

Domestic Violence Strategy

Stockton-on-Tees

2011>2014



This is Stockton's fourth Domestic Violence Strategy, which reports on our achievements to increase safety for victims and their families and sets out our priorities to reduce domestic violence and support victims between 2011 and 2014.

This strategy plan feeds into the Community Safety Plan 2011 > 2014

National approach

The Home Office has developed a Violence Against Women and Girls strategy and action plan which provides an overview of the range of actions that the Government will be taking forward.

The definition used comes from the UN declaration on violence against women (1993) which defines such violence as *any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life*. They go on to say 'the vast majority of these violent acts are perpetrated by men on women and girls and include domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, so-called 'honour based violence', female genital mutilation and forced marriage'.

Local approach

The Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) is the statutory Community Safety Partnership for the Borough of Stockton on Tees.

The key priorities for SSP have been identified by residents during our main consultation period which ran from August to November 2010. We received 5,222 responses to our consultation from residents and visitors to the Borough and they told us that the top six key priorities for the next three years should be:

1. Anti Social Behaviour
2. Alcohol related crime/ASB
3. Violent crime
4. Drug related offending
5. Criminal damage
- 6. Domestic violence**

Tackling domestic violence has developed into a true partnership approach under the direction of the Domestic Violence Strategy Group and is supported by the Domestic Violence Forum and the Violence Tactical Group.

Domestic Violence accounts for around 35% of all violent crime, however during 2010 recorded violent crime reduced but the percentage of it which was DV related increased. We will develop our work within the framework of the national VAWG strategy and throughout the lifetime of this plan will focus attention on a number of threads that impact locally on this priority:

- Reducing reoffending
- Reducing repeat victims
- Providing reassurance and support for victims and survivors
- Localities within wards that have the highest levels of DV related crime

Since the last Domestic Violence Strategy we have developed our partnership work and we work closely with a range of other partnerships to achieve our aims:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Committee
- Local Children's Safeguarding Board
- Health and Well Being Partnership

Our multi agency Integrated Offender Management Team (IOM) team is now well established working with Prolific and Priority Offenders (PPO), people subject to a Community Order with a Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) and high crime causers many of whom also commit domestic abuse. With this approach the focus is on the offender not the offence and it entails identifying and using a dual support and/or enforcement approach with the relatively small numbers of repeat offenders who disproportionately cause harm.

To complement this, our annual Partnership Strategic Assessment uses a victim, offender location approach to interrogate the various partner data sets to give us an overall picture of what is happening across the Borough.



This allows us to identify repeat victims and those who are vulnerable, repeat locations as well as repeat offenders so that we can target our resources more effectively.

Looking back

Over the last three years we have improved the support offered to those who experience domestic violence and further developed our work with perpetrators. Harbour has continued to provide domestic violence services for the Borough. We have also developed the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process which deals with the most serious cases and we use advocates employed by Harbour to support those who are going through the Criminal Justice System to reduce withdrawals from prosecution.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We have agreed that all members of the partnership will share responsibility for achieving our targets, aims and objectives. There is a designated lead and deputy with responsibility for monitoring performance and reporting progress to SSP.

The Domestic Violence Steering Group receives quarterly monitoring reports on progress against targets and these are available on www.saferstockton.com.

Cross cutting themes

There are a number of general issues that are relevant to Domestic Violence:

- **Repeat and vulnerable victims** – we will prioritise work on behalf of people who have become or are at risk of becoming repeat victims as well as those who may be vulnerable or those being targeted.
- **Effective information sharing** – we will promote and support activities to improve our knowledge base across the full range of community safety issues to deliver intelligence led solutions.

- **Best practice and value for money** – we will evaluate projects and learn from both our own experience, and from regional and national experience.

Consultation

The main consultation exercise for SSP was held in the summer of 2010 and the key priorities identified from this are the drivers for the work we will carry out over the coming three years. Residents identified Domestic Violence as the sixth priority. This is the first time that DV has featured in the top six priorities in the consultation.

Of the 5,000 responses 1,739 people thought that Domestic Violence should be a key priority with only 366 saying that it should not. Under16's thought that violent crime should be the top priority and BME respondents ranked domestic violence as the seventh key priority. Newtown ward placed domestic violence as the third priority and violent crime fourth, Mandale and Victoria and Stainsby Hill ranked domestic violence as the fifth key priority.

Funding

We continue to face pressure for efficiency savings. For the first year of this strategy SSP will provide funding from the Community Safety Fund for DV services and the Council will maintain its contribution to Harbour for the provision of support services. From 2012/13 CSF will be drastically cut and will end in 2013 when Police Crime Commissioners will take over the role of commissioning services for the four districts that make up the Cleveland police force area. We were unsuccessful in securing government funding for MARAC and IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates) services which puts additional pressure on the partnership.

During 2011 a commissioned DV service will be developed to safeguard services available for future years within the funding available.

What's happening locally?

DV Coordinator

Stockton Borough Council and Hartlepool Borough Council have jointly funded a Domestic Violence Coordinator.

Confidential Reporting Policy

Stockton Borough Council has developed a domestic violence policy which explains what it will do to support employees who are experiencing domestic violence. The policy also provides guidance for managers and contact details for the confidential reporting system provided by the Dignity in the Workplace officers who can signpost to support services in the Borough.

Think B4U Drink Campaign

SSP's Think B4U Drink Campaign highlights links between alcohol and abusive behaviour.

Choices helpline

The issues of forced marriage and "so called" honour based violence remain a significant concern. In 2007 Cleveland Police launched the "Choices" 24 hour helpline providing dedicated advice and assistance for victims experiencing these specific types of domestic abuse.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.

MARACs were set up in Stockton in 2007 to focus on the most vulnerable high risk victims of domestic violence. Information is safely shared within the group, which helps to provide preventative and protective responses that are tailored to the needs of individual victims and their children alongside managing the risks the perpetrator poses more effectively.

Stockton does not have its own Court so DV cases are generally heard in Middlesbrough's

courts and occasionally in Hartlepool Magistrates court. We do have a Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) working within Harbour to advocate on behalf of clients pursuing a criminal prosecution.

Stockton Police

Stockton Police operate a policy of zero tolerance towards perpetrators of domestic abuse and officers make an arrest wherever there is evidence an offence has been committed.

The Police Vulnerability Unit focuses on the most serious and complex cases of domestic abuse, working closely with partner agencies to ensure that victims are fully supported during this process, particularly in high risk cases.

Safe at Home

In 2007 the Council's Community Safety Team and the Police launched the Safe at Home target hardening scheme to improve the choices available to victims of domestic violence by helping them to remain in their own homes where it is safe for them to do so.

Harbour

Harbour provide a range of domestic violence services throughout the Borough of Stockton. These include:

- Women's refuge services and move on accommodation
- Adult outreach services
- Children's outreach services
- Perpetrator programme
- Women's Safety Work
- Sexual violence counselling

Harbour's aim is to work holistically with families to ensure the safety of victims and positive outcomes for the whole family wherever possible. Its approach combines support for victims with preventative work for perpetrators with the overall goal of reducing the incidence of domestic abuse and its pervasive impacts on communities.

Harbour Stockton Refuge

Harbour Stockton Refuge offers accommodation and support to women and children who are fleeing domestic violence. It includes seven self-contained units and refuge support workers provide a system of tailored support based on the needs and priorities of each woman and her children.

Harbour Adult Outreach

Harbour Adult Outreach service works with women and men who have, or who are still experiencing domestic abuse. The outreach team develop tailored support plans with each client to meet their specific needs, these include risk assessments and safety strategies as many clients are still living with or have recently left an abusive partner.

Harbour Children's Outreach Service

The Harbour Children's Outreach Service provides therapeutic support in the form of one to one or group work for children who have witnessed or experienced domestic abuse. The Children's Outreach team also works with young people in local schools to promote the development of healthy and respectful relationships as part of the PHSE programme

Harbour Perpetrator Programme

The Harbour Perpetrator Programme works with men who are, or who have been violent or

abusive. It comprises a rolling group work programme for men who wish to change their behaviour.

Women's Safety Work

Since 2005 Harbour has provided women's safety work to the partners of perpetrators attending the Probation Service's court mandatory perpetrator programme (CDVP) across Teesside. This work focuses on safety planning and support for the women whilst their partner is participating on the programme.

Sexual Violence Counselling

The Harbour sexual violence counselling service provides therapeutic support for adults who have been raped or sexually abused.

REDUCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PLAN

Lead : Chief Inspector Operations (Ted Allen)
Deputy: Community Safety Manager (Marilyn Davies/Steven Hume)

What do we know about this issue?

Our yearly Partnership Strategic Assessment tells us that:

1. Violence against the person has reduced by 3.1% in the last 12 month period, however the elements of DV within this crime type has not reduced.
2. Domestic violence has increased during the same period by 7.4% and represented 33% of all violent crime.
3. 85% of domestic violence incidents had a female victim.
4. Males commit 64% of non domestic related violence.
5. Over two thirds of victims of domestic violence had children living with them and there were child protection issues with 30%.
6. For Most Serious Violence of the female victims (15%) a third of offences were linked to domestic violence.
7. Victims from the BME community account for only 3% of reported domestic violence.
8. Repeat victimisation is common in domestic violence and has a 10% repeat rate with 80 victims subject to two or more crimes.
9. 23% of Probation clients have Violence Against the Person as their offence.
10. 47% of female clients with Probation are victims of domestic violence and 37% of male clients are perpetrators of domestic violence.

The DV Away Day held in February 2011 identified the following areas for development:

1. An Integrated Offender Management approach should be used to work with the most prolific perpetrators of DV. This should include intense support work with the top 10 families affected by DV.
2. A business case for DV preventative work within Health should be developed.
3. Review the involvement of Health in the rape and sexual health counselling service provided by Harbour and funded by the council.

What we will do.

We will:

1. Extend the Integrated Offender Management approach to work with prolific perpetrators of Domestic Violence offering enhanced support to their victims and families.
2. Improve data sharing for domestic violence to include health and other partners.
3. Increase the number of completions on our male perpetrator programme.
4. Develop an Action Plan for the top ten DV perpetrators/families to ensure an integrated partnership response is in place.
5. Provide intensive support for repeat cases of domestic violence that are presented to the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference).
6. Sustain the Safe at Home scheme to enable victims of domestic violence to remain in their home if it is safe for them to do so.
7. Commission a DV service for the Borough from 2012.
8. Put in place a monitoring system within Health starting with A & E and GP services to facilitate the development of a business case for preventative work.
9. Begin a dialogue with Health about the future funding arrangements of the rape and sexual violence counselling service provided by Harbour.
10. Look at assessment processes to ensure that they are robust and fit for purpose.
11. Provide awareness raising sessions in the health arena to empower health providers to deal with DV.
12. Adopt Government guidance for Domestic Violence Homicide reviews.
13. Quarterly monitoring reports will be taken to the DVSG and SSP and an in depth discussion will be held yearly at SSP on this topic.

Performance measures

	Measure	Timescale	Lead
1	<p>Reduce repeat perpetrators of Domestic Violence</p> <p>Use a baseline taken from 2010/11 to identify offenders who re-offend 6 months after completing a Perpetrator Programme.</p>	<p>Reduce the number of perpetrators of DV who re-offend 6 months after completing a programme year on year. Baseline of 23 repeat perpetrators known to the police prior to completion of the programme taken from 2010/11.</p>	<p>Marilyn Davies/Steven Hume</p>
2	<p>Increase the number of repeat victims in MARAC accessing support from Harbour.</p> <p>Increase the take up of support using a baseline taken from identifying numbers offered support against those accessing support during 2011/12.</p>	<p>Baseline taken from 2011/12</p> <p>Increase year on year.</p>	<p>Marilyn Davies/Steven Hume</p>

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