

# DONCASTER DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY 2021-2024

TOGETHER, WE CAN END THE ABUSE.



# CONTENTS

Forewords.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Introduction .....	6
What is domestic abuse? .....	8
Domestic abuse in Doncaster .....	9
Understanding the wider picture .....	11
Our vision .....	13
Developing the strategy .....	14
Our strategic priorities .....	18
Prevent and ultimately end domestic abuse .....	19
Support and keep victims, survivors & families .....	23
Holding abusers to account .....	26
Leadership, governance and quality assurance .....	30
Doncaster domestic abuse charter .....	33
Acknowledgements .....	34

DRAFT

## Accessing Support

This is a strategy document about how we want to develop and improve our services over the next 3 years.

If you need support now this can be accessed by calling the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Hub on 01302 737080 or visiting [www.doncaster.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/domesticabuse) for more information.

If you are in immediate danger please call 999. If it is not an emergency you can contact South Yorkshire Police using telephone number 101 or visit your local police station.

You can also contact the Freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge on 0808 2000 247 or the Men's Advice Line on 0808 801 0327.

DRAFT

# Forewords

## Foreword by the Chair of the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership

Domestic abuse can, and does, happen to anyone of any age, sex, race, gender or social background. One in four women and one in six men will be affected by domestic abuse in their lifetime.

This strategy has two aims; to tackle domestic abuse and to improve the lives of the people of Doncaster. As professionals and communities, we must come together with one voice to say that Domestic Abuse is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

As a partnership we are committed to tackling not only domestic abuse itself, but also the root causes. Our aim is to continue to improve structures that will prevent domestic abuse.

When a domestic abuse incident is reported, it is often already embedded within a family and there is extensive evidence which indicates many victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse have grown up in a home where it was present. Vital to addressing domestic abuse is taking action to break this cycle. Our practices need to be trauma informed and recognise the impact that domestic abuse has on a child's development.

Doncaster continues to see high levels of domestic abuse, and higher than average levels of high-risk domestic abuse. It is vital that as a partnership we invest in services and communications that challenge any normalisation or acceptance of domestic abuse in our communities.

Talking to young people is vital. We must ensure that they understand what healthy relationships look like. Social media and popular television don't always portray healthy relationships, we must counteract this.

Essential to securing the right outcomes for our communities is investing in services and resources to support victims who want to make a change. Victims with the right support and understanding have more information and opportunities to move forward with their lives, improving theirs and their children's futures, with a life free from abuse.

We must not forget about the people who are being abusive. Our commitment to addressing domestic abuse must tackle offending actions by working with people to challenge and support them to change their behaviour.



*Doncaster District Commander,  
Mel Palin  
Chair of the Safer Stronger  
Doncaster Partnership*

## Forewords by local survivors of domestic abuse

It has been a privilege to be asked to write a foreword for a strategy that sets out clear objectives for Doncaster. As a domestic abuse survivor who helped bring about and lobby for the many amendments within the Domestic Abuse Act, I understand what victims need. I am a survivor of 16 years. We can feel the difference when policy and strategy truly meets the needs of victims.

I am now a strong independent woman and a local, regional and national advocate for changes to protect women and children. We cannot be numb or ignore the prevalence of male violence against women and the changes that are needed in society to stop this. I am also very aware that the same ideologies, myths and stereotypes that harm women also have a detrimental impact on men, preventing them from reporting, accessing help and being believed. We have to work together to put an end to domestic abuse for everyone.

True trauma informed non victim blaming systems must be embedded to stop the re-traumatising of victims. We are also calling upon our communities to stand by us and call out abusive behaviours and to help us to shine a spotlight on an issue that is far too often hidden behind a front door. We must strive to allow our next generation to grow up free from the deathly clutches that is domestic abuse and ensure the children who experience domestic abuse are embraced by professionals that truly understand trauma responses, ensuring the child's voice is heard, be that vocal or via their behaviour.

We must see further investment in frontline service, so victims get wrap around support from the moment of a disclosure. We need a long-term sustainable funding plan for the implementation of long-term support creating stability for victims and changing life courses that have been destroyed through the devastating effects of domestic abuse, always constantly exploring new ways through multi agency working and collaboration to reach victims at the earliest opportunities.

Domestic abuse must be a priority for all, not an afterthought or a tick list objective. Our community allies are assets and must be valued. By harnessing the expertise of our residents in their local areas we can create a borough that says we do not accept domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is everybody's business.

Always remember victims are the experts in their personal stories. Hear them. Give them tools to rebuild their lives free from blame or shame. It's on us not them to get this right. They have done the bravest thing off all. Survived it.

To the victims and survivors of Doncaster. It was never your fault. We believe you.

My final thoughts and remembrance go to the victims and families of those who were taken from this world far too soon through domestic abuse. Please take a moment for them.

*Laura*

For many years, domestic abuse has been a taboo subject, and even seen as acceptable in some communities. As a male survivor of domestic abuse at the time I thought I was the only one, there seemed to be very little support. It was not until my children started to be physically affected and the authorities were involved, I found that there was support.

Thankfully, times are changing. More and more types of behaviour involved in domestic abuse are recognised as crimes, including coercive and controlling behaviour and stalking and harassment. There is support for both men and women, in my opinion there is still not enough support, but the government is moving in the right direction.

In Doncaster support is available, as a male survivor of domestic abuse I will be involved in setting up a support group for male survivors, where we can simply talk or listen. My wish is for nobody to feel alone, whether you have escaped from domestic abuse or currently still in danger.

The main barrier is not so much a lack of support, it is knowing where to find it and realising that us men too have emotions.

The first time I rang the police it was out of desperation and it did start the ball rolling with child protection, social services etc. I always thought that such services would take the children away, but to my surprise they did a good job, they protected my children and myself and got us the help and support we needed.

I would like to see domestic abuse brought out of “the shadows”, recognised by all and full support given no matter of sex, religion, sexuality, culture etc.

*Nick*

## Foreword by Councillor Rachael Blake, Portfolio holder for Children’s Social Care, Communities and Equalities

As the elected member responsible for oversight of domestic abuse in Doncaster I am delighted to endorse this strategy. It is the result of extensive consultation with survivors, professionals, community activists and leaders and residents of Doncaster. It is a continuation and development of domestic abuse prevention and intervention work that has been happening locally for many years.

Together with colleagues, and survivors of domestic abuse, I will ensure that this strategy drives forward improvements in the prevention of domestic abuse; responses to victims and their families, and efforts to hold abusers to account.

We will be ambitious and proactive in our approach to tackling this form of abuse that has such a devastating effect on us all and of course particularly on victims and children. We will educate our children and young people about healthy and unhealthy relationships to prevent abuse from happening in the first place, and we will support children that have been affected by domestic abuse to reduce the impact of the trauma they have suffered.

We will take the responsibility to be free of abuse away from victims by providing a community response that wraps itself around them, preventing further harm and helping them to recover, while challenging those who are abusive and helping them to change their behaviour and attitudes. We will ensure that domestic abuse is everyone’s responsibility.

Change won’t happen overnight, and it will require a huge effort from each and every one of us to create a culture where domestic abuse is not tolerated. Please join us in our shared vision to end domestic abuse in Doncaster.

# Introduction

Team Doncaster is formally recognised as the strategic partnership of organisations and individuals that spans the public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

The Team Doncaster Strategic Partnership currently oversees four thematic partnerships one of which is the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership which aims to reduce crime and disorder in our communities, helps to improve the quality of life for residents, and contributes to the regeneration of Doncaster. Domestic abuse is a priority for the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership and Team Doncaster.

There is a clear interface between the domestic abuse strategy and the Locality 'way of working' which is a catalyst for how the Council and partners deliver public services ensuring strong community collaboration with residents to build stronger, more resilient communities, individuals and families. The domestic abuse strategy embraces this way of working, helping to ensure that domestic abuse is everyone's responsibility.

The Localities approach recognises it is essential that we work closely with our communities in an integrated and coordinated way to understand their realities and tailor our partnership response to suit local strengths, needs or concerns. This helps us to deliver support where it is most needed, as early as possible to prevent issues from escalating.

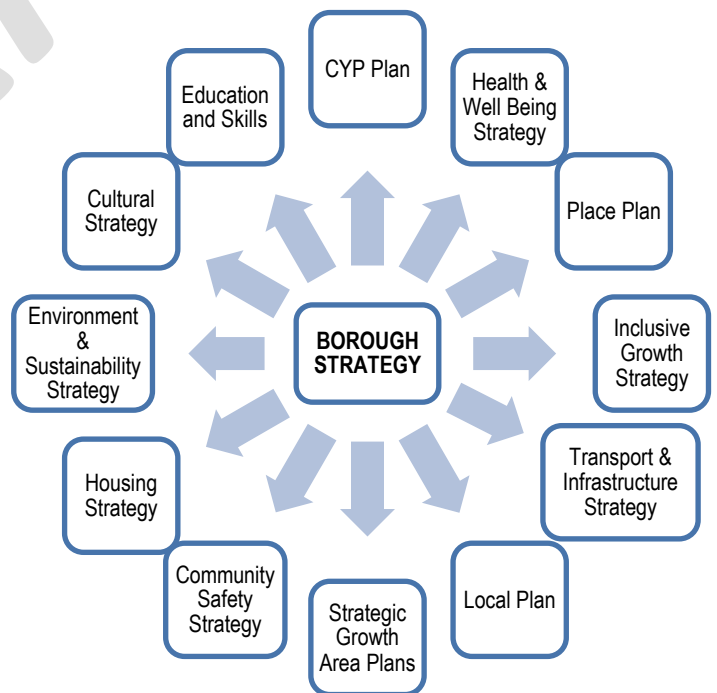
The Doncaster response to domestic abuse also includes a joined up approach between child and adult safeguarding services. It is vital that if victims of domestic abuse also have care and support needs, that we ensure a joined up approach between domestic abuse and adult care and safeguarding services. It is also important that people referred to adult care and adult safeguarding services are offered specialist domestic abuse services via the Doncaster domestic abuse hub. The same multi-agency way of working also applies to safeguarding children.

Information sharing and working together is the foundation of the local response.

The Domestic Abuse strategy will have a significant impact on the agreed Borough Strategy, Doncaster Delivering Together, contributing in particular to the 'Safe and Resilient' and 'Healthy and Compassionate' Well-being goals.

A number of top tier strategies will help deliver the well-being goals and equally our response to domestic abuse is captured via several top tier strategies such as Health & Wellbeing, Community Safety, Children and Young People Plan, and Housing Strategy.

This strategy sets out the joint vision, priorities and commitments. Our overall aim is to prevent domestic abuse, ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly and that we hold abusers to account while ensuring that they also getting support to change their behaviour.



The strategy is accompanied by a thorough needs assessment report, a performance management framework, a quality assurance framework and a detailed action plan that will be driven and managed by the Doncaster domestic abuse partnership. The domestic abuse partnership will provide assurance and progress reports to the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership.

#### The Doncaster Domestic Abuse Partnership

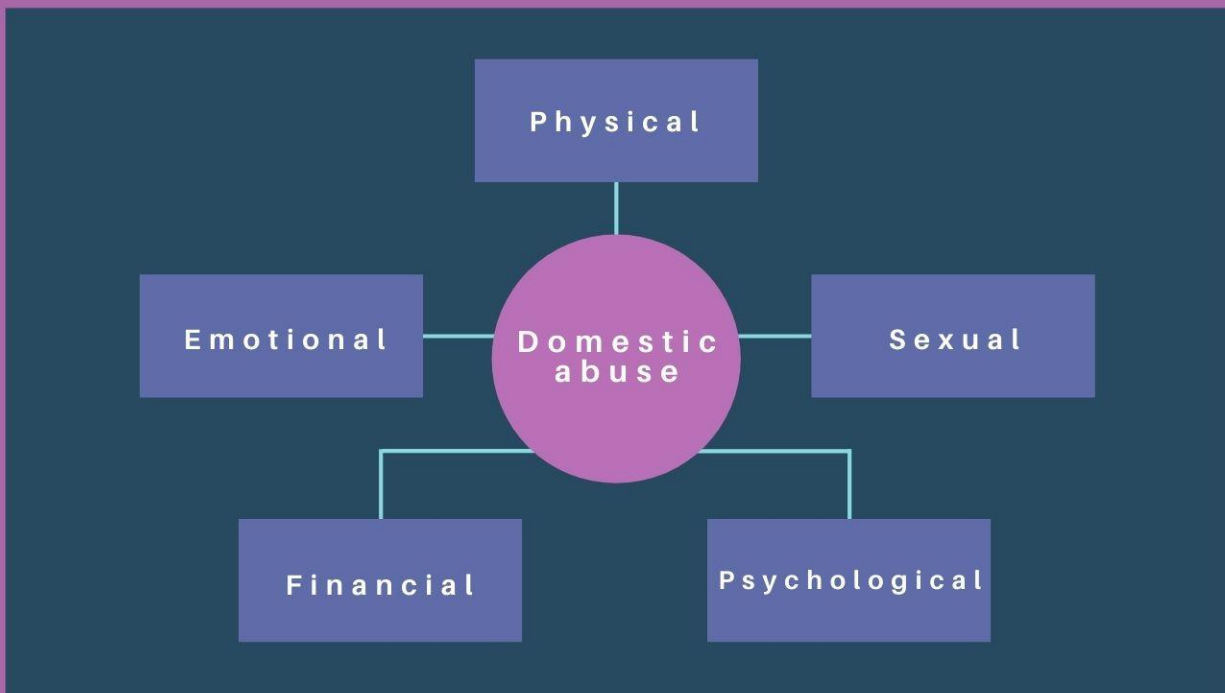
The Doncaster domestic abuse partnership is made up of representatives from across statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations, specialist domestic abuse services, private sector organisations and survivors of domestic abuse. The role of the partnership is to provide leadership, governance and direction to operational partners involved in the response and prevention of domestic abuse; ensuring that priorities and activity are intelligence-led, adequately resourced, and performance managed.

The Partnership will be responsible for producing an annual report demonstrating progress made towards the objectives in the strategy, providing honest and transparent reporting to Government, partner agencies, communities and survivors.



# What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse can happen between two people who are both aged 16 years or over, are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive.



## Domestic abuse can occur in a variety of situations:

- you are, or have been, married to each other,
- you are, or have been, civil partners of each other,
- you have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated),
- you have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated),
- you are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other,
- each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child,
- you are relatives

## Abusive behaviour consists of any of the following:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse – this includes behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on your ability to obtain, use, or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services
- Psychological, emotional, or other abuse
- And it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour

# Domestic abuse in Doncaster

Domestic abuse occurs across our society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth, and geography of the victim or perpetrator. Domestic abuse touches the lives of many.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales in 2020 estimated



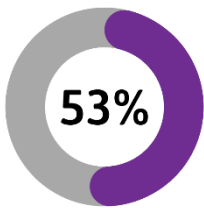
**5.5% of adults experienced domestic abuse**  
in the last year

which equates to approx.

**11,164 potential victims**

in Doncaster.

Between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021 1,858 referrals were made to specialist domestic abuse services via the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Hub. This is an increase of 18% on the previous year.



1,406 referrals were made to Doncaster Council's Independent Domestic Violence Advocate services which is for high risk victims. This is a 53% increase from the previous year.

Data from the Hub is consistent with national trends in that women are the victims in 89% of referrals although increasingly men are coming forward and now equate 11% of referrals.

Local Police data shows that more victims of reported domestic abuse with injury were female. This is in contrast to every other crime type in the area.

Both males and females reported more domestic abuse in 2020-2021 compared with the same time period in 2019-2020. There was an 8.7% increase in reports by male victims and a 5.6% increase by women.

75% of suspects are male, 22% are women and 3% are not recorded or unknown.



Based on South Yorkshire Police data

**9,724**

crimes and 'non-crimes' linked to domestic abuse were reported to the police in Doncaster between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021.

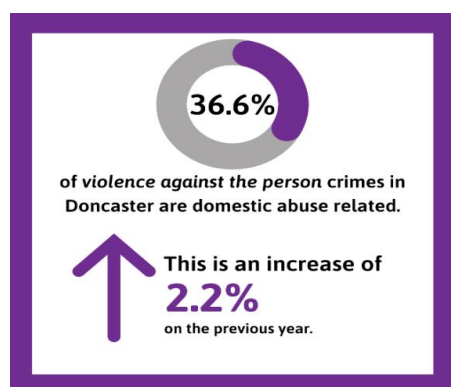
That is an increase of



on the previous year.

During the 12 months April 2020 to March 2021 South Yorkshire Police recorded 9,724 reported incidents of domestic abuse, 6,021 of these were recorded as a crime which is an increase of 11.6% on the previous year showing the commitment of the Police to hold abusers to account.

Police, social care and specialist domestic abuse services commonly identify repeat perpetrators of domestic abuse and witness perpetrators moving from one victim to the next. This is something that we want to eradicate in Doncaster.



Between January 2019 and October 2021 there have been four deaths that have been subject to a domestic homicide review. Every death linked to domestic abuse, including death by suicide, will continue to be investigated and reviewed to help prevent further harm and death.

In 2020-2021 Stalking and Harassment overtook Violence with Injury as the dominant crime type relating to domestic abuse. Stalking and harassment is likely to occur after the victim has left an abusive relationship. Further work to tackle stalking and harassment will be completed by the partnership.

### Children

In 2020-2021, 1,687 children were referred to Doncaster Children's Services Trust due to risks associated with domestic abuse. This is an increase of 47% on the previous year. While this increase is significant, it does show that partner agencies are recognising the risk to children and acting on it by making appropriate referrals to safeguard them.

The Doncaster domestic abuse partnership, along with the Doncaster Safeguarding Partnership is committed to reducing the number of children at risk from domestic abuse and supporting children to limit the impact of the trauma suffered.

## Over £18 million

per annum in Doncaster.

As well as the physical and emotional impact of domestic abuse on victims, the cost of child protection arrangements, some known costs to health and the criminal justice system are estimated to be over £18m per year.



### Sexual orientation

Data from the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Hub show that three quarters of victims are heterosexual with between a fifth and a quarter not stating their sexual identity. 2% were Asexual, Bisexual Gay or Lesbian.

### Ethnicity

92% of Doncaster residents are White British. The other two largest groups are Other White (3%) and Asian (3%) ([Doncaster State of the Borough 2017](#)). Data from St. Leger Homes of Doncaster shows 92% of people accessing their accommodation as a result of domestic abuse are White, whereas Riverside and Phoenix WoMen's Aid who provide refuge accommodation for Doncaster residents and for people from out of the area record that approximately 50% of residents are White.

The relatively low numbers of reports from LGBT+ people and people from minority groups is an area of focus for the Doncaster domestic abuse partnership to ensure that there are no barriers to reporting.

### Disability

One in three referrals (33%) to the Doncaster domestic abuse hub identify as having a disability. Of which over a third (36%) have mental health issues.

Data from Riverside shows that 78% of people accessing their accommodation had mental health issues. Almost two-thirds (63%) of people accessing St. Leger Homes of Doncaster temporary accommodation had mental health issues, 28% had physical/mobility impairments and 9% had a learning disability. 42% of people accessing Phoenix WoMen's Aid accommodation had disabilities, over half of which were Mental Health issues.

# Understanding the wider picture

This strategy has been published following the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act in April 2021. The Act together with other legislative changes over recent years means that there are now more legislative measures in place to protect victims from harm.

There is now a statutory definition of domestic abuse and stalking and coercive and controlling behaviour are criminal offences. Domestic Violence Protection Orders, forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) can now be enforced to protect against offenders to protect individuals from harm.

The coercive or controlling behaviour offence came into force in December 2015 but following the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 it now includes abuse that happens post separation.

A domestic violence disclosure scheme has been introduced and now placed on a statutory footing under the new Act. The scheme enables an individual to ask the police to check whether a new or existing partner has an abusive past. It also enables an agency to make a 'right to know' application if they believe that an individual is at risk of domestic abuse from their partner.

In 2015, domestic abuse was added to the Care Act 2014 as an adult safeguarding category in recognition of those victims who have care and support needs that limit their ability to protect themselves. The criteria are that the adult has care and support needs, whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs; is suffering or is at risk of suffering abuse or neglect; and is unable to protect themselves against that abuse or neglect as a result of their care and support needs. Care and support needs could include, for example, needs arising from disability, age or frailty, mental ill-health, or substance misuse.

In 2016 the Home Office revised the Multi-agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews. This statutory guidance states that the local Community Safety Partnership, which in Doncaster is the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership, has a statutory requirement to conduct an independent review into the death of any of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by:

- (a) a person to whom he was related or with whom he was or had been in an intimate personal relationship, or
- (b) a member of the same household as himself,

held with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from the death.

This strategy and associated action plan includes recommendations from any local and national reviews that can improve practice.

The Government has also published a range of papers and guidance that has domestic abuse as a priority within them including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges.
- Working together to safeguard children 2018: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Violence against women and girls Strategy July 2021

Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 the Government has established the position of a Domestic Abuse Commissioner in law to provide accountability to the public and Ministers on failure within statutory service provision and poor practice in services.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places a duty on local authorities to provide appropriate care, support and accommodation to victims of domestic abuse. This covers the provision of support to victims and their children residing in refuge accommodation; specialist safe accommodation; dispersed accommodation; sanctuary schemes and move-on/second stage accommodation.

The duty also requires local authorities to:

- Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board
- Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victims or their children, including those who come from outside the area.
- Develop, publish and give effect to a domestic abuse strategy
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy
- Report back to central government.

Team Doncaster partners have a long history of working together to tackle domestic abuse which means that all of the statutory duties placed on local authorities through the Act are already being complied with. Over £1million of funding per year is already being invested in direct support for victims of domestic abuse and for a programme of intervention with perpetrators of abuse.

# Our Vision

**Our vision is simple: 'In Doncaster, people no longer experience domestic abuse'.**

Local feedback has been combined with statistical evidence about domestic abuse in Doncaster and national good practice to produce a strategy that is ambitious, based on shared objectives, whilst also being achievable with the commitment of everyone in Doncaster working together.

The Standing Together 'In Search of Excellence' report 2020, sets out a framework and recommendations for improving responses to domestic abuse through a coordinated community response (CCR).

'The CCR enables a whole system response to a whole person. It shifts responsibility for safety away from individual survivors to the community and services existing to support them.'

In addition to a coordinated community response, the Doncaster domestic abuse partnership will adopt a public health approach to tackling domestic abuse in line with the South Yorkshire Violence Reduction strategy which means looking at the causes of violence. The domestic abuse partnership will also take a trauma informed approach to dealing with domestic abuse drawing on a wealth of research relating to trauma and adverse childhood experiences. This means identifying and addressing the reasons why people become abusive or are at greater risk of becoming victims, at the impact of trauma and how it impacts on how people engage with services and barriers to engagement. Trauma informed practice also involves designing services that do not re-traumatise people.

A whole family approach remains a focus of the strategy with a need for all services to ensure that the risks of and to all family members are considered, and that intervention is pro-actively offered to victims and their families, wider social networks and to those people that are causing the harm.

It is also vital that the partnership listens to people that have been abusive and to survivors and their families to learn from their experiences.

# Developing the Strategy

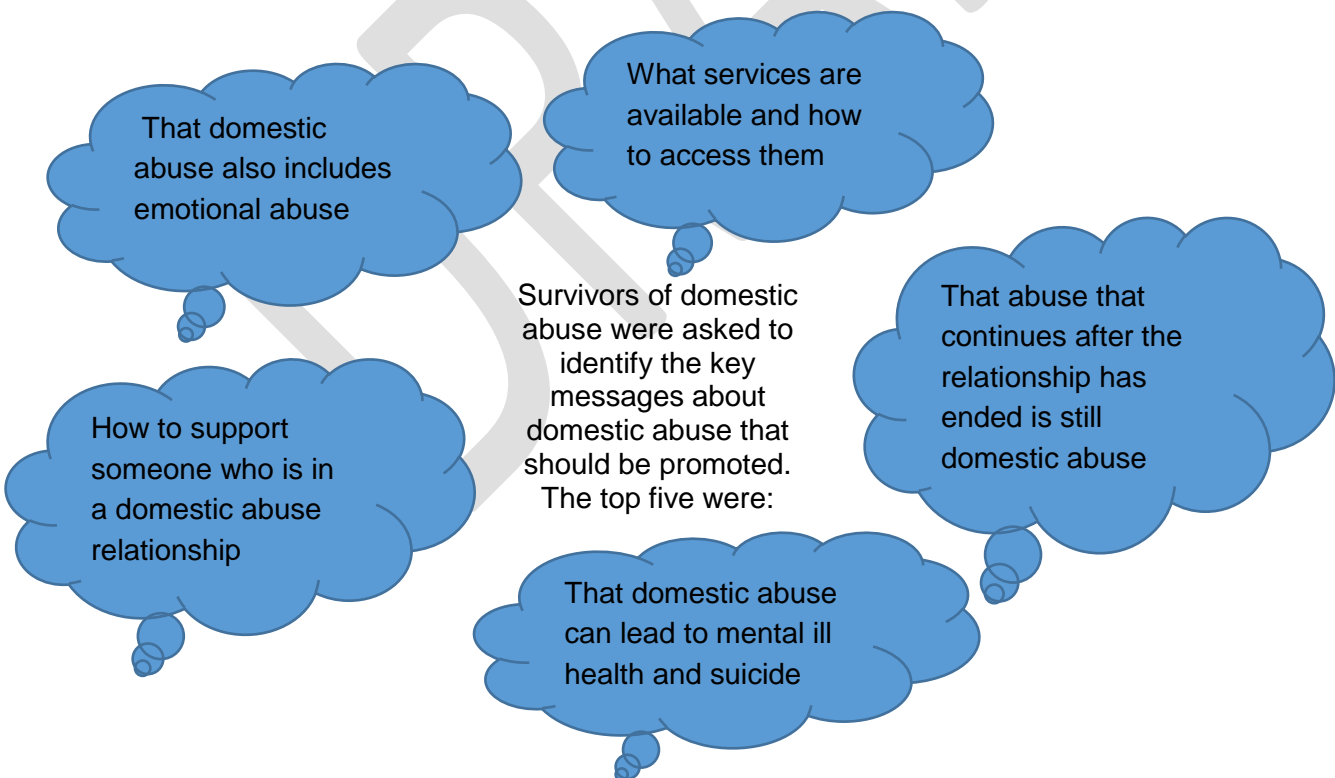
The strategy has been produced collaboratively with numerous Team Doncaster partners and with the survivor voice at the heart of it. The survivor voice includes that of children and families that are also victims of domestic abuse. It is based on a full analysis of domestic abuse in Doncaster and consultation with statutory and community organisations, specialist services, adult and child victims and survivors of domestic abuse and by talking to those who have been abusive. This has resulted in a shared ownership of our vision, agreement on our strategic priorities, and shared responsibility for achieving them.

Consultation included a series of short surveys. Different surveys were produced for the general public, for practitioners and community leaders, for survivors of domestic abuse, and for perpetrators of domestic abuse. There were 216 responses from the public, 123 from practitioners and community leaders, 99 from survivors and 4 from perpetrators. A further survey was developed for young people but due to Covid19 the response was low. Further work with young people is planned over the next few years.

There were a great deal of similarities between the feedback from residents, practitioners and survivors. The most in-depth survey was the survivor survey, which identified a wealth of information for the partnership to act on.

## What people told us

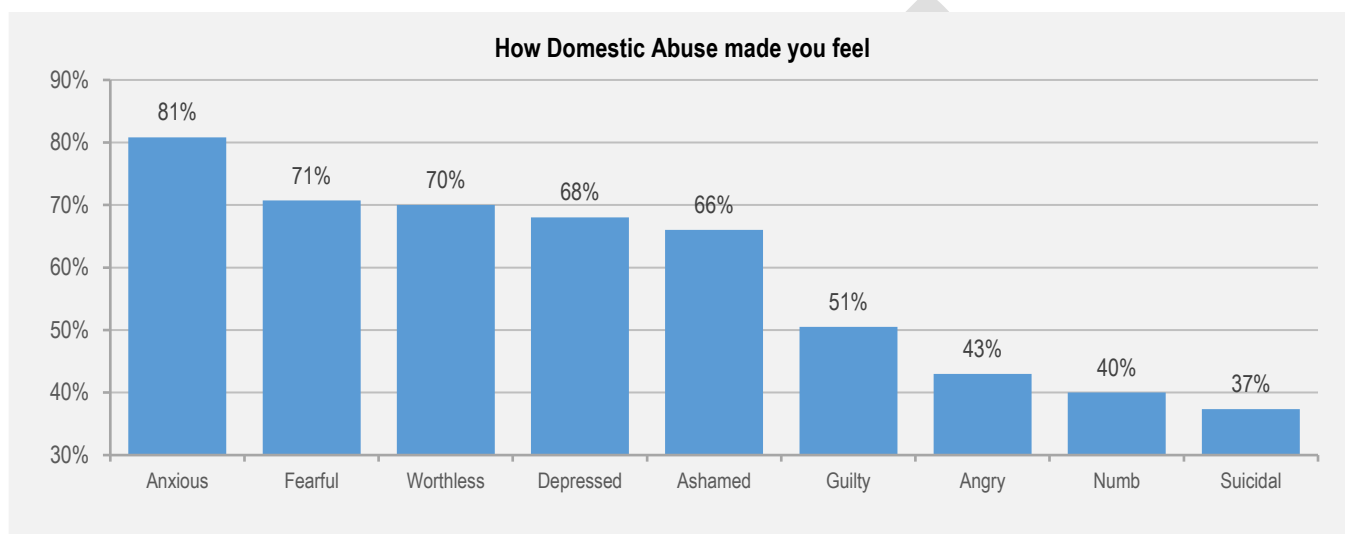
Victims and Survivors



Survivors and practitioners were asked to say what they thought the priorities should be for future domestic abuse work. Survivors and practitioners identified the same top 5 priorities:

1. Domestic abuse/healthy relationship education in schools
2. Support for victims including children (people who are actively experience abuse from their abuser)
3. Survivor support/groups (people who have separated from an abuser but may also include support for ongoing post separation abuse)
4. Out of hours telephone support (i.e. evenings and weekends)
5. Confidence and self-esteem building for young people

When asked how the abuse made them feel:



Some of the powerful comments made by survivors:

*"All of the above but your instinct to survive and protect your children keeps you strong. The affects come out after at times when you hear or see something that connects you to the times of abuse. I think it has taken me all this time things still make me feel sick."*

*"I felt stupid, confused - doubted myself all the time, constantly on egg shells, watchful of every word. I felt like a bad mother and a failure for my inability to stand up for myself. I also felt like a liar - presenting one face to the world but living a totally different life. I felt alone and isolated."*

*"Shock that this was happening to me. As I never thought I would be in that situation but it can happen to anyone."*

Other key feedback from survivors included:

- 51% said that single sex services are either extremely or very important to them. 22% said somewhat important and 14% said not so important and 12% said not important at all
- 48% of respondents said that they would be interested in forming a survivor's network that comes together to share learning and improve responses in relation to domestic abuse
- 81% had children living with them at the time of the abuse
- 72% said that there was no support available for the children or whole family
- 63% said that the children were still affected by the abuse
- 27% of survivors had also grown up in a household were there was domestic abuse



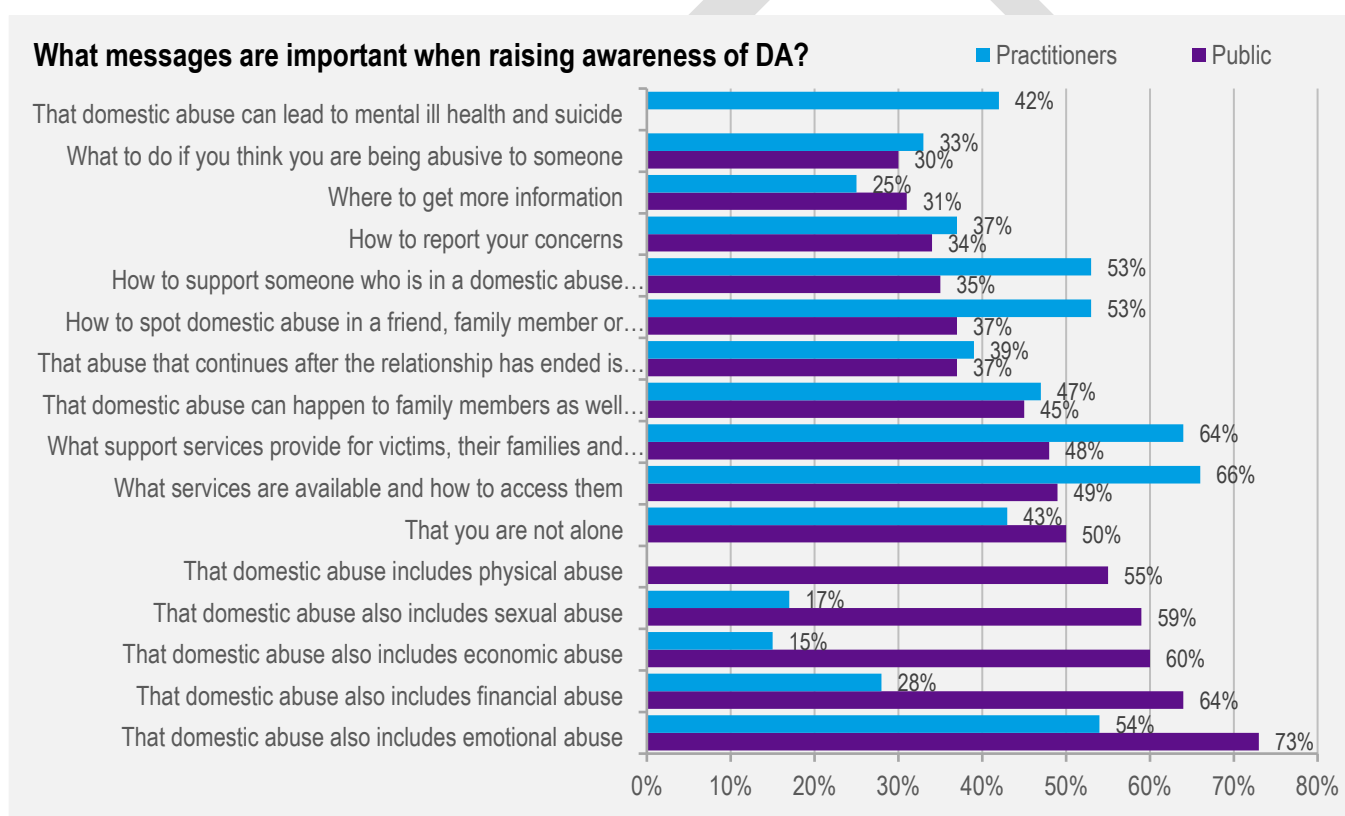
### General public

95% of general public responders knew that domestic abuse could be between people in families not just those in a relationship. But 22% didn't know that it's still domestic abuse if the abuse continues after a relationship has ended.

Opinions on whether various behaviours were classed as domestic abuse showed a lack of universal understanding about what domestic abuse is. This highlights that more work must be done by the Domestic Abuse Partnership to help people recognise abusive relationships.

Only half of all responders said they would know how to get help/what services are available for themselves or a friend/family member if they were in an abusive relationship.

98% of responders thought there should be more awareness of domestic abuse generally. 99% felt more awareness raising aimed at young people is needed. Regarding what messages are most important in such a campaign, practitioners tended to focus on information about what services were available and how to access them; whereas the general public tended to focus more on what constitutes domestic abuse and its different types/forms.



This feedback will help target the right messages to various audiences in Doncaster.

### Practitioners

Practitioner responses show a view that domestic abuse/healthy relationship education in schools should be the number one priority (75%) for the strategy, followed by the provision of support for victims (66%) and provision of out of hours services (evenings and weekends) (57%).

Secondary priorities, which scored 50%-52%, include self-esteem building for young people (which could link with the first priority); Survivor support, work with perpetrators of domestic abuse, and the availability of emergency/flexible funding that can be used for a range of needs.

Practitioner responses about knowledge/awareness of a range of domestic abuse related services shows some relatively low proportions for a large range of services. Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) scored in the mid-80s; but knowledge of domestic violence protection orders and notices, domestic abuse training, the Doncaster domestic abuse Hub and the Doncaster domestic abuse website only scored 60%-68%. Only half had knowledge of forced marriage protection orders. Some issues such as the domestic abuse navigator service (whole family approach to domestic abuse service delivered by Doncaster Children's Services Trust) and the Doncaster domestic abuse protocol scored between 32%-43%.

A full analysis of the consultation feedback and the needs assessment has been completed which has led to the identification of areas for development and objectives that are set out under the four strategic priorities in this document.

# Our strategic priorities

The priorities are all interlinked and although this strategy talks about victims and families as a separate priority to holding abusers to account we must think 'whole family'.

'Whole family' in this context means looking at the needs of all members of that family; victim, children, other dependents and the abusive person, as well as the wider family dynamics.

In some cases and for some agencies this will mean literally working with all members of the family together. In other cases, this will not be safe or possible. In these cases, practitioners should still consider the needs of all people involved and ensure that the risks and needs are assessed and positive action taken.

## Key principles

In order to succeed in achieving the objectives set out against each of our strategic priorities we must abide by a set of agreed principles. We must:

- Listen to victims, children and families that have experienced domestic abuse and use their experience to co-produce strategies, policies, protocols, resources, campaigns and services with survivors of domestic abuse, including children and families
- Be culturally aware, culturally sensitive and inclusive
- Actively engage with ALL people in our communities especially with people that might find it more difficult to get their voice heard or access services, for example older people, children, young people, women and men, people with disabilities and LGBT+ people and people from ethnic minorities
- Understand intersectionality in relation to domestic abuse. This means understanding how social categorisations such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability etc. are interconnected and can lead to barriers, discrimination, disadvantage or increased risk
- Be trauma informed and listen to the experiences of people that have caused harm so that we can learn how to prevent domestic abuse in the future
- Commit to learning from situations where victims did not survive domestic abuse through rigorous domestic homicide and safeguarding reviews and analysis of missed opportunities
- **Ensure that domestic abuse is everyone's responsibility and that we all work together to achieve our shared vision**



## Strategic priority - Prevent and ultimately end domestic abuse



Primary prevention is about preventing something before it happens.

If we are to truly achieve our vision that Doncaster people no longer experience domestic abuse, we need cultural change and prevention of exposure to factors that cause abuse and harm. To do this we need to think about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Although experienced individually, Adverse Childhood Experiences often stem from our relationships with others and include:

- Parental separation
- A parent in prison
- Being the victim of physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- A parent with a mental health condition
- A parent with substance misuse issues
- Being the victim of neglect
- Experiencing domestic abuse, including coercive control

Victims of violence and abuse are often more likely to be further involved in violence either as victim or perpetrator. A recent survey in Wales found that individuals with four or more adverse childhood experiences were:

- Four times more likely to be a high-risk drinker
- Six times more likely to have or caused a teenage pregnancy
- Six times more likely to smoke
- 14 times more likely to be a victim of violence
- 15 times more likely to be perpetrator of violence
- 16 times more likely to have used heroin
- 20 times more likely to be in prison

It is therefore vital that we work across a range of issues and with other multi-agency thematic partnerships to identify cross-cutting issues and strategies.

Secondary prevention aims to reduce the impact of domestic abuse. This is done by identifying and intervening as soon as possible to stop or reduce the impact of further harm.

### What is currently delivered in Doncaster?

- Work In schools  
Healthy relationships is now a mandatory part of the Relationship, Health and Sexual Education curriculum in schools. The domestic abuse partnership is working with educational establishments and schools to ensure that there is consistency and best practice when talking about domestic abuse. A number of initiatives are currently being delivered in schools with further work and resources being planned.

The Mentors in Violence Prevention programme (MVP) is a peer led leadership programme delivered in secondary schools across South Yorkshire.

It uses lesson plans to open discussion and to tackle cultural beliefs and attitudes around domestic abuse with the help and support of trained peers. The programme enables students to develop skills, knowledge and understanding, and help each other to identify abusive behaviours as being wrong. It places emphasis on healthy relationships and gives students the tools to empower themselves with the confidence to intervene and challenge when they come across unacceptable behaviours.

The programme is delivered by year 10/11 students to year 7/8 students. In schools where Mentors in Violence Prevention was introduced, evidence shows incidences of violence reduced, attitudes and beliefs started to change, and confidence and attainment levels increased.

Furthermore, the knowledge and skills gained are taken by students to effect change within their own communities, shaping attitudes and beliefs towards all types of violence as being unacceptable, making communities safer and healthier places to life.

One of a kind is a children's group work programme to support children to recover from their experiences of domestic abuse. The programme aims to increase safe support networks, explore emotions and healthy ways to express them, and support their understanding of healthy relationships.

- Training

There is an extensive domestic abuse training programme that is free for all Doncaster employees and volunteers. By ensuring that our workforces are aware of domestic abuse, we can identify it sooner and intervene to prevent escalation and get people the support they need.

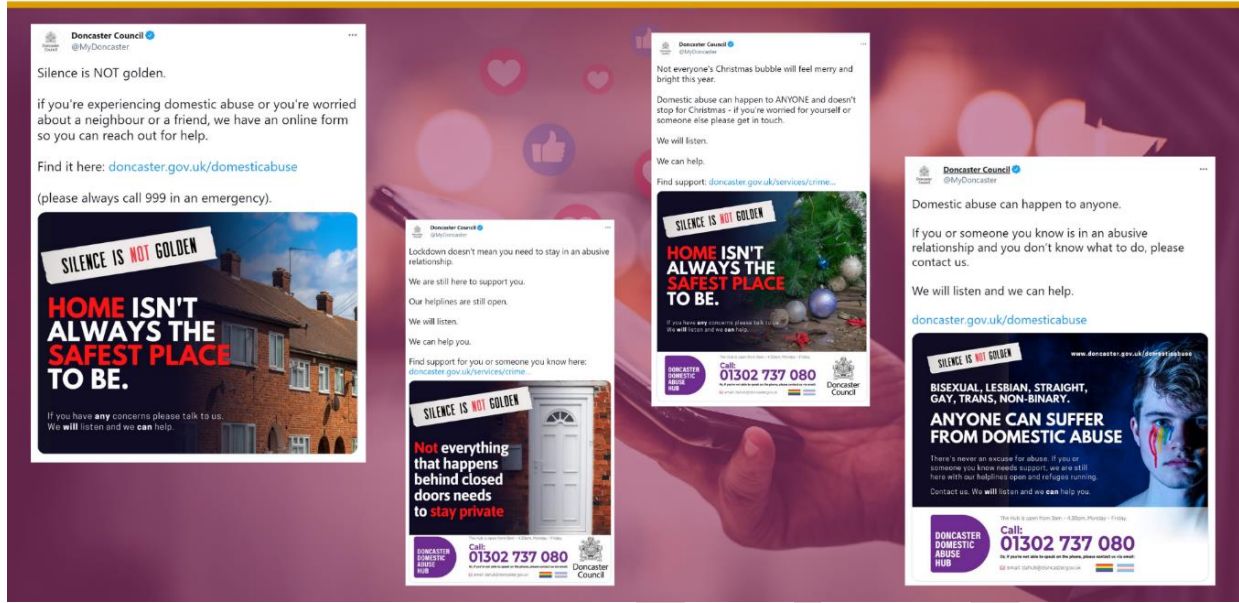
Our training programme includes:

- Domestic abuse awareness
- DASH and MARAC
- Stalking and Harassment
- Young People Experiencing Intimate Partner Violence
- Coercive and Controlling Behaviour
- Honour Abuse, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Supporting Male Victims of Domestic Abuse
- Supporting Children Living with Domestic Abuse (primary age)
- Sexual Abuse Awareness
- Supporting Older Victims of Domestic Abuse
- Supporting LGBT + victims of Domestic Abuse
- Trauma Informed Working Training

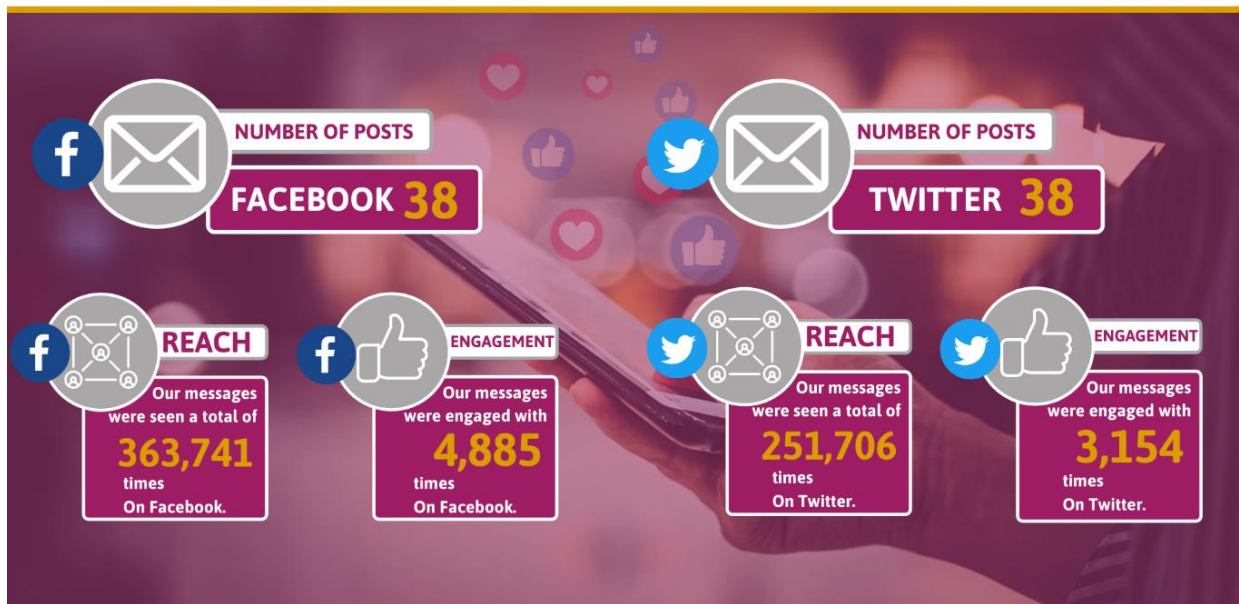
- Awareness campaigns

Doncaster Council with the support of the partnership has delivered domestic abuse campaigns over the past 2 years. This has included general campaigns aimed at women and targeted campaigns aimed at male victims and LGBT+ people as well as information about domestic abuse and where to get help throughout the Covid19 pandemic.

## SOCIAL MEDIA STATS: Domestic Abuse (April '20-April '21)



## SOCIAL MEDIA STATS: Domestic Abuse (April '20-April '21)



- Parental conflict**

There is strong evidence that conflict between parents – whether together or separated – can have a significant negative impact on children’s mental health and long-term life chances. Not all conflict is damaging, but where this is frequent, intense and poorly resolved it can harm children’s outcomes. A key point is that parental conflict is very different to domestic abuse but it could be an early warning sign of issues in relationship that could escalate to domestic abuse. The Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) programme in Doncaster is aimed at conflict below the threshold of domestic abuse.

## Areas for development

The needs assessment and consultation exercise has identified a number of areas for development.

- Greater collaboration between the safeguarding partnerships when sharing and implementing the lessons learned from national and local safeguarding reviews and domestic homicide reviews
- Although healthy relationships is now a mandatory part of the Relationships, Health and Sexual Education (RHSE) curriculum, there is a lack of partnership knowledge about how it is delivered which leads to a sense that there could be inconsistency. More support for educational establishments, as well as youth services, is needed to equip them with the knowledge and skills to deliver the domestic abuse content
- More information and resources about domestic abuse on display throughout our communities
- Increased number of 'Trusted Assessors' and community champions to encourage people to share their experiences and identify abuse early
- Healthy and unhealthy relationship information aimed at young people
- Identification of any gaps in service provision for people at risk of experiencing or perpetrating domestic abuse
- To create a culture where domestic abuse is not tolerated

## Objectives

These objectives will address the areas for development and are included in the Doncaster domestic abuse action plan:

- Build on existing positive relationships between the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Partnership and the Doncaster Safeguarding Boards to ensure that we work together and share learning from safeguarding reviews
- Build on existing positive relationships between the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Partnership and educational establishments, providers of childcare, youth services and young people to develop a strategy and resources to raise awareness of healthy and unhealthy relationships with children and young people
- Work with families and wider communities to understand healthy and unhealthy relationships and how to discuss differences of opinion in a respectful way to avoid conflict
- Increase awareness of domestic abuse amongst individuals, families, employers and the wider community and improve confidence of everyone to speak more openly about it and be more comfortable in reporting it

## Strategic priority - Support and keep victims, survivors & families safe

Keeping victims and their families safe is at the very heart of what we want to achieve in Doncaster. The Doncaster domestic abuse partnership will do this by working together, sharing information and resources and promoting a whole family approach. Keeping people who experience domestic abuse and their children safe from harm ensuring access to the right support at the right time, this includes holding abusers to account and there is more information about that in the next priority section.



### What is currently delivered in Doncaster?

Doncaster domestic abuse services are available for anyone that is experiencing domestic abuse. Current services include safe accommodation for women and men, outreach services, counselling, specialist domestic abuse programmes, support for children and partnership initiatives such as the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference in which various appropriate partner agencies discuss cases where there is high risk of further serious harm to the victim and agree on the most effective joined up approach to supporting the victim, safeguarding children and holding the abuser to account.

The Doncaster Domestic Abuse Hub is the central place for all domestic abuse referrals and is the place where need is assessed. Specialist domestic abuse advisors in the Hub attempt to contact everyone who is referred to the service as well as victims that phone the dedicated domestic abuse helpline for support. They will listen to the victim and assess the risks to them and their family and ask what the person needs and wants. If the victim wants further outreach support they will be allocated a specialist domestic abuse worker from the most appropriate domestic abuse service. Domestic abuse agencies that are part of the Hub include Doncaster Council's Domestic Abuse Caseworkers and Survivor Liaison Worker, Outreach workers from Riverside Care and Support, and specialist workers from Phoenix WoMen's Aid.

The Domestic Abuse Navigator (DAN) service within Doncaster Children's Services Trust is an innovative programme that aims to reduce the emotional harm caused by domestic abuse to children and young people and aid their recovery. It challenges the acceptance of domestic abuse among families and the wider community and aims to break the pattern of abuse as it represents itself in children and young people. A significant achievement of the DAN team is the success with reducing repeat referrals into children's services. The repeat referral rate for families working with DANs are between 0% and 1%.

Doncaster Council commissions the provision of domestic abuse safe accommodation. Provision includes seven units in a women's-only refuge and a minimum of six units of dispersed housing that can be used for any victim regardless of gender. All accommodation is available for Doncaster residents as well as victims fleeing domestic abuse from other local authority areas. Half of all people accessing Doncaster's safe accommodation are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Phoenix WoMen's Aid provide a refuge for male victims of domestic abuse as well as one for women.

Temporary accommodation is used for victims reporting to the local authority or St. Leger Homes of Doncaster as a homeless emergency case. With the additional funding (made available by the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government to enable the local authority to fulfil its statutory requirements under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021) plans are being developed to provide additional safe accommodation with specialist



support available.

In Doncaster, we have a well-established and comprehensive domestic abuse training programme that is free for all practitioners and volunteers in Doncaster so that we can identify and intervene at the earliest opportunity. We are also working hard to encourage employers in Doncaster to ensure that their employees and managers are trained in domestic abuse. By doing this we are removing the responsibility placed on victims to ask for help and placing it on communities and organisations to spot it and take action.

We are striving to ensure that all of our services are inclusive. Just by saying that services are accessible to all, doesn't make it so. We want to work with survivors and residents in Doncaster to identify and remove barriers to reporting abuse and accessing support. Two new positions have been created to help achieve this inclusive ambition, a survivor liaison worker and a community engagement worker.

The Survivor Liaison Worker is a person with lived experience of domestic abuse. The Worker supports people that have experienced domestic abuse and want ongoing long-term support to deal with the trauma they have suffered. One to one and group support is offered. The Survivor Liaison Worker also proactively consults and collaborates with survivors on service development, and co-production of training, and campaigns to ensure that the survivor voice runs throughout all strategic and operational activity in Doncaster.

The community engagement worker proactively works with local communities and businesses to raise awareness of domestic abuse, help them to identify and report it and create a culture where we do not accept it, empowering local people to take positive action.

All of this ensures that we have a strong foundation on which to build in order to achieve our vision.

## Areas for development

The needs assessment and consultation exercise has identified a number of areas for development including:

- Greater emphasis on the survivor voice, including the voice of the child and young person
- Strengthen our first response in every organisation
- Exploration of child/adolescent to parent abuse; and what we can do as a partnership to prevent and reduce harm and encourage healthy relationships
- More safe accommodation with specialist domestic abuse support
- More support to help victims and their families remain safely in their homes
- Barriers to reporting and accessing services for people with complex needs such as mental health illnesses, and drug and alcohol misuse problems
- Information sharing and joint working for victims and their families that move between local authority boundaries to ensure that their health and social needs can be met
- More support to help victims navigate the criminal justice system
- A focus on stalking and harassment as this is now the most prevalent crime type in Doncaster, including further analysis of these crime types
- A focus on suicide prevention for all victims, children and abusers
- Early intervention and support for children affected by domestic abuse
- Greater awareness about domestic abuse and the support in our communities and by employers
- Consistency in responses from organisations
- Assurance that health providers are identifying and responding to victims, children and perpetrators of domestic abuse consistently and effectively

- Greater assurance that adults with care and support needs who experience domestic abuse, and who are unable to protect themselves against abuse due to their care and support needs, are effectively supported and safeguarded

## Objectives

These objectives aim to deal with the areas for development and are included in the Doncaster domestic abuse action plan:

- Listen to and collaborate with survivors, children and families that have experienced domestic abuse
- Develop ways of preventing and reducing adolescent to parent abuse to prevent and reduce harm and encourage healthy relationships
- Increase the amount of safe, supported and suitable accommodation available to victims of domestic abuse that are unable to remain in their home – including victims with complex needs and minority groups
- Ensure clear and smooth transition across local authority boundaries for victims to ensure that their health and social needs can be met
- Work with members of the criminal justice system to improve the experiences of victims through the court system
- Explore ways of effectively dealing with the trauma suffered by children and young people in domestic abuse households at an early stage to aid recovery
- The Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group and Health Partners will consider the Standing Together Pathfinder Toolkit and the recommendations within it and use this, alongside contemporary local and national guidance and best practice, as a base to consider the development of services moving forward
- Ensure that adults with care and support needs who are experiencing domestic abuse are both safeguarded and supported by safeguarding and domestic abuse services
- Reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse and prevent people from becoming a victim of abuse again having ended one abusive relationship
- Conduct a detailed analysis of stalking and harassment and devise a plan of action for prevention and early intervention

## Strategic priority - Hold abusers to account

A 'Call to Action' report coordinated by the Drive Project states that a quarter of high-harm domestic abuse perpetrators are repeat offenders, and some have at least six different victims. Their behaviour costs lives, wellbeing, and money.

Their report states that there are approximately 400,000 perpetrators causing high (including murder) and medium levels of harm across England and Wales, yet less than 1% receives specialist intervention that might prevent future abusive behaviour. Perpetrators whose victims are assessed at lower levels of risk are even less likely to get a specialist intervention.

Our strategy to hold abusers to account is to take all reports seriously and investigate them thoroughly. We will focus on reducing the impact of domestic abuse on the whole family and seek to reduce the likelihood that perpetrators will commit further instances of abuse. This could be through pursuing perpetrators through prosecutions and the formal criminal justice system, the use of civil outcomes or via individuals volunteering to address their behaviour. Working in partnership will be central to any approach taken and this strategy will be supported through statutory frameworks including the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership and also wider local partnerships such as South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit.

Alongside this we recognise that in order to ultimately end domestic abuse we need to rehabilitate perpetrators to stop them abusing others in the future. To achieve this our approach will be trauma informed which focuses on thinking about 'what has happened to this person' rather than 'what is wrong with this person'. It is about finding out and understanding what has happened in a person's life that might have led them to where they are now. It is also about thinking how trauma could affect a person in the future and taking steps to prevent adversity. This is not a soft option and still places responsibility on the person who is being abusive for their actions while also giving them the support to change their behaviour.

To break the cycle of violence we have to acknowledge what has happened in a person's life that has led them to a place where they are committing crime. It is highly likely that there has been some adversity or trauma in that person's life that has not been resolved. Only by taking a trauma-informed approach while holding abusers to account will we be able to reduce harm, prevent future abuse and manage serial perpetrators.

As a domestic abuse partnership working alongside other partnerships such as the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership and South Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit, we already have a joined up approach to enforcement and prevention of crime and harm.

### What is currently delivered in Doncaster?

South Yorkshire Police has a dedicated domestic abuse investigation team in Doncaster that lead and own the policing response to high-risk investigations and manage the investigative response where domestic abuse suspects have been arrested. The aim of the team is to improve the policing response to domestic abuse victims, thereby improving confidence to disclose and report and to improve the links between South Yorkshire Police and support agencies thereby delivering the best safeguarding response for victims. In addition, the team aim:

- To improve the quality of evidence and investigative response to domestic abuse reports
- To ensure timely and effective management of domestic abuse prisoners
- To improve criminal justice outcomes in cases of domestic abuse, by improving understanding of



charging thresholds and improving file quality

- To identify and promote good practice ensuring that all officers and staff within SYP understand that domestic abuse is everybody's business.
- To work with partners to problem solve, reduce repeat victimisation, support effective interventions for victims and perpetrators.

In March 2021 South Yorkshire Police introduced the Multi agency tasking and coordination (MATAC) in Doncaster. Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination involves regular meetings led by South Yorkshire Police, along with key partners, to assess and plan a bespoke set of interventions to target and disrupt serial perpetrators and/or support them to address their behaviour.

Those individuals identified as causing the most serious harm to victims are managed through the Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA). These statutory procedures are well established in Doncaster to facilitate partnership working to manage these offenders in our community. In Doncaster there is a strong commitment to MAPPA and how the alliance manages those individuals to keep communities safe

South Yorkshire Police and the specialist domestic abuse services have introduced a SmartWater initiative. SmartWater is a traceable liquid and forensic asset marking system that has previously been used to mark items of value to identify thieves and deter theft. The SmartWater initiative for domestic abuse creates a new range of products which aims:

- To reduce the number of repeat domestic abuse victims
- To improve confidence in domestic abuse victims
- To deter the perpetrator and change the mind-set
- To bring offenders to justice

SmartWater is intended to support other protective factors such as restraining orders, police and court bail and domestic violence protection notices and orders.

On occasions, when the Police are unable to prosecute, they may seek a Domestic Abuse Prevention Notice, which prevents the perpetrator from returning to the premises and having contact with the victim for 48 hours. Once the Domestic Abuse Prevention notice has been approved, a Domestic Abuse Prevention Order may be applied for at Court which would further prevent the perpetrator from residing or having contact with the victim for up to 28 days. Domestic violence protection notices and orders are used to good effect in Doncaster to hold abusers to account. In the first six months of 2021, 112 domestic abuse protection notices were issued in Doncaster by South Yorkshire Police. In the same period 79 domestic violence protection orders were applied for by South Yorkshire Police and approved by the Courts, holding abusers to account and protecting victims.

There is a dedicated Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) Team within South Yorkshire Police who review domestic abuse reports and highlight incidents where the application may be necessary. The police have good systems to identify victims once a domestic abuse incident has occurred and work is ongoing to improve the identification of new partners of serial domestic abuse perpetrators where a disclosure using the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme would be appropriate to notify potential victims of the risk and details of support services.

Initiatives such as Navigators in custody suites work to identify people entering the criminal justice system and engaging with them at a reachable, teachable moment to address their behaviour and provide support out of criminal activity. This includes people that have been arrested for a domestic abuse offence.

Once convicted perpetrators can be made subject to requirements to complete Building Better Relationships which is an accredited group work intervention available to those men convicted of domestic abuse offending. Based on cognitive behavioural therapy and strengths based methodology the programme supports the rehabilitation of individuals by helping them to recognise their abusive behaviour and develop pro social relationship skills.

There is a whole family approach to tackling abuse which is delivered by the Domestic Abuse Navigator (DAN) service within Doncaster Children's Services Trust and includes a programme called Caring Dads. This programme focuses on the relationship between father and children in the context of abuse from the father in the adult relationship with the aim of increasing safety and impacting change through Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) based principles and child centred fathering.

In addition, the DAN service provide the Getting On programme which is a programme for children who use abusive behaviours towards their female parent or carer. Providing both mum and child with an opportunity to repair their often fractured relationship using restorative justice and CBT based approaches.

Doncaster is part of a Countywide Partnership to provide a voluntary programme to enable Domestic Abuse Perpetrators to change their behaviour. The programme is called 'Inspire to Change' and is delivered both online and at various locations across the County. The new provider Cranstoun launched the programme at the beginning of September 2021 and within the first few weeks received 45 referrals from across the County. The new service builds upon the success of previous programmes and is jointly funded by the four authorities in South Yorkshire and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

### Areas for development

The needs assessment and consultation exercise identified a number of areas for development. In addition, the Doncaster domestic abuse partnership has taken recommendations from the 'Call to Action, A Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Strategy for England and Wales' report that was coordinated by the Drive Project.

Areas for improvement include:

- A multi-agency trauma-informed response to perpetrators which includes the identification and management of serial perpetrators as well as early intervention
- Increasing alert systems in order to have a clearer line of sight of perpetrators
- Implementing key areas of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 linked directly to perpetrators
- Ensure that the full range of interventions and services are known about in our local community
- Shift the balance of the discussion to ask the question 'why don't they stop?' rather than 'why don't they leave?'
- Maximising the use of offending behaviour programmes following sentence
- Make better use of intelligence to assist in targeting resources in areas where the evidence indicates the highest proportion of domestic abuse

### Objectives

These objectives aim to tackle the areas for development and will be included the Doncaster domestic abuse action plan:

- Improve our systematic multi-agency approach to the identification of perpetrators including serial perpetrators

- Increase the success rate of prosecutions associated with domestic abuse crimes
- Improve our systematic multi-agency approach to the management of domestic abuse perpetrators through the effective use of initiatives such as MATAC, SmartWater, Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Notices and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme
- Ensure changes introduced in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 are implemented including: extending the coercive and controlling behaviour law to include post separation abuse and the inclusion of threats to share sexual images
- Work as a partnership to embed the national restructure of probation services in Doncaster
- Promote and support behavioural change amongst perpetrators of domestic abuse
- Improve the ability of businesses, organisations and communities to recognise and challenge abusive behaviour

DRAFT

## Strategic priority - Leadership, governance and quality assurance



Team Doncaster is formally recognised as the strategic partnership of organisations and individuals that spans the public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

The Team Doncaster Strategic Partnership currently oversees four thematic partnerships. Each theme helps to deliver improvements set out within the Borough Strategy for Doncaster's residents, and those working in and visiting the borough. Our vision for tackling domestic is aligned to the overall Team Doncaster mission of: Thriving People, Place & Planet.

The Team Doncaster Strategic Partnership oversees the development and progress of the Wellbeing Goals with the responsibility for scrutiny and governance driven by the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership (which is the Doncaster Community Safety Partnership).

## Governance structure

The Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership has agreed that domestic abuse is a priority for Doncaster. As a result, there is a Doncaster domestic abuse partnership that drives the work forward and reports to the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership for scrutiny and to provide reassurance that the strategy is being delivered.

The Doncaster Domestic Abuse Partnership consists of a strategic and operational board.

### Doncaster domestic abuse strategic board

The strategic board ensures that there is a shared vision and shared responsibility for tackling domestic abuse that includes collaboration with those with lived experience. This board will provide direction to the operational board and scrutiny of performance, evaluation and quality assurance frameworks. It will provide opportunities to celebrate success as well as identifying outstanding issues and areas in need of improvement. There is free flow of information and influence between the strategic and operational boards encouraging imaginative and collaborative approaches to managing this area of work.

If there is a death linked to domestic abuse, be that a murder or a suicide, there will be a rigorous and independent review in accordance with the [Home Office Multi-agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews](#). Each review into a death will be trauma informed, looking at any early warning signs and missed opportunities for intervention that we can learn from to prevent future harm and deaths. Liaising with family and friends will remain a focus of the reviews as well as offering support for the trauma they have faced.

The findings of the review and any actions for individual agencies or for the partnership as a whole will be monitored by the domestic abuse strategic board with assurance given to the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership of changes and improvements.

### Doncaster domestic abuse operational board

The operational board includes partners who oversee teams and projects. This board is responsible for the

reporting on performance management information and for the quality assurance of projects such as the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Multi-Agency Task and Coordination (MATAC). The operational board will regularly review and update the action plan to ensure that there is momentum and completion of identified work. The action plan will be updated to include any emerging issues and areas of work, in particular any learning from domestic homicides, safeguarding reviews and from survivors of domestic abuse.

How we will achieve our objectives is detailed in the action plan; containing short, medium and long-term actions. The action plan is a live document that is constantly reviewed and which drives activity towards achieving our vision by providing a coordinated community response.

The action plan is accompanied by a performance management and quality assurance framework. The performance management framework details the partnership data that is needed throughout the year to check on progress towards our goals, ensure that services and support reflect the needs of all victims in Doncaster and identify any emerging trends or issues. The quality assurance framework checks that we are maintaining our high standards and abiding by policies and protocols. A number of case audits are planned throughout the year to assure ourselves that the services and multi-agency arrangements are producing positive outcomes for victims, children and abusers.

## Areas for development

The needs assessment and consultation for the strategy along with researching good practice from across the UK in relation to effective partnerships to tackle domestic abuse has resulted in the identification of a number of areas for development that the Doncaster domestic abuse partnership want to work together on:

- All members of the Doncaster domestic abuse partnership want to continually strive for improvements and best practice. We will use national resources such as the Standing Together 'In Search of Excellence' report, the 'Call to Action' report and the revised National Statement of Expectations that the Government will be publishing in 2021/2022
- We need to develop our understanding of what success looks like. We need to ask the question 'so what?' when we assess the services that we provide; what difference did they make? The domestic abuse partnership wants to ensure that all of the services that work with people affected by domestic abuse are making a difference
- We want consistency of responses from all organisations to provide assurance to victims, encourage them to report and guarantee that they will be treated with respect and given the support they deserve
- Some domestic abuse services have secured longer term funding from Doncaster Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner while other services rely on short-term annual funding. A longer-term financial and commissioning strategy is needed

## Objectives

The following objectives will tackle the areas for development and are included in the Doncaster domestic abuse action plan:

- Use the survivor voice to determine what works, what isn't working, barriers and areas for improvement



- A commitment from partners to regularly update the domestic abuse needs assessment whilst developing and integrating new data sets to give fresh insights
- Measure progress made against nationally recognised standards including the Standing Together 'In Search of Excellence' and the Government's National Statement of Expectations
- Introduce a Doncaster Domestic Abuse Charter. This would consist of a set of standards for employers to adhere to which includes support for employees and customers
- Ensure long-term funding is committed to preventing and tackling domestic abuse
- Undertake further research and analysis into specific areas such as stalking and harassment in Doncaster and ways of prevention and early intervention and suicide in relation to victims and people who are abusive

DRAFT

# Doncaster Domestic Abuse Charter

The Doncaster domestic abuse partnership has agreed a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Charter outlining five standards that partner agencies should aim to achieve in order to effectively respond to victims, perpetrators and families affected by domestic abuse.

The Charter will be awarded to local organisations that meet the following standards as a minimum. The award could be awarded to local small businesses such as barbers and hairdressers, pharmacies, community centres, shops, youth groups etc. as well as larger public and private sector organisations.

	<b>Standard</b>
1.	Domestic abuse material is displayed by the business/organisation/department that is relevant to all local communities
2.	There is an effective domestic abuse policy/protocol or guidance in place detailing how the organisation/department will respond to clients/customers that are experiencing domestic abuse
3.	That staff who require domestic abuse training have been identified and the level of training required assessed and that all identified staff have completed the training to the required level
4.	The agency has an employee policy/procedure for employees experiencing or perpetrating domestic abuse
5.	There is at least one domestic abuse champion within the organisation/department who ensures that they keep up to date with the latest resources, referral pathways, policies and procedures and implement improvements in service delivery as necessary

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Partners involved in the development of this strategy, and members of the Doncaster Domestic Abuse Partnership, include but are not limited to the list below.

- Survivors
- Residents
- Doncaster Council
- Doncaster Bassetlaw Teaching Hospital
- Doncaster Children's Services Trust
- Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Elected members
- National Probation Service
- Phoenix WoMen's Aid
- Riverside
- Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Trust
- South Yorkshire Police
- South Yorkshire YWCA
- St. Leger Homes of Doncaster

Special thanks go to the survivors of domestic abuse that have spoken about their experiences in order to help others. It can be incredibly hard to revisit that trauma and the Doncaster domestic abuse partnership would like to praise the bravery and selflessness of every single survivor that came forward to work with us. We pledge to continue listening to and collaborating with victims and survivors to achieve our vision:

**'In Doncaster, people no longer experience domestic abuse'**

Appendices will be saved as separate documents and will include:

- Appendix A - Domestic abuse needs assessment
- Appendix B - Performance and quality assurance framework
- Appendix C - Due Regard Statement
- Appendix D - Action Plan (this is a working document that will be subject to regular updating)

DRAFT