

AN INTERGENERATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE STRATEGY
FOR 2021 TO 2024



MAKING DOMESTIC ABUSE EVERYONE'S BUSINESS



WWW.BROMLEY.GOV.UK/DOMESTICABUSE

In partnership with



Contents



4 Executive summary	6 Foreword	11 An introduction to DVA	18 A picture of Bromley
19 DVA in Bromley	28 Current services across the borough	36 A partnership approach	48 Our vision and priorities
49 Our strategic aims	51 Priority 1	52 Priority 2	53 Priority 3
54 Priority 4	55 Priority 5	58 A partnership commitment	62 Appendices

Please note:
All the photos in this document are stock imagery.
Some percentages will add up to more than 100% due to rounding.

Getting help and support

This is a strategy document about how we want to develop and improve our services over the next few years.

If you need support now this can be accessed from:

Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid

Call 020 8313 9303
Visit www.bcwa.org.uk

National Domestic Violence Helpline

Call 0808 2000 247
Visit www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

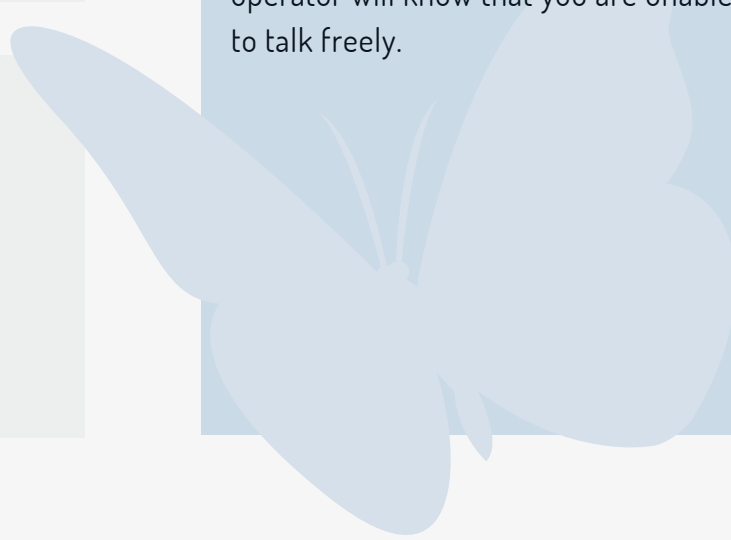
Respect Men's Advice Line

Call 0808 801 0327
Visit www.mensadviceline.org.uk

If you are in immediate danger, call 999

If you are in an emergency situation please do not be afraid to call 999, otherwise you can contact the Police on the non-emergency telephone number 101 or visit your local police station to speak with an officer in confidence.

If you are unable to say which service you require you can press 55 and the operator will know that you are unable to talk freely.



Executive summary

We understand that it is everyone's responsibility to challenge and prevent Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). No single organisation or group can tackle these hideous crimes alone. The issue of DVA crosses the whole borough – across every community, every age band and every socio-economic group.

Our vision is:

to challenge DVA and VAWG at the earliest opportunity, before it becomes an issue, through the provision of high quality, accessible support services for all our residents which empower victims and survivors to take control of their situation and have the confidence to move forward with their lives

Domestic abuse is often referred to as a hidden crime as it is not always reported to the Police. We have a partial picture of the levels of abuse that people are experiencing which suggests that 5.7% of adults are estimated to have experienced domestic abuse. During the 12 months between June 2019 and May 2020, there were over 8,300 reported domestic abuse and sexual abuse incidents and offences in Bromley.

To better understand the picture of DVA in Bromley, we have held conversations with victims and survivors who have been supported by domestic abuse services in the borough. We believe their voices and experiences are crucial to shaping our future service provision in Bromley.

We understand that both adults and children can be victims of abuse. This abuse can impact both their physical and mental health. It is for this reason that we have chosen to adopt an intergenerational approach to our strategy.

The services we commission in Bromley support victims of all ages, genders, ethnicities, sexualities and backgrounds. We are committed to ensuring that all services are accessible and that they reflect and meet the needs of our diverse community.

A multi-agency partnership approach is essential in the delivery of effective, robust support to victims and survivors of DVA, and effective interventions for perpetrators. All partners have a responsibility to deliver on the actions and priorities outlined in this strategy.

Through this strategy, we will focus on:



Promoting the message that tackling DVA is everyone's and every agency's responsibility



Commissioning effective services to support victims of DVA and VAWG



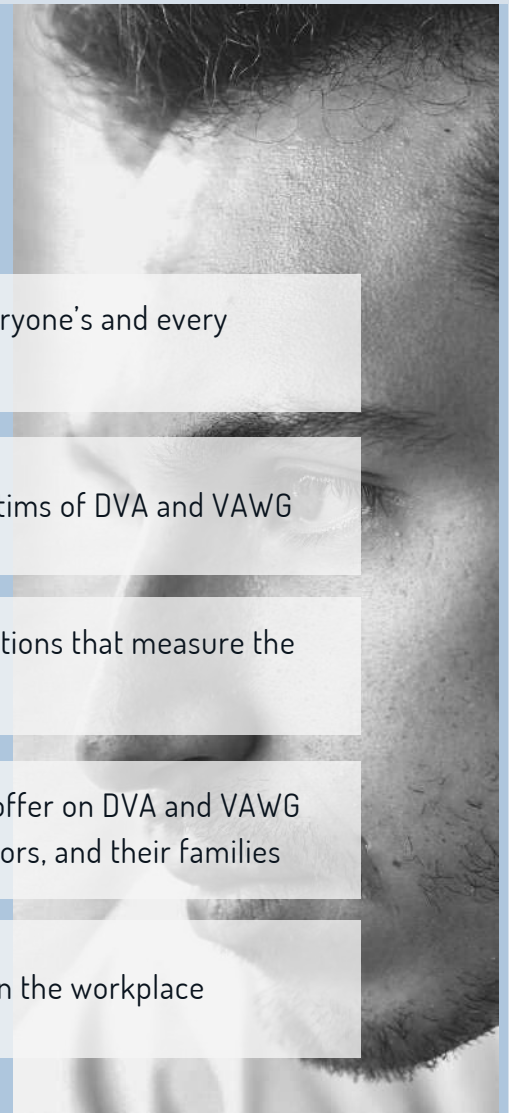
Challenging perpetrators and exploring interventions that measure the change in their behaviour



Increasing and developing our existing training offer on DVA and VAWG to improve local responses to victims and survivors, and their families



Introducing DVA Ambassadors to support staff in the workplace



Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the first Intergenerational Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy for Bromley.

This strategy is an important publication because it has the potential to touch the lives of large parts of our community. We have adopted an intergenerational approach to make sure that we can holistically tackle Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA), as we recognise that it can happen at any stage of a person's life. This strategy has the full support of our Children's Safeguarding Partnership and our Adult Safeguarding Board.

In Bromley, we take DVA very seriously. We understand that it is everyone's responsibility to challenge and prevent DVA. No single organisation or group can tackle this hideous crime alone. The issues of DVA cross the whole borough. It incorporates:

- the whole workforce, whether child, adult or family focused
- services and support provided by the public, private and community sectors
- every community and all social economic groups

Our journey to cover all aspects of DVA in an intergenerational context will look at:

- when a woman falls pregnant and the impact that this has on the unborn child and later on in the child's life
- services that support our children and young people
- a child's transition into adulthood and how we educate young people on healthy relationships and promoting self-esteem
- highlighting what support services there are for women and girls to access
- addressing the support needs of boys and men
- support services for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community
- increasing awareness about dementia and abuse towards older people

We need to support victims to change their lives, to free themselves and their children from the emotional and physical damage caused by this often insidious abuse. Equally, we need to support professionals working with families to be curious and explore further so that they can recognise domestic abuse. This will help them to support the victims to access the right help as early as possible and to reduce the impact on the wider family.

We are fully committed to this journey. Some examples of our commitment from 2019 include:

- appointing a Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead who sits within our Early Intervention and Family Support Service
- making tackling DVA one of our key priorities in the strategy of our Community Safety Partnership
- reviewing and refreshing our DVA Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategic Board

Only by working together can we have a positive impact and reduce DVA. This strategy provides a framework on how we plan to do this.

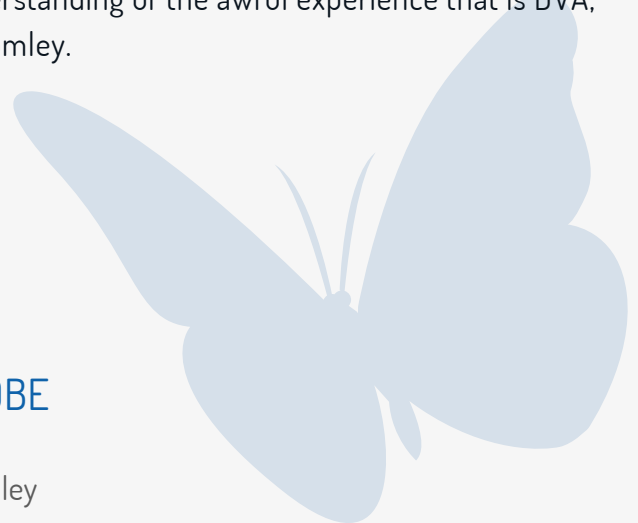
And finally, I want to close my foreword by bringing the focus back to the victims of this awful crime.

My sincere thanks go to those victims who have allowed us to share their experiences. Reading about their experiences brings to life the words 'domestic violence and abuse'. We cannot tackle something we do not understand. Sharing personal experiences in this way, we hope, will engage you in this journey, help you to have a more person-centred understanding of the awful experience that is DVA, and inspire you to be part of the positive change in Bromley.



ADE ADETOSOYE OBE

Chief Executive
London Borough of Bromley





Please note the client's name has been changed to Naomi to ensure anonymity. This was a name the survivor chose herself.

NAOMI

I came to the UK three years ago, after an arranged marriage. He was good at the start, even though there were some problems with my dowry and my family were asked for more money by my husband's family. We lived in a shared house with another couple.

One day he asked me to cook for him but got really angry when I gave the food to him. This was the first time I saw him like this and it scared me. A few weeks later, I found out that he was having a relationship with another woman. He would leave the house for four days at a time each week and told me that he would be working out of London during that time. He would not contact me at all, whilst he was away.

The first winter I spent in the UK, I became sick with a viral infection. I tried to call him as he was away on "business", but he didn't answer his phone. I was scared to put the heater on as he had moaned about large utility bills and the winter clothes I brought with me had been put away in a storeroom, which I could not access. Eventually he contacted me, and I told him I was feeling unwell. He told me not to speak to anyone. I ended up calling his parents as I didn't know what else to do. I wasn't registered with a GP and didn't know how things operated in the UK. His father was angry and said if people back home heard of this, they would kill me.

My husband said I had to get a job and give my wages to him. I didn't have a bank account at that time, so he told me to use his account. It was at this point that he stopped buying food for me. If I asked for basic food items like milk, he told me to go to work to pay for them myself.

There was no intimacy between us and when I asked him why this was, he told me he didn't have sex with slaves. I wanted a baby but when I tried to discuss this with him, he kept avoiding the subject and said it would take some time for this to happen. He said it is difficult to raise a child in the UK and that he would think about it in three years' time. I stopped talking about it after a while as he would get so angry.

The first time he was physically violent towards me was when I asked him why he kept going away. He hit me and pulled my hair and told me I was on his spousal visa so had to do things his way. I was so scared. I wanted to go to the bathroom, but he wouldn't let me. I was crying and screaming, and he told me to be quiet as I wasn't in my home country any more, so I couldn't behave like that. The next day he was really nice to me but asked if he was using domestic violence towards me, which I found strange.

The physical violence stopped for a while, but he continued to withhold things from me and was becoming very controlling. I didn't realise it at the time, but now I am able to see it. He put me down a lot, he told me not to wear shorts as I had bad legs. He said he wouldn't kiss me as I was dark in complexion and had pimple marks. I was told that I was too short for him, even though he knew my height before he married me. He made threats to send me back home to my parents if I did things that he didn't agree with. He said this as he knew it would be frowned upon and even though he was behaving like this, I would be the one blamed for it. It would also impact my parents as there are many cultural factors involved. My mother is currently ill because of the stress this situation has caused her. I am too scared to go back home to see her, even though I am feeling homesick.

I have a degree in biology, but my husband held me back from applying for jobs in this industry and made me apply for jobs in several local bakeries instead, which I did. However, I was told that I was over-qualified for these roles. I had no one to talk to, no one to share things with. I felt very alone. He also began to block my number when he went away, so I couldn't call him.

The emotional abuse became worse over time. He would ask me to make a certain food dish and tell me to stand up rather than sit down when preparing this specific dish. On one occasion I took a small piece of food from a dish I had made; he got angry with me and threw all of the food away as I had touched it. I wasn't ever allowed to question his actions or ask him anything. He was never satisfied with my efforts to clean the house and always criticised what I had done.

Whilst browsing online one day, I came across an organisation called Rights of Women. I thought they were a counselling service, so I sent them an email. My husband saw my browsing history and he became physically violent towards me again. He pulled my hair, slapped me and pushed me to the floor.

A few days later, I contacted the Citizen's Advice Bureau as I didn't know what to do. They put me in touch with Women's Aid who gave me support both over the phone and face to face. I was told my relationship was not healthy and that I should consider leaving my husband. They put me in touch with a solicitor for legal advice and encouraged me to report the assault to the police, but I was worried that this would make things worse. I was assisted with applying for a non-molestation order which was granted. This meant he was not allowed to come to the house. However, I couldn't stay in the property, so I was moved to a refuge for my own safety.

At this point, my confidence was so low. I thought and hoped he might change but knew he was never going to. I was diagnosed with depression. I was totally dependent on him and was scared to come out of the relationship and worried if I would be able to manage on my own.

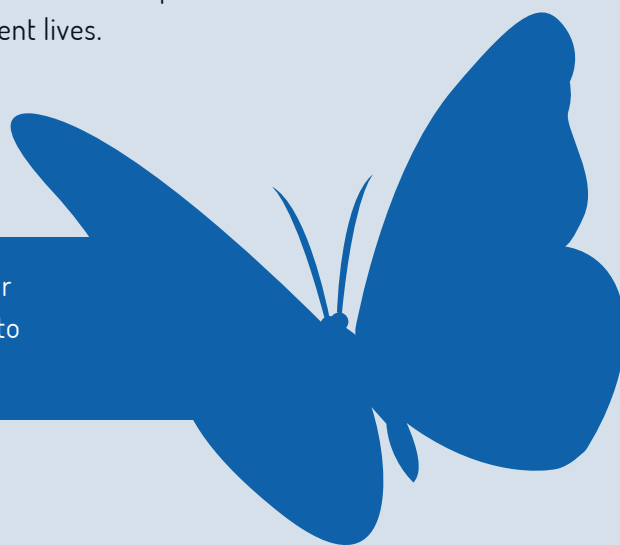
The staff at Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid (BCWA) were amazing. They supported me with applying for indefinite leave to remain which was granted and one of their support workers came with me to see a solicitor. I completed the Freedom Programme via BCWA which really helped me to see what I was going through. When the facilitator went through the characteristics of abusers, I was able to give an example for each one. The time I spent in a refuge allowed me to speak with other women and we were able to share our experiences. Spending time with some of the children in the refuge really helped me get through each day. The support workers were really supportive and were always there to listen to me. I was finally able to buy and choose my own food, when I needed to and not be reliant on my husband. I was able to go to sleep at night without having disturbed, sleepless nights.

The physical abuse hurt at the time but doesn't now. The emotional abuse is like an open wound, it still hurts and has scarred me. I didn't ever think I would have to make these kinds of decisions. It can be very difficult for women to leave in situations like mine due to the cultural influence and impact, but it got to a point where I couldn't take any more. Looking back there were early signs of him being abusive but I didn't take it seriously.

I have attended some free training programmes which have helped distract me from what has happened. I am finally able to be free, with no one restricting me. I also attend a temple for prayers and have taken up belly dancing classes, yoga, cycling and swimming. I meditate, practise self-care and read books on mindfulness as this helps. I am finally doing things that make me happy. I would like to pursue a career in counselling. I find talking to others is healing and you realise some people have experienced things so much worse than I have. I am excited about learning new things as it allows me to forget things for a short time. I know in time as I get stronger, it will get easier.

I would like to thank all the refuge workers who supported me and hope that sharing my story helps others who are scared to come out of abusive relationships, realise their potential and have the confidence to lead happy, independent lives.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to our survivor for writing this account of their experience and allowing us to publish it.



An introduction to DVA

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is:

“An incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence, in the majority of cases by a partner or ex-partner but also by a family member or carer. It is very common. In the vast majority of cases it is experienced by women and is perpetrated by men.” ^[1]

Domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to, acts of:

Physical abuse

Any form of physical contact, such as pain or injury, physical harm, hitting and punching, spitting and biting.

Sexual abuse

Can be either ‘contact’ or ‘non-contact’ and includes rape and sexual assault, which is often perpetrated using force or by taking advantage of another person.

Financial or economic abuse

Controlling access to money or resources, including putting someone into debt, preventing them from working or taking their wages.

Psychological and emotional abuse

It is often difficult to recognise and is often a feature in all other types of abuse, as well as on its own, and it can include name-calling, threats and manipulation.

Coercive control

Coercive or controlling behaviour, such as intimidation, isolation, humiliation and control with the use of threatening behaviour, to harm, punish or frighten the victim.

Online and technical abuse

A newer form of abuse, such as sending abusive text messages, demanding access to devices, using secret tracker apps and spyware, and sharing images online without the person's consent.

Source:

[1] Women's Aid - www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/what-is-domestic-abuse

What is Violence Against Women and Girls?

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality in society. It is referred to as:

“A grave violation of human rights. Its impact ranges from immediate to long-term physical, sexual and mental consequences for women and girls, including death. It negatively affects women’s general well-being and prevents women from fully participating in society.”

VAWG includes the following strands:

Domestic violence and abuse

This encompasses the forms of abuse listed above.

Sexual violence

This involves any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act by violence or coercion, to express power and dominance over the victim. It also includes acts to traffic a person or behaviour directed against a person’s sexuality. It disproportionately affects women and girls and is mainly perpetrated by men towards female partners.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

This is also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting. It comprises procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is illegal for FGM to be performed in the UK or to arrange for a girl to go to another country for it to be carried out there. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 covers both criminal and civil legislation on FGM practices. Due to the hidden nature of this crime the full extent of how many women and girls have experienced FGM is unknown. A mandatory reporting duty for FGM came into effect in October 2015, which requires all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report known cases of FGM in anyone under the age of 18 to the Police. An FGM Protection Order can be applied for from the Courts if someone is known to be at risk of FGM.

Modern Slavery and Trafficking

This can take many forms including slavery, forced sexual exploitation, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Modern slavery is a complex crime and may involve multiple forms of exploitation. Victims may not be aware that they are being trafficked or exploited, and may have consented to elements of their exploitation, or accepted their situation. Forced labour is the most common form of slavery in the UK. A growing form of slavery is trafficking into crime, where children and young people are groomed into criminal drug gangs. This is known as 'county lines' trafficking.

Harassment and stalking

This is persistent and unwanted attention that makes you feel harassed and anxious. It involves behaviour that happens more than once, which is directed at or towards a person, which causes them to feel distressed. The behaviour can continue for a long period of time which can make the victim feel very anxious and afraid. Stalking and harassment can also take place online through social media platforms and "cyber-stalking" or online threats can be just as intimidating.

Prostitution

This is the term used for the exchange of sexual services for financial gain. Prostitution is not currently illegal but there are a number of offences linked to it, such as running a brothel or controlling a prostitute for gain. It is considered to be gender neutral with the majority of perpetrators being men, who incite and control the sellers of sexual services who are mainly women and girls. It is considered an abuse of power. However, there are many boys and men who are forced and coerced into sex working. If the person is under the age of 18, then it should be considered child sexual exploitation (CSE).

Honour based violence

This consists of a range of violent practices which may be committed to protect or defend the honour of a family or community. Acts of violence are predominantly against women and girls and are committed by family members or other members of the wider community. It can take many forms including murder, forced marriage, rape, forced suicide, acid attacks, forced abortion, mutilation, threats, harassment, abduction and imprisonment.

Forced Marriage

This is where one or both parties do not or cannot consent to a marriage and pressure or abuse is used. In the UK, forced marriage is recognised as an abuse of someone's human rights. A forced marriage is different to an arranged marriage as in these circumstances, the families of both spouses will be involved with arranging the marriage, but the couple decide whether or not they wish to proceed with the arrangement.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

This is a type of sexual abuse. Children and young people are exploited by being given something such as money, gifts, drugs, accommodation or increased attention and affection, in exchange for sexual activities. They are often tricked into believing that they're in a loving and consensual relationship, which is known as grooming. They may not realise that they are being abused as they trust their abuser and do not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship they are in. Abusers may use violence, coercion and intimidation to frighten or force the child or young person to do something, to make them feel as though they have no choice. CSE can also occur online, through the use of technology, where an abuser will attempt to gain a child's trust, before physically/sexually abusing them. They might be persuaded or forced to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, film or stream sexual activities and engage in sexual conversations. Children and young people who are being exploited may also be used to coerce others to join associated groups as sexual exploitation can also occur in gangs. Perpetrators are often convicted for associated offences such as sexual activity with a child as there is no specific crime attributed to CSE.

The Domestic Abuse Bill

The Domestic Abuse Bill was introduced by the Government into the House of Parliament in July 2020 and is scheduled to receive Royal Assent in 2021.

Once it has received Royal Assent, the Act will create for the first time a cross-Government statutory definition of domestic abuse to ensure that domestic abuse is properly understood, considered unacceptable and actively challenged across statutory agencies and in public attitudes.

How widespread is DVA?

Domestic abuse is often referred to as a hidden crime as it is not always reported to the Police. We have a partial picture of the levels of abuse that people are experiencing. It suggests that:



Sources:
Office for National Statistics - www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabuseprevalenceandtrendsendlandandwales/yearendingmarch2019

Safelives - <https://safelives.org.uk/policy-evidence/about-domestic-abuse/how-long-do-people-live-domestic-abuse-and-when-do-they-get>

The estimated economic and social costs of domestic abuse in England and Wales

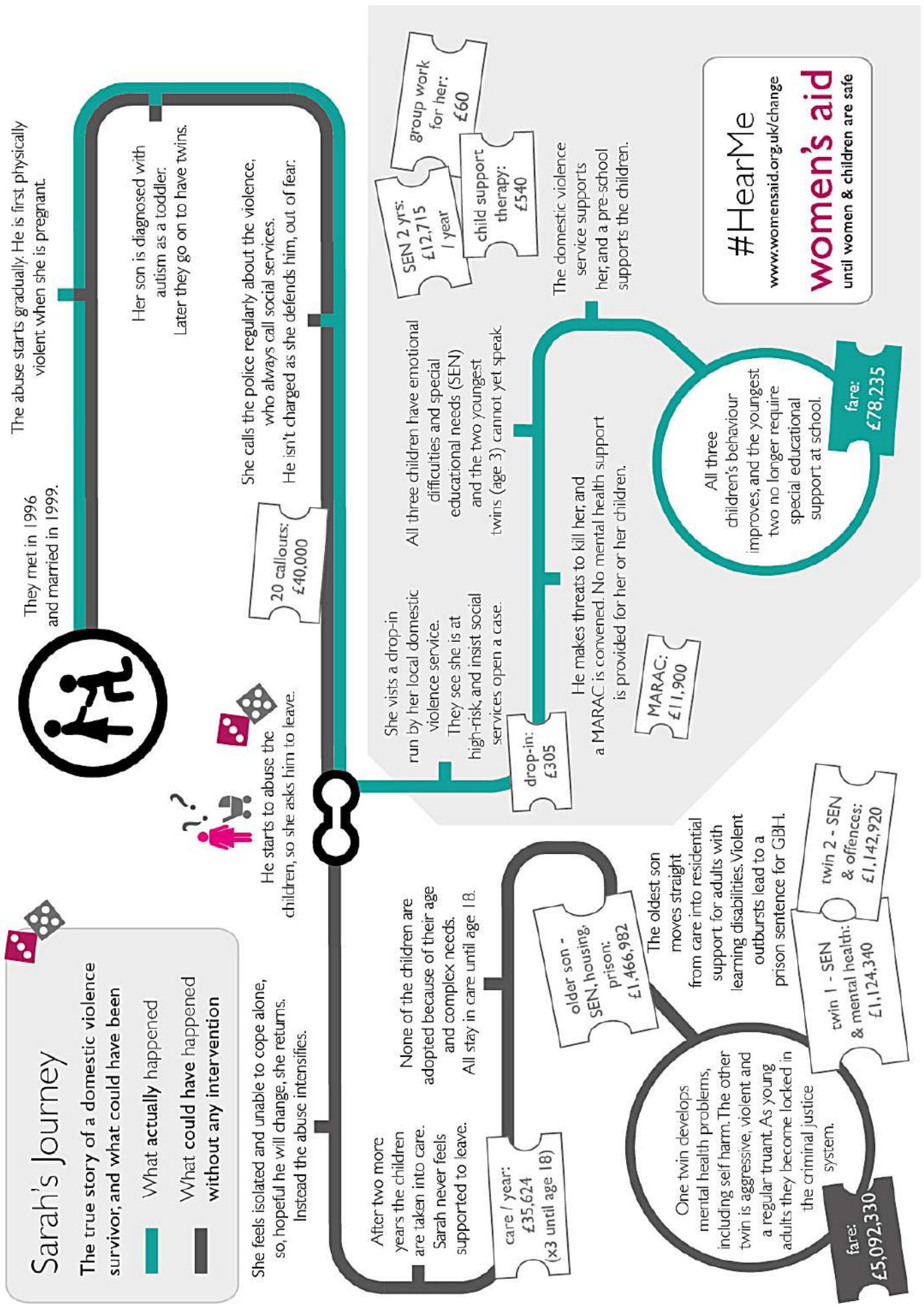
We recognise that all forms of domestic violence and abuse are unacceptable. Abuse from a partner or family member is a prevalent issue and the consequences can have long lasting effects on those who experience it.

The true cost is often difficult to calculate but the estimated economic and social costs of domestic abuse in England and Wales is believed to be around £66 billion.

The largest element is the emotional and physical harm experienced by the victim and survivor with an estimated cost of £47 billion.

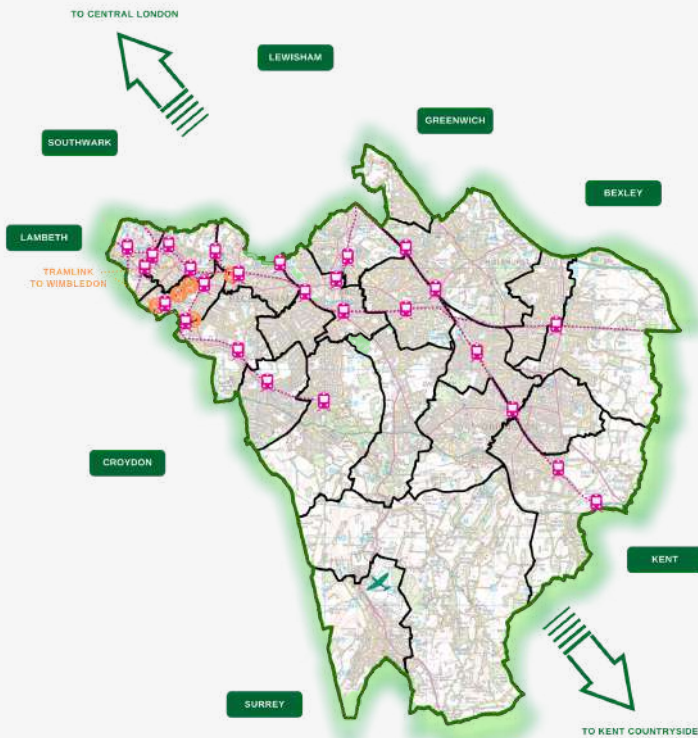
Women's Aid have produced a set of infographics to visually share the journey of a victim and the paths they could have taken. These illustrate the enormous cost, in human and financial terms, of not listening to women and responding to their needs. The image on the next page illustrates 'Sarah's journey'.





Source: Women's Aid - www.womensaid.org.uk/our-approach-change-that-lasts/sarah-web

A picture of Bromley



330,000+
people live in Bromley

» 25% aged under 20

» 58% aged 20 to 65 years

» 18% aged 65 and over

8th
most populous
London borough

LIFE EXPECTANCY

84.9
years

81.4
years

20%
minority
ethnic groups

4.6%
of adults
unemployed

68.2
crime rate per 1000 population

4%
of households
are overcrowded

Source:
Greater London Authority,
<https://iao.blob.core.windows.net/publications/reports/f11c199d237c4cb79bca5427bfe8511d/E090000006.html>, accessed 9 October 2020

DVA in Bromley

Our strategy has been shaped by a comprehensive analysis which identified what we have in Bromley, what we think is missing from our existing offer, what we are doing well and what we need to improve upon. Doing this analysis helped us to focus on our future aims and priorities and what we need to do, in order to successfully achieve them. Our analysis has identified gaps in a few areas which will be incorporated into our priorities moving forward.



Hearing the voices of our residents

To better understand the picture of DVA in Bromley, we have held conversations with victims and survivors who have been supported by domestic abuse services in the borough.

Alongside these conversations, we completed a consultation with our stakeholders to understand their experiences and viewpoints.

We believe their voices and experiences are crucial to shaping our service provision for the future in Bromley.

Prevalence of reported DVA in Bromley

One of the difficulties in capturing data around DVA is that many incidents are not reported. Most of the data we have is linked to police reporting so it can be quite difficult to gauge an accurate picture of how prevalent the issue is in our communities.

During the 12 months between June 2019 and May 2020, there were:



There were 416 domestic abuse incidents in Bromley in August 2020 which is an increase on the same point the previous year. Using this data, if this pattern was to continue it would create a 4% increase on reported domestic abuse incidents compared to the previous 12 months.



This is of significant concern as the data reported by Safe Lives evidences that on average for every domestic incident reported, the victim is likely to have experienced 49 other incidents before disclosing to the Police. This could equate to over 10,000 additional unreported domestic abuse incidents.

Source:
MOPAC Domestic and Sexual Violence Dashboard -
[www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/
data-and-statistics/domestic-and-sexual-violence-dashboard](http://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/domestic-and-sexual-violence-dashboard)

There were 22,362 reported cases of domestic abuse between 2014 and 2019. During this five-year period, the wards with the highest reported rates of abuse were Penge and Cator, and Cray Valley West.

The wards of Darwin, Chelsfield and Pratts Bottom, West Wickham, Bickley, Chislehurst, and Petts Wood and Knoll reported the lowest level of harm.

Source:
Metropolitan Police South Basic Command Units (BCU) – CRIS database



A profile of victims and survivors

We understand that both adults and children can be victims of abuse. This abuse can impact both their physical and mental health. It is for this reason that we have chosen to adopt an intergenerational approach to our strategy. What our data illustrates is that domestic abuse has no age limit which underpins the need for our intergenerational strategy.



Average age for victims of domestic abuse

25 to 34
years old

The average age of victims of domestic abuse in Bromley is 25 to 34 years old (almost 1 in 3 victims), followed by those aged from 35 to 44 years old (almost 1 in 5 victims), which is comparable to the London average.

Average age for victims of sexual abuse

Under 18
years old

The average age of victims of sexual abuse in Bromley is under 18 years old (1 in 3 victims), followed by those aged from 25 to 34 years old (almost 1 in 5 victims). The proportion of victims aged under 18 is significantly greater (+8%) than the London average.

Source:
MOPAC Domestic and Sexual Violence Dashboard -
www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/domestic-and-sexual-violence-dashboard

Reports of abuse amongst older people and the abuse of parents by their children is a growing issue and an area where further work is needed in order to bring existing support services and resources together to tackle this problem. A recent report by Age UK states that the Crime Survey for England and Wales does not capture data on adults over the age of 74. Older adults can experience barriers when trying to access support or attempting to leave an abusive relationship. Many older people may also be reliant on their abuser for their care or finances. We want to increase the awareness of domestic abuse in older people in Bromley. In terms of demographics we have an ageing population, so it is important that we do this.

The gender of the victims and survivors



23%
are males

Almost 1 in 4 victims (23%) of domestic abuse are males. This evidences that men in both heterosexual and homosexual relationships can be subjected to DVA. Data indicates that men are less likely to suffer injury or fatality, but the psychological and emotional impact can lead to mental health problems and issues with substance misuse. Men are also less likely to report abuse.

The ethnicity of the victims and survivors

We recognise that some ethnic communities could be at higher risk of cultural practices such as FGM and so called 'honour-based' violence. They are also more likely to experience additional barriers to accessing support and may not report abuse, as they are fearful of being isolated from their family and wider communities.

Our data shows that 72% of victims of domestic abuse report being from a white background which is lower than the residential population of approximately 80%. As the ethnicity of more than 1 in 10 victims (12%) is unknown, it is difficult to fully analyse the ethnic background of the victims.



Source:

MOPAC Domestic and Sexual Violence Dashboard -

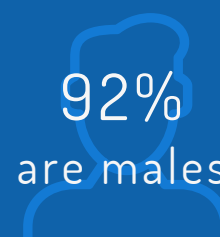
www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/domestic-and-sexual-violence-dashboard

The sexuality of the victims and survivors

Incidents of DVA are often unreported in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community for a number of reasons. LGBT victims may be afraid of revealing their sexual orientation which may prevent them from seeking support or they may not identify as LGBT. Sometimes sexuality can also be used as a way of controlling the victim, by threatening to tell people about their sexuality.

A profile of perpetrators

Domestic abuse is considered largely a gendered issue, with most perpetrators being male (92% in Bromley), using violence against women and girls.



In line with our intergenerational approach to supporting victims and survivors of DVA, the same approach needs to be taken to tackle perpetrators. Although the average age of perpetrators in Bromley is between 25 to 34 years old (4 in 10 people), perpetrators of domestic abuse can be any age, with no age group being excluded.

73% of perpetrators identify themselves as white (compared to almost 80% of the residential population). 1 in 5 perpetrators (21%) identify themselves as black, which is significantly higher than the residential population (8.5%)



As at September 2020, there were 43 wanted domestic abuse offenders in Bromley. Of these 27 are from this year (2020) with the remaining 16 wanted for historic offences (from 2014 to 2019). Based on this data, it is important for perpetrator programmes and interventions to be directed towards these individuals, in order to reduce levels of domestic abuse.

Source:

MOPAC Domestic and Sexual Violence Dashboard -

www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/domestic-and-sexual-violence-dashboard



FGM

I was born in Kurdistan in the mid 1980s. When I was just 4 months old I went to Iran as war had broken out between Iraq and the Kurdish people.

When I was 4 and a half years old I remember a lady who knew my family asking me to go with her. I was told I would be wearing traditional Kurdish clothes. I was taken to a building which had a salon style room downstairs and a large apartment upstairs. My Mum was there and I was told I was going to be measured for clothes.

I remember my hands being held behind my back and my legs being parted. The lady had some sort of self-made blade which she put between my legs. I can remember crying because what she was doing hurt so much and I must have passed out with the pain.

When I woke up, I saw blood. I was in so much pain and started crying again. My sister, who was five years older than me, was also taken to this place and had the same thing done to her. I was kept at this place for 3 days. I was taken to hospital at some point as I was foaming at the mouth and my eyes were rolling back in my head. I must have been having some kind of seizure due to the pain I was experiencing.

I went to an all-girl school in Iran and didn't really have any contact with boys until I went to University where I studied translation – Kurdish to English. I was very shy around boys. I had my first period at the age of 13 and it was really painful. When my breasts developed, I would try to flatten them by tying scarves and fabric around them, so they wouldn't be noticeable.

Sexual intercourse was very painful. I had an arranged marriage with the father of my two sons. I didn't have any contact with him for a year – only via the phone as he was in the UK and I was in Iran. I then married him and came to the UK. My husband became abusive towards me both physically and psychologically. He was very controlling. We were married for 8 years. He left me with no warning and I was financially dependent on him. I had to move from Croydon, where I lived with my husband, to Bromley after we split up, as he stalked me. I have stayed in various temporary accommodations in Croydon and Bromley since splitting up with my husband.

I had a natural birth with my first son who was born a little early at 34 weeks. My second son was born via C-section. Despite having two children and attending regular cervical smear tests, no one recognised that I had had FGM performed on me.

It was only last month (November 2019) that I realised what had happened to me. I was seeing a counsellor from the IKWRO (Iranian Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation) as I had been suffering from depression, low mood and insomnia and was having flashbacks and nightmares of things that had happened to me in the past. The counsellor was asking me questions about my past and realised that this was related to the torture I had experienced. She referred to it as "FGM". I searched for this term on Google after I left the counsellor that day and realised that this was what had happened to me. Up until that point, I thought the pain and discomfort I had been experiencing was normal and something that other women experienced.

The counsellor made referrals to my GP, the Police and some other agencies.

There are four types of FGM. I am between type 1 and type 2.

The traditional name for what happened to me is "Sunnat". I can remember the lady who did it to me. I can still picture her face. When I hear babies and small children crying loudly or screaming, it takes me back to when it happened as there were other girls and babies there.

My mum now realises that what happened to me and my sister was wrong, but at the time she saw it as being traditional.

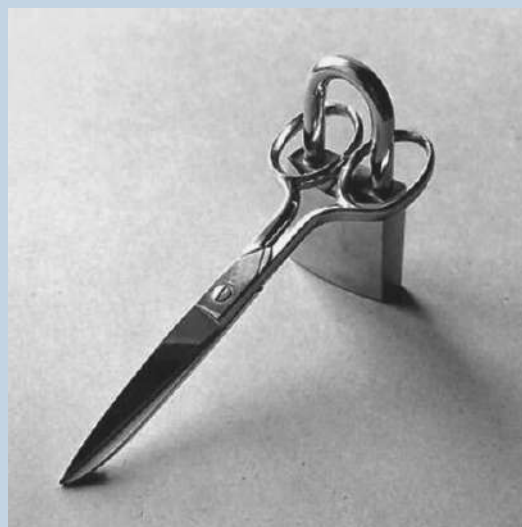
I also had a friend who was asked to perform the procedure on herself. She cut her finger and wiped the blood on a piece of tissue to make it look like she had carried the procedure out.

I didn't want either of my two sons circumcised but, in my culture, boys have to be, so my husband organised this for both of my sons.

I am trying to move on with my life and want to build a better future for me and my two sons. I want to learn to drive and find secure accommodation, which we can call "home". I teach Kurdish children, for two hours at the weekend, on a voluntary basis. I help them learn their language and we sing songs.

I am still seeing the counsellor from IKWRO and have been engaging with a Family Support and Parenting Practitioner from Bromley Children Project who has helped me so much and has made me feel good about things.

My eldest son and I recently completed the Children's Group Programme in Bromley, which helped me understand the impact of domestic abuse on my children.



This image was chosen by the survivor

We wish to express our sincere thanks to our survivor for writing this account of their experience and allowing us to publish it.



Current services across the borough

The services we commission in Bromley support victims of all ages, genders, ethnicities, sexualities and backgrounds. We are committed to ensuring that all services are accessible and that they reflect and meet the needs of our diverse community.

Services for pregnant and perinatal women

Pregnancy can be a trigger for domestic abuse. Quite often, women who are already experiencing domestic abuse find that the abuse escalates during pregnancy or after giving birth.

Domestic abuse during pregnancy is a risk to both the mother and the unborn child and increases the risk of miscarriage, infection, premature birth, foetal injury and death. It can also have a detrimental impact on a woman's mental health and emotional wellbeing, causing her stress and anxiety, which can affect the development of the baby.

All women accessing maternity services in the borough are asked if they are experiencing domestic abuse when they book their pregnancy. A further question is asked again at 28 weeks and 34 weeks of the pregnancy and prior to the woman's discharge from hospital. If a disclosure of abuse is made, face-to-face appointments will be more frequent.

An Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) is co-located at the Princess Royal University Hospital who women can access for advice and support.





Services for children (under 18s) and families

We recognise that preventing DVA and building awareness amongst children and teenagers from an early age is key to our approach of early intervention.

Children are often the unheard victims of DVA. It can have a detrimental impact on their mental, emotional and psychological health as well as on their social and educational development and is considered significant harm.

Evidence also suggests that they could be more likely to experience domestic abuse in adulthood or become perpetrators of abuse themselves.

We have a number of services to support children and young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse.

Early intervention and safeguarding

We recognise the importance of statutory and non-statutory services working closely together, to ensure smooth transitions in cases that are stepped up to Children's Social Care or stepped down to Early Intervention.

The Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership is committed to tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls and has recently produced a protocol and guidance on FGM.



Children Overcoming Domestic Abuse (CODA)

We run an evidence-based support programme for children and their primary female carer called CODA.

The Children's Group

The Children's Group is an evidence-based programme for children aged 4-16 who have witnessed abuse against their mother or primary female carer. The groups are to help the children heal after witnessing or being exposed to violence in the home.

The Mother's Group

The Mother's Group runs alongside the Children's Group and allows mothers to understand the impact the abuse has had on their children whilst also helping them to gain an insight into what the children are learning in their group.

The groups are organised and facilitated by the staff in our Early Intervention and Family Support service's Bromley Children Project. The groups run three times a year during term-time. Each group consists of 10 weekly sessions. We work closely with our schools who enable the children to attend these sessions without it impacting on their attendance record.



Children Overcoming Domestic Abuse

“This group has helped a lot. Sometimes, I thought no one else goes through these things.”
- A child

“This group has really helped me and my children. I wasn't looking forward to this course but looked forward to coming every week.”
- A mother

“This group helps with your anger and getting help. You can talk to someone about it!”
- A child

“Helped me understand what happened to us. Helped me and my children to move forward. Gave me the tools to help myself and my children.”
- A mother

“We talked about things that made me sad. I am not good at telling people stuff as something I say may make it bad but the group helped me with this.”
- A child

“I've learnt to trust myself again and that I have the power to protect my children.”
- A mother

Services for adults

A range of specialist refuge provision and community outreach services and support for victims of domestic abuse are commissioned across the borough.

The One Stop Shop

This is a free service for people to access help or advice in relation to domestic abuse. No appointment is necessary as it operates on a drop-in basis.

A number of agencies attend, such as the locally commissioned domestic abuse service (Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid), housing, and solicitors for family law and immigration.

There is also a dedicated phone number to contact the local police.



IDVAs and IDSVAs

The borough's support line and services offer non-judgemental advice to victims and survivors of DVA. This includes access to a team of three IDVA and Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advisors (IDSVAs) who work with high risk victims to offer them support and ensure their safety.

An IDVA will assess a person's needs and level of risk and develop safety plans with them. We currently commission three IDVAs who are co-located at several key locations. This promotes joint working practices with key partner agencies. Each of the IDVAs spends a couple of days each week in these co-locations. This enables them to develop close working relationship with other services.

Support programmes

Support groups are run for survivors of domestic abuse, including the Keys to Freedom Programme. This is intended to help women understand and come to terms with what has happened to them. It allows them to recognise their journey and offers a therapeutic approach by allowing women to talk about their experiences, with a view to positively moving forward with their lives. The programme is run over 12 weekly sessions and currently runs three times per school term or nine groups in total each year.

Refuge provision

Refuge accommodation provides a safe living environment where women and children who are experiencing domestic abuse can stay free from fear.

We have a number of refuges which offer both shared and self-contained accommodation that are operated by the locally commissioned domestic abuse service. In addition, we have a Safe Bed Scheme, which offers temporary accommodation for women with no recourse to public funds.

The sanctuary scheme

The sanctuary scheme will be relaunched in the borough at the end of 2020 to support individuals and families who may be at risk of violence or harm to remain safely in their homes.



Services through primary healthcare

DVA training and support have been provided to GP practices in the borough since 2015 through the implementation of the Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) model.

The IRIS model is a national programme for staff working in primary care settings. The model equips them with the knowledge and skills to identify patients who may be experiencing domestic abuse so that they can refer them to the IRIS team for crisis intervention support, if this is appropriate.

The IRIS team consists of Independent Domestic Violence Advocate Educators (IDVA-E) and GP Clinical Leads.

The IDVA-E role supports survivors by providing crisis intervention work, such as assessing risks, safety planning and undertaking multi-agency work with other specialist services.

The IRIS team have maintained a strong link with the IDVA based in the Princess Royal University Hospital as this has been an effective approach in identifying victims who are either not registered with a GP or who cannot access their GP due to perpetrator coercion.

It has been identified that pathways need to be developed between the IRIS project and the locally commissioned domestic abuse service. One GP has recently stated that "IRIS has allowed us to transform how we support patients".

Services and interventions for perpetrators

We have been successful in a joint bid working with our colleagues in Croydon and Sutton through the Metropolitan Police Service South Basic Command Unit (BCU) to pilot a new perpetrator programme starting in 2021.

The programme is called DRIVE and works with high harm high risk and serial perpetrators of abuse to prevent and reduce their abusive behaviours and protect victims. This will see the introduction of a new Perpetrator Panel where individuals can be identified and agreed. DRIVE will challenge and support perpetrators to change and works with partner agencies to disrupt abuse.



Training for professionals

Multi-agency training on DVA and VAWG is jointly commissioned by the Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board and the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Professionals from all partner agencies can access an e-learning module on domestic abuse and participate in face-to-face group training sessions. These are currently structured into three levels (foundation, intermediate and advanced - see Appendix 7 for more details) depending on the type of work professionals do and the knowledge of domestic abuse related issues required for their individual roles.

We rolled out a new training course in 2019 covering coercive control as a need for additional understanding around this complex abuse was identified. The course covers the legislation around coercive control, tactics and behaviours and the impact this type of abuse has on victims and children.

We plan to review and develop our existing training package, specifically looking at abuse towards male victims, older adults and people from BME and LGBT communities, to increase knowledge and awareness across all partner agencies. In turn this will improve the response to all victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse in Bromley.





A partnership approach

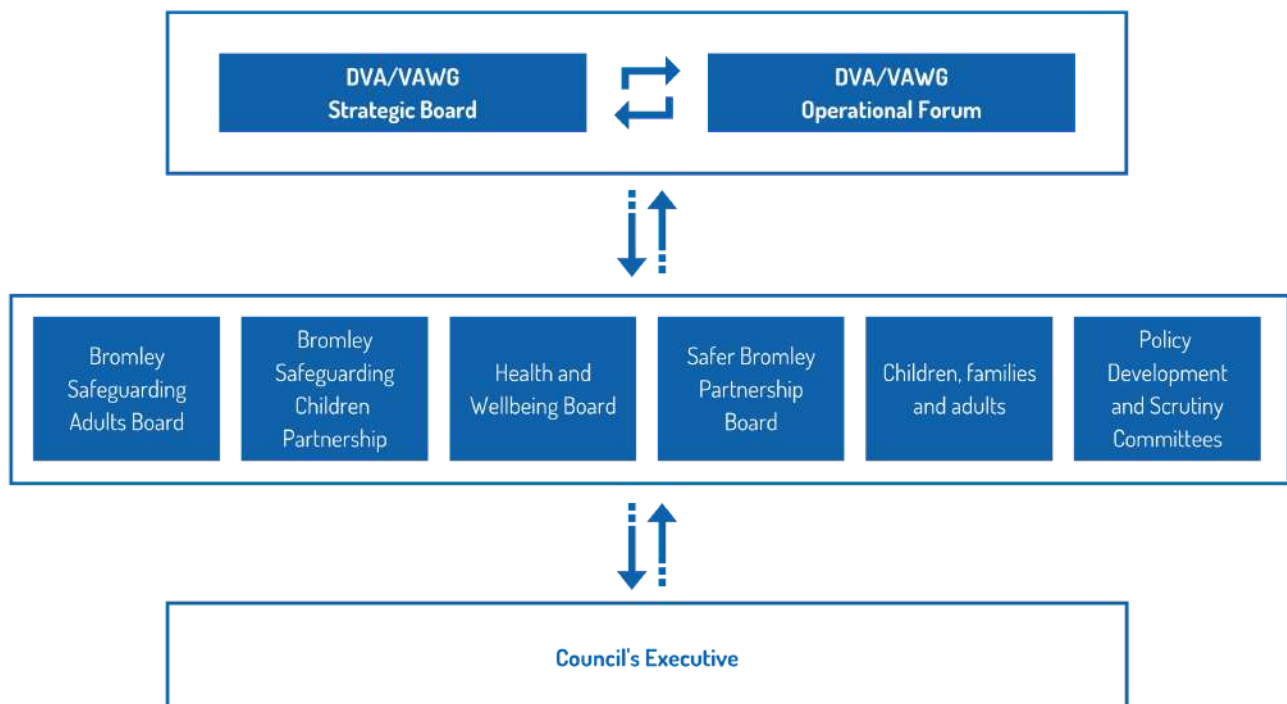
A multi-agency partnership approach is essential in the delivery of effective, robust support to victims and survivors of DVA, and effective interventions for perpetrators.

We recognise the importance of encouraging networking opportunities between agencies to build on our collective strengths and to ensure that a holistic approach is taken, and knowledge, information and resources are shared, where it is appropriate to do so.

Our governance

All partners have a responsibility to deliver on the actions and priorities outlined in this strategy. Different aspects of the strategy will be delivered through the relevant strategic boards. This will enable processes to be streamlined and effective commissioning strategies to be developed.

Actions and recommendations identified through the strategic board and operational forums will be shared across the strategic boards, with updates given when each board meets, which is usually on a quarterly basis.



Strategic and operational partnership groups

We have two forums in the borough which enable conversations and dialogue to take place between agencies which will promote better working relationships.

These forums offer an integrated approach in ensuring that services are meeting the needs of victims and survivors, whilst also tackling and supporting the perpetrators of the abuse.

DVA/VAWG Strategic Board

The strategic board is responsible for the monitoring, scrutiny and governance of the multi-agency response to DVA.

DVA/VAWG Operational Forum

The operational forum will enable professionals to share information and examples of best practice where successful outcomes have been achieved. This forum will also facilitate discussion on coordinated pathways of support and new innovative approaches to tackling domestic violence and abuse at a local level. It will allow agencies to build links with the locally commissioned service, who provide specialist support for victims of domestic abuse in the borough.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

The MARAC is attended by representatives of various organisations to discuss high risk victims of DVA, including children's and adult social care, housing, the police, primary health services, specialist health services, probation services and specialist domestic abuse services.

High risk victims are those who are at risk of serious harm or homicide.

Coming together in the MARAC, the representatives can share the information that they know about an individual or a family. This provides a holistic overview and it enables the professionals to jointly identify the actions required to support those affected.

During 2020 we will be undertaking a review of the MARAC to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, adds value and, most importantly, positively impacts on the lives of those experiencing DVA.

Strategic partnership boards

Our Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead works with Bromley's strategic partnership boards to make sure the profile of DVA is raised within these partnerships and a collaborative approach to tackling the issue is taken.

Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP)

The BSCP aims to ensure that all children and young people in Bromley are kept safe from harm. BSCP representatives include schools, early years, health commissioners and providers, children's social care services, the police and members of the community and voluntary sector.

Together they coordinate what is done locally to protect and promote the welfare of children and young people in the borough and to monitor the effectiveness of those arrangements.

The BSCP Pledge commits to better understanding vulnerabilities that can impact on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, including abusive relationships, and to working to mitigate and prevent that harm. This work includes scrutiny of agency audits and quarterly multi-agency data regarding domestic abuse, consideration of the impact of domestic abuse in Safeguarding Practice Reviews and input into Domestic Homicide Reviews where relevant.

The BSCP delivers training sessions for professionals on domestic abuse, in partnership with the Bromley Adult Safeguarding Board. The BSCP also works with other Strategic Partnerships in Bromley on overlapping priorities, such as domestic abuse, via the Inter Chairs Board.

Domestic violence and abuse is one of the priorities highlighted in their Annual Report and shares our focus on monitoring and improving the ongoing effectiveness and impact of the partnership in responding to Domestic Violence.

To learn more about the BSCP, visit: www.bromleysafeguarding.org



Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB)



The BSAB is focused on making sure vulnerable adults are kept safe from harm and abuse. Board representatives include adult social care services, the police, ambulance service, housing, health and members of the community and voluntary sector.

Domestic abuse is one of the BSAB's priority areas. They are committed to raising awareness of domestic abuse and providing relevant information to professionals via their widely distributed poster campaign, website content and BSAB commissioned training courses.

The BSAB aim to cover domestic abuse in their Safeguarding Awareness Week, that is due to take place in November 2020. Domestic abuse is highlighted in the Board's Annual Report, which references both local and London wide initiatives and they are always open to opportunities to further advance the domestic abuse agenda in Bromley.

To learn more about the BSAB, visit: www.bromleysafeguardingadults.org

Safer Bromley Partnership (SBP)

SBP is committed to improving safety in the borough, with domestic abuse and violence against women and girls being one of the key priorities.



There are key inter-relationships between this priority and the partnership's other priorities which are to keep children and young people safe and stand together against Hate Crime. Board representatives include the police, community safety, fire service, health services, probation services, and members of the community and voluntary sector. The SBP aims to take a joint problem-solving approach to better protect women and girls in the borough by:

- Changing attitudes and preventing violence by raising awareness through campaigns, safeguarding and educating children, early identification, intervention and training
- Supporting women and girls and empowering them to take control of their lives
- Targeting offenders and working towards effective prosecution

The Board will be publishing their new strategy during the early part of the life of this strategy.

To learn more about the SBP, visit: www.bromley.gov.uk/saferbromley

Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)

The HWB is a collaboration between the Council and various partner agencies whose role is to understand the needs of the local community and encourage commissioners and services to work in a more joined up and integrated manner. Board representatives include public health, primary healthcare services, health commissioners, and members of the community and voluntary sector.

DVA is a very important issue for the Board because of both the direct and indirect effects and consequences. The Board monitors the situation across Bromley through regular reports from both the BSCP and BSAB, and the chairs of both are members of the HWB. In addition, focused reports on DVA are presented to the HWB.

In the recent past the HWB has considered the impact interaction of domestic abuse on policies for loneliness and social isolation, adolescent mental health and dementia care amongst others. It has also considered the effect of other priority concerns, such as alcohol and drug abuse, on domestic violence.

More recently, the HWB has monitored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on domestic violence and will continue to do so through our virtual meetings which have taken place as scheduled.



A learning approach

We have a learning approach and constantly seek to improve what we do and how we do it. If a person dies due to DVA or if they are known to safeguarding services, a post-death review will be undertaken. These include Domestic Homicide Review (DHR), Serious Case Review (SCR) and Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR).

The reviews and their recommendations support us to understand:

- What lessons are to be learned from the incidents
- How each of the agencies involved will respond to the points raised
- What changes they expect to happen as a result of the review
- How services can work more closely in partnership with one another to try and prevent future incidents
- How services can improve and develop their practice, policies and service provision

It is important to remember that these reviews are not an exercise in apportioning blame but are commissioned so that lessons can be learned and good practice applied in the future.

Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)

A DHR will be undertaken where the death of a person aged 16 or over has occurred as a result of violence, abuse or neglect by a relative or other household member or someone who had a personal, intimate, relationship with.

A review panel, which is led by an independent chair and consists of representatives from statutory and voluntary sector agencies, is commissioned to undertake the DHR. The panel reviews the involvement of each respective agency in the case (which is usually provided as a chronology) and recommendations are made, with a view to improving responses in the future.

The panel will also consider information from members of the victim's family and other people they may have been close to them, such as friends and work colleagues.

We have undertaken three DHRs since 2018.

Serious Case Reviews (SCR) and Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR)

SCRs and SARs are held after a child or vulnerable adult dies or is seriously injured in circumstances where abuse or neglect are thought to have occurred.

In Bromley our Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board are responsible for overseeing these and implementing the learning that derives from them.

Sometimes these will run in conjunction with a Domestic Homicide Review.

Moving forwards together

Our strategic approach

To tackle DVA across Bromley, we will collaboratively work together by:

- building on our strengths
- promoting positive joint working relationships
- learning from best practice
- undertaking further engagement with victims and survivors

The impact that our services have on victims, perpetrators and their families is essential in measuring successful outcomes.

Awareness of domestic abuse and related issues appear to vary in Bromley. We recognise that in order to achieve a standard level of knowledge and understanding, we need to develop our existing training offer to ensure consistency in how professionals and practitioners respond to domestic abuse. This will enable them to identify, support and signpost victims, children and perpetrators to the appropriate services in the borough.

One of our strategic priorities is to reach out to the wider partnership to ensure that all agencies understand that it is everyone's business to tackle domestic abuse and the responsibility does not lie with one single agency.

Intervening early

As part of our commitment to tackling DVA, in 2019 we appointed our new Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead. Prior to this, the post had been vacant for two years. The role sits within our Children's Social Care Early Intervention and Family Support Service. This aids the early intervention approach we want to take in Bromley in addressing DVA. We recognise that a lot of the work undertaken is when victims reach crisis point but in order to provide victims and survivors with the best support we can, early identification of issues and how associated risks can be minimised is crucial to effective service provision.

Reducing parental conflict and domestic abuse

Parental conflict can involve regular bickering, arguing and frustration with each other about issues such as money, parenting or housework. When a child experiences this conflict frequently and it is unresolved, it could result in children feeling upset, confused or angry and impact their ability to resolve relationship problems throughout their lives.

Often it is clearer to identify where domestic abuse is a concern. However, sometimes it can be more challenging to differentiate between parental conflict and domestic abuse. The For Baby's Sake Trust's Intimate Relationship Spectrum has been adopted by Bromley to assist practitioners in differentiating whether families are experiencing parental conflict or domestic abuse:

Bromley's Intimate Relationship Spectrum



In Bromley our behaviour is guided by relational practice and we are committed to helping families make choices and develop their own solutions to the challenges they may face. This involves helping parents where there may be parental conflict. In Bromley we have developed resources to support parents to reduce parental conflict.

Bromley has also embraced the reducing parental conflict training for staff and is in the process of developing a network of champions, the aim of which is to help prevent conflict escalating to domestic abuse.

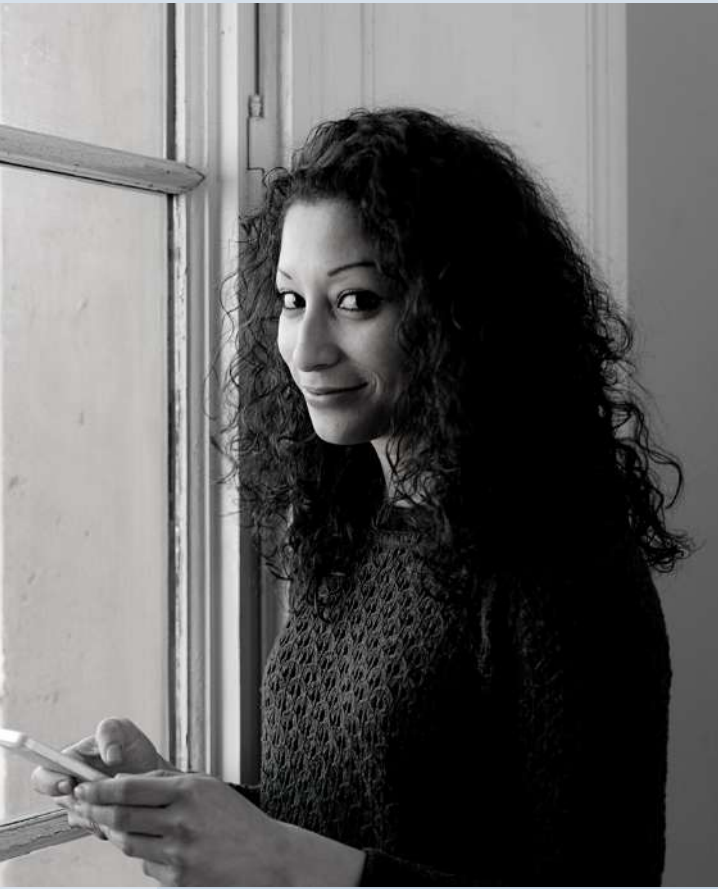
Raising the profile of DVA

We are continuously refining and strengthening our communication strategy so that we can continue to raise and promote the profile of DVA services in Bromley.

Some of the steps that we have taken include:

- A visual identity – we have adopted an image of butterflies as they are associated as symbols of resurrection and transformation, endurance, change, hope and life, which victims and survivors of domestic abuse can relate to
- A regular newsletter – we produce a newsletter every 2 to 3 months to share updates and useful information on both a local and national level
- Contact cards – we have produced credit card-sized information cues to share useful contact information for people to access both local and national based support
- Online information – we have expanded the range of information on the Council website aimed at both our residents and professionals covering DVA and Reducing Parental Conflict
- Directory of services – researched, produced and distributed which we will update twice a year





SURVIVOR TESTIMONIAL

I remember how frightened I was of my partner. I was 16 and he controlled my clothing and makeup choices and wouldn't allow me to take contraception. He assaulted me several times, threatened to kill me and would force me to have sex against my will. When I was in the relationship I felt very alone and scared. I felt trapped.

As I started talking to my support worker at BCWA, about my feelings and how things affected me, I didn't feel so alone. They never judged me, and supported me when I went back to the relationship. My support worker was very supportive throughout my relationship and that was life changing for me, as without her I would probably still be with my boyfriend and in a really bad place, if I didn't have her support.

Now, coming out of the relationship, I have a close circle of friends. I am able to do activities that make me happy and I now feel free. I feel like my own person once again.

BCWA has helped me to realise that I am strong, and that I am not alone. Sometimes it does get lonely and I do have my own struggles and get upset but I know that my support worker is there, if I ever need to talk.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to our survivor for writing this account of their experience and allowing us to publish it.



Our vision and priorities

Our vision is:

to challenge DVA and VAWG at the earliest opportunity, before it becomes an issue, through the provision of high quality, accessible support services for all our residents which empower victims and survivors to take control of their situation and have the confidence to move forward with their lives



Our strategic aims

DVA is a complex issue, which can impact people's lives in many different ways. We believe that our residents should be able to receive the best services they can. The overarching themes of our strategic aims will help us develop and implement a holistic, multi-agency approach to preventing, identifying and responding to incidents of abuse. We have implemented the 'Four Ps Model':



PREVENTION

- We will change attitudes and prevent violence by raising awareness of DVA.
- We will take an early intervention approach when people have experienced or are at risk of DVA.



PROVISION

- We will establish clear, local priorities in order to develop effective service provisions across the borough.
- We will assist victims and survivors to progress with their lives by providing effective services, advice and support.



PARTNERSHIP

- We will develop a coordinated, multi-agency approach to tackling DVA by implementing positive change and maximising opportunities for partnership working across the borough.
- We will make sure that our response to tackling DVA is shared by all stakeholders.



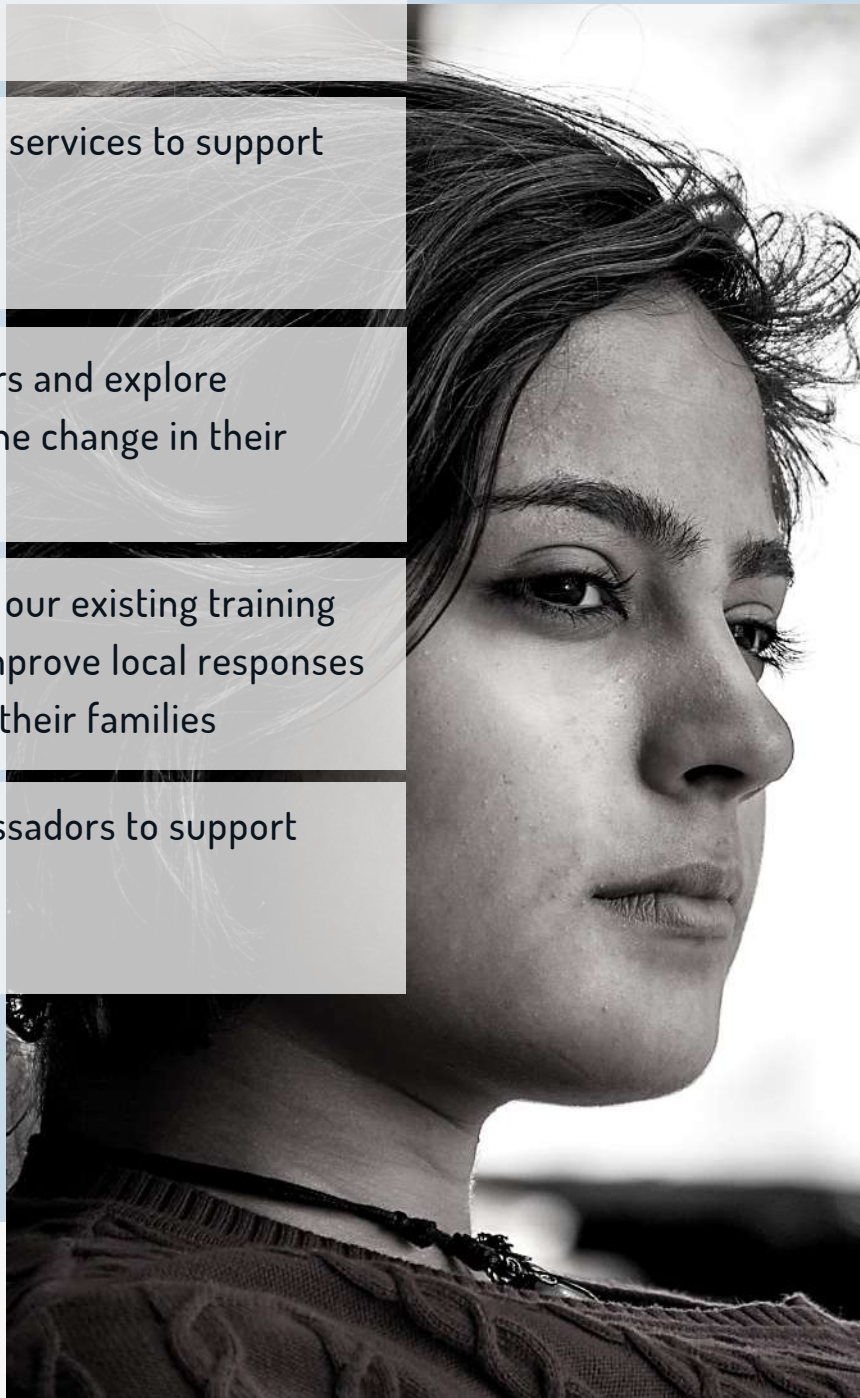
PROTECTION

- We will provide tailored support services in Bromley which meet the needs of victims and survivors, their families and perpetrators.
- We will provide accessible, holistic support to people who have experienced or who are at risk of DVA and provide effective perpetrator interventions.

Our priorities

To achieve our vision, we will work to implement the following five priorities which underpin Priority 2 of the Safe Bromley Partnership Strategy 2020-2023:






- 1 We will promote the message that tackling DVA is everyone's and every agency's responsibility
- 2 We will commission effective services to support victims of DVA
- 3 We will challenge perpetrators and explore interventions that measure the change in their behaviour
- 4 We will increase and develop our existing training offer on DVA and VAWG to improve local responses to victims and survivors, and their families
- 5 We will introduce DVA Ambassadors to support staff in the workplace



Priority 1

We will promote the message that tackling DVA is everyone's and every agency's responsibility




We will do this by:

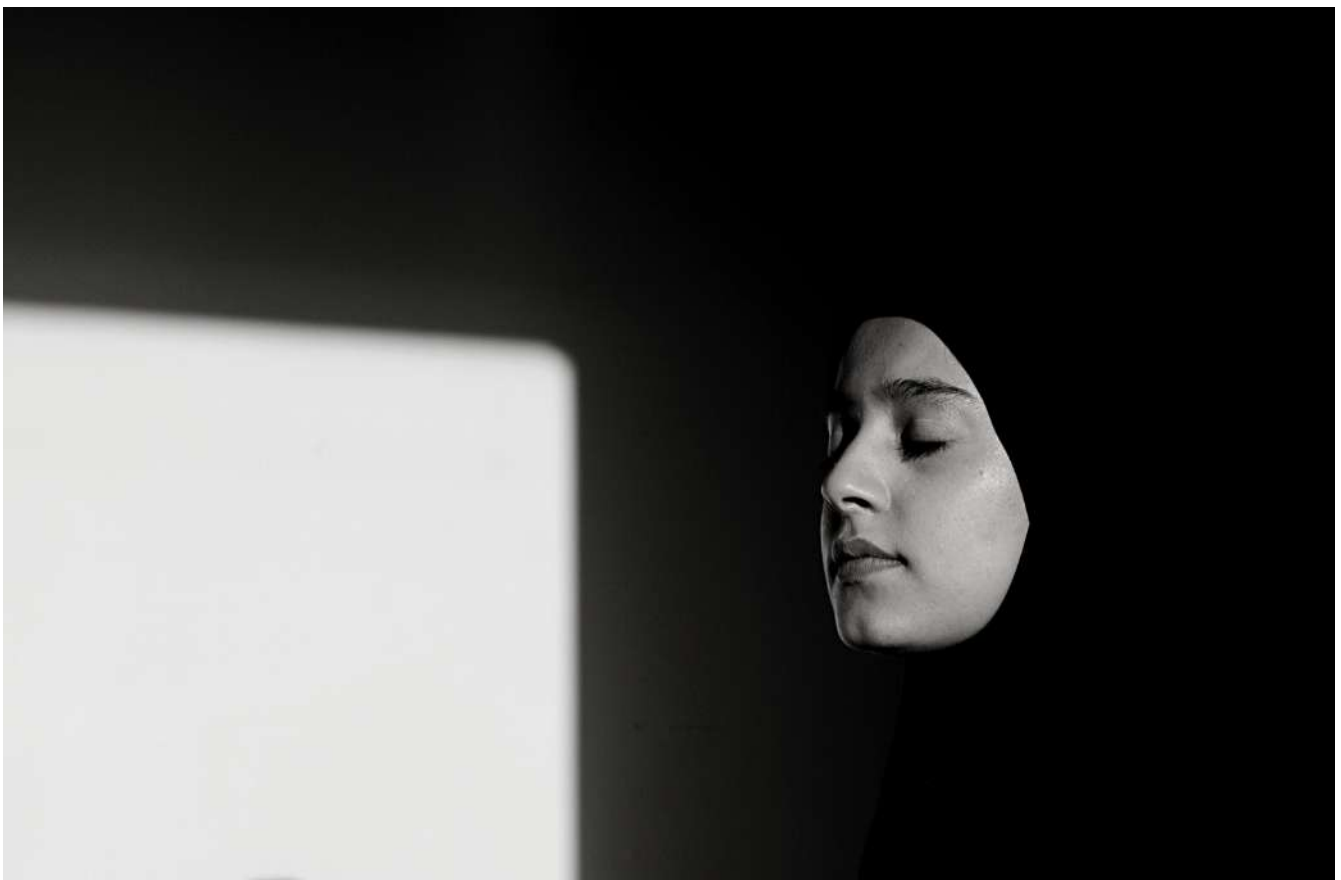
-  Increasing awareness of DVA through coordinated publicity campaigns in order to better support and safeguard our children and vulnerable adults from domestic abuse and the wider impact of this on families
-  Building on our successes and developing our approach in tackling DVA by utilising our local and national knowledge
-  Engaging better with groups and communities that we often struggle to hear from
-  Communicating the pathway and referral routes to access all DVA services across the borough
-  Encouraging organisations to adopt a DVA champion model to –
 - Be the experts in their organisation for DVA
 - Develop and share their own knowledge and understanding of the DVA agenda both locally and nationally
 - Actively promote all local and national DVA services
 - Attend the DVA/VAWG Operational Forum

Priority 2

We will commission effective services to support victims of DVA

We will do this by:

-  Hearing and learning from the voice of victims and survivors to influence our service provision
-  Seeking funding from partner agencies and external funders to continue to provide specialist support
-  Reviewing our information sharing protocols to support the early identification of abuse and to ensure that wraparound support is provided



Priority 3

We will challenge perpetrators and explore interventions that measure the change in their behaviour

We will do this by:

- ✓ Researching successful interventions that other communities and local authorities have adopted
- ✓ Developing specific training focused on supporting perpetrators
- ✓ Building relationships with agencies who may be working with perpetrators
- ✓ Implementing a whole family approach by including the support being provided to perpetrators in assessments that are completed for other family members



Priority 4

We will increase and develop our existing training offer on DVA and VAWG to improve local responses to victims and survivors, and their families

We will do this by:

- ✓ Commissioning and rolling out specific training in relation to MARAC
- ✓ Identifying training which specifically looks at the needs of –
 - hard to reach and minority groups
 - those who may face barriers to reporting abuse
- ✓ Promoting the training and resources available on reducing parental conflict to help professionals understand the difference between this and domestic abuse



Priority 5

We will introduce DVA Ambassadors to support staff in the workplace

We will do this by:

- ✓ Embedding policies in the workplace for their managers on how to support employees who have been impacted by DVA/VAWG
- ✓ Training staff as DVA Ambassadors so that they can effectively support colleagues who may be experiencing or are affected by DVA
- ✓ Signposting to available support and sharing resources to support staff who may be experiencing DVA
- ✓ Developing a communication strategy to raise staff awareness of the range of DVA support available





IDVA SUPPORT VIA BCWA

(BROMLEY AND
CROYDON WOMEN'S AID)

A client called the BCWA support line and was referred to the IDVA service. An IDVA was allocated and a risk assessment completed. She scored 14 on the Dash Risk Assessment and was deemed as high risk. The client stated that she had to flee her family home. The tenancy was in her name and she was pregnant at the time. Her partner had told her to terminate the pregnancy, which she did not want to do. During the relationship, her partner had numerous affairs but the client had always forgiven him for the sake of the children. There had been physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse with threats to kill.

Her partner had substance misuse issues. He was very controlling and demanded that she showed him her time sheets. He would then calculate how long it took her to reach home and would ask why it took so long. He threatened to kill her if she tried to leave him and told her that she would never see her children again. She felt that he would harm her and the unborn baby, if he found out that she had not terminated the pregnancy, so she fled her home without her children, and booked herself in to an Airbnb.

She called BCWA the same day, seeking help. She was very upset and in tears when the IDVA spoke with her. The IDVA gave her continued emotional support to ensure she was ok, as she was alone, very low in mood and was missing her children. A referral to MARAC was completed by the IDVA, who made contact with social care to explain why the client had left home without her children. The IDVA also put the client in touch with a solicitor, who sent a warning letter to the partner, asking him to leave.

The letter was served on the partner who then left the property. The client then moved back to the property with her children. The case was heard at MARAC and special schemes were put in place on the address. The IDVA continued to provide emotional support to the client until all safety measures were put in place at her address and she no longer had any contact from her partner.

Feedback from the client, sent to the IDVA's Manager:

Dear Manager

I've been going through a tough patch in my life and could not see any hope out of it. I called your organisation and received a call from the IDVA the same day. The day she called me, I didn't have the energy to even eat or bath. She introduced herself to me, so freely, as someone I have known for years. I felt so encouraged and saw a reason to go on, every time I spoke to her. She has motivated me so much that any time I feel low, I remember her words: "You are a good mum, and all that is happening is not your fault, you deserve better". I have never received such words from a professional person.

She talks to me in a very calm, kind and loving voice and has lots of empathy. I would like to thank her so much for being there for me, when I needed a shoulder to cry on. I have been so tearful but now feel so strong and see myself in a different way.

It is a shame that she cannot be cloned, as the world would be a much better place to live with people like her. Thank you so much. She has a way of building a rapport and this makes people, like me open up about issues in life.

Words have failed me, thank you so much.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to our survivor for writing this account of their experience and allowing us to publish it.

A partnership commitment

As we continue to strengthen our awareness of DVA in Bromley, we hope there will be opportunities for us to work with a range of organisations, services and community groups, to promote the message that tackling DVA is everyone's responsibility.

The commitment

We have asked all key partner agencies to sign the following commitment to deliver the priorities set out in this strategy:

We commit to training our staff to identify potential domestic abuse situations and to take a pro-active approach through listening and communicating, giving information and signposting to relevant local and national services who specialise in supporting victims and survivors of domestic abuse and, where appropriate, report it.

In addition, we will invite all organisations who work with Bromley residents to sign this commitment.



Ade Adetosoye OBE

Chief Executive
London Borough of Bromley



Dan O'Sullivan

TDCI
South Area – Public Protection
Metropolitan Police Service



Dr Angela Bhan

Place Based Director: Bromley
NHS South East London Clinical
Commissioning Group





REFUGE SUPPORT VIA BCWA

(BROMLEY AND
CROYDON WOMEN'S AID)

I met my ex-partner several years ago. No words are good enough to describe this man. The closest one is monster, who used and abused me in every possible way. I became his punch bag, his maid, his slave and his toy.

Life became a never ending cycle of poison and medicine. Whenever he was abusive, I felt like I was being given a dose of poison and whenever he would calm down, then that was my medicine. Whenever I wanted to leave, he pulled the chains and controlled me; escape wasn't possible. I was a prisoner but the chains were invisible.

One day, after an attack, I grabbed my 4 year old son on my hip and ran into the nearby pub to hide. I faced homelessness. I was told by a housing officer in another borough to find shelter in a mosque as we are Muslims. They advised me to go back to where I had fled from as there was not any actual threat of domestic violence.

I wanted to throw myself in front of a bus as I couldn't bear any more pressure. But when I looked at my son, I pushed these horrible thoughts away. We stayed in a B&B for 9 days and then we finally came to Bromley. Our refuge was the best! The refuge playroom was our sanctuary, a place where all our worries disappeared for both my son and I. My son spent his first birthday in the refuge but had his first birthday party there and was given a birthday cake. It was also the first time I had spent Eid on my own, far away from family and friends but the refuge was filled with laughter and happiness. I wasn't lonely; I was happy and had discovered my new family.

Whilst domestic violence leaves us with scars and stressful memories, the outings and activities organised by BCWA gave us the opportunity to discover new places, learn to travel independently, release stress and build new memories. They provided my son and I with a roof over our head and I am ever so grateful for that. From the time of the referral being made to when we actually moved in, from child support services to resettlement support, I felt safe, protected and supported during every step of my journey. There was a mountain on my shoulders, but it wasn't heavy. The staff took away my burden. My support workers were inspirational and empowering. Their input was very important as without them I would not be where I am today.

Life is beautiful and worth living. I left the refuge a year ago and despite suffering from anxiety and depression, I am now enjoying a peaceful life with my son, in my new home, with access to a private garden. We will create new memories. We will be happy and we will have a good life.



We wish to express our sincere thanks to our survivor for writing this account of their experience and allowing us to publish it.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Data from the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) for Bromley, Croydon and Sutton

Appendix 2

A profile of DVA across Bromley wards

Appendix 3

Profiles of victims and survivors

Appendix 4

Profile of the perpetrators

Appendix 5

Type of offences committed

Appendix 6

Proceedings

Appendix 7

Training course levels

Appendix 8

Directory of services across Bromley

Appendix 9

Our strategic plan

Data from the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) for Bromley, Croydon and Sutton

Incidents and offences for Bromley, Croydon and Sutton

(June 2019 to May 2020)

BOROUGH	DOMESTIC ABUSE INCIDENTS	DOMESTIC ABUSE OFFENCES	SEXUAL OFFENCES	TOTALS
BROMLEY	4,776	3,037	506	8,319
CROYDON	7,980	4,812	985	13,777
SUTTON	2,860	1,830	269	4,959
TOTALS	15,616	9,679	1,760	27,055

- Domestic abuse incidents - where a crime has not been committed but is recorded for intelligence purposes, such as a verbal argument
- Domestic abuse offences - where a crime has been committed and recorded
- Sexual offences - which includes a range of non-consensual crimes such as rape or sexual assault and exploiting others for a sexual purpose, either in person or online

The total domestic abuse flagged count for Bromley, Croydon and Sutton

(2015 to 2020)

	BROMLEY	CROYDON	SUTTON
TOTAL DOMESTIC ABUSE	22,362	37,044	14,291

Source:

MOPAC Domestic and Sexual Violence Dashboard -
www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/domestic-and-sexual-violence-dashboard

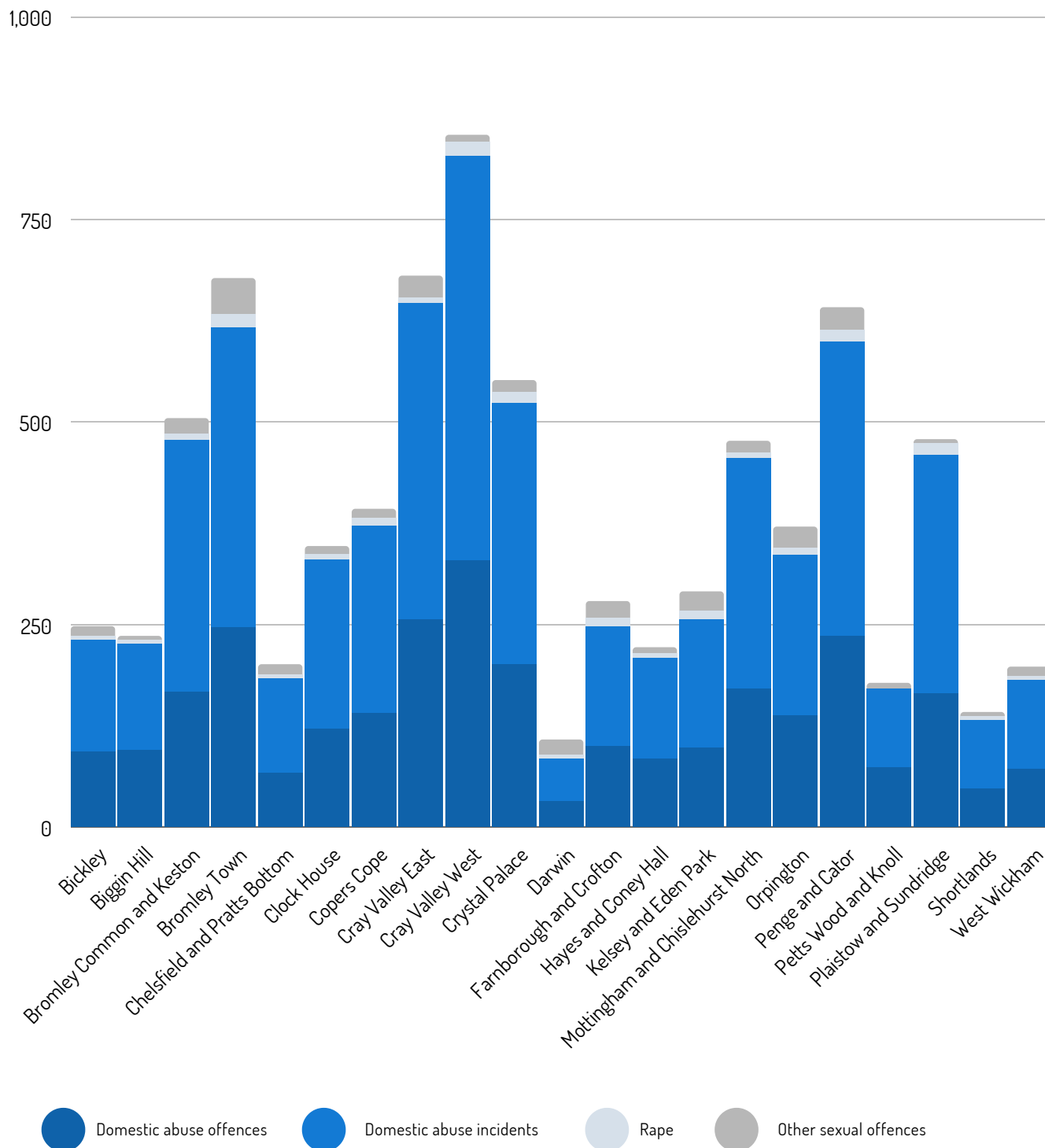
M O P A C

MAYOR OF LONDON
OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

A profile of DVA across Bromley wards

Domestic abuse and sexual offences by ward

June 2019 – May 2020



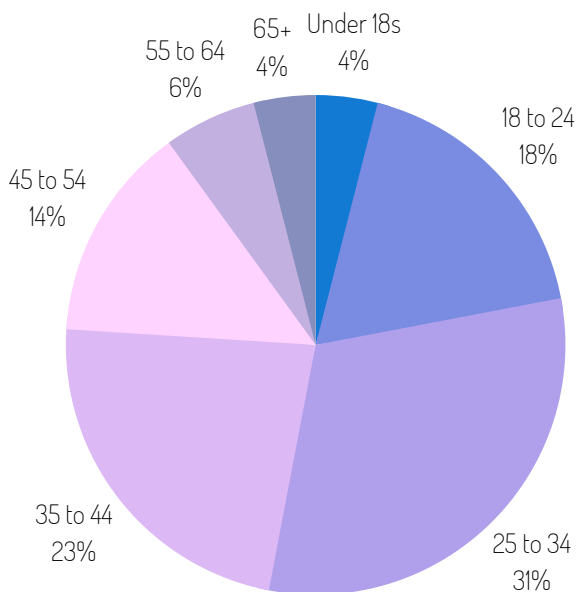
ANY DATA UNDER 5 HAS BEEN ROUNDED UP TO 5 TO PROTECT INDIVIDUAL IDENTITIES.

WARD	DOMESTIC ABUSE OFFENCES	DOMESTIC ABUSE INCIDENTS	RAPE	OTHER SEXUAL OFFENCES
BICKLEY	92	138	<5	12
BIGGIN HILL	94	131	<5	<5
BROMLEY COMMON AND KESTON	166	311	8	19
BROMLEY TOWN	246	370	16	45
CHELSFIELD AND PRATTS BOTTOM	66	116	<5	13
CLOCK HOUSE	121	208	7	10
COPERS COPE	140	231	10	11
CRAY VALLEY EAST	256	390	7	27
CRAY VALLEY WEST	329	499	17	9
CRYSTAL PALACE	200	323	13	15
DARWIN	31	52	<5	19
FARNBOROUGH AND CROFTON	99	148	10	21
HAYES AND CONEY HALL	84	124	<5	8
KELSEY AND EDEN PARK	97	158	11	24
MOTTINGHAM AND CHISLEHURST NORTH	170	284	7	15
ORPINGTON	137	198	9	26
PENGE AND CATOR	235	363	15	28
PETTS WOOD AND KNOLL	73	97	0	7
PLAISTOW AND SUNDRIDGE	164	294	15	5
SHORTLANDS	47	84	<5	<5
WEST WICKHAM	71	109	5	12

ANY DATA UNDER 5 HAS BEEN MARKED AS >5 TO PROTECT INDIVIDUAL IDENTITIES.

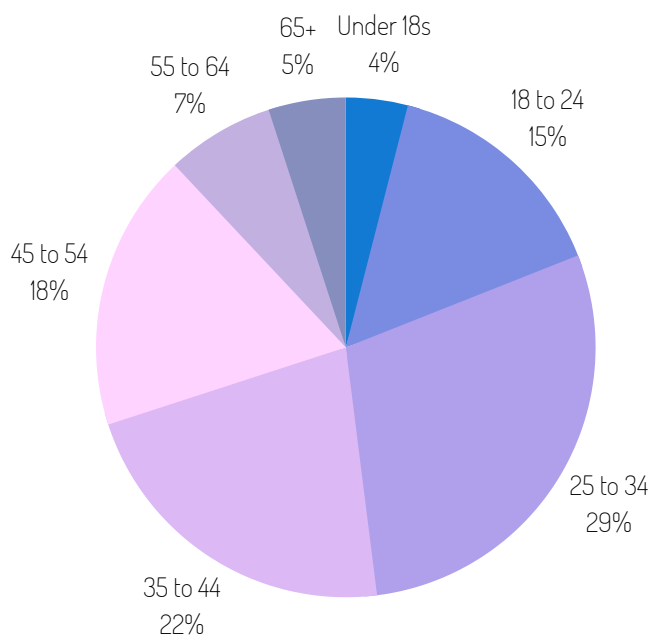
Profiles of victims and survivors

Victims of Domestic Abuse in London by age 2018/2019



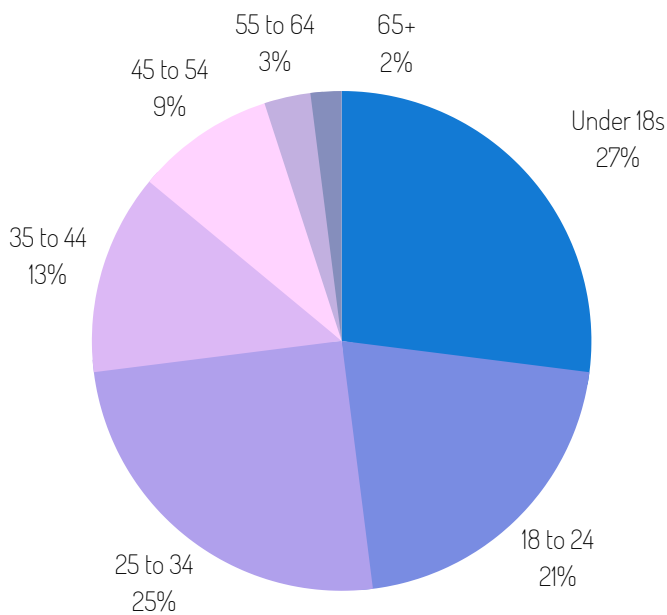
Under 18s	= 4%
18 to 24	= 18%
25 to 34	= 31%
35 to 44	= 23%
45 to 54	= 14%
55 to 64	= 6%
65 and over	= 4%

Victims of Domestic Abuse in Bromley by age 2018/2019



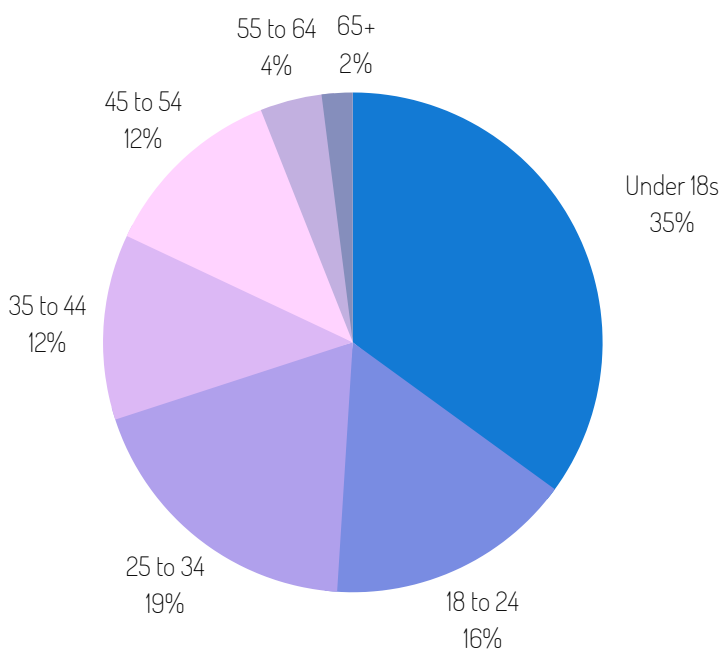
Under 18s	= 4%
18 to 24	= 15%
25 to 34	= 29%
35 to 44	= 22%
45 to 54	= 18%
55 to 64	= 7%
65 and over	= 5%

Victims of sexual offences in London by age 2018/2019



Under 18s	= 27%
18 to 24	= 21%
25 to 34	= 25%
35 to 44	= 13%
45 to 54	= 9%
55 to 64	= 3%
65 and over	= 2%

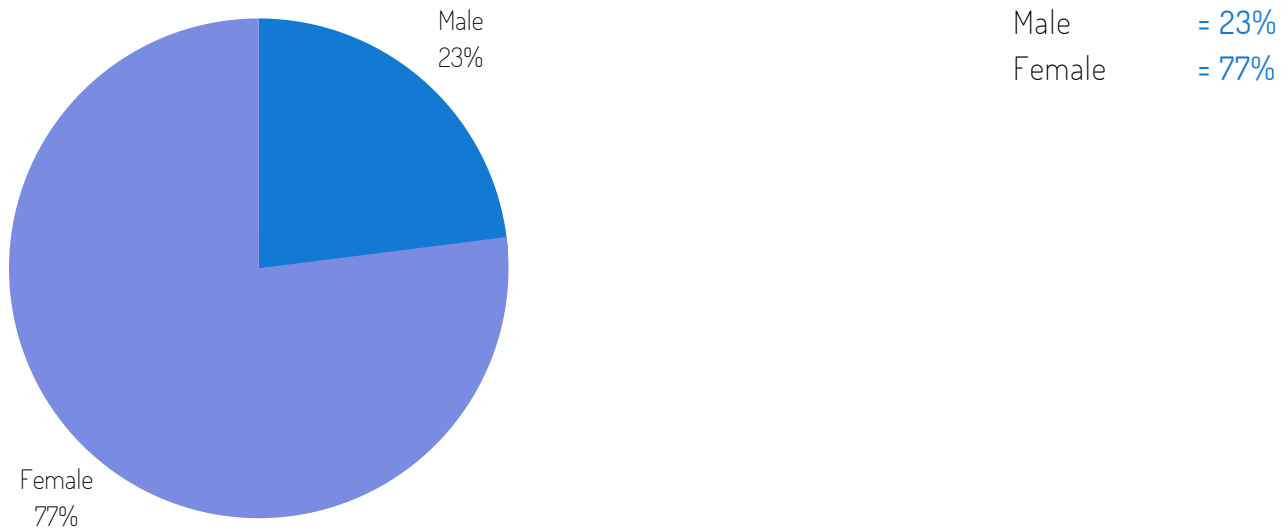
Victims of sexual offences in Bromley by age 2018/2019



Under 18s	= 35%
18 to 24	= 16%
25 to 34	= 19%
35 to 44	= 12%
45 to 54	= 12%
55 to 64	= 4%
65 and over	= 2%

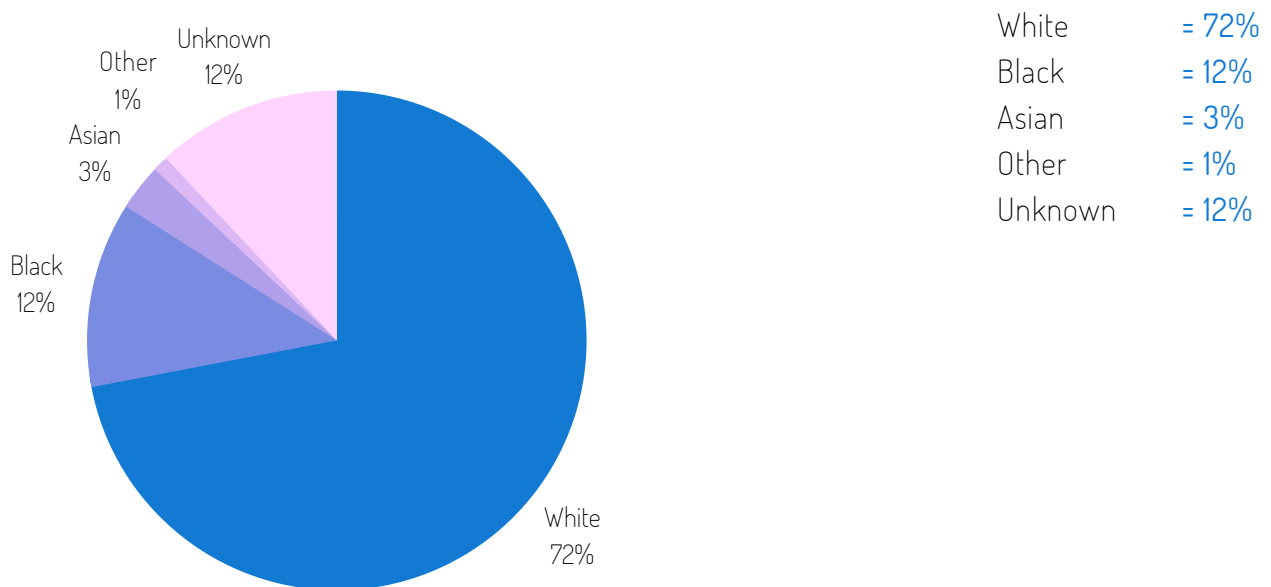
Victims of Domestic Abuse in Bromley by gender

2018/2019



Victims of Domestic Abuse in Bromley by ethnicity

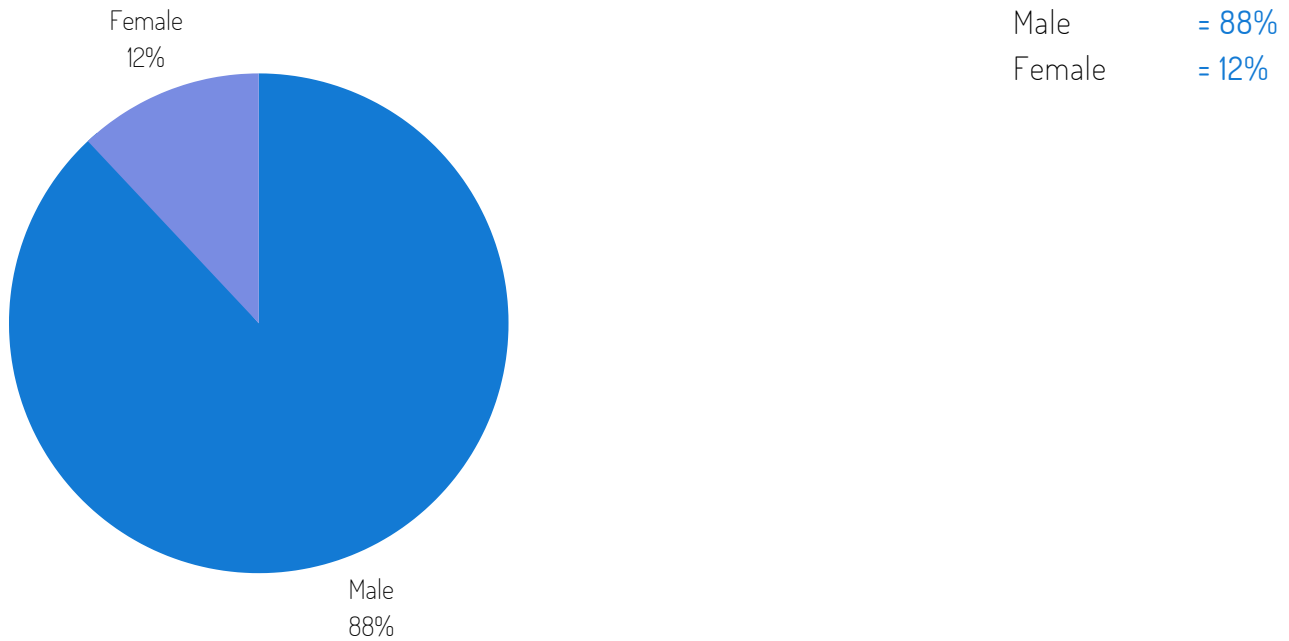
2018/2019



Profile of the perpetrators

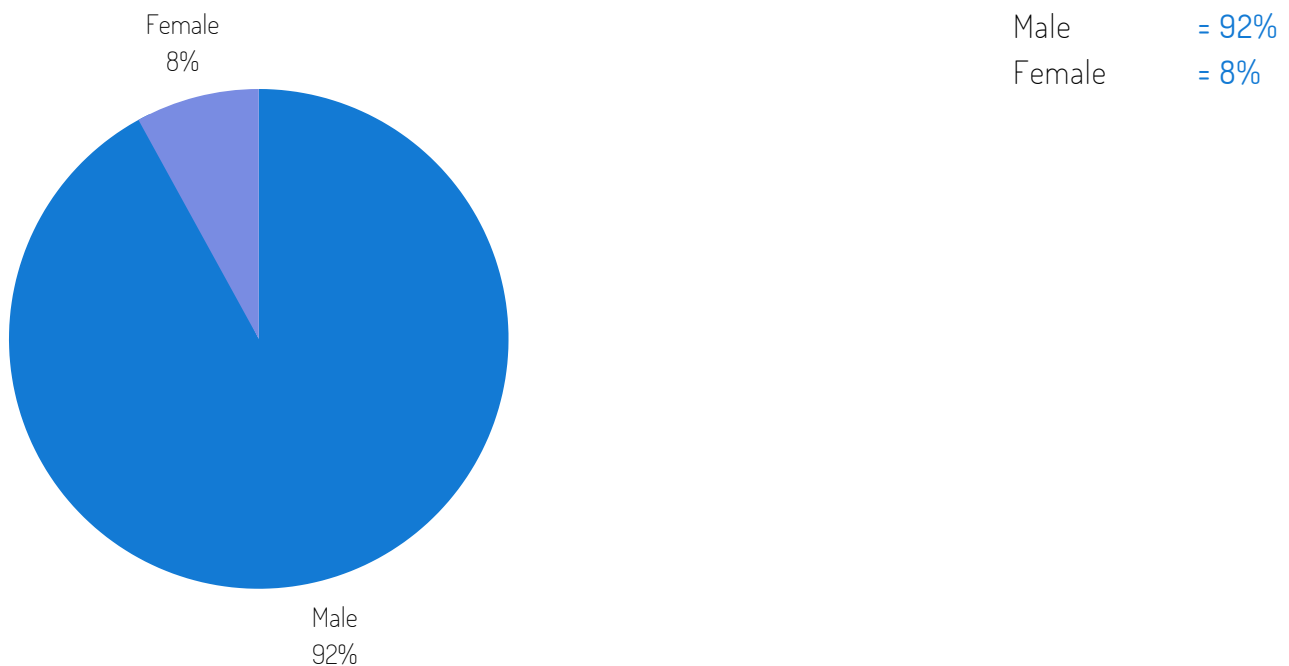
Perpetrators of domestic abuse in Bromley by gender

2018/2019

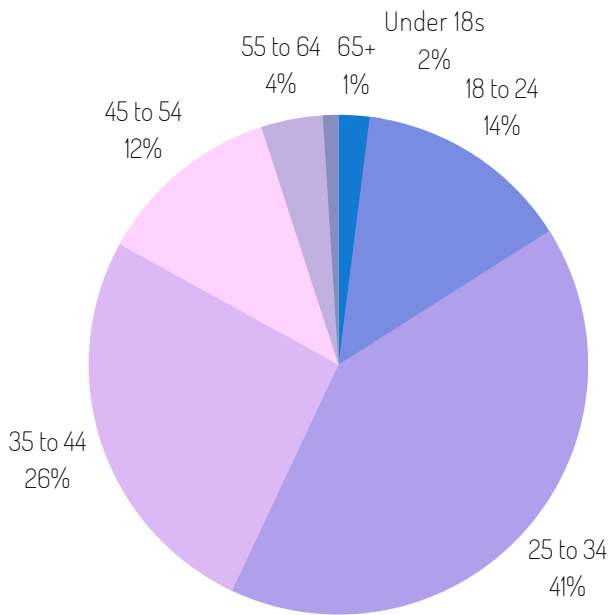


Perpetrators of sexual offences in Bromley by gender

2018/2019

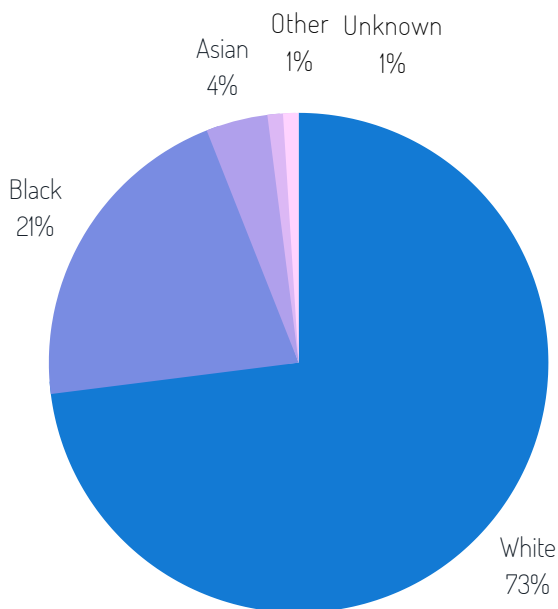


Domestic Abuse Perpetrators in Bromley by age 2018/2019



Under 18s	= 2%
18 to 24	= 14%
25 to 34	= 41%
35 to 44	= 26%
45 to 54	= 12%
55 to 64	= 4%
65 and over	= 1%

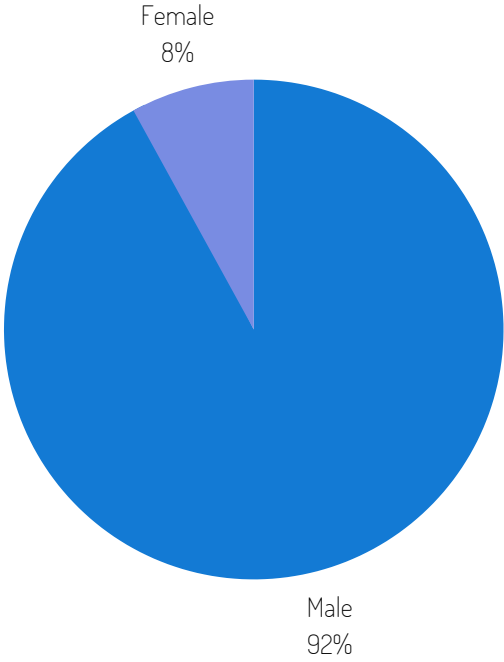
Domestic Abuse Perpetrators in Bromley by ethnicity 2018/2019



White	= 73%
Black	= 21%
Asian	= 4%
Other	= 1%
Unknown	= 1%

Sexual Abuse Perpetrators in Bromley by gender

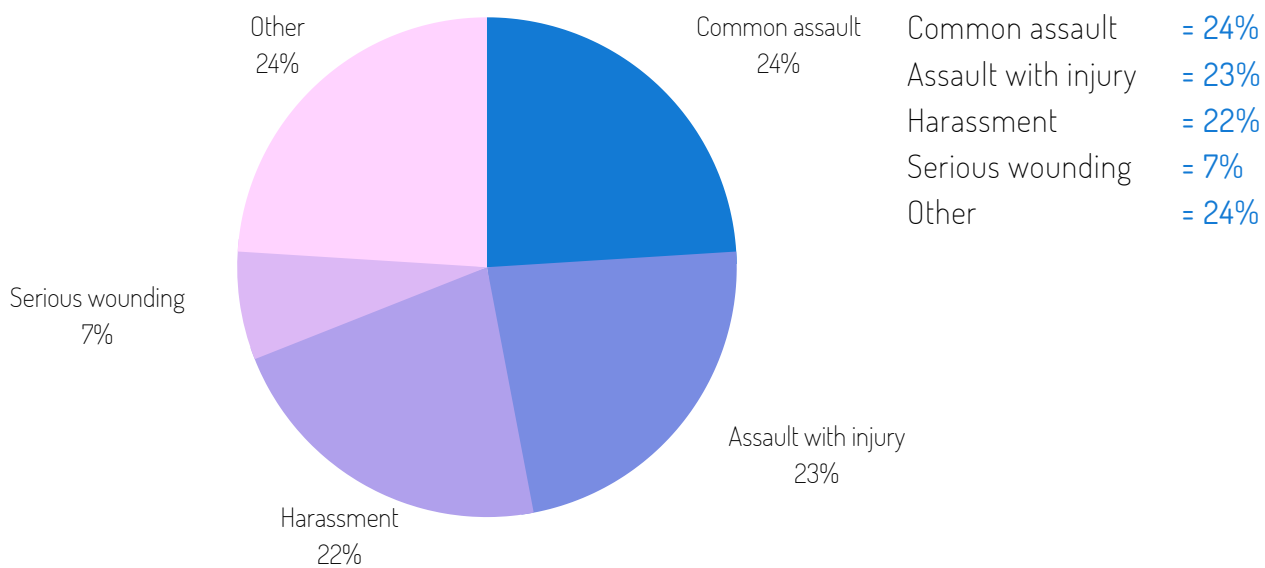
2018/2019



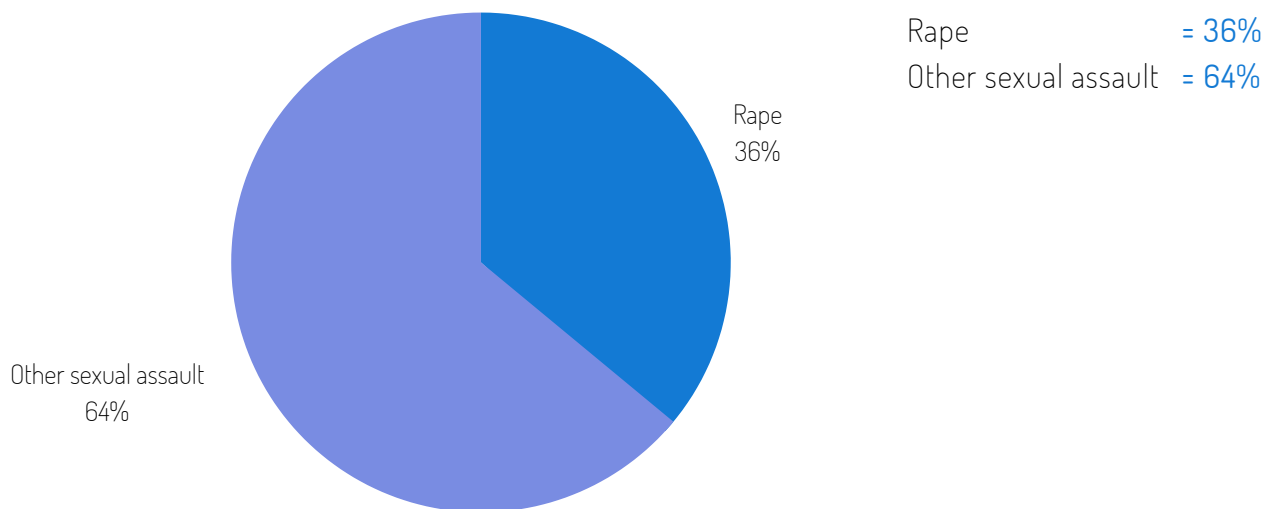
Male = 92%
Female = 8%

Type of offences committed

Offences committed against victims in Bromley 2018/2019

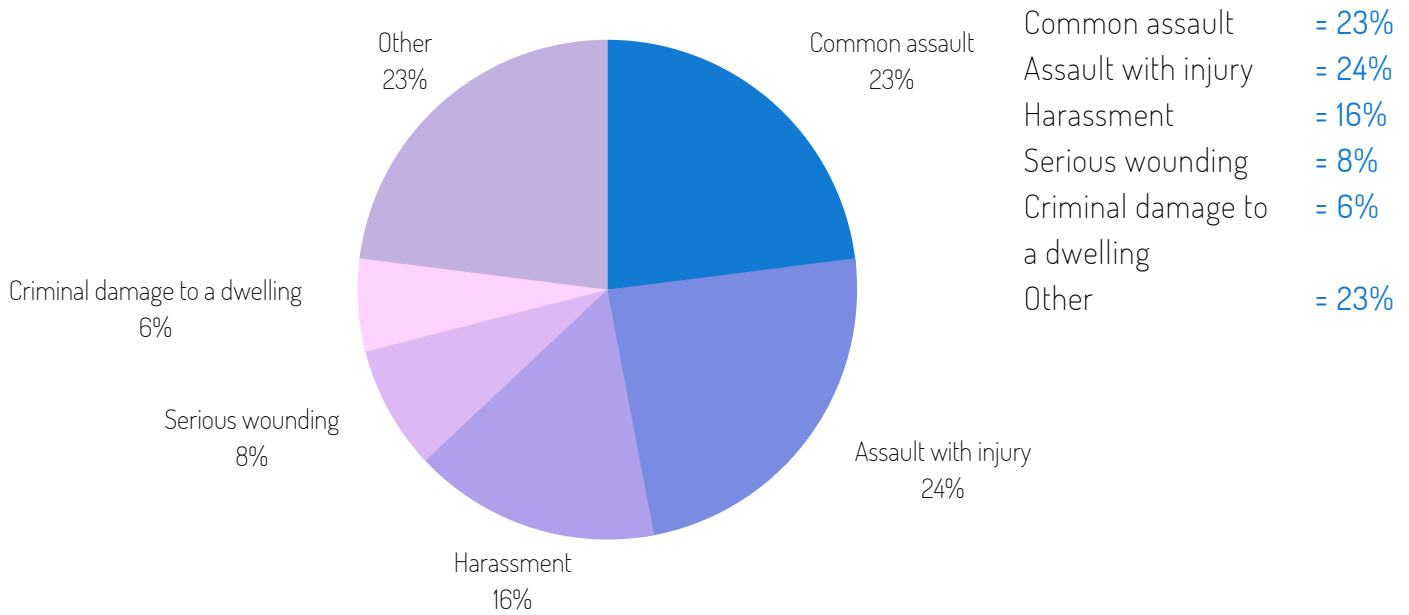


Sexual offences committed against victims in Bromley 2018/2019



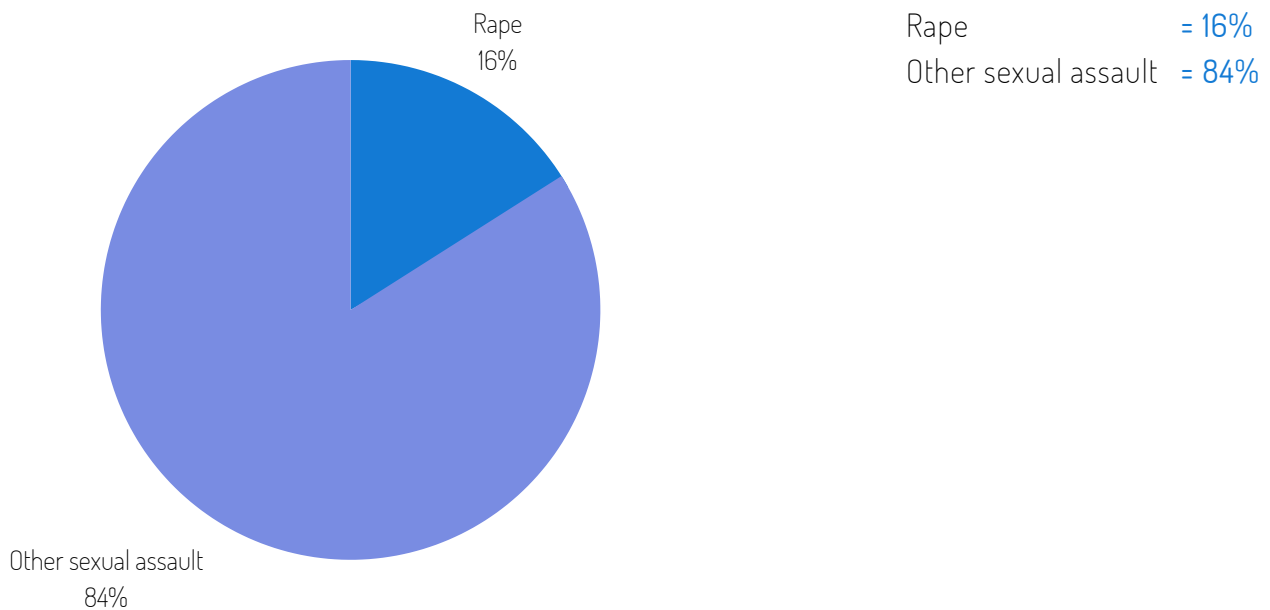
Domestic abuse perpetrators by offence type in Bromley

2018/2019



Sexual offences committed by perpetrators in Bromley

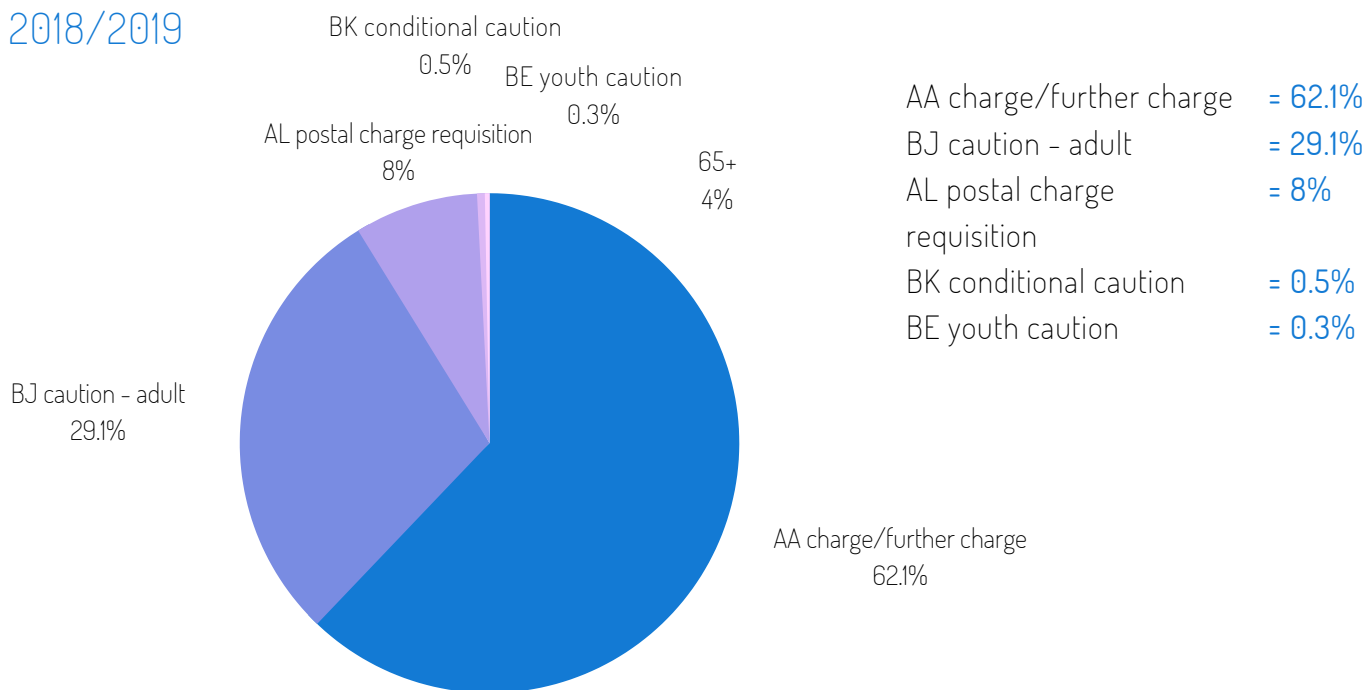
2018/2019



Proceedings

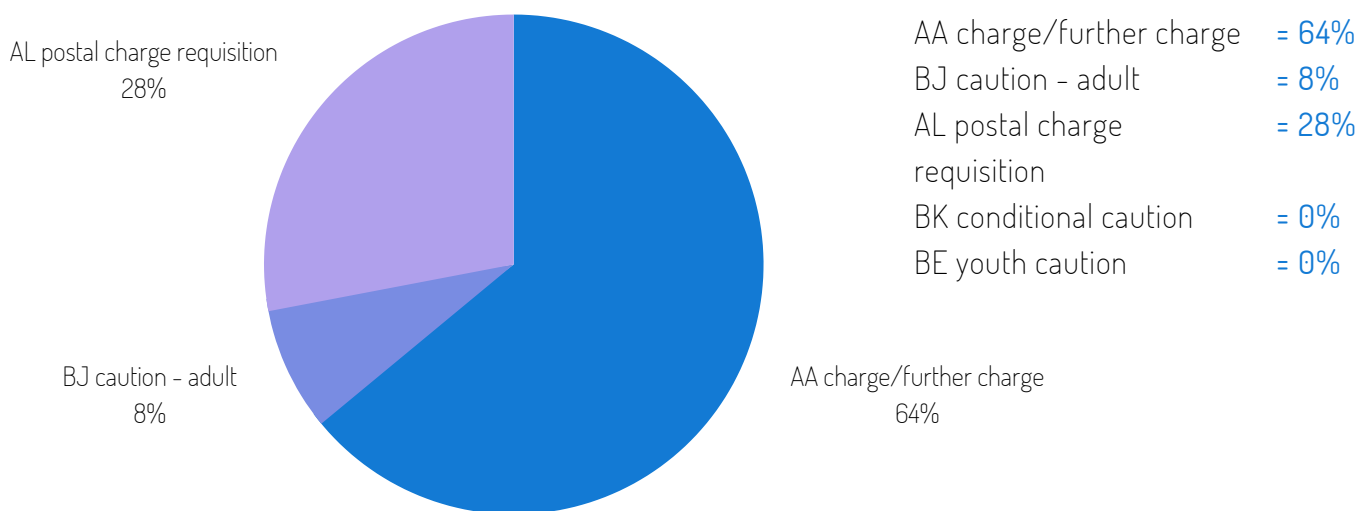
Proceedings involving domestic abuse perpetrators in Bromley

2018/2019



Proceedings involving sexual abuse perpetrators in Bromley

2018/2019



Training course levels

LEVEL 1

Domestic Abuse Foundation

This is multi-agency awareness training, for all staff who work with families who have experienced domestic abuse or who need a general understanding of the subject. The course aims to enable professionals to understand their role, in effectively working with families where domestic abuse is present. The Safe Lives Risk Assessment Tool is introduced to attendees on the course, to help them identify levels of risk. The course also looks at the MARAC process and how to refer to MARAC in Bromley. It is currently run as a half-day course and there are four sessions each year.

LEVEL 2

Domestic Abuse Intermediate

This course is for all frontline staff, working for the London Borough of Bromley and all partner agencies, who regularly work with families who have experienced domestic abuse. It is aimed at professionals who have already completed the foundation course and have some awareness and understanding of domestic abuse. The course aims to build on the knowledge of those attending the course, to enable them to support victims/survivors and their families. Attendees are asked to look at a case study and thought-provoking questions are asked in an attempt to get them to think about the situation at hand. The course also looks at record keeping in relation to domestic abuse cases, information sharing, the toxic trio, coping strategies, additional barriers to reporting and civil and criminal proceedings – including non-molestation orders and occupation orders. It is currently run as a one day course and there are two sessions each year.

LEVEL 3

Domestic Abuse Advanced

This course is aimed at practitioners who work within key agencies to provide support to victims/survivors of domestic abuse and their families. The course aims to provide professionals with an understanding of the roles, responsibilities and agency responses in tackling domestic abuse in the borough, with a view of promoting positive working relationships and effective multi-agency working. The course also looks at the impact of domestic abuse on children, trigger trauma and how complex this can be and perpetrator programmes and interventions that are available to them.

Services available across Bromley

Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid



020 8313 9303



info@bcwa.org.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm
or visit www.bcwa.org.uk

Victim Support (Bromley)



020 7277 1433



info@bcwa.org.uk

open from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 7pm weekends, and 9am to 5pm
bank holidays or visit www.victimsupport.org.uk

Bromley Council - Adult Social Care



020 8461 7777



adult.early.intervention@bromley.gov.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
or visit www.bromley.gov.uk

Out of hours



0300 303 8671

Bromley Council - Children's Social Care



020 8461 7373
020 8461 7379
020 8461 7026



mash@bromley.gov.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
or visit www.bromley.gov.uk

Out of hours



0300 303 8671

Bromley Children Project



020 8461 7259



bcpadmin@bromley.gov.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
or visit www.bromley.gov.uk

Relate (Bromley)



0300 003 3225

open from Monday to Saturday 8am to 8pm
or visit www.relate.org.uk

Bromley, Lewisham & Greenwich Mind



01689 811222



bromley@blgmind.org.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
or visit www.blgmind.org.uk

Clarion Housing Group



0300 500 8000

open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm, and Wednesday 10am to 5pm,
or visit www.myclarionhousing.com

Bromley Drug and Alcohol Services



020 8289 1999

open various hours during the week
or visit www.changegrowlive.org

Women and Girls Network



0808 801 0660



advice@wgn.org.uk

open from Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm, and Wednesday 6pm to 9pm,
or visit www.wgn.org.uk

Services available in neighbouring areas

Bexley Council

Adult Social Care



020 8303 7777



screeners@bexley.gov.uk

Children's Social Care



020 3045 5440



childrensocialcare.admin@bexley.gov.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or visit www.bexley.gov.uk

Out of hours



020 8303 7777



Croydon Council

Adult Social Care



020 8726 6500



croydonadultsupport@croydon.gov.uk

Children's Social Care



020 8726 6400



childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or visit www.croydon.gov.uk

Out of hours



020 8726 6500

Greenwich Council

Adult Social Care



020 8921 2304



aops.contact.officers@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

Children's Social Care



020 8921 3172



mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or visit www.greenwich.gov.uk

Out of hours



020 8854 8888

Kent County Council

Adult Social Care



03000 41 61 61



social.services@kent.gov.uk

Children's Social Care



03000 41 11 11



social.services@kent.gov.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or visit www.kent.gov.uk

Out of hours



03000 41 91 91

Lambeth Council

Adult Social Care



020 7926 5555



adultsocialcare@lambeth.gov.uk

Children's Social Care



020 7926 5555



helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk

open from Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or visit www.croydon.gov.uk

Out of hours



020 7926 5555

Home Start (Lambeth)



020 7924 9292



info@homestartlambeth.co.uk

Not Alone In Sutton



0808 168 9291



transformsutton@cranstoun.org.uk

Refuge

Lambeth - The Gaia Centre



020 7733 8724



lambethvawg@refuge.org.uk

Lewisham - Athena



0800 112 4052



lewishamvawg@refuge.org.uk



Services available nationally

Refuge



0808 2000 247

Freephone 24 Hours or visit www.refuge.org.uk

Men's Advice Line



0808 801 0327



info@mensadviceline.org.uk

Monday and Wednesday 9am to 8pm. Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am to 5pm.
Visit www.mensadviceline.org.uk

LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership



020 7359 5767

Weekly drop-in held on Fridays between 2pm – 3:30pm at London Friend.
Visit www.lgbtdap.org.uk

Karma Nirvana



0800 5999 247



info@karmanirvana.org.uk

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
Visit www.karmanirvana.org.uk

National Centre for Domestic Violence



0800 970 2070



office@ncdv.org.uk

Visit www.ncdv.org.uk

Respect UK



0808 802 4040

Monday to Friday 9am to 8pm.
Visit www.respect.uk.net

Hestia



020 7378 3100



info@hestia.org

Visit www.hestia.org



Mankind



01823 334244

Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm

Visit www.mankind.org.uk

Galop LGBT + Anti-Violence



0800 999 5428



help@galop.org.uk

Visit www.galop.org.uk

National FGM Centre



020 8498 7137



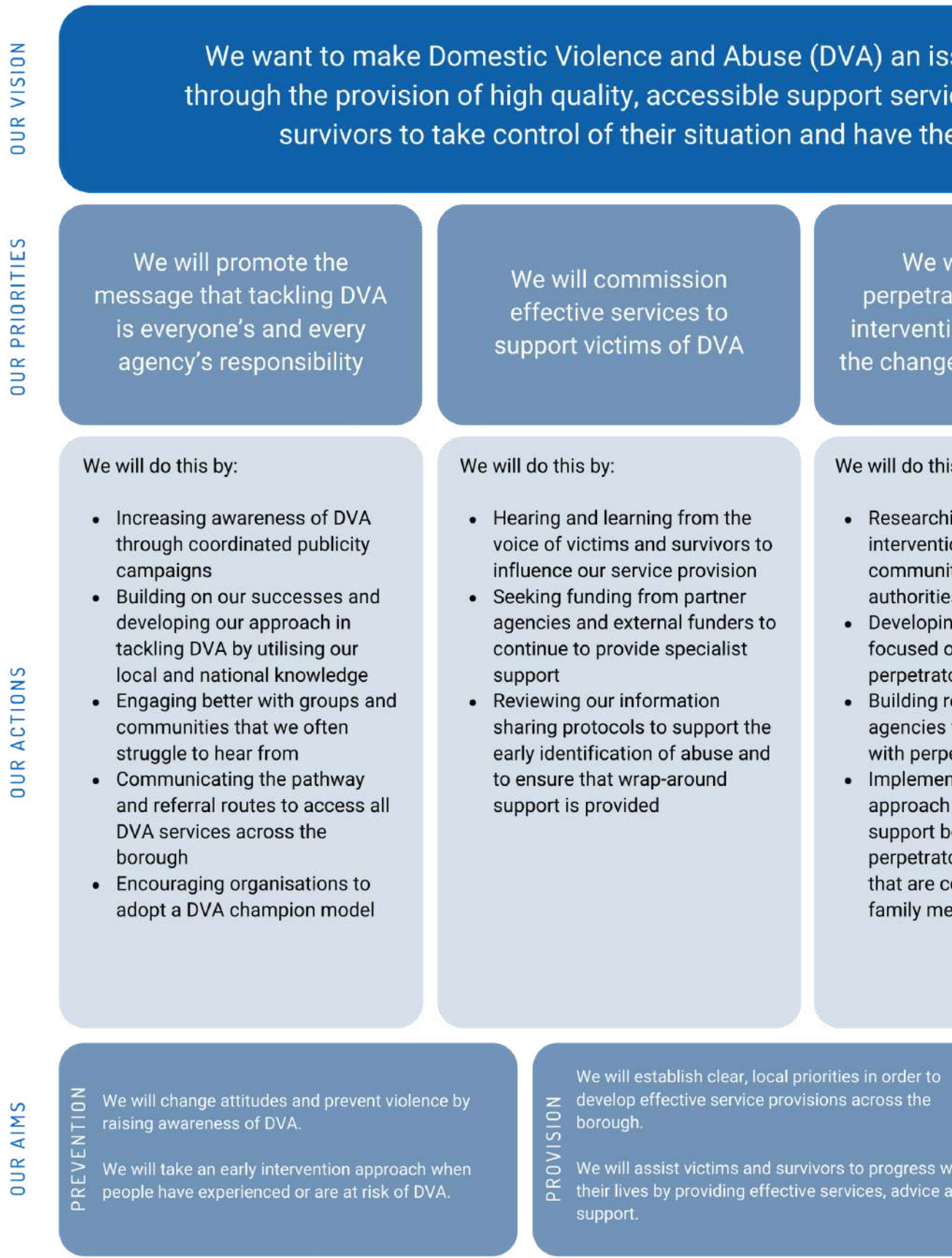
info@nationalfgmcentre.org.uk

Visit www.nationalfgmcentre.org.uk



AN INTERGENERATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE STRATEGY FOR 2020 TO 2023

MAKING DOMESTIC ABUSE EVERYONE'S



BUSINESS



Issue that is challenged, before it becomes an issue,
resources for all our residents which empower victims and
the confidence to move forward with their lives

We will challenge
perpetrators and explore
interventions that measure
change in their behaviour

We will increase and develop
our existing training offer on
DVA and VAWG to improve
local responses to victims and
survivors, and their families

We will introduce DVA
Ambassadors to support staff
in the workplace

We will do this by:
Identifying successful
interventions that other
agencies and local
businesses have adopted
and providing specific training
on supporting
perpetrators
and relationships with
perpetrators who may be working
as perpetrators
Identifying a whole family
approach by including the
perpetrator being provided to
perpetrators in assessments
completed for other
family members

We will do this by:

- Commissioning and rolling out specific training in relation to MARAC
- Identifying training which specifically looks at the needs of hard to reach and minority groups and those who may face barriers to reporting abuse
- Promoting the training and resources available on reducing parental conflict to help professionals understand the difference between this and domestic abuse

We will do this by:

- Embedding policies in the workplace for their managers on how to support employees who have been impacted by DVA/VAWG
- Training staff as DVA Ambassadors so that they can effectively support colleagues who may be experiencing or are affected by DVA
- Signposting to available support and sharing resources to support staff who may be experiencing DVA
- Developing a communication strategy to raise staff awareness of the range of DVA support available

with
and

PARTNERSHIP

We will develop a coordinated, multi-agency approach to tackling DVA by implementing positive change and maximising opportunities for partnership working across the borough.

We will make sure that our response to tackling DVA is shared by all stakeholders.

PROTECTION

We will provide tailored support services in Bromley which meet the needs of victims and survivors, their families and perpetrators.

We will provide accessible, holistic support to people who have experienced or who are at risk of DVA and provide effective perpetrator interventions.



Produced by:
Children's Services
London Borough of Bromley
Civic Centre, Stockwell Close
Bromley BR1 3UH

