

Domestic violence and violence against women and girls

Strategy 2013 – 2016



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1. Foreword

This is the first Domestic Violence and Violence against Women and Girls (DV and VAWG) strategy for Barnet aimed at practitioners working with children and adults across all services including health, police and the voluntary sector and it is ambitious.

Our previous achievements in the area of domestic violence are noted in this strategy and we now want to broaden our work. Through this wide ranging strategy and action plan, we are demonstrating our concern across all violence to women and girls in our community and our ambition to tackle it.

As a borough we want to develop a comprehensive response to DV and VAWG, which includes all agencies working together so that we are able to prevent abuse before it happens and stop it from happening again, make sure victims and their families are provided with information, support and care by a knowledgeable workforce. It is important that staff know what to do and that together we challenge attitudes and beliefs that underpin DV and VAWG. We will continue to hold perpetrators accountable for their behaviour and support them to change their behaviour.

This DV and VAWG strategy and replaces the previous work of the borough in addressing domestic violence alone. While it includes this work it has a wider vision which now reflects the national position emphasising prevention across the issues of rape and sexual violence, forced marriage, prostitution, sexual exploitation, trafficking, honour based violence, Female Genital Mutilation and sexual harassment. In order to implement the strategy we have developed an action plan which sits alongside this strategy.

Resources are limited and it is important to understand the high human and fiscal cost of DV and VAWG. Research estimates that responding to domestic violence alone costs our borough £38 million a year¹.

This highlights the need to improve our data in order to understand local needs and develop our preventative work. The intention is to make significant savings across partner organisations and reduce the harm caused to victims, their children and families and the wider community. We must also maintain a strong justice system working with partners in the criminal justice system holding perpetrators to account in order to stop repeat violence.

A strong partnership approach will best encourage a bold and creative response across a range of services and emphasise the message that we all have a role to play in ending violence against women.



¹ The Cost of Domestic Violence: by local authority, Trust for London and the Henry Smith Charity (2011)

2. Introduction

This first ‘Domestic Violence and Violence against Women and Girls’ strategy for Barnet has been introduced as a wider-reaching development of the previous Domestic Violence Strategy 2010-2013.

The strategy sets out our vision with four themes: partnership, prevention, protection and provision.

It has been developed following consultation meetings with the Domestic Violence Forum, the Domestic Violence Operational Board and the Domestic Violence Strategy Board and has been agreed by the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board which oversees the plan. These groups comprise services which will work to deliver the strategy including Children’s Services, Adult Services, Police, Housing, Health, Probation, Substance Misuse services, the Domestic Violence Forum, Victim Support, Domestic Violence services, and mental health services as well as the third sector.

It lays out the commitment of partners to work together to address local needs and develop a strong partnership response and it addresses priorities identified in the Safer Communities Partnership Board Plan.

Addressing all forms of violence against women will ensure that not only do we address the consequences of domestic violence but we address prevention of the wide range of violence which is disproportionately perpetrated on women, such as rape and sexual violence, forced marriage, sexual assault, Female Genital Mutilation, honour based violence, prostitution and sexual exploitation. We also want to ensure that men and boys who are affected by these forms of violence are included in our aims and that services address their needs too.

Priorities on partnership and data

As this is the first year of this strategy our immediate actions will be on strengthening our partnership approach to ensure we have a consistent response across services; a wide range of services and partners whose work impacts upon DV and VAWG will be encouraged to develop understanding of the issues and to address them as priorities in shared action plans.

A priority in our first year will be developing a robust way to collect data to inform our understanding of DV and VAWG in Barnet, assess local needs and support future work. Currently data collected is mainly around domestic violence and we need to broaden the data collected to reflect the wider issues of VAWG. We will discuss and work with partners to audit current data, clarify new outcomes required, structure and develop shared definitions so partners are able to compare information more easily.

This strategy and action plan outlines governance and monitoring arrangements and will be used across the partnership to raise awareness, inform commissioning of services, improve prevention, develop provision and ensure perpetrators are held to account.

3. Our Vision

We want to ensure that people who experience any form of DV and VAWG get the help and support they need.

We have achieved a significant amount in our response to domestic violence and we will further develop and improve this, whilst giving equal attention and effort to the other forms of VAWG.

In order to achieve this we have four strategic objectives/themes; they reflect the structure of national and regional policy and provide a platform for us to build and deliver an effective response to all aspects of DV & VAWG:

Partnership – ensuring that the coordinated community response model to domestic violence and violence against women and girls is developed and implemented locally with partners.

Prevention – to prevent violence against women and girls from happening in the first place, by changing attitudes and preventing violence, intervening early to prevent it, awareness raising campaigns, safeguarding and educating children and young people, early identification and training².

Provision – helping women and girls to continue with their lives (effective provision of services, specialist services and support; emergency and acute services; refuges and safe accommodation).

Protection – delivering an effective criminal justice system (investigation, prosecution, victim support and protection and perpetrator programmes).

The strategy aims to coordinate services in Barnet in support of the wider safeguarding agenda and to ensure the following:

Survivors and their children

Survivors and their children are able to access a consistent range of co-ordinated support services that maximise safety, reduce repeat victimisation and acknowledge their individual needs and experiences and that systems of early identification and a proactive response to DV & VAWG are in place to reduce risks.

Perpetrators

Perpetrators are held accountable by a range of interventions that reduce risk, provide clear messages that their behaviour is not acceptable and are provided with specialist support to change their behaviour.

Commissioners of services and senior management

Commissioners are committed to mainstreaming responses to DV & VAWG; ensure allocation of sufficient resources for specialist services; implement robust and comprehensive monitoring systems to ensure equality and effectiveness of services; provide good practice guidance, training and support to practitioners and improve effectiveness through better coordination, information sharing and allocation of existing funds.

The people of Barnet

The people of Barnet live in a safer community; are informed of support services; have an increased understanding of DV and VAWG, challenge the social tolerance of DV and VAWG in their communities.

² See Appendix 2 for list of training subjects we intend to cover

4. Context

Context is always relevant to people who experience any form of DV and VAWG.

What is violence against women and girls?

This strategy adopts the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the elimination of violence against women³.

“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.”

‘Violence against women and girls’ defines the range of serious violent crime types which are predominantly, but not exclusively, experienced by women and girls which include the following:

- sexual violence, abuse and exploitation
- sexual harassment and bullying
- stalking
- trafficking and forced prostitution
- domestic violence
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- crime committed in the name of ‘honour’.

Domestic Violence updated definition

In March 2013 the Home Office revised the definition of domestic violence to include those aged 16-17 and changed the wording to reflect coercive control. The definition of domestic violence and abuse now states:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.”

This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional.

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.”

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called ‘honour’ based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

³ (1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women). This is in line with HM Government’s strategy Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls strategy 2010 and the Mayor of London strategy The Way Forward 2010.

Including young people aged 16 and 17 years

The change to the definition of DV to include young people is welcomed, as it will help raise awareness that young people experience domestic violence in their own intimate relationships. This will mean that our safeguarding children systems in Barnet will need to be reviewed to ensure that are equipped to respond appropriately to younger victims. The responsibilities of the multi-agency partnership for the aspects of DV and VAWG affecting children and young people will need to be reviewed so that there is agreement of the strategic ownership for these areas. We have included this work as objectives in our DV and VAWG action plan.

What does our strategy mean for men and boys?

The term violence against women and girls can be accompanied by concern about the exclusion of men and boys from services and a failure to recognise that men and boys can experience similar forms of violence and abuse.

By adopting the definition of VAWG used by the UN and the government we accept that women and girls are disproportionately victims

of all forms VAWG and consequently men are over represented as abusers. We believe that it is helpful to define VAWG as “any form of violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately”. The term ‘disproportionately’ allows this approach to include men and boys as they too can be victims of VAWG. Helpfully and very specifically, this definition and strategy also understands that some forms of VAWG are gender specific such as female genital mutilation.

It is important that men and boys, who are affected by violence, including domestic and sexual violence, are included in all aspects of the strategy particularly our prevention and awareness raising work. We are committed to ensuring that any victim of DV or VAWG receives a sensitive and appropriate response so that they get the help and support they need.

We hope to engage more men and boys in this through working closely with www.whiteribboncampaign.org.uk

**DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE**

Forms of DV and VAWG

(Excerpt from 'The Way Forward' (Mayors Strategy) 2010-13)

Domestic/intimate partner violence

A pattern of coercive control, which includes combinations of physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse by a current or former partner. In extreme cases this includes murder.

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C)

Involves the complete or partial removal or alteration of external genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is mostly carried out on young girls at some time between infancy and the age of 15. Unlike male circumcision, which is legal in many countries, it is now illegal across much of the globe, and its extensive harmful health consequences are widely recognised

Forced marriage

A marriage conducted without valid consent of one or both parties, where duress is a factor.

'Honour' based violence

Violence committed to protect or defend the 'honour' of a family and/ or community. Women, especially young women, are the most common targets, often where they have acted outside community boundaries of perceived acceptable feminine/sexual behaviour. In extreme cases the woman may be killed.

Prostitution and trafficking

Women and girls are forced, coerced or deceived to enter into prostitution and/or to keep them there. Trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation and exploitation of women and children for the purposes of prostitution and domestic servitude across international borders and within countries ('internal trafficking').

Sexual violence including rape

Sexual contact without the consent of the woman/girl. Perpetrators range from total strangers to relatives and intimate partners, but most are known in some way. It can happen anywhere – in the family/household, workplace, public spaces, social settings, during war/ conflict situations.

Sexual exploitation

Involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where someone receives 'something' (for example, food, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, protection money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/ or emotional vulnerability. Young women and girls involved in or connected to gangs are at risk of sexual exploitation by gang members.

Sexual harassment

Unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can take place anywhere, including the workplace, schools, streets, public transport and social situations. It includes flashing, obscene and threatening calls, and online harassment.

Stalking

Repeated (i.e. on at least two occasions) harassment causing fear, alarm or distress. It can include threatening phone calls, texts or letters; damaging property; spying on and following the victim.

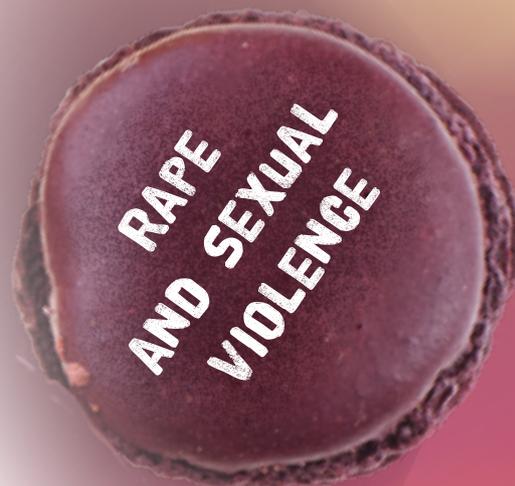
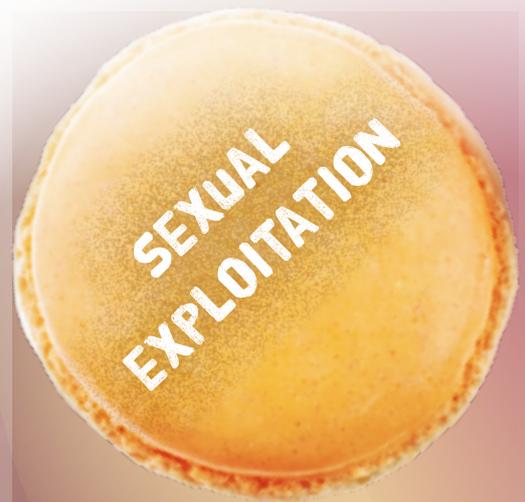
5. National Policy Framework

We have now incorporated our response to Domestic Violence into our wider VAWG agenda. We believe this will improve services and help for victims, their families and abusers and will ensure our work here in Barnet is in line with government policy and recognised best practice.

The national VAWG policy framework and local strategic links

The VAWG policy framework as set out by the government and the Greater London Authority (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) is established and provides us with a valuable framework to start our VAWG response with.

- 2011 Council of Europe Convention on Violence Against Women (the Convention defines and criminalises various forms of VAWG and is the first legally binding instrument to provide a legal framework).
- The Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls (updated March 2013) Coalition government strategy/action plan. Themes are: preventing violence; provision of services; partnership working; risk reduction and justice outcomes.
- The Mayor's Strategy: The Way Forward, 'Taking Action to End Violence Against Women and Girls (2010-2013). Themes are: London takes global lead to end violence against women and girls; Improving access to support; Address health, social and economic consequences of violence; Protecting women and girls at risk; Getting tougher with perpetrators.
- Mayoral Strategy on Violence against Women and Girls (MOPAC) 2013-2017.
- Taskforce on the Health Aspects of Violence Against Women and Children, Department of Health (2010).
- Protecting People, Promoting Health, Department of Health (2012).
- Public Health Outcomes Framework (2012).



6. Local Policy⁴ Framework

This strategy addresses priorities within the following local plans:

- Safer Communities Action Plan 2012/13
- Council's Corporate Plan 2013-16
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2008/09-2011/12
- Local Safeguarding Children Board Work plan
- Barnet Children and Young People Plan 2013-2016.

Engagement with the new health system

We have new opportunities for joint working with health as public health is now placed within the local authority and this will help strengthen strategic links with this work especially on the prevention of violence and crime

reduction, linking with Public Health roles and responsibilities. The Public Health Outcomes Framework includes DV and sexual violence indicators, which will support this strategy. We will need to ensure that all health partners across the system (Clinical Commissioning Group, Public Health, and Hospital Trust, mental health, primary care and community services care providers) are engaged in this strategy and action plan.

Health and Wellbeing Board

We will also engage with the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure the strategy is shared.

⁴ See Appendix 1 for details of relevant sections of plans

Operational Structure of DV & VAWG Strategy and Action Plan 2013

Safer Communities Partnership Board

DV and VAWG Strategy Board

This is now the DV and VAWG Delivery Board

Domestic Violence and VAWG Forum

MARAC Steering Group

MARAC

7. Information and data about DV and VAWG

Barnet

Information about DV and VAWG that we do have is heavily biased towards data on DV and is mostly linked to police reporting. However it is nationally recognised that the police remain unaware of 81 per cent of domestic abuse victims⁵.

Our data on the wider issues of violence against women and girls in Barnet is limited reflecting the national picture. One of the key actions for the first year of this new strategy is to develop work with partners on our data collection and monitoring in order to develop a needs assessment that can inform this new work area. This will require the support and cooperation of the partnership to establish key baseline data and prioritise areas of need.

Police Reporting Domestic Violence Offences

For the period 2011/12 there were 3.41 offences (per 1000 population) DV reported to the police in Barnet, making us second in London.

Costs of Domestic Violence in Barnet

The total costs of domestic violence to Barnet have been estimated to be **£38 million** (not including human and emotional costs and pro rated by population⁶). Costs included in this total sum of £38 million are:

- Physical and mental health care
£11.4 million
- Criminal justice £8.3 million
- Social Services £1.1 million
- Housing £0.8 million.

⁵ Way Forward' Mayors Strategy 2010-2013

⁶ The Cost of Domestic Violence: by local authority, Trust for London and the Henry Smith Charity (2011)

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

The MARAC aims to review and co-ordinate service provision in high risk of harm domestic violence cases. The aim is to reduce repeat victimisation and prevent DV homicides. Cases discussed at the MARAC have been risk assessed as cases where the victim is considered to be at risk of death or significant harm. MARACs review approximately the top ten per cent of all DV incidents that reported.

In the period 1 April 2011-31 March 2012 there were a total of 163 cases discussed at the MARAC which involved a total of 183 children.

Each high risk case of domestic violence discussed at the MARAC costs the public purse £20,000 and health services £5,000 per victim⁷. Using this formula we know that the 163 cases discussed in the last year of the MARAC's operation, **cost the public purse in Barnet just over £3.25 million and health services £815 000.**

Domestic Homicide

Barnet has had one domestic homicide in 2012 and two in 2013; this has been reviewed in accordance with new Home Office Domestic homicide review guidelines.

London and National Data

National

Key statistics on domestic abuse in the UK⁸:

- one in four women and one in seven men report being abused by their partner

⁷ Saving lives, saving money: MARACs and high risk domestic abuse CAADA 2010

⁸ Beyond Violence: Breaking Cycles of Domestic Violence, Centre for Social Justice July 2012

- one in five women are sexually assaulted by a family member
- one in five women and one in ten men are stalked by a family member
- in the year 2009/10, there were approximately 1.2 million female victims and 700,000 male victims of domestic abuse
- men are the victims in approximately 27 per cent of domestic abuse incidents
- 24 per cent of victims of domestic violence experienced three or more incidents of abuse in the past year; this equates to approximately 1.5 per cent of the adult female population, and 0.7 per cent of the adult male population
- on average two women are killed every week in the UK by their partner or ex (in the year)
- 2009/10, 94 women were killed and 21 men were killed by their partner or ex
- both women and men aged between 16 and 24 are at highest risk for domestic abuse compared to older groups
- people with a long-term illness or disability are more likely to experience domestic abuse than those without these conditions
- women who are separated are at the highest risk of domestic abuse.

Domestic violence data across London⁹:

- there were 53,069 domestic violence crimes reported in London during the 12 months from March 2008 to March 2009 – a 4.4 per cent increase compared to the previous year
- three per cent of the total NHS budget goes to treating the physical health of victims of domestic violence

- London has higher rates of domestic violence than the average for England and Wales.

VAWG Data across London¹⁰

Violence against women

- London has the highest rate of female victimisation in England and Wales
- compared to the rest of the country, London has the lowest percentage of successful outcomes (measured as convictions of prosecuted cases) for violence against women offences (only 62 per cent were successful last year compared to 72 per cent nationally).

Sexual offences:

- women in London are more likely to report that they are worried about being raped (48.1 per cent) and fear violent crime (70 per cent)
- the rape conviction rate in England and Wales is 6.5 per cent. This is the second lowest conviction rate in Europe after Scotland
- on average, just ten per cent of rapes are reported to the police
- a woman is more likely to be sexually assaulted than she is to get breast cancer
- seventy-six per cent of the women refugees and asylum seekers at a single service in London had been raped
- there were 2,180 recorded rape offences in London for the 12 months between March 2008 and March 2009.21 – this is an increase of 14.5 per cent over the last year
- London Ambulance Service is called to approximately 450 rape/sexual assault incidents per year

9 Mayors Strategy 'The Way Forward' 2013

10 ibid

- only 22 per cent of serious sexual violence offences are brought to justice
- the police remain unaware of 87 per cent of serious sexual assault victims
- the number of ‘multiple perpetrator rapes’ 25 has increased from 71 in 2003/04 to 93 in 2008/09.²⁶ the actual number of women and girls affected is likely to be much higher.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):

- an estimated 6.3 per cent of pregnancies in inner London and 4.6 per cent in outer London are to women with FGM.²⁹
- there have been no convictions for FGM since it was outlawed in 1985, compared to 100 in France.

Trafficking and Prostitution

- between 1,000 and 10,000 women and girls are trafficked into the UK each year for sexual exploitation.³⁰ Many are trafficked to or through London
- around 6,000 of the estimated 8,000 women involved in off-street prostitution in London’s brothels, ‘saunas’ and ‘massage parlours’ are foreign nationals-it is believed that a significant number of them have been trafficked
- there are estimated to be around 80,000 people involved in prostitution in the UK
- women involved in prostitution are some of the most vulnerable in our communities and are likely to be victims of serious physical and sexual violence-women in prostitution in London suffer from a mortality rate that is 12 times the national average.

Forced Marriages

- an estimated 1,000 British Asian girls/young women are forced into marriage each year

- the Forced Marriage Unit recorded 1,618 cases of forced marriage across the UK in 2008.³⁵ Of these cases, 339 were identified in London.

‘Honour’ Based Violence:

- nationally, there are around 12 so-called ‘honour’ murders a year
- the Metropolitan Police recorded 256 incidents linked to ‘honour’ in the year 2008/09, of which 132 were criminal offences – this is a 60 per cent rise for the year to April 2009.



8. Monitoring and measuring the impact of our actions

The action plan that sits alongside our strategy will help us ensure that we succeed and deliver this DV and VAWG strategy.

The strategy and action plan will be monitored regularly so that the partnership is clear about what progress is being made. Effective review and monitoring will be important as the DV and VAWG agenda is wider than we have tackled previously and the work will be challenging and complex.

The action plan will be monitored through a series of reporting arrangements within the Barnet partnership. Barnet Safer Communities Partnership will have ultimate responsibility for delivery of the strategy and action plan.

Review of structures

In the early part of the strategy we have to review and re-organise the meeting structures in order to ensure it is extended to cover all aspects of DV and VAWG.

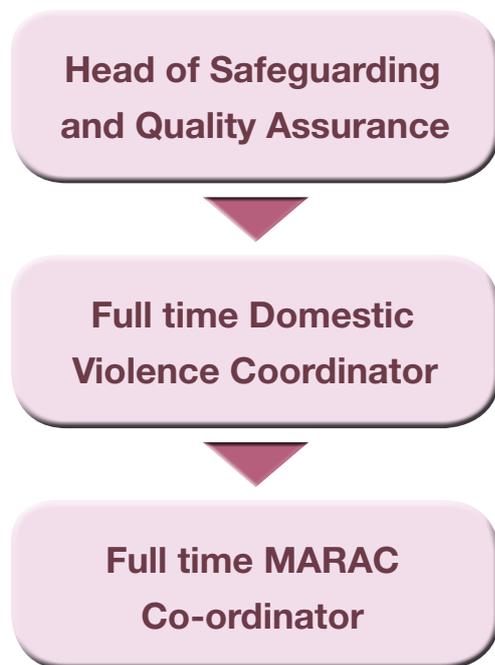
We also need to agree arrangements and responsibilities for DV and VAWG with other strategic groups, specifically groups responsible for young people, and adults at risk of harm.

It has been agreed to merge the DV and VAWG Strategy Board and the DV and VAWG Operational Group into one board; namely the DV and VAWG Delivery Board. The revised DV and VAWG Delivery Board will be responsible for overseeing the progress of the action plan. This will be done with support from the DV and VAWG Forum. The DV and VAWG Delivery Board will receive quarterly updates on the entire action plan. It will identify and agree the risks to delivery and will report these to the

Safer Communities Partnership Board (and other boards where this is deemed necessary/appropriate).

- **Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board** – is responsible for delivering the Safer Community Strategy and has the specific aim to reduce crime and anti-Social Behaviour: and ensure residents feel safe.
- **DV and VAWG Delivery Board** – this board exists to ensure that there is a robust, coordinated response to DV and VAWG working at a strategic and operational level across the partnership in Barnet – it does this by making clear the roles, responsibilities and commitments of partner agencies to ensure that outcomes and targets in the action plan are agreed and delivered.
- **DV and VAWG Forum with an independent chairperson** – this forum is a networking space for practitioners, where best practice is shared and it works to support victims of domestic violence and aims to reduce DV and VAWG in the borough.

Staffing – based within Safeguarding Children’s Division from Jan 2013



Achievements since the last strategy

Whilst we recognise we still have a significant amount of work to do in delivering a comprehensive response to DV and VAWG, we have achieved meaningful success with our work on domestic violence in the last three years. The challenge will be to continue this level of achievement on DV whilst broadening it out to cover the other forms of VAWG so that they equally benefit from our commitment and efforts.

Since the last domestic violence strategy we have achieved the following:

1. Raise awareness of domestic violence across all agencies and among the public to change attitudes enable early intervention and help to prevent violence:

- the council has a new domestic violence web page and a MARAC web page- within this there is a practitioner’s page that contains up to date information, including referral pathways for different agencies and council departments

- monthly MARAC training sessions continue to be delivered across the partnership to ensure the MARAC system is effective and high risk victims of domestic violence are supported
- the borough’s domestic violence forum participated in the ‘Safeguarding Month’ events for borough
- we have promoted our domestic violence services to all residents through features included in Barnet First magazine and community engagement events
- designing a DV training programme for the partnership – this will run from January 2013, on a level 1 basic DV awareness, level 2, in-depth DV training and level 3 which is the MARAC training- separate VAWG training modules will also be provided.

2. Ensure safe and effective provision that enables domestic violence survivors and their children to continue with their lives:

- we have successfully commissioned Solace Women’s Aid to deliver the DV Services in the borough from 1 April 2012 till 31 March 2014 – Solace Women’s Aid will deliver with other specialist DV services the following:
- two refuges, 18 bed spaces, one is with Jewish Women’s Aid
- an independent DV Advocacy and Support Service, with an Independent DV Advocate for the Specialist Domestic Violence Court, alongside Barnet Asian Women’s Association.
- a perpetrator service delivered by DVIP.
- we have supported the development of the North London Rape Crisis

service (along with the Mayor of London and other north London boroughs), provided by Solace Women's Aid, to provide help, support and counselling for victims of rape and sexual violence

- developed links with Barnet Homes to improve the response to people at risk of homelessness due to domestic violence
- developed links with services to support difficult and complex cases such as substance misuse and mental health services.

3. Understand, identify and safeguard the needs of children and young people whose lives are affected by domestic violence.

- improved the response of Children's Service to DV – the service now has in place
- within social care, three specialist DV workers who work with and support families affected by domestic violence who are deemed to be vulnerable and high risk
- a Safer Families Team, which works around early intervention staffed by three DV workers, who work with children up to 11 years old
- the new Troubled Families Unit that will also work with families affected by DV
- worked alongside the Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board and Barnet Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure that DV is included in their work.

4. Deliver an effective criminal justice system to ensure perpetrators are held accountable for their actions in a way that maximises the safety of survivors and their children and reduces repeat victimisation.

- in accordance with the legal requirements we have held and completed a multi-agency domestic homicide review (the report was reviewed by the Home in early 2013)
- continue to support the work of the Specialist DV Court at Hendon Magistrates court and commissioning an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) to support victims.

5. Ensure a proactive response through co-ordinated action across all agencies, based on consistent and well-informed policy, systems, resource sharing and leadership.

- work has been done to strengthen the MARAC which now meets every three weeks, and we have set up a MARAC steering group that is chaired by the police to oversee its work and continue to deliver an excellent coordinated response to high risk victims of domestic violence.

Appendix 1

Safer Communities Strategy 2011-2014

Priority 3 – Violent crime with specific focus on domestic violence

Lead agency – Metropolitan Police

Fortunately levels of violent crime are lower in Barnet than many other Boroughs, but the severity of these crimes makes it essential that they are tackled robustly.

DV is a high priority. As the most populous borough in London, with a large number of children and young people, the potential impact of domestic violence on our communities is huge. We estimate at least a quarter of reported violent crimes are related to domestic violence (such as threatening behaviour, violence or abuse against adults who are or have been in intimate relationships or family members, old and young). We know this crime is vastly underreported and exists in a myriad of relationships. While primarily perpetrated by men on women, those in same sex relationships are also victims.

We need to encourage residents to report domestic violence incidents to the police and/or to other agencies who can support victims and survivors. Our new campaign 'Taking the First Step' will start to address this.

Barnet's Domestic Violence Strategy Board ensures all agencies respond to and tackle domestic violence in a joined up way. It is co-chaired by the Director of Children's Service and the Police Borough Commander and reports directly to the Safer Communities Partnership Board.

The Strategic Assessment highlights the importance of focusing on repeat offending as a control strategy for reducing crime. This is

particularly relevant to domestic violence offences.

What will we do to achieve this?

- increase awareness of DV among agencies and residents through media activity
- implement the North London Rape Crisis Centre Service
- develop and implement effective perpetrator services
- ensure safe and effective interventions at the earliest opportunity so survivors can continue with their lives
- safeguard the needs of young people and vulnerable adults whose lives are affected by DV
- deliver an effective criminal justice system to punish, deter and reduce repeat DV victimisation
- ensure integration with the Family Intervention project 'family focus'
- promote the use of the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

In addition we will continue to:

- ensure effective inter agency co-ordination against all forms of violence
- be robust in tackling problem licensed premises and in the prosecution of alcohol related violence
- tackle violent offenders through disrupting gangs and arresting individuals causing harm.

How will we know if we are succeeding?

Target	Baseline 2010/11
Total violence against the person crime rates per 1000 population	12.935 (4438 people)
Increase DV:	
(i) offences	(i) 10.29 (3529 people)
(ii) incidents reported per 1000 population	(ii) 3.55 (1218 people)
Reduction in % of repeat incidents of DV	21%

Appendix 2

Training

Training issues we intend to cover for our DV & VAWG training programme:

To include:

- forced marriage as a criminal offence
- forced marriage and learning disabilities
- vulnerable adults and domestic violence
- dynamics of domestic violence and best practice
- risk assessment and safety planning
- identification and enquiry
- Female Genital Mutilation identification, enquiry and safeguarding
- VAWG concerns within child protection supervision)
- stalking and harassment – best practice and legislation
- risk factors and identification of sexual exploitation.



For more information:
tel: 0208 359 5625 email: manju.lukhman@barnet.gov.uk
or visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/domestic-violence