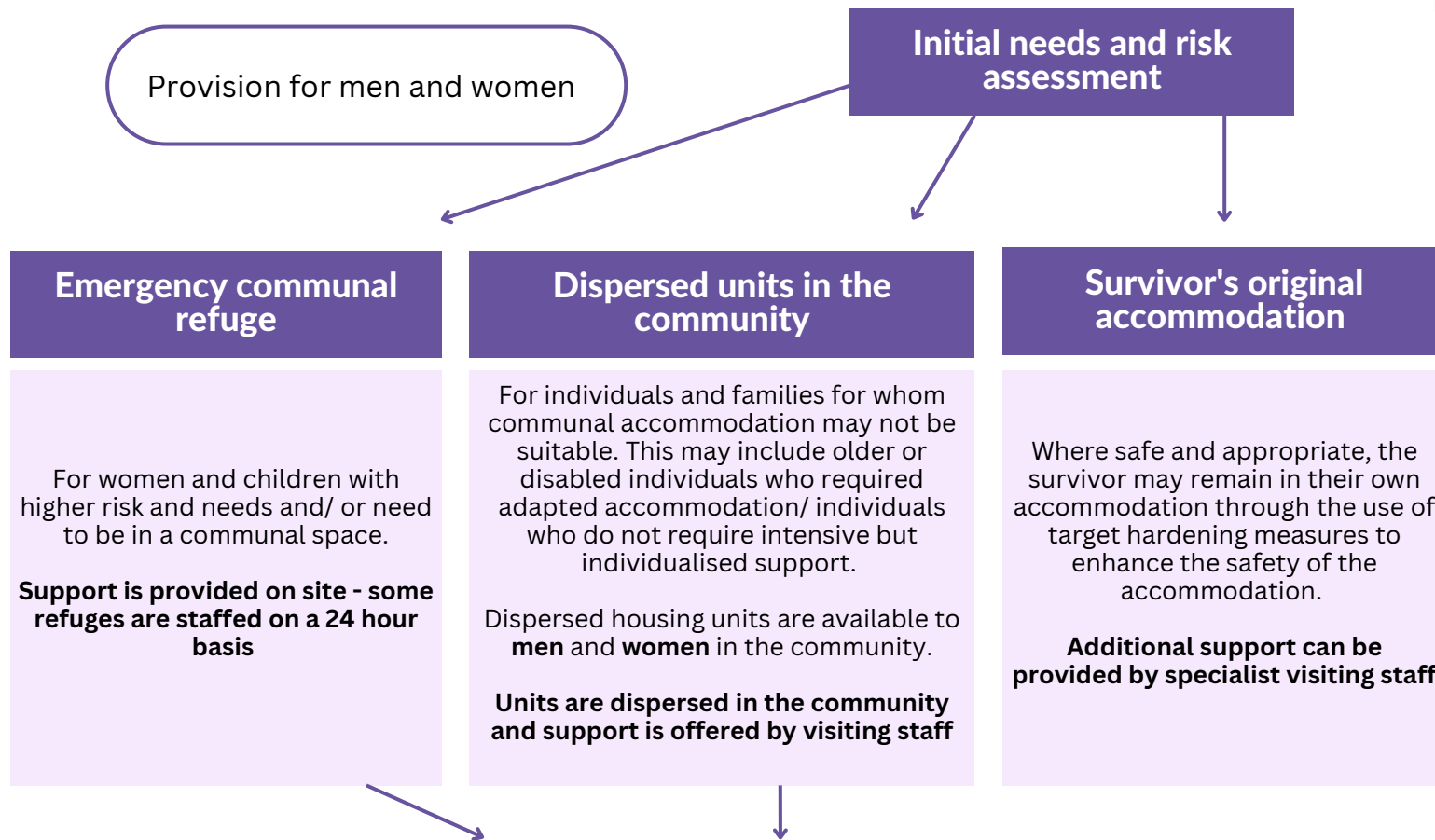
- 130 in 2019/20 (high risk - 48%)
- 139 in 2020/21 (high risk - 57%)
- 152 in 2021/22 (high risk - 61%)

We recognise the need for gender responsive accommodation services for women who experience multiple disadvantage. We are therefore planning to develop specific housing provision for women who have complex needs.

We will:

Implement recommendations from the Complex Needs Task and Finish Group.

Accommodation-Based Support



Access to **safe and suitable accommodation** is a key for survivors to start rebuilding their lives and regain autonomy free from abuse and fear. Specialist service providers in the region deliver a range of different models of accommodation-based support tailored around individuals' unique needs.

Psychologically Informed Environments, needs-led, strength-based and trauma-informed approaches are applied when providing **support** to survivors in these settings.

Rehousing - long-term accommodation

Our **Rapid Rehousing** approach means that we ensure that support fits around the survivor so that they can move to safe long-term accommodation and exit homelessness quickly.

We will: review the accommodation pathway, community support and prevention elements of service delivery to ensure that they continue to meet need

Sexual Exploitation

There isn't a source of data that would allow for the production of a representative estimate for those exploited through the sex industry. A study[3] commissioned by the Home Office and South Wales PCC into the "*nature and prevalence of prostitution and sex work*" identified a number of difficulties relating to data collection including its hidden, transient and multi-faceted nature and the inconsistent and partial collection of information. Most studies put the the UK figure in the region of 80,000[34]. Changes to the welfare benefits system, austerity and the increase in the cost of living, have pushed many women into poverty and sexual exploitation. Websites that previously were used to advertise sexual services have been shut down whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the proliferation of online platforms such as Only Fans.

The discourse relating to this issue is often polarised between 'sex work' and 'exploitation'. Dr Mulvihill[35] provides a more nuanced analysis that also accounts for women whose 'choice' to enter the sex industry is complicated by structural disadvantage such as poverty and destitution, insecure immigration status and No Recourse to Public Funds, lack of viable employment alternatives often linked to lack of quality and affordable childcare. Their 'choice' is often a choice of no alternatives.

The lack of alternatives further disadvantages women in the industry by putting them at risk of structural harm and gender-based violence including rape, physical violence, robbery, stalking, blackmail as well as intimate partner violence and abuse. In acknowledgement of these complexities, the use of language in the strategy refers to sexually exploited women/adults not 'sex workers'.

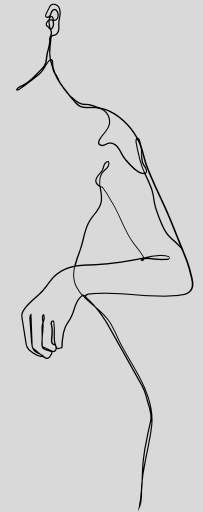
"You don't know how it makes me feel not being judged and treating me like a person."

"I like coming to the office. It's a Safe Space and feels like family."

VAWDASV survivors

We support the **All Wales Sexual Exploitation Operational Group's** recommendations:

- Commitment to including sexual exploitation in the National Training Framework.
- Identifying links between child sexual exploitation and adult sexual exploitation.
- Consistent guidance for police forces on addressing sexual exploitation.
- Acknowledging the specific nature of street harassment that sexually exploited women experience.
- Perpetrator interventions and workstreams to consider those who sexually exploit.
- Meaningful engagement for sexual exploitation survivors.



Agencies in the region are committed to improving their level of knowledge and understanding of the challenges and barriers faced by exploited people in accessing their services.

The Safer Wales' StreetLife project has been operating in Cardiff since 2005 and has transformed the lives of many women impacted by sex work and both victims and survivors of sexual exploitation. The project is premised on the belief that women who are exploited through the sex industry have the right to be safe and are able to access appropriate support. A flexible, trauma-informed, needs-led, strengths-based holistic service is delivered through:

- Evening Outreach
- Day time floating support and Assertive Outreach service
- Drop In/Safe space/Open Access through a dedicated Women's Centre
- Dedicated housing support with Cardiff Community Housing Association to support women to maintain their tenancies.

The service works with 150 women at any given time.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Myth:

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT) only involve foreign nationals



Fact:

32% of those referred to the Cardiff MSHT MARAC were for British Nationals

Myth:

Women are the main victims of MSHT



Fact:

51% of referrals to the MSHT MARAC were men.

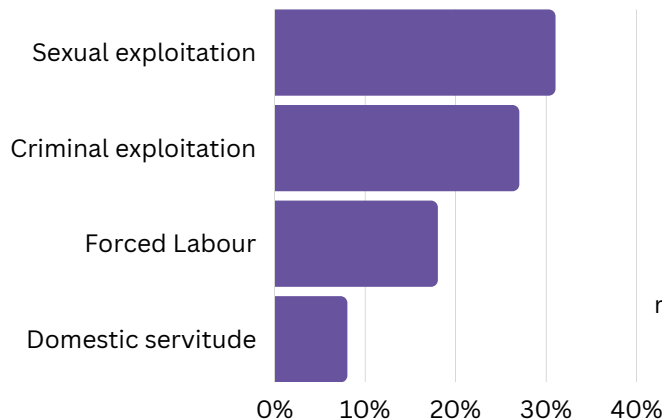
Myth:

Trafficking involves mainly sexual exploitation

Fact:

MSHT involves different forms of exploitation

* Data compiled from referrals to the MSHT Unit for 2018-22



"I started going out with this guy. He was telling me: "I love you; I want to spend my life with you. You are the woman I wanted in my life", and in short, he started convincing me and I started to love this guy, but all of this that he was saying were lies. He deceived me and forced me to work or sleep with other men. He was threatening me with my children's lives. he was telling me if I didn't do whatever he was saying I would not see my kids anymore. I was forced to do this thing, to sleep with many men in one night." -
VAWDASV survivor testimony

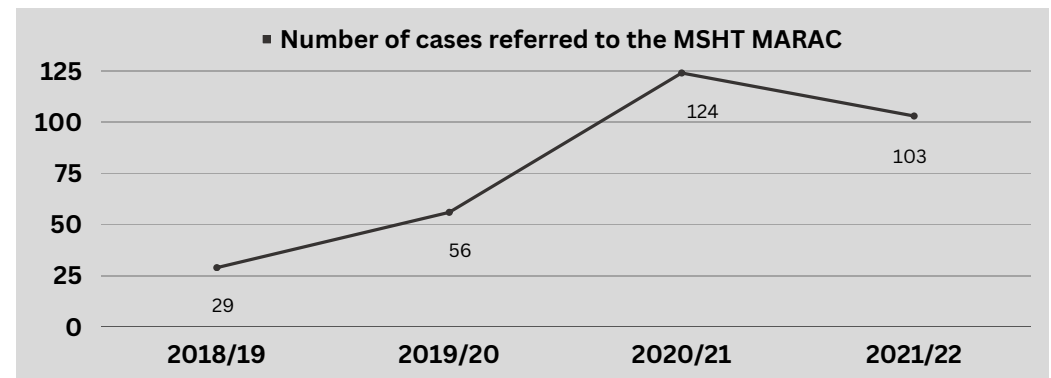
Myth:

MSHT involves force and violence

Fact:

Whilst MSHT can involve the use of force and violence, it can also involve **fraud, coercion and deception**

MSHT arrests in Cardiff and the Vale continue to grow. We are committed to continuing to raise awareness with partners in the region to bring to light a crime that often remains hidden.



Support and safe accommodation is provided by the Diogel Project funded by Welsh Government and managed by Bawso. Working closely with the Police and the Border Force, under the auspices of the Salvation Army, the project supports male and female victims, some of whom have been referred via the National Referral Mechanism.

Focus on Sexual Violence

"Domestic abuse can however dominate the public and professional perception. This can, and has, led to responses starting and finishing with domestic abuse with the broader concepts missed. This might take the form of professionals not recognising issues for referral, treating abuse as a safeguarding issue rather than an offence or commissioners regarding domestic abuse provision as ticking all the boxes. During the life of this strategy we want to ensure that the understanding of VAWDASV is comprehensive, addressing sexual violence as successfully as we address domestic abuse for example" -

Welsh Government violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence: strategy 2022 to 2026

Survivors of sexual violence have often been less visible in discourse relating to VAWDASV due to the stigma and shame that they experience.

Since our last strategy, millions of survivors around the world broke the silence on sexual violence and sexual harassment with the emergence of the **#metoo** and **#timesup** movements. The number of referrals to specialist sexual violence services in the region have also been increasing annually both in numbers and in complexity, particularly with respect to mental health and safeguarding issues.

Whilst perpetrators are more likely to be somebody the victim knows, sexual violence doesn't always occur within the context of domestic abuse.

737 number of referrals to the **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)** in 2020/21.

1/3 of referrals to the SARC are for non-recent assault.

4% of the survivors accessing services by **New Pathways** require sexual violence support in the context of a domestic abuse situation.

22% report experience of domestic abuse at any time in their life.

The partners' needs-led and trauma-informed response to sexual violence and abuse includes a range of options including: counselling and therapy, Sexual Abuse Referral Centre services (including forensic examinations), advocacy and support with the Criminal Justice System, psycho-educational, emotional and practical support. New Pathways also provide awareness raising sessions, sexual violence and trauma training for practitioners.



Health Responses to VAWDASV

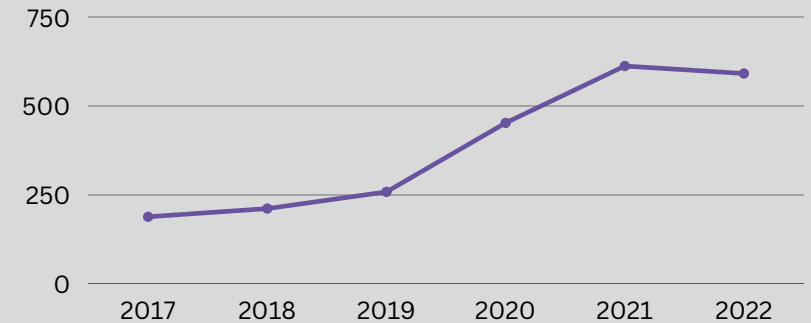
Hospital-based IDVA

VAWDASV is a public health issue with significant consequences on survivors' physical and mental health and wellbeing. Research[36] indicates that survivors engaging with an IDVA in a hospital setting were more likely to disclose higher levels of multiple needs related to their mental health, drugs and alcohol than those accessing community services.

The COVID-19 pandemic created a safety requirement for individuals to present at health services without a friend or family member accompanying them. This created a natural opportunity for safe enquiry with all individuals presenting at the emergency department leading to a 67% increase in the number of disclosures. In response, routine enquiry has been further embedded in the work of the department.

In addition, a newly established Young Person's IDVA will boost the IDVA team to provide support to patients aged 11 -17 years who have experienced VAWDASV including domestic abuse, sexual violence and sexual exploitation.

Annual number of survivors supported by the IDVA service

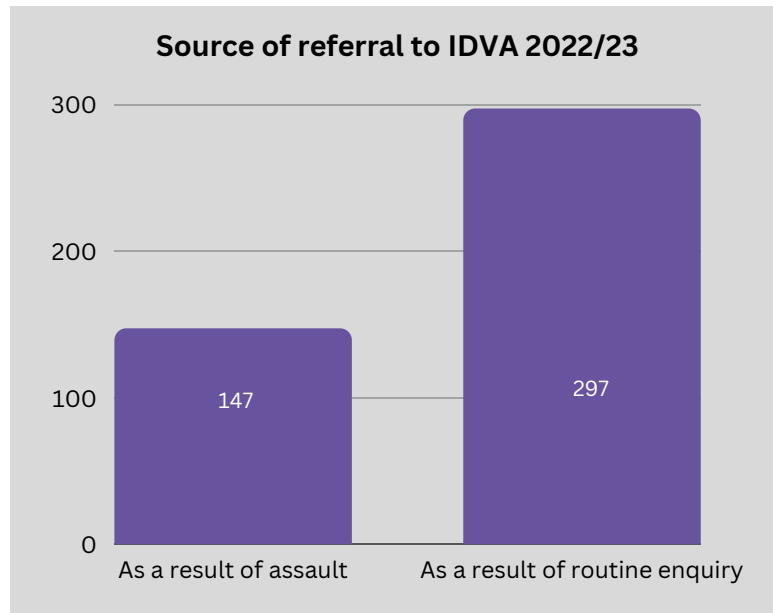


Women's Wellbeing Clinic

The Women's Wellbeing Clinic at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary is a fast-track service offering specialist treatment & support to females who have undergone Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Professionals and all females affected by FGM can self-refer into the Women's Wellbeing Clinic regardless of age.



Women receive a continuity of care through a specialist midwife who assesses and supports newly arrived asylum seekers and supports them throughout their journey, including in theatre during de-infibulation. However, the service is forced to decline referrals from neighbouring areas and is unable to provide consistent and specialist support to survivors dispersed to other areas of Wales. The clinic is also equipped with a psychologist that provides support with the multiple layers of trauma that asylum seeking women experience. Women accessing the service express a desire for them to be the last ones in their family to have FGM.



Migrant women experience distinct forms of violence and trauma.

in their country of origin

during the migration process

upon arrival to the host country

Health Responses to VAWDASV

IRIS+

IRIS+ stands for Enhanced Identification and Referral to Improve Safety and it is extend the successful IRIS project, which involves increasing the identification, documentation, and referral of female victims of domestic violence and abuse within GP surgeries.

Aims of IRIS+

We know that for many victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse the GP surgery is the one place they can be seen alone. We also know that male and female victims and survivors feel that it would be appropriate for their GP or nurse to ask them about domestic violence and abuse.

IRIS+ aims to improve the general practice response to domestic violence and abuse and build on the success of IRIS by training primary healthcare professionals and providing a direct and simple referral pathway to a local specialist service. The intervention model incorporates training about, and a referral pathway for:

- Male victims/survivors and perpetrators
- Female perpetrators (as well as victims/survivors)
- Children exposed to domestic violence and abuse

There are 57 surgeries in the region. In the last 3 years the following number of surgeries have received training:

Year 2018-2019
5 practices

2019-2020
17 practices

2020-2021
2 practices



The estimated cost of the physical and emotional harms incurred by victims of domestic abuse alone is £47 billion, with the emotional harms (the fear, anxiety and depression experienced by victims as a result of domestic abuse), accounting for the overwhelming majority of the overall costs.[37]

Recovery

VAWDASV is widely recognised as a public health issue and human rights violation, but studies[38] show that it is also a public mental health issue with a bidirectional causal association between poor mental health and VAWDASV.

- There is an association between depression and subsequent domestic violence and abuse. Equally domestic abuse increases the likelihood of depression in women, including post-natal depression.
- People in contact with secondary care have a history of particularly high rates of sexual violence, with 10% prevalence of past-year sexual violence. More than half of those who had experienced rape or attempted rape reported having attempted suicide as a result of their experiences.
- Small number of studies suggest high levels of symptoms, including symptoms of depression, anxiety, and PTSD in women who have escaped their traffickers.
- Women with FGM might be more likely to have a psychiatric diagnosis and to experience symptoms of anxiety, depression, somatisation, PTSD, and low self- esteem.

We will:

Ensure that IRIS+ is fully implemented in the region.

Our services

Bawso	Sovereign Quay, Havannah Street, Cardiff, CF10 5SF 029 20 644 633 & 0800 731 8147	Live Fear Free Helpline	Pan Wales VAWDASV Helpline	0808 801 0800
Cardiff Women's Aid	50 Meteor St, Cardiff CF24 0HE 029 2046 0566	Galop	Helpline for LGBTQ+ survivors	0800 130 3335
Cedar Project	0808 801 0321 / 029 2077 6000	SignHealth	Deaf survivors	Text 07800 003421 da@signhealth.org.uk
Dyn Project / Safer Wales	1st Floor, Castle House, Castle Street, Cardiff, CF10 1BS - 0808 801 0321 / 029 2022 0033	Forced Marriage Unit	Support for Forced Marriage survivors	020 7008 015
New Pathways	19 St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff, CF10 3DB 029 2022 0390	Karma Nirvana	Honour Network Survivors Helpline	0800 5999 247
RISE	One Stop Shop, Cardiff Royal Infirmary, Block 24, Longcross St, Cardiff CF24 0JT - 029 2046 0566	Modern Slavery Helpline	Support for survivors of Modern Slavery	0800 0121 700
Safer Merthyr Tydfil	89-90 Pontmorlais, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8UH 01685 353999 Interventions delivered at the Quaker House in Cardiff	The Traveller Movement	Helpline for Gypsy, Roma & Traveller Women	07541 637 795
Sexual Assault Referral Centre	Ynys Saff SARC, Cardiff Royal Infirmary, Glossop Road, Cardiff, CF24 0SZ - 029 2049 2233	Vesta Specialist Family Support	Support for Polish Survivors & Perpetrators	0800 061 4004
Vale Domestic Abuse Services	198 Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4HN 01446 744 755	Men's Helpline	Support for male victims of abuse	0808 8010 327
Women's Wellbeing Clinic	Cardiff Royal Infirmary, Longcross Street, CF24 0SZ 02920 33 54 49	Revenge Porn Helpline	Supporting survivors of imaged-based abuse	0345 6000 459
		Stop it Now!	For anyone concerned about child abuse including those worried about their own thoughts or behaviour	0808 1000 900

Glossary

ACE—Adverse Childhood Experience
BCU—Basic Command Unit
CEDAW—Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CPS—Crown Prosecution Service
CSE—Child Sexual Exploitation
FGM—Female Genital Mutilation
GP—General Practitioner
HBV—Honour Based Violence
IDVA/ISVA/IPA—Independent Domestic/Sexual Violence Advocate/Independent Personal Advocate
IRIS—Identification and Referral to Improve Safety
LGBTQ+—Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer
MAPPA—Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC—Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MASH—Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
NRM—National Referral Mechanism
NTF—National Training Framework
PCC—Police and Crime Commissioner
PPN—Public Protection Notice
PSE—Personal and Social Education
SARC—Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SWP—South Wales Police
SUSR—Single Unified Safeguarding Review
VAWDASV—Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
WASPI—Wales Accord in Sharing of Personal Information

Key Dates for your Diary

1st week February	Sexual Violence Awareness Week
6th February	International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation
8th March	International Women's Day
18th March	Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) National Awareness Day
18th April	National Stalking Awareness Day
May	Mental Health Awareness Week
14th May	National Children's Day
17th May	International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia
14th July	Memory for Victims of Honour Based Violence
1st October	International Day of Older Persons
10th October	World Inclusion Day
18th October	Anti-Slavery Day
19th November	International Men's Day
20th November	Children's Rights Day / World Children's Day
25th November	International Day to Eliminate Violence Against Women/ White Ribbon Day
November	National Safeguarding Week
3rd December	International Day of Disabled Persons
10th December	Human Rights Day
17th December	International Day to Eliminate Violence Against Sex Workers

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