

Barnet Safer Communities Partnership

Barnet Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy

2022-2025



SAFER COMMUNITIES
PARTNERSHIP



Keeping Barnet Safe

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

Our partnership approach to tackling Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls in Barnet

Supported by:

Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board

Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Group

Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls Forum



Dedication

Four domestic homicide reviews were undertaken for five Barnet residents who have lost their lives because of domestic abuse during the four years of the last VAWG Strategy.

This document and all our work is dedicated to them.

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Foreword

This Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2022-25 sets out our vision for Barnet to be a borough where everyone can live free of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

We are committed to working with all partners and communities following the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, and to improve the support and response for all victims and survivors in Barnet.

Our approach retains a clear focus on women and girls' experiences, whilst also recognising that anyone including men and boys can be victims and survivors.

Our aim is to ensure that all victims and survivors receive appropriate service responses and are able to access support irrespective of additional barriers they may face when seeking help.

We want Barnet residents to feel safe at home; in their place of education; at work; and in the community. We will make early intervention and prevention the foundation of our approach, support all victims and survivors to report, access help and recover, pursue perpetrators and engage them in behaviour change interventions to eliminate harm to victims and their families, strengthen the partnership response and work together for safer streets, community and public spaces in Barnet.



**Councillor Jennifer Grocock
Chairman, Safer Communities Partnership Board**

Our action plan sets out how we will deliver these objectives through a partnership approach. It demonstrates the strong commitment made by all our partners to deliver the DA and VAWG Strategy 2022-25. The accountability for the progress and the performance monitoring of the action plan lies with the Safer Communities Partnership Board.

Our conversations with survivors and the practitioners who support them has assisted in the development of this strategy and I would like to express my thanks to those courageous survivors who came forward during our consultations.

We also want to ensure that we continue to understand the needs of survivors and their families. This will help us to provide the best response we can, to intervene at the right time and provide them with the help they want to stay safe and recover. We are committed to continue listening to victims and survivors as their voices will be the best measure of our intended outcomes to eliminate violence against women and girls in Barnet.

This refreshed DA and VAWG strategy 2022-25 will be our next three years commitment to making Barnet a safe place free of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.





I am excited and pleased to support the Barnet Council Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy.

Tackling violence is a top priority for the Metropolitan Police Service, including crimes that disproportionately affect women and girls. Our officers are working tirelessly to combat violence perpetrated by men against women and to improve and rebuild confidence with our local communities. I recognise there is much more we need to and must do to ensure women are safe and feel safe.

Where a crime has been committed, we will take action to bring perpetrators to justice and support victims through the judicial process. This strategy focuses on identifying practical solutions, working with our partners and other agencies to make a difference to women’s safety. Our guiding principle is that offenders offend and survivors will not be held responsible for the violence against them, and that they will be

empowered to control and make decisions for themselves.

I want to increase women’s confidence in the police so as to improve the reporting of crimes which disproportionately affect women and girls. We use this information to inform our public space patrol strategy, target repeat victimisation and high harm offenders. Even if no crime has been committed, we signpost victim-survivors to effective support agencies and third sector providers within their communities.

Our ambition is greater than just responding to reported crimes. We want to see them eradicated and are committed to working in partnership with other parts of the criminal justice system and the wider public sector to make this happen. This will include education and prevention work with children and young people, both in our schools and communities, and working with third sector agencies to raise awareness. The VAWG strategy is a commitment to making our communities safer places to live, work and visit.



Chief Supt Sara Leach - NW BCU Commander



Barnet’s Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2022 – 2025 sets out an ambitious programme of delivery and a clear message that to end violence against women and girls we need to work together.

As a partnership we must do all we can to provide education, change attitudes, call out harassing, sexist and violent behaviour when we see it and hear it, provide support to victims and bring those that cause harm to others to justice.

Our Violence Against Women and Girls partnership is strengthened by working together with Barnet residents, voluntary and statutory organisations, ambassadors, champions and policy makers, to raise awareness, educate and campaign to bring about change. Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls are preventable problems.

The domestic abuse data from the Crime Survey for England

and Wales (CSEW) showed that an estimated 2.3 million adults aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2021; it is a crime that disproportionally affects women and girls with victims accounting for 73% of domestic abuse-related crimes in the year ending March 2021.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduces a new statutory definition of domestic abuse and provides absolute clarity that domestic abuse can take many different forms including verbal, psychological, emotional and economic as well as physical and sexual. The evidence of the harm caused to children and young people who see, hear and experience domestic abuse is well documented, as such, I am pleased to also see the recognition within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 of children as victims.

I look forward to supporting the partnership to achieve these aims so all residents of Barnet can grow, live, go to school and work in safety.



**Tina McElligott
Chair of VAWG Delivery Group and Director,
Early Help & Children’s Social Care Services**

Executive Summary

In 2017, the first Barnet partnership VAWG strategy 2017-20 was published with a clear message: we wanted to ensure victims and survivors are able to escape abuse and be safe, access services that build resilience, reduce the risk of families reaching crisis point and reduce the impact on children. We also wanted to hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour.

Great progress has been made since the launch of the strategy, and we continue to see the impact it is making. This new DA and VAWG strategy 2022-2025 celebrates the progress made and sets out the new commitments to tackling domestic abuse (DA) and Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) in Barnet. The strategy has been written in collaboration with survivors to ensure their experiences are central to our partnership approach.

Our Vision

“Our vision is for all residents of Barnet, especially women and girls, to live free of domestic abuse and all forms of VAWG. Working with our partners, we will raise awareness and work to prevent violence and abuse in the home, places of learning and employment, and in the community. The Partnership has zero tolerance for abuse and violence, perpetrators will be held to account and victims and survivors will be able to access the support and help they need.”

Our Aim

This strategy sets out our partnership commitment following the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, to improve the support and response for all victims and survivors in Barnet, and to hold perpetrators to account.

This strategy will seek to:

- Enable all victims and survivors of DA and VAWG to feel safe and be able to access the support they need and deserve
- Increase awareness within the local community to create opportunities for people to report as part of their day-to-day interactions
- Reduce the prevalence of DA and VAWG by preventing more of these crimes in the first place through education and early intervention
- Increase the number of perpetrators of DA and VAWG brought to justice. Increase engagement with perpetrator behaviour change programmes
- Increase public confidence in the system and an increase in reporting to the police
- Build on the multi-agency partnership approach to improve outcomes

Our Partnership Objectives

In Barnet we have developed 5 shared partnership objectives that we will all work towards to achieve the aims of the strategy, these are:

1. Early intervention and prevention of Domestic Abuse and VAWG
2. Support all victims and survivors to report, access help and recover
3. Pursue perpetrators and engage them in behaviour change interventions to eliminate harm to victims and their families
4. Strengthen the partnership response to improve multiagency working and information sharing to deliver improved outcomes
5. Working together for safer streets, community and public spaces



Background

National Context

The Government's 'Tackling violence against women and girls' strategy¹ was published in July 2021, it sets out how the government plan to prevent these crimes, improve the experiences of victims and survivors, ensure perpetrators are brought to justice, and improve the way different organisations work together. Both this new VAWG Strategy and the forthcoming Domestic Abuse Strategy will be supported by a revised National Statement of Expectations (NSE) to ensure that there is a consistent process for commissioning support services across the country. This Barnet strategy recognises the national strategy, and our supporting delivery action plan will remain flexible to take into account recommendations made in the forthcoming DA Strategy.

The Government strategy has a clear focus on women and girls' experiences of male violence and abuse, as does our Barnet strategy; it also recognises that men and boys are also affected by these crimes. In 2019 they published the first men and boys position paper which will be followed by a new position paper to be published in 2022. The first ever cross-government Male Victims' Position paper helped to clarify and strengthen the response to male victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking and so-called 'honour' based abuse. We are working with specialist agencies to ensure all victims and survivors - regardless of their gender identity and including transgender and non-binary survivors - can effectively access appropriate support in the borough of Barnet.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ('the 2021 Act') was passed in April 2021.² The Act creates for the first time, a statutory definition of domestic abuse to ensure that DA is properly understood, considered unacceptable and actively challenged across statutory agencies and in public attitudes. It provides absolute clarity and certainty that domestic abuse can take many different forms and can

be physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological, emotional, or other abuse and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 will transform our approach to tackling domestic abuse to create a society where domestic abuse is stopped, where victims feel safe and supported by strengthening protections for those who have experienced abuse and harm whilst also ensuring perpetrators feel the full force of the law.

Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 includes a new duty on Tier 1 local authorities (the Greater London Authority (GLA) in London) to provide support to survivors of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation, as well as a duty to publish a safe accommodation strategy, informed by a needs assessment.

The DA Act 2021 also creates consolidated new Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders; allowing police and courts to intervene earlier where abuse is suspected. The breach of these new orders will be a crime, aimed specifically at tackling domestic abuse, and will offer better and earlier protection for victims.

Definition of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

VAWG is both a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights. Locally we have adopted the United Nations Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women, which defines violence against women³ 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 [or girls], including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty' (1993, Article 1)



The definition incorporates a wide range of abusive behaviours including physical, sexual, financial, emotional or psychological violence, economic abuse and sexual exploitation.

VAWG can take place at home, work or in public places such as on the street or public transport. It is important that VAWG is not only seen as a series of incidents or assaults which an individual experiences; instead, VAWG describes violent and oppressive patterns of behaviour and practises which achieve power and control over women and girls. It impacts on the physical safety, health and emotional wellbeing of individuals and impacts on families, carers, children and the community as a whole.

This strategy covers the following forms of VAWG:

- sexual violence, abuse and exploitation
- sexual harassment and bullying
- stalking
- trafficking and forced prostitution
- domestic abuse
- coercive and controlling behaviour
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- abuse and violence committed in the name of 'Honour'

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

³ United Nations Declaration on Elimination of Violence towards Women (1993), <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm> (last accessed 27.06.16)

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021.

This 'landmark' Act will provide further protections to the millions of people who experience domestic abuse and strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators.

The Act will:

1. Create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that Domestic Abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, controlling or coercive, and economic.
2. Establish in law the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner and set out the Commissioner's functions and powers.
3. Provide for a new DA Protection Notice and DA Protection Order.
4. Place a duty on Local Authorities in England to provide accommodation-based support to victims of DA and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation (each relevant Local Authority in England must assess or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for accommodation-based support in it's area; prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of such support in it's area and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy).
5. Prohibit perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in the civil and family courts in England and Wales.
6. Create a statutory presumption that victims of DA are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts (inc. giving evidence from behind a screen). Victims of DA will not have to satisfy the fear/distress test.
7. Clarify the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under Section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989 to prevent family proceedings that can further traumatise victims.
8. Extend the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse.
9. Extend the offence of disclosing private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress (known as the 'revenge porn' offence) to cover threats to disclose such material.
10. Create a new offence of non-fatal strangulation or suffocation of another person.
11. Clarify by restating in statute law the general proposition that a person may not consent to the infliction of serious harm and, by extension, is unable to consent to their own death.
12. Extend the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences (the Act extends the jurisdiction of the UK courts so that, where appropriate, UK nationals and residents who commit certain violent and sexual offences outside the UK may be brought to trial in the UK).
13. Provide for a statutory Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Strategy.
14. Enable DA offenders to be subject to polygraph testing as a condition of their licence following their release from custody (a 3-year pilot).
15. Place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) on a statutory footing.
16. Provide that all eligible homeless victims of DA automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance.
17. Ensure that where a Local Authority, for reasons connected with DA, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an Assured Shorthold Tenancy) this must be a secure lifetime tenancy.
18. Prohibit GPs and other health professionals in general practice from charging a victim of DA for a letter to support an application for Legal Aid.
19. Provide for a statutory Code of Practice relating to the processing of DA data for immigration purposes.



It is expected that most of the provisions in the Act will come into force during 2021/2022

The Statutory definition of Domestic Abuse:

The Act creates, for the first time, a cross-government statutory definition of Domestic Abuse (DA), to ensure that DA is properly understood, considered unacceptable and actively challenged across statutory agencies and in public attitudes.

Behaviour of a person A towards another person B is domestic abuse if

A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional or other abuse

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

For the purposes of this Act A's behaviour may be behaviour towards B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (e.g. B's child).

Definition of personally connected

For the purposes of this Act, two people are personally connected to each other if any of the following applies

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

Child means a person under the age of 18

Controlling behaviour covers 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 the victim.



London Context

The London Mayor's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2018-2021 is due to be updated and refreshed in 2022. The Mayor now has new duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to support victims and survivors of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation. They include undertaking a needs assessment, producing a strategy, and commissioning services.

The Mayor's Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy⁴ is informed by the pan-London needs assessment and was published in December 2021. It sets out policies and proposals that will contribute to meeting the vision for London, in relation to the Part 4 duties, that all victims and survivors of domestic abuse, including children, are able to access and be supported by safe accommodation-based services, tailored to their needs, to enable them to move on with their lives.

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in their VAWG Action Plan, states that 'Tackling violence against women and girls should not be seen in isolation from the wider work of the Met to keep all of London safe. A substantial proportion of the Met's considerable resources is focussed on addressing violence against women and girls. However, we must do more and improve. This plan describes recent changes we have made and what else we are introducing to improve our response and raise confidence. Our approach reinforces the importance of victim care, and places victims at the heart of all activity we undertake.'

This partnership strategy for Barnet aligns with other key strategic plans across London and the action plan remains flexible to accommodate updates where needed once these strategies are published.



Barnet Context

Barnet Safer Communities Partnership (BSCP) brings together the Metropolitan Police, Barnet Council, London Fire Brigade, the criminal justice system, and other organisations involved with crime reduction and community safety. The partnership aims to reduce crime, re-offending and anti-social behaviour and ensure people in Barnet feel safe. This BSCP strategy highlights the importance of collaborative work between these key partner agencies but also the wider Barnet community including voluntary sector organisations; businesses; and education settings.

In recent years we have seen a step change in the number of these crimes recorded by the police and the number of referrals to our support services. Barnet Council, to support its commitment to tackling domestic abuse and VAWG, commissioned 4 specialist domestic abuse services namely the Advocacy and Support Service, 2 women's refuges, the perpetrator programme, the Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) programme to train GP surgeries staff on domestic abuse. The Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) was brought in-house to Barnet Council in April 2021. Barnet Homes runs the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop every Thursday morning. We want to ensure that by responding to domestic abuse and all forms of VAWG early on and focusing on preventing it, we will reduce the harm it causes to victims and survivors, their families, and the wider community.

We know that these terrible crimes are disproportionately gendered, however

we also recognise that anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse and our approach is framed within a DA and VAWG strategy to benefit all victims including men, boys, transgender, and non-binary people. Similarly, we also recognise that some of the offences covered in our definition of abuse and gendered violence can be committed by women. In Barnet we have conducted Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR) into the deaths of 2 males out of a total of 5 people who lost their lives between 2017 and 2019 because of domestic abuse.

We will ensure everyone's needs are represented in this strategy regardless of sex or gender, whilst also keeping a focus on women and girl's experiences in line with the national VAWG strategy. It is important to acknowledge that VAWG is often male violence against women and girls; we want men and boys to play a key role in challenging sexist and misogynistic views which perpetuate and underpin the abusive behaviours.

⁴ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/specialist-housing-and-services/mayors-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-strategy>

For rolling 12 months to March 2018 and for rolling 12 months to March 2021, domestic abuse incidents reported to the police in Barnet increased from 4757 to 5023 which is 5.6% increase. For the rolling 12 months to March 2018 the percentage of incidents that became offences increased from 53% to 60.5% in the 12 months to March 2021.

Barnet's rate of domestic abuse incidents in Barnet is 7.6 per 1000 population (12 months to March 2021). This was the 2nd lowest rate of all 32 London boroughs. However, the rate of DA incidents in Barnet is 7.8 per 1000 population (12 months to November 2021). In November 2021, Barnet became the borough with the third lowest rate of DA incidents across London.

There were 740 Domestic Abuse Violence with Injury offences recorded by Police in Barnet in the 12 months up to the end of December 2021; representing a 8.2% decrease when compared to the previous year.

In the 12 months to December 2021, for Violence with Injury Domestic Abuse Offences, 66 suspects were identified and proceeded against by the Police. This equates to a Sanction Detection Rate of 8.9% down from 14.6% on the previous year.

From January 2021 – December 2021, the number of referrals of high-risk cases of domestic abuse received were 511 (against 477 in 2020/2021) which is a 7% increase in referrals. There were 223 families (against 218 in 2020/21) with a total of 446 children (against 403 in 2020/21) referred to MARAC.

The percentage of repeat MARAC referrals in 2021 (January to December) is 21 % compared to 13.2% in 2019/2020.

Over the last 12 months in 2020/21, the Barnet Domestic Abuse Advocacy and Support Service received 1357 new referrals against 1360 in 2019/2020. The One Stop Shop has provided advice and support to 399 victims of Domestic Abuse in the 12 months to March 2021. The demand has been constant from 442 in 2019/20, 486 in 2018/19, 456 in 2017/18 and 324 in 2016/17.

During the life of the last strategy, as more victims and survivors came forward, we needed to ensure that they received the right support at the right time; we needed a transformation of service provision. Through our strategy we co-located IDVAs within adult Mental Health services, Children and Adult MASH, local Police station, and Barnet Homes One Stop Shop. We strengthened our work, improved prevention to change behaviour and attitudes, and developed our perpetrator programmes to stop reoffending. We have also committed funding to collocate an IDVA with our Family Services Early Help and Social Care team.

We introduced the IRIS programme in Barnet in 2018 following recommendations from a domestic homicide review. IRIS is a general practice based DA training, support, and referral programme for primary care staff.

IRIS Services work in partnership with General Practitioners (GPs) Surgeries and offer tailored training on the public health issue of domestic abuse. As at January 2022, Solace have engaged with 39 GP practices of which 27 are fully trained and 4 partially trained. A further 8 GPs have expressed their interests and are being booked for IRIS training.

Barnet Homes was successful for the fourth time to a bid of £100,000 per year to sustain women's refuge provision for women who are homeless because of fleeing domestic abuse and approach Barnet Homes.

We are making progress, however the number of people experiencing domestic abuse is still far too high. Despite record numbers of prosecutions and convictions for domestic abuse, there are approximately 2.3 million victims of domestic abuse aged 16 – 74 in the UK, two thirds of whom are women.

We have organised three major campaigns to raise awareness at community level on prevention of VAWG issues like harmful practices (Forced marriage, so-called honour-based abuse and Female Genital Mutilation), Modern Slavery, Trafficking and Prostitution and learning lessons from

a recent Domestic Homicide Review. The next campaign to be coordinated will be a Barnet wide campaign to raise awareness about domestic abuse and VAWG to increase awareness of support options with the aim of decreasing the number of victims who go unsupported; whilst also increasing knowledge of what constitutes abuse so that more people can identify and ask about abuse leading to opportunity for victims to tell someone in their day-to-day interactions.

Survivors have told us they didn't always feel believed when they told someone about abuse. We want domestic abuse to be properly understood and recognised in Barnet, so that we can provide victims with the services and support they are entitled to receive. We will continue with the delivery of multi-agency domestic abuse training and awareness programmes in the borough of Barnet. Between August and December 2021, we delivered a series of DA Act training sessions to raise awareness to multi agencies and in-house agencies' staff to ensure that all front-line staff understand the changes brought about by the DA Act 2021.

In 2020, COVID-19 touched our lives in nearly every way, everywhere, as we went into various lockdowns and movement was restricted to contain the spread of the virus. As doors closed and isolation began, reports of all forms of violence against women and girls, particularly domestic abuse, began to rise. In Barnet we ensured business continuity of domestic abuse support programmes during the lockdowns and all support for survivors of domestic abuse – although remotely- were available for those in need, even during the coronavirus pandemic. We have implemented a fourfold increase in the frequency of the MARAC meetings – a change from monthly to weekly MARAC meetings during lockdown. The MARAC partners dedicated their efforts in adjusting to the new ways of working to respond to the fast turnaround in keeping families affected by domestic abuse safe during the lockdown. We are highly appreciative to the charities, agencies, and service providers who work tirelessly and with such tremendous dedication in the borough of Barnet.



All of our commissioned services continued to offer support virtually during the lockdowns. We developed a poster which was circulated to police stations, supermarkets, all walk in centres, hospitals, health centres, maternity clinics, pharmacies, and councillors. We dedicated all the efforts to preventing the escalation of domestic abuse cases during the COVID-19 lockdowns to all the domestic abuse organisations, agencies, and service providers who worked passionately and with such impressive commitment in an amazing partnership in Barnet and supporting each other including Barnet Solace Women's Aid (Advocacy & Support service and women's refuges), Hestia, CCG, RISE Mutual Barnet Homes (housing) Adult and Children Social Care, Change Grow Live, Probation, Community Rehabilitation Centre, Mental health BEH MHT team, NWBCU Police and Victim Support. The Barnet Homes Domestic Abuse One Stop Coordinator working in partnership with Barnet Solace Women's Aid, Barnet Homes Housing Officer, Cyber Care, Asian Women Resource Centre, 2 Family law solicitors, and one immigration Solicitor continued to operate virtually during lockdown with increasing numbers of survivors calling for support and help.

It is by listening and learning from those who know what is needed on the frontline – the victims and survivors, and those who provide them with support that we maintained the excellence in the delivery of VAWG services throughout the pandemic. All key domestic abuse agencies met weekly

during lockdown to manage risks and share good practices.

While good progress has been made since the previous strategy, all partners in Barnet recognise the need to continue to develop our response to domestic abuse and VAWG. To ensure all victims get the right support at the right time, we will continue to drive an improvement to our service provision. We want to promote new approaches and establish and embed best practice to help victims, and their families, and hold perpetrators accountable and prevent them from re-offending. To improve provision, we want to focus on survivors facing additional barriers; parents and guardians experiencing abuse from their children; those with complex issues of mental ill-health, substance misuse and domestic abuse; and domestic abuse toward the elderly. We want to reach out to those in the most deprived areas of Barnet.

We will continue to make sure that our VAWG Forum and VAWG Delivery Group have access every quarter to examples of best local practice, all the monitoring VAWG data, evidence and analysis they need to provide an integrated and effective partnership response to prevent domestic abuse in Barnet.

We will continue to deliver a partnership response which focuses on the safety of adults and children, whilst developing the strategy to also prioritise longer term support and highlighting their ongoing support needs and recovery journey.

To develop this strategy and supporting action plan, we carried out extensive

consultation over a period of eight months. Between April and October 2021, the first phase of consultation took place across the borough to develop this strategy. The feedback from this phase of extensive consultation informed the development of the draft strategy and action plan. The draft documents then went to full public consultation from October 29th to December 20th, 2021. The consultations consisted of qualitative and quantitative elements. The qualitative consultations included survivors of domestic abuse, young people, practitioners, VAWG partners, staff and Council members. The quantitative public consultation included an online questionnaire.

Key partners agencies worked together to agree the partnership objectives and actions to achieve these. The partners will work collaboratively to deliver the aims of the strategy. Actions are defined in the supporting action plan. Acknowledgments are made to everyone involved at the end of this document.

We believe victims and survivors should remain at the heart of the strategy and this partnership approach. That is why we developed the strategy in collaboration with survivors who we thank for their contributions and are grateful to them for sharing their stories with us. We value them and believe they are central to measuring the success of this strategy and so we will continue to seek their feedback to ensure we keep on track with the objectives.

Safeguarding Adults

Domestic Abuse is one of the key priorities of Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board. Where appropriate we have ensured that the legal requirements of conducting a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) and a Domestic Homicide review (DHR) are aligned to ensure the recommendations and lessons learnt from a death involving domestic abuse of an adult at risk are communicated to all relevant staff, setting out the actions to further strengthen the partnership working on Safeguarding of adults at risk of domestic abuse. This strategy and action plan link to the action plans developed through local reviews.

Earlier in 2021 Barnet Council published its corporate plan⁵ (The Barnet Plan 2021-25) which sets out the council's priorities to 2025. This sets out the council's vision to provide the best possible services for residents in communities where there are opportunities to grow and thrive, and where everyone feels safe. To do this the council is committed to doing more to join up and strengthen its focus on the prevention activity. In delivering this strategy, we will work with services across the council, and in particular with Adult Social Care, where they identified priorities of prevention and early help; work with partners to improve access to mental health support for anyone impacted by domestic abuse; develop outreach to older people, LGBTQ+ residents, refugee communities and other under-represented groups; and on reducing domestic homicide.

The council will continue to work in partnership on this issue including communications, awareness, and training for frontline staff. The council will also lead on the development of a strategy on trafficking and modern slavery.

Serious Adult Violence panel

The Barnet Serious Adult Violence panel (SAV) has an overview of adults who have been convicted of serious violence offences but also those who are on the periphery and or at risk of committing serious violence. Part of the panel's analysis is to understand and respond to underlining triggers of violent behaviour and explore gaps in intelligence. From this, the panel formulates partnership resources and grass roots services to help tackle violence related issues with clear community and individual focused outcomes. The criteria of the panel, drug trafficking, violence, and group/gang offending overlaps into violence against women and girls in a number of ways. Women and girls may often be affected directly or indirectly by this cohort. As well aiming to reduce re-offending, SAV also aims to safeguard survivors by diverting and disrupting the behaviour of perpetrators.

Children and Families

The DA Act 2021 raises the status of children as victims in their own right. The new statutory definition states that any reference in the Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who sees or hears, or experiences the effects of the abuse, and who is related to the victim or the perpetrator.

The impact of domestic abuse on the adult victim/survivor and on children is severe and long-lasting and families live with domestic abuse for far too long before getting effective help – on average 2.7 years. Reducing the time it takes to find and help victims and their families is critical to stop murder, serious injury, and enduring harm. But there are still far too many missed opportunities to get help for families experiencing domestic abuse. Safelives data shows that 85% of victims sought help five times on average from professionals in the year before they got

effective help to stop the abuse. Each contact represents a chance for us to help the victim disclose and get help – a chance that was missed, leaving the family to live with abuse for longer.

The NSPCC⁶ helpline saw an increase of 35% in contacts about domestic abuse in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20. Contacts from parents and carers about domestic abuse also increased by a third (33%).

At the time of writing Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership is seeking to adopt Domestic Abuse as a shared safeguarding priority. This follows recognition of the stubborn prevalence of DA within safeguarding with children either direct victims of it; seeing, hearing or otherwise experiencing it; or perpetrating it. Often, local child safeguarding practice reviews identify strong causal links between DA and harm experienced by children. By working closely with the VAWG strategy it is hoped that a sharper focus can be placed upon DA and VAWG, with the opportunity to share learning from local and national safeguarding reviews providing a strong platform for practice improvement.

Early Help for children and families

Working with partners, Barnet's 0-19 Service provides help and support to families, children, and young people up to the age of 19 (or 25 with a disability). The Early Help hubs offer a range of services and evidenced-based programmes and interventions for children and young people and their families.



5 <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/022176%20-%20BC2135%20-%20BARNET%20Corporate%20plan%202021%20-%202025%20-%20FINAL%20%281%29.pdf>

6 <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2675/impact-domestic-abuse-children-young-people-from-voices-parents-carers-insight-briefing.pdf>

Voices of survivors in Barnet



Service users, when consulted as part of developing this strategy, highlighted the good support they received from our local voluntary sector partners, Solace Women's Aid, the DA One Stop Shop, Cyber Care and Victim Support. However, they also highlighted:

- Being alone after escaping violence and abuse is very difficult and even more difficult when you have children. Support to settle in a new area, and to meet people when you are moved from everyone you know is essential.
- Everyone's experience is unique, and it is important that support services recognise this.
- To help people feel confident and safe to report abuse, there needs to be clear information about what will happen; about what support is available -not just at the time but also long term; and for the person they tell to believe them and fully understand domestic abuse and VAWG.
- The importance of psychological support from someone who understands domestic abuse and VAWG, and the long-term need for this to recover from abuse.
- There are cultural barriers which prevent reporting to Police.
- A believing and understanding response from Housing was highlighted as very important.
- Not everyone has access to information online whether that be due to digital deprivation or restricted access by the abuser.

Survivors had some key messages for specific partners:

To Children's Social Care

- What works well - Social workers who are really easy to talk to, who have taken the time to hear the voice of the child, who were knowledgeable and understand the dynamics of coercive controlling behaviour.
- What should change - The times when parents haven't felt heard, where the abusive parent has been able to manipulate the social worker and how the involvement of Social Care made a victim feel more scared rather than safe and supported.

To Housing

- What works well - When Housing use their powers to intervene; when it is good quality and meets my needs; when staff understand coercive control and believe me.
- What should change - Needing to prove I am a victim, training for housing staff.

To Police

- What works well - when officers recognise coercive control; when I know what will happen after I report and I am kept informed; when Police removed him, I felt safer.
- What should change - when nothing is done; restore confidence and trust in Police.

Our conversations with survivors and the practitioners who support them has assisted in the development of this strategy which clearly sets out the on-going partnership commitment to work together to respond to and prevent DA and VAWG in Barnet. We believe preventing violence against women and girls is everybody's business. We want to ensure that everyone can identify victims and be able to inform them of their options and support them to take steps to report or access support to prevent situations from escalating to crisis point.

We also want to ensure that we continue to understand the needs of victims and their families. This will help us to provide the best response we can, to intervene at the right time and provide them with the help they want. We are committed to continue listening to victims and survivors as we implement our new strategy and action plan which will help us measure the progress of our response.

Domestic abuse and VAWG cannot be addressed by any single agency. Statutory services, voluntary organisations and communities need to work collaboratively to increase opportunities for victims and survivors to seek and access support. To achieve the best outcomes for victims and their children, our response needs to be co-ordinated and consistent; it needs to consider the whole family, particularly children, and early intervention needs to remain a priority.

Through this refreshed strategy, we have set out an ambitious vision to tackle domestic abuse and violence against women and girls in all its forms over the next three years. We will monitor the progress regularly and partners will hold each other to account for the actions.

Our strategy puts the victims and survivors at the centre of service delivery, whilst including a clear focus on perpetrators, keeping people safe, and acknowledges the need to raise local awareness of the issues.

Equalities

Our approach is framed within a DA and VAWG strategy and recognises that women and girls are disproportionately affected; we are also committed to ensuring that all victims of DA or VAWG receive a sensitive, appropriate response and the right support.

This Barnet strategy acknowledges that men, boys and non-binary people also experience and/or are affected by the range of issues that encompass DA and VAWG. It is important to ensure appropriate service responses are in place to support all victims - noting that gender may be an additional barrier to seeking help. We aim to include every victim and survivor in all aspects of our strategy, particularly our prevention and awareness raising work across the borough.

We want to recognise, acknowledge and address barriers which prevent some victims and survivors from seeking help - including victims from racially minoritised communities; disabled victims; elderly victims; LGBT+ victims; migrant victims; victims who have mental health or substance use needs; and children and young people. Some groups also face language barriers and are not able to easily express their feelings and experiences in English, while some others experience cultural expectations which may deter them from making reports. We are committed to enabling victims and survivors who are currently hidden from services to feel able to come forward.

During the life of this strategy, we want to progress the conversation about intersectionality, defined by Kimberle Crenshaw (2017) as, 'It's basically a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. We tend to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What's often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts.'

We will seek to ensure that our services meet individuals' needs in a sensitive, trauma-informed and consistent manner, in line with the relevant legislation.



Partnership Objective 1:

Early Intervention and Prevention of Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls

We will make early intervention and prevention the foundation of our approach and embed DA and VAWG as ‘Everyone’s Business’ across agencies, services, workplaces and the wider public. We will address the attitudes and behaviour that can underpin crimes of domestic abuse and violence against women and girls as part of our approach to tackling them, including addressing gender inequality more broadly. We will raise more awareness and understanding of DA and VAWG with the community and among professionals and ensure that any processes which place blame with victims and survivors are addressed. Education of our children and young people to help them understand what healthy relationships and behaviour look like will remain a priority.

We want Barnet residents to feel safe at home; in their place of education; at work; and in the community.

Early Help, Family Services

The main objectives of the 0-19 hubs are to provide the right help first time; that meets identified need, improves outcomes for children and young people and prevents the escalation of issues that would then require specialist services.

There is a multi-agency weekly Early Help panel where partners from DA services attend to ensure each Early Help Assessment has the right team around the family for the support needs identified. We have a secondee from RISE Mutual in our Supporting Families programme who works closely with the hubs to provide advice and support where families have experienced DA.

Each 0-19 hub provides a recovery group programme for mothers and their children who have experienced DA.

The team has developed training for LBB and partner staff as part of their work on parental conflict, which includes tools and interventions for work with children and families. The training is explicit in identifying where parental conflict has escalated to DA so that safeguarding, and the right support can be put in place.

Schools and Education

Perpetrators who have successfully engaged with and/or completed programmes with RISE Mutual CIC have regularly called for information and lessons around healthy relationships and domestic abuse to be taught in schools and colleges. Programmes or workshops in secondary schools for young people are raised by perpetrators as strategies they feel would’ve been useful and helped them in recognising the early signs of abusive behaviours and relationships.

The Government has already taken action to prevent these crimes, including making Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools, Relationships and Sex Education mandatory in all secondary schools, and Health education compulsory in all state funded schools since September 2021.

The Department for Education’s statutory guidance on this states that pupils should be taught about the concepts of, and laws relating to a range of areas including consent, exploitation, grooming, coercion, harassment, domestic abuse, and female genital mutilation.

The Department for Education will better support teachers to deliver the recently introduced Relationships, Sex and Health education curriculum, as

well as explore how we can engage young people, such as university students, to support this.

The Department for Education has also updated the Keeping Children Safe in Education⁷ (KCSIE) statutory guidance for schools and colleges and will help ensure that all school and college staff are clear on how to deal with reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, whether they occur inside or outside the school or college gates, or online. It will also ensure that all school and college staff understand how they can actively identify and respond effectively to all forms of abuse and neglect, including harmful sexual behaviour and peer-on-peer abuse, so that victims are confident action will be taken and both they, and perpetrators, will get the support they need.

In collaboration with primary and secondary schools, a peer-on-peer audit tool was developed and circulated to all schools in 2020/21 Summer term. This tool was further updated in the Autumn term of 2021/22 to reflect additions in KCSIE, and a new Model Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy has also been updated to ensure peer-on-peer abuse was covered in all schools appropriately. They also circulated a model Peer-on-Peer Abuse Policy; however, it is not a mandatory requirement for schools to have a separate policy. The

⁷ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1021914/KCSIE_2021_September_guidance.pdf

effectiveness of school's response to peer-on-peer abuse is monitored through Ofsted inspections and the Learning Network Inspector SEV (School Effectiveness Visits).

Since the media attention regarding the 'Everyone's Invited' website, schools in Barnet have had a stronger emphasis on Peer-on-Peer sexual abuse and misconduct and have:

- Increased the focus in training on sexual violence and harassment in schools
- Met with headteachers, deputy headteachers, DSLs and Governors to highlight learning from Ofsted reports, remind and signpost to the DfE September statutory guidance sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges, highlighted the need for school Behaviour Policies to be clearly communicated to pupils and parents and to challenge all low level derogatory or abuse behaviour and language.
- Facilitated the sharing of best practice between schools
- Currently reviewing the PSHE curriculum support offer through BPSI

Support in higher education

The Department for Education will work with the Office for Students to tackle sexual harassment and abuse in higher education settings, including within universities. The Government will continue to encourage higher education providers to review and update their systems, policies, and procedures, in line with the Office for Students' statement of expectations on harassment and sexual misconduct before the next academic year. These steps also include exploring further options to ensure that all providers see the statement of expectations as the minimum standard for addressing sexual harassment on campus and how the Office for Students can take action against providers who are not doing enough to support students experiencing harassment. This will include the Office for Students considering options for connecting its statement of expectations to its conditions of registration. The

Department for Education will also review options to limit the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements in cases of sexual harassment within higher education.

We recognise that some children and young people such as children in care, care leavers and young offenders are not in formal education settings, and we want to ensure these high-risk groups are a clear focus in the strategy.

We want to monitor how these programmes are being implemented in Barnet through our safeguarding leads in schools, colleges, and Middlesex University.

Safe and supportive workplaces

In June 2020, the Government launched a review into workplace support for victims of domestic abuse. During the review, they heard about the impacts that domestic abuse can have on the victim and the challenges it raises for employers. Victims highlighted the real difference that a supportive employer's response can make. The review concluded with three key areas to focus on: Raise awareness in workplaces to help people spot the signs and signpost to support; Workplace policy can be an effective mechanism for employers and employees, but this needs to be embedded in wider organisational frameworks and cultures; and consideration for consulting on a change to employment rights to support flexible working for victims to help them deal with the impacts of domestic abuse.

All partners should have policies in place to protect staff and volunteers in the workplace. This should include increasing awareness and encouraging staff to report; steps taken to prevent abuse; how they support the victims of abuse and how they deal with the perpetrators of the abuse. We will monitor how all partner agencies are implementing workplace policies.

We want this strategy to raise awareness with employers in Barnet; a big step towards creating supportive workplaces. Barnet Council are committed to progressing this

conversation and will develop a domestic abuse and VAWG policy for staff.

The Met Police will promote the Mayor's Women's Night Safety Charter - part of City Hall's own Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy - by encouraging businesses to sign-up and do more to further prevent and protect women from violence. Barnet Council has signed up to the Charter.

White Ribbon UK is a leading charity engaging with men and boys to end violence against women. Their important work aims to stop violence before it starts. The White Ribbon movement was started by men 30 years ago and the message remains the same. They call on all men to make the white ribbon promise to never commit, excuse, or remain silent about violence against women. Barnet Council are working towards meeting all the criteria to become White Ribbon UK Accredited.

Domestic abuse and Health

NHS England and NHS Improvement are developing local 'pathfinder' projects for enhanced trauma-informed mental health support for sexual abuse victims and survivors with the most complex needs.

Local 'pathfinder' projects will be a collaboration between statutory mental health providers and the voluntary



sector to develop tailored, trauma-informed models of care to support adult survivors of sexual assault and abuse who have complex, trauma-related mental health needs. Over the next 12 months, the partnership will create a network of ‘pathfinder’ projects to test and evaluate approaches to better meet survivor needs.

This strategy has cross-cutting priorities with the Barnet Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy 2021-2025⁸. Priority 1, ‘Creating a healthier place and resilient communities’, includes a focus on domestic abuse, and supports the aim of this strategy to make DA and VAWG ‘Everyone’s business.’

Making Every Contact Count (MECC) is about how to make the most of each opportunity to help people improve their health and wellbeing. Frontline staff and volunteers are encouraged to complete the e-learning module which will help them understand the approach to finding time in their everyday conversations with Barnet residents to help them think about and resolve things that could affect their health and wellbeing. This might include domestic abuse, and there is a factsheet available to support their conversations.

The Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) is a general practice based DVA training, support, and referral programme for primary care staff. IRIS is targeted intervention for patients experiencing current or former DA (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage, and so called “honour” based abuse) from a partner, ex-partner, or family member. This service enables support to be offered to DA victims at an early stage, before the abuse becomes a serious risk to mental, emotional, and physical health.

The IRIS Programme in Barnet is designed to provide a quick and direct referral route to the domestic violence advocate-educator (AE). The AE works closely with victims (women and men) who have been affected by domestic and/or sexual abuse and sees the patients at the GP surgeries to carry out risk assessment and safety planning with the survivors/patients. Engagement with practices is supported by the GP Clinical Lead, Primary Care lead. IRIS also make referrals to MARAC, adult and children’s MASH to provide support to the survivors. Since the implementation of IRIS in Barnet we have seen a fluctuation in the number of referrals to the AE.

Prior to 2018, Specialist DA service providers rarely received referrals from primary care. From February 2017 to January 2018, referrals into our advocacy and support service in Barnet from local GP’s were 4. From Feb 2018 to January 2019, they increased to 53, In 2019 (Jan-Dec), the number of referrals were 92, in 2020 (Jan-Dec) were 74 and the referrals increased to 133 in 2021.



Impact Statements from GP surgery staff:

Barnet GP – June 2021

“I can’t believe I’d never been trained in it before – not at medical school, as junior doctor or in GP training. The more I learnt the more I realised DV was the underlying problem for so many of my patients (of all backgrounds, gender and age) and helped me move forward to provide the best possible care.”

Barnet GP Admin staff – June 2021

“I found this training to be extremely useful. Pre-covid when I worked at the surgery (working from home at the moment) I was fairly confident talking to patient face to face about personal issues but since the training knowing where to signpost the patient(s) I feel very confident and able to help DA patients both male and female. Video/digital training can be difficult, but the length of time (under 1hour) is perfect to hold our attention – I do believe that face to face training is best, but this training was excellent.”



⁸ <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/health-and-wellbeing-key-documents/joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2021>

There is a dedicated London Victim & Witness Service Senior IDVA (Independent Domestic and Abuse Advisor) located at Barnet hospital within maternity services and A & E.

The Health IDVA provides specialist help and immediate support and advice to victims of domestic abuse attending Barnet hospital, often in the immediate aftermath of a crisis: severe physical assault, drug/alcohol related medical needs, attempted suicide or self-harm.

They work with victims and other professionals to reduce the risk of immediate and further harm; particularly when hospital release is imminent (as many of the of the victims in hospital are still in a relationship with the perpetrator which means they face additional risk), and to ensure that specialist support is sustained and the risk is reduced. The Health IDVA also provides expert training, advice, DA awareness and support to hospital staff so that they have the confidence to ask about domestic abuse and signpost to support and works closely with the Safeguarding team and attends regularly key meetings at the hospital to raise awareness and offer support to victims and professionals. This post is funded by MOPAC London Victim & Witness Service.

Autism is a disability and people with autism are vulnerable individuals. Autism is characterised by social and communication difficulties and rigid, inflexible thinking. This makes it difficult for them to communicate and interact with others. This explains why autistic individuals are at a higher risk of being victims of abuse and have greater difficulties to access help and engage with support services. Many autistic individuals also have ADHD, which is linked to anti-social behaviour. Identification (or diagnosis) of these conditions (and treatment in the case of ADHD) is needed so professionals need to have ASD awareness training. Any support offered to victims should be delivered in an autistic-friendly manner by autism knowledgeable staff.

A confident workforce

We want staff to feel able to ask questions sensitively and provide an early intervention response to disclosures. We will continue to provide training to staff and volunteers across voluntary and statutory agencies to increase confidence and knowledge of how to respond. Our partnership DA and VAWG training is reviewed annually based on training needs assessment for multi-agency staff working in Barnet.

We are also committed to funding the accredited IDVA training of 24 practitioners across the partnership. This will increase the capacity within teams to assess risk and support needs; and to provide specialist advice and guidance to meet these needs.

Protecting people online

Preventing children and young people from being exposed to harmful online content both helps prevent them from developing harmful views and protects them from direct harm and abuse. Schools are taking a more targeted approach to educating parents and pupils providing online safety sessions virtually in the evenings, provided by Barnet's Prevent Education Officer, for parents and children to attend together. These sessions are very popular and have supported schools to get the messages out to parents. Parents have reported that these sessions have been invaluable. Through Prevent, Barnet have recorded an increase in concerns and referrals regarding ideologies that are defined as Mixed, Unclear or Unstable. This category reflects instances where the ideology presented involves a combination of elements from multiple ideologies (mixed), shifts between different ideologies (unstable), or where the individual does not present a coherent ideology yet may still pose a terrorism such as Incel (Involuntary Celibacy). Through Prevent, training and pupil workshops have been commissioned and delivered to schools seeking support for counter-narratives and information/guidance and support with curriculum development.

The risk of grooming through online means for adults, and children and young people, is covered in this strategy. Relationships that begin online can very quickly become coercive and controlling, with the victim believing they are in a loving and safe relationship. Technology is often used by perpetrators of abuse to control, monitor, and threaten, including reading emails, checking texts and locations of social media posts, tracking there every move, threatening to share explicit photos as a means of preventing someone ending the relationship. Indeed, a third of survivors who responded to a Women's Aid survey⁹ on online abuse said their partner or ex-partner had used spyware or GPS locators to track them down.

Victims and survivors can be supported to re-gain control over their online IT lifestyle. Cybercare has delivered a clinic at the Barnet Homes One Stop Shop for domestic abuse victims and survivors working with multi-disciplinary colleagues and VAWG partners to provide a comprehensive and successful service since 2016. Cyber knowledge and skills are essential to combat Cyber-Abuse / Tech-Enabled Abuse. In today's world, having access to the internet and up-to-date digital skills is essential for jobs, communication skills development and raising a family. Supporting victims and survivors and their families gives them hope and a future. Cybercare's support enables them to remove and eliminate geo-locators, unwanted access, coercive control, damaging and harmful abuse by the perpetrator. The perpetrator often has access to the victim and survivors' IT systems, devices, apps, and online documents. Cybercare Clinic team work closely with victims and survivors, using up to five unique specialist tools, to assess and re-configure several and often complex levels of risk within their IT lifestyles, connected homes and internet-enabled devices. Freed from stalking, tracking and coercive control by the perpetrator, victims and survivors and their families re-gain access to schools, training, job opportunities, communities, and citizenship. Since 2016, Cybercare Clinics have supported over 600 victims and survivors and delivered many cyber awareness workshops to partner services.

9 <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/what-is-domestic-abuse/onlinesafety/>



Challenging and responding to harmful practices: FGM, Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse, Virginity testing

Understanding the prevalence of so called ‘honour’-based abuse, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage nationally, is challenging as there is limited information¹⁰. However, a 2009 Government-commissioned study on forced marriage (using data from ten local authorities, Karma Nirvana and the Government’s Forced Marriage Unit) estimated the national prevalence of reported cases of forced marriage in England to be between 5,000 and 8,000 cases (including those involving threats to force someone into marriage).¹¹ Ministry of Justice data¹² show that, to date, over 2,800 Forced Marriage Protection Orders and almost 700 FGM Protection Orders have been made since their respective introductions in 2008 and 2015.

In 2015 the Government introduced a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report known cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. In Barnet we will continue to raise awareness of the FGM mandatory reporting duty and ensure that frontline professionals are aware of their obligation to report these cases.

Following a review into virginity testing and hymenoplasty, the government announced in the Tackling violence against women and girls’ strategy its intention to establish an expert panel on hymenoplasty. In November 2021, MPs voted in favour of banning virginity testing in England and Wales. The ban was added to the Health and Care Bill in an amendment introduced by the government. Significantly the ban will have extra-territorial effect, meaning that it applies where women and girls are taken out of the country for virginity testing. The government have since confirmed they will also support a ban of the connected harmful practice of hymenoplasty. As this strategy is published, the Bill still has to be voted on in Parliament.

In Barnet, there is limited information on the prevalence of so called ‘honour’-based abuse’, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. We have seen an increase in referrals to MARAC for honour-based abuse. Since April 2018, there have been 3 referrals each year to MARAC for honour-based abuse. For forced marriage, there were no referrals in 2018/19; one in 2019/20 and two in 2020/21.

For 2020/2021, Solace supported 15 victims of so called ‘honour-based abuse’ and 10 victims of forced marriage.

We will continue to raise awareness of harmful practices across the borough, working closely with specialist support agencies who are working within the community. We will look at communications methods to ensure they reach those most at risk.

Anna: “actually the social services was very useful for me because they pushed me to do more steps, for me this was like nightmare, and I said how can I do by myself everything if I don’t have a job, but she took me to One Stop Shop on that time when the lady from Cybercare there, she gave me some IT support, then I got help to go to the job centre to apply for all the benefits and everything, I received support from the council housing and all these kind of things and I just took some stuff and I moved to my friend’s house and slowly slowly I found a job, I found where to move and everything was sorted out with those things. I don’t have much contact with him, just little bit sometimes but now he doesn’t control my life at all.”

Survivors’ testimonial to Cybercare, 2021

Debbie: “I am so grateful for all the help Cybercare and your colleagues provided to me”

Eliza: “Just when Cybercare started to speak to me I felt strong, I needed to change my life. That was important, at the beginning I was scared, I felt like I can’t do that and that, maybe he follows me, he does something to me”.....“it was stressful and difficult, but I am happy now and all the help from the DV charity , police and GP , they all came and helped me any time I am thankful for this. In some way this was good for me because I am stronger now. Since I left him everything that comes to my life it is good. “

Survivors’ testimonial to Cybercare, 2021



¹⁰ Tackling VAWG strategy, July 2021

¹¹ <https://natcen.ac.uk/media/23519/forced-marriage-prevalence-service.pdf>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-court-statistics-quarterly-april-to-june-2021>

Partnership Objective 2:

Support all victims and survivors to report, access help and recover



“You won’t get an increase in reporting if we don’t get help and feel safe”

(Survivor, Barnet, September 2021)

We want to address the barriers that prevent people telling someone about the abuse and violence that they are experiencing.

“Not everyone is able to speak to police as it causes a ripple effect”

(Survivor, Barnet, referring to cultural expectations, September 2021)

We have heard from survivors that not everyone feels able to talk to the police. We want to understand the issues faced by our communities and seek to increase opportunities for them to tell someone.

Survivors have told us who they told first about the abuse they were experiencing. This was commonly friends, family, or a community member. We have heard how for some it was someone else who called the police which then enabled them to talk about the abuse, as they had felt too scared or worried to call the police themselves. We will be focusing on raising awareness in the community to ensure everybody understands what domestic abuse and VAWG are, and how to respond if they are worried about someone.

We will ensure that victims have access to a broad diversity of provision which will meet the needs of all groups and individuals - whether long-term or more recent residents of Barnet. We want all victims and survivors (including children) in the borough to be able to access long term specialist support to address their needs & enable their recovery. We have heard about the challenges faced by victims and survivors when trying to access support. They have told us we need to raise awareness about the

services and support that are available. Ideally, having a single point of contact rather than having to navigate the system themselves.

We know that certain groups are more likely to be victims of these crimes, experience higher levels of violence, and lower rates of accessing support. For example, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that amongst adults aged 16 to 74 in the year ending March 2020¹³, disabled people were more than twice as likely to have been victims of domestic abuse, stalking or rape than people without a disability¹⁴. In addition, when considering sexual orientation, gay, lesbian or bisexual people were more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than heterosexual people.¹⁵ Looking at gender identity, trans and non-binary people were less likely to access support, while being more at risk of experiencing both intimate partner violence (IPV) and abuse from family members. This was also the case for stalking, sexual violence, and rape. Age can also impact the likelihood of victimisation. For domestic abuse, sexual assault, rape and stalking those aged 16-19 and 20-24 were more likely to be victims of these crimes than any other age group. This difference across

age groups is particularly apparent for sexual assault, where 12.9% of women aged 16-19 and 10.5% of women aged 20-24 had been a victim in the last year compared to 3.2% of women aged 25-34, the next highest group. Prevalence decreased as age increased¹⁶.

In January 2019, new research¹⁷ carried out by women with lived experience was released which highlights the extent of the challenges faced by the most disadvantaged women. The report argues for support services to be trauma-informed and for more staff with lived experience to be on the workforce.

In Barnet we recognise the need to address these challenges and are committed to working in partnership with services, communities, and individuals to stop people being excluded from support. We will place particular focus on Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) organisations working with partners across the borough to achieve this. By-and-for specialist services are recognised as being key as they build the relationships and trust with members of the community who may feel unable to approach statutory services.

13 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

14 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/sexualoffencesprevalenceandvictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales>

15 Terminology used here reflects that used in the CSEW <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/domesticabuseprevalenceandvictimcharacteristicsappendixtables>

16 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/sexualoffencesvictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/march2020>

17 'Hand in Hand', co-produced by peer researchers with the charities AVA (Against Violence & Abuse) and Agenda, the alliance for Women and Girls at Risk, for the National Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence and Multiple Disadvantage, 2019.

We will reach out to those with additional barriers. As identified in a gap analysis in November 2020, there is likely to be significant under reporting of domestic abuse and VAWG. In Barnet we identified barriers encountered by groups when help seeking. These include women with multiple disadvantage; refugees, migrant women and those with no recourse to public funds; male victims; those whose first language isn't English; older victims and those with a disability.

Survivors have told us about the good support they received in Barnet and what helped them to feel safe. We also heard about the isolation and loneliness they felt when they moved away from everyone and everything they know in order to keep safe. The new DA Act addresses the support for adult and children when they are in safe accommodation, and we will ensure our response in Barnet prioritises this. They told us that they were unaware of support options and say we need to ensure everyone knows what help is available. They highlighted the need for long term support to help with their recovery. They want to access psychological support from a practitioner who understands domestic abuse and VAWG to help them cope with the trauma of abuse. They really value informal sessions with other survivors; a space where they can get together, make friends and links with others for support and understanding on the issues around domestic/sexual violence.

Domestic abuse and Housing

Domestic abuse can lead to homelessness, either arising from victims losing their home due to a lack of income or from the fact many victims have to flee their home in order to find safety and escape an abusive situation.

The DA Act 2021 gives those who are homeless as a result of DA priority need for accommodation secured by the Local Authority. This will help ensure victims do not have to remain with their abuser for fear of not having a roof over their head. Councils will no longer need to consider if a victim is vulnerable as a result of their abuse in order to access accommodation secured by the Local Authority (LA).

Under the DA Act 2021, victims of DA can flee their abusive situation without fear of losing their lifetime tenancy. Part 4 of the Housing Act 1985 has been amended which include that the Local Housing Authority must grant a secure tenancy that is not a flexible tenancy if the tenancy is offered to a person who is or was a tenant of some other dwelling-house under a qualifying tenancy (sole or joint) and the Authority is satisfied that the person or a member of the person's household is or has been a victim of DA carried out by another person and the new tenancy is granted for reasons connected with that abuse.

To implement the duties under the DA Act, Barnet housing colleagues told us what will help them to support and safeguard victims. They shared concerns about making the right decision when assessing eligibility and would like training on interviewing and investigating skills when responding to victims to ensure they give the best response.



The Mayor of London is committed to using these new powers to the full to ensure a well-resourced, clear and coordinated pan-London pathway of support through a survivor's journey, from crisis to recovery. He says he will also continue to use the other powers and resources available to tackle domestic abuse and support victims/survivors more widely – including through his Police and Crime Plan, Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, London Housing Strategy and capital programmes delivering affordable rented homes.

From survivors, we have heard just how important an effective and understanding response from housing is for them. We have heard what a difference safe and comfortable housing can make to them. We have heard about their experiences of not being believed or of their experience being dismissed or minimised as the abuse wasn't physical. We have heard how some accommodation is in disrepair or feels unsafe. We want this strategy to ensure that practitioners and services have access to the knowledge and skills needed to do the best job they can for victims.

Through consultation with practitioners, we have identified good practice of housing using their powers to remove perpetrators from joint tenancies for domestic abuse cases in another borough. We want Barnet residents to benefit from the sharing of good practice and will progress the conversation in the borough about all options for keeping victims safe in their homes.

Barnet Homes manages Barnet's Sanctuary Scheme which enables some domestic abuse victims to remain in their home by making it safe and secure. Barnet Homes works in partnership with representatives from the Police, Fire Brigade and Solace Women's Aid to risk assess victims and provide additional security measures to their homes which give them the option of remaining in their home if it is assessed as safe and their partner no longer lives with them. The Sanctuary Scheme is free, and anyone can apply, no matter whether they own their own home, are a private tenant, a housing association tenant or a council tenant.

For the year ending March 2021, 121 referrals for sanctuary installations were received. 97 sanctuary installations were completed. The others were declined either because the installations were not needed or because of disrepair issues that should be addressed by the landlord.

Residents have told us that well-lit public spaces without shrubs or areas where people can hide behind are crucial to help them feel safe. Victims who are moved into this area to keep them safe from abuse in another area told us how important it is for them to move into housing in an area with a friendly and welcoming community feeling. As they are moved away from everything and everyone they know, meeting people and feeling safe is very important to them. Community spaces to meet people, whether this be parks, or community buildings are key.

We have heard loud and clear that people feel tackling DA and VAWG should be Everyone's Business, including statutory partners; community organisations; employers; and neighbours, friends, and family. We would like to develop a collaborative partnership with local developers and housing associations to ensure that our victims and survivors of domestic abuse live in a safe environment and get the support they need.

Domestic Abuse Advocacy and Support Service (DAASS) in Barnet

Our Domestic abuse Advocacy and Support service in Barnet is commissioned by Barnet Council to provide appropriate advice, information, and advocacy support to ensure a safe environment for men, women, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBTQ+) individuals over the age of 16 who are affected by domestic abuse. According to Safelives,¹⁸ victims, survivors and their families need the right resources at the right time to help them become safe, sooner. For a service to achieve this we believe a thorough understanding of the complexities of client's needs based on reliable evidence is vital.

Not all domestic abuse incidents are reported to the Police. Survivors told us about the reasons they wouldn't report to the Police. Other service providers such as the health service, Probation, Housing and voluntary organisations may identify cases of domestic abuse. We want all practitioners in Barnet to know the signs to look out for, including those of coercive control, and understand how to respond in a safe and supportive way.

Following a service user survey regarding the Domestic Abuse Advocacy and Support Service (DAASS) programme completed in September 2020, 72% of service users who were consulted in London Borough of Barnet (LBB) strongly agreeing that the Advocacy Service is working efficiently, 69% of them strongly agreeing that the advocacy met their expectations and 81% strongly agreeing that the support they received met their individual circumstances and overall were satisfied with the support they received. 75% of the service users reported that the impact of the support they received from Advocacy and Support Service were very positive for them and their families:

Some of them are:

"Being destitute and having no family ties who can and want to support me, I would have broken down completely if it were not for you all. First time in my life people are taking care of me and make me feel like am not invisible or unwanted."

"The support I have received here is more than I would ever have imagined. Even a fraction of this in term of quantity and quality doesn't exist in many countries including where I am from. First time, among all the worst times of my life, I am being treated with compassion and dignity".

From the Consultation feedback with survivors held in September 2021, they reported that the gaps in services are counselling sessions and support groups for survivors in Barnet.

We recognise that on occasions, services cannot contact victims or survivors, or they do not engage, and those cases may be closed after failed contacts. To ensure that victims do not slip through the net, we will address this issue in a coordinated manner. We also want to ensure that victims at standard and medium risk are given support which addresses their safety and support needs including steps to prevent the risk increasing. We continue to audit the advocacy and support service on a regular basis to ensure that the service meets new demands and provide effective support to our survivors in the borough.



One Stop Shop

The DA One Stop Shop (OSS) is a drop-in multi-agency service for early intervention, information, and advice for victims of DA and VAWG. The OSS which is delivered by Barnet Homes with partners including Barnet housing officers, Solace Women's Aid, private solicitor firms, a Barnet Magistrate, Asian Women Resource Centre, Jewish Women's Aid and Cyber Care. The service is supported by the OSS coordinator. Every Thursday morning all Barnet residents can contact this service.

Although the number of people supported by the service have been constant, we want to create more awareness within the borough to ensure everyone is aware of the service should they or someone they know in the community needs it. 80% of questionnaire respondents from the public consultation hadn't accessed support for the DA and/or VAWG they experienced, with the most common reasons being:

- i. I didn't know where to get help
- ii. I didn't feel ready to get help
- iii. I didn't know I was experiencing DA or VAWG

Women's refuges and safe accommodation

Barnet Council commissions 18 bed spaces within 2 women's refuges in Barnet. Barnet Homes receives funding from MHCLG/MOPAC for a third women's refuge to deliver another 6 bed spaces. The 3 women's refuges provide advice, information and advocacy support to women and children fleeing domestic abuse. The women's refuges also ensure a safe environment for women and children fleeing domestic abuse and deliver support interventions required to meet the needs of the women and children who have a range of issues. They can accommodate children, boys under the age of 13, and girls up to any age.

Following a service user survey regarding the two current women's refuges in Barnet, 73% of service users strongly agree and 27% tend to agree that overall, they were satisfied with the support they had received at the 2 women's refuges. The stay at the refuges are normally around 1 to 6 months but there are cases where they may stay for up to 1.5 years. Overall, the responses are very positive and highlighted the following:



“ I come from a place where human rights are just words... To be treated like and care for as a human being, to be given so much dignity is overwhelming and makes me have hope for a better life and gives me a purpose. ”

“ All I want is someone to listen to me ”

(Survivor sharing her daughter's voice, Barnet, September 2021)

“It has made me aware of my rights. I feel confident that I can speak to someone who doesn’t judge me my support worker helps my children with emotional support the children have visited places I could not ever have afforded, they have arranged a holiday me and my children in a caravan it’s the very first holiday we ever had. I was so happy to see my children be happy and feel normal, it made me emotional watching my children so happy. I cried tears of joy. It’s so clean and warm and safe and happy as a family in this refuge.”

The main suggested areas for improvement are:

“I believe with the pandemic, housing availability in advance is of primary importance... If we all work together, we will heal the society faster.”

“There were no spaces available and was deemed to be unsafe as it was local to our client we were supporting.”

“It is not easy to find a place due to high demand”

Domestic abuse victims who need to escape home will be provided with better support in safe accommodation from 1st October 2021 as a result of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. There is now a clear expectation that expert specialist support is provided to victims in safe accommodation that best supports their needs, whether in refuges or other safe housing. The guidance¹⁹ details the type of support victims can expect to receive and also places a focus on the delivery of trauma informed services based on individual needs for safety and support.

“The help when we move in, the smile, the support, coming to check on us in the early days because coming here is a big change and we need all the support”

(Refuge resident talking about moving into Barnet, 2021)



Safeguarding adults and domestic abuse

In response to a review of the IDVA service, consultation with MASH practitioners highlighted the needs for an IDVA to be co located within adult and children’s safeguarding MASH. Due to the success of this, an IDVA will now also be co-located within social care teams.

We have heard from survivors that it can be hard to get help and support if you don’t have children. Equally, for older victims and survivors it can particularly be difficult to tell someone about abuse you are experiencing, especially if it is your son, daughter or grandchild who is abusing you.

From the cases heard at DA MARAC in 2019/20, 11.6 % (42/ 363) of the alleged perpetrators of abuse (APOA) were from adult sons and daughters. In 2020/21, the number of cases of adult children abusing their parents were 54 out of a total of 477 cases (11.3%) at the MARAC. Abuse of this type is increasingly being identified in Barnet. With funding from the Home Office, we have been delivering, since August 2021, a new a domestic abuse perpetrator programme to change behaviours of the abusive adult children and support for their parents.

Safeguarding Children and domestic abuse

We have heard from survivors about their experiences of Children’s Social Care in Barnet. We have been told about the social workers who are really easy to talk to, who have taken the time to hear the voice of the child, who were knowledgeable and understood the dynamics of coercive controlling behaviour. We have also heard about the fears that parents have when social workers are in their lives. We have been told about the times parents haven’t felt heard, where the abusive parent has been able to manipulate the social worker and how the way a social worker talked to a survivor made her feel more scared rather than safe and supported.

“All I want is someone to listen to me”
(Survivor sharing her daughter’s voice, Barnet, September 2021)

We want to learn from the good practice examples to ensure all survivors and their children receive the response they need. We will focus on identifying training needs and providing the necessary knowledge and skills training to meet these needs. Survivors told us we should raise awareness about the role of a social worker to dismiss the fear of children being removed from their care.

Domestic abuse, and mental health and wellbeing

The impact of DA and VAWG includes a detrimental effect on mental health: this may be short or long-term and could include feelings of anger and frustration, decreased self-esteem, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, a loss of identity and suicidal thoughts. For example, research conducted by Sussex Stalking Support and the National Centre for Cyberstalking Research at the University of Bedfordshire (in conjunction with the Suzy Lamplugh Trust) found that as many as 91% of victims of stalking involved in the research reported suffering from mental health problems after being stalked.²⁰

Survivors have told us about the impact of abuse on their mental health and the challenges they face in accessing support when they most need it. This includes longer term mental health support and counselling with practitioners who understand domestic abuse and VAWG. There is a mapping exercise being undertaken to understand the pathways to mental health support in the borough, and also to highlight any gaps.

We have in Barnet a mental health IDVA within mental health services. They are based at Springwell Centre but work across Barnet Mental Health services including at Edgware community centre and the Network Mental Health Safeguarding Service.

19 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-duties-for-councils-to-provide-support-in-safe-accommodation-for-domestic-abuse-victims>

20 Government ‘Tackling VAWG Strategy’ July

Appropriate mental health support needs to be available and accessible to Barnet residents. Links will be made to Barnet's suicide prevention campaign to ensure people who live and work in Barnet understand how to ask and respond when they are concerned someone is at risk of suicide.

The Domestic Homicides Project²¹ was established by police and government in England and Wales to collect, review, and share quick-time learning from all police-recorded domestic homicides and also from suspected suicides of individuals with a history of domestic abuse victimisation in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions. There were 38 suspected suicides of victims of domestic abuse reported to the project in the 12 months 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. They cannot know how the number of suspected victim suicides compares with previous years as there is no comparable baseline data. The 38 victims who lost their life by suicide highlights the devastating effects of domestic abuse and VAWG on the mental health of victims and survivors. Where someone dies from suicide and there are concerns that they were a victim of domestic abuse, a domestic homicide review (DHR) should be carried out.

For this reason, this strategy has close links to the Barnet suicide prevention strategy 2021-2025, which states that each area should consider the need for a tailored approach when working with specific groups including survivors of trauma, abuse, or violence. Partners should engage with groups at risk of suicide to identify and mitigate barriers to access and to improve service provision.

The Barnet Wellbeing Service was established as a collective process between people who use mental health services, voluntary and community sector organisations, the health service, and Barnet Council. The aim with the Wellbeing Service is to support the transition of services and the focus of care away from 'what is the matter with you?' towards 'what matters to you?'

North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group commissions the service. CommUNITY Barnet was appointed in 2018 to oversee this partnership and to act as the prime contractor. The success of the service is due to the partnerships and collaborative arrangements with Voluntary and Community Organisations committed to supporting Barnet residents experiencing poor emotional and mental health.

Barnet Wellbeing Service consists of three parts:

- **Barnet Wellbeing Hub** – The 'front door' delivered by Meridian Wellbeing. This provides a single point of access to the whole Wellbeing Service.
- **Community Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Therapeutic Service** – Wellbeing workshops delivered by New Citizens Gateway, Recovery College delivered by Mind in Barnet, wellbeing services for young people aged between 16-25 years delivered by Barnet Young People Thrive and Barnet Friends to support adults aged 18-55 experiencing loneliness and isolation possibly because they live with a diagnosed serious mental illness.
- **Clinical Support** – A blended offer from Barnet, Enfield, and Haringey Mental Health Trust and VCS partners delivered by clinicians offering IAPT therapeutic services, psychoeducational workshops, and webinars.

Economic Abuse

Economic abuse is a recognised form of domestic abuse and is defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It occurs in the context of intimate partner violence or familial abuse, and involves the control of a partner, ex-partner, or family member's money and finances, as well as the things that money can buy or things that restrict their freedom.

According to Surviving Economic Abuse²², it can include exerting control over income, spending, bank accounts, bills and borrowing. It can also include controlling access to and use of things like transport and technology, which allow us to work and stay connected, as well as property and daily essentials like food and clothing. It can include destroying items and refusing to contribute to household costs. This type of abuse is a form of coercive and controlling behaviour. It can continue long after a leaving and can have lifelong effects.

Access to finances can be a significant barrier for victims and survivors being able to leave an abusive relationship. If they are able to flee, most leave with little or no financial support. Once they have left, the abuser can continue to use finances as a means to control or punish them.



21 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-homicides-and-suspected-victim-suicides-during-the-pandemic>

22 <https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/what-is-economic-abuse/>

In recognition of the scale and impact of economic abuse DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) should be key partners in the Barnet partnership response to DA and VAWG. To prevent the re-traumatisation for victims having to recount their painful experiences, joined up working between key partners particularly Children's Social Care, Police and DWP is essential.

Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Modern slavery is a human rights violation and a global public health concern. To date, criminal justice approaches have dominated attempts to address it. Modern slavery has severe consequences for people's mental and physical health, and there is a pressing need to identify and implement effective preventative measures.

The scale of the national problem was not fully recorded in official statistics because of the hidden nature of the crimes involved. This is a concern because it increases the risk that modern slavery will be treated as a minor problem, particularly at a local level.

In March 2020 a conference on Trafficking, Modern Slavery and Prostitution was held in Barnet. A wide range of inspiring and informative speakers gave attendees insight into the national and local picture. Participants were asked to take part in table discussion about addressing this in Barnet. The key points from the feedback included:

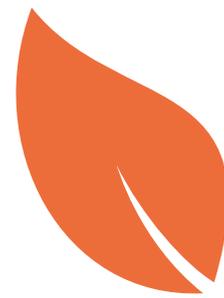
- Training for professionals, particularly GPs and schools to help identify people at risk
- Creating awareness of what it is as well as support helplines, through a variety of channels including posters, social media and in schools
- All professionals should provide a non-judgmental and joined-up response

The Government is committed to tackling the harm and exploitation which can be associated with

prostitution and sex work and believes that people who want to leave should be given every opportunity to find routes out. In addition, they know that victims of modern slavery, including sexual exploitation often have needs arising from their exploitation

We have limited knowledge about residents of Barnet who are facing sexual exploitation. We recognise the barriers to reporting these crimes.

This area of work is progressing, with the Barnet Council strategy team leading on the development of a dedicated strategy. We will research the prevalence in Barnet to help understand the number of people being exploited, abused and trafficked. We will also link with national and local specialist organisations to understand the options for support in Barnet.



Partnership Objective 3:

Pursue perpetrators and engage them in behaviour change interventions to eliminate harm to victims and their families

The Government perpetrator strategy will form part of a wider domestic abuse strategy which is due to be published within 12 months of Royal Assent of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 that aims to bring more perpetrators to justice, reduce reoffending, protect victims, and ensure they have the support they need.

Available data on stalking, sexual offences and domestic abuse indicates that perpetrators tend to be male, and most victims are female. Over 90% of people prosecuted in 2020 for stalking, domestic abuse and sexual offences sex offenders were male. While the overwhelming majority of perpetrators are men, we recognise that any person can be a perpetrator, regardless of their gender.

As stated in the government VAWG strategy, for many forms of violence against women and girls, the number of perpetrators charged, prosecuted, and convicted has been falling. Of the large number of these crimes recorded by the police in 2019/2020, only 9% of domestic-abuse-related crimes, 4% of sexual offences, and 2% of rape offences were given an outcome of charged/summonsed in the same year. A significant proportion of these cases are recorded by the police as having been closed with the outcome 'evidential difficulties, victim does not support action' (54% of domestic-abuse-related crimes, 35% of sexual offences, and 44% of rape offences), indicating that the victim withdrew from the process.

At the time of writing, Barnet has the third lowest rate of police reported domestic abuse of all 32 boroughs. We were previously second lowest.

We want to see more victims and survivors feeling able to report abuse, and acknowledge that an increase in police reported domestic abuse and VAWG could be indicating an increase in confidence to report rather than an increase in incidences of abuse. We want victims and survivors who are currently hidden to feel able to come forward. We want to see a focus on

stopping re-offending to prevent repeat victimisation and to stop perpetrators moving from victim to victim and continuing their abuse. When analysing police data, we are committed to understanding what the data is really telling us about repeat offending; increased confidence in reporting; and action taken by police.

Police are consistently wearing Body Worn cameras in Barnet. We want to understand how victims who don't feel able to support Police action in Barnet is impacting the Sanction Detection rate and monitor the number of evidence-led prosecutions.

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 ("CJA 2003") provides for the establishment of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements ("MAPPA") in each of the 42 criminal justice areas in England and Wales. These are designed to protect the public, including previous victims of crime, from serious harm by sexual and violent offenders. They require the local criminal justice agencies and other bodies dealing with offenders to work together in partnership in dealing with these offenders. There are well established MAPPA processes in Barnet, and these will be subject to a HMIP Thematic Inspection in February 2022.

Perpetrator programmes to change behaviour and support victims in Barnet

RISE Mutual CIC deliver a range of domestic abuse perpetrator programmes (DAPP) fully accredited by RESPECT, aiming to address the attitudes and behaviour of those who have been abusive within an intimate partner relationship.

The Safe Relationships intervention consists of 20 sessions, a combination of group work and one to one meetings and is designed to challenge participants to achieve a better understanding of why they have used violence and/or aggression in intimate relationships. They aim to provide a safe, respectful, and challenging environment, which facilitates change and motivates individuals to engage and learn.

They use group discussions and interactive exercises that are meaningful and relevant to explore and challenge abusive behaviours, including coercion and control.

Best practice includes a victim-survivor element to meet their needs when a perpetrator is engaged in an intervention. RISE offers this support to deliver a joined-up approach which ensures effective risk management and victim-survivor safety.

Their Respect and Principles Programme (RAPP) is an 8-session interactive programme for young people aged 11-18. It provides education about healthy relationships; identifying patterns of healthy and unhealthy behaviours; effective ways to communicate relationship needs and manage conflict. There is a focus on the role of peer groups in young people's decision making and challenging beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes.

In addition, RISE delivers a programme for male or female young people aged 11 to 18 who have engaged in child to parent violence or abuse. The programme consists of 8 structured 1:1 sessions for the parent(s) and 6 sessions for the young person, using the whole family approach.



In August 2021, London Borough of Barnet (lead local authority) in collaboration with Brent and Enfield was successful to a bid with Home Office/ MOPAC for the amount of £305,832 which seeks to address significant gaps in culturally appropriate provision of perpetrators of domestic abuse in minoritised and/or marginalised groups. RISE is delivering the services as part of an intersectional approach, which takes into account the different elements of the victim and perpetrators' identities (rather than focusing on just one identity marker e.g. gender or race) when working with the family. It will also help to break down some of the barriers to victims accessing support and help challenge and disrupt the abuse. It is a multi-faceted bid with provision including an offer to female perpetrators (who may also be victims), adult child to parent abuse/violence, familial domestic abuse intervention, and support for victims. The funding is for one year.

We want to improve engagement with behaviour change interventions in Barnet. We want this partnership approach to include engagement with Police, CPS and advocacy and support agencies, to improve outcomes or victims and build trust in the criminal justice process. We want practitioners who identify perpetrators to know

about the support available and to feel confident to engage in conversation which encourages them to seek support to change their behaviour.

Domestic abuse GPS pilot

There is a GPS tagging pilot running across London. The aims are:

- Offenders subject to GPS have their thinking and behaviour challenged and positively changed through the use of location data in supervision
- GPS data is used to improve the management of the risk posed to past, current and future partners and other known adults and children and becomes an integral part of risk management plans
- GPS monitoring acts as a deterrent to domestic abuse perpetrators
- GPS monitoring increases the effectiveness of enforcement action and managing compliance with licence conditions, particularly exclusion zones
- Best practice learning is developed around how priority cases can be identified and how information on these cases can be shared with police, victim/survivor safety agencies and other professionals, within legal boundaries and ICO guidelines.

To be eligible an offender must be:

- Aged 18+
- Serving a determinate sentence for a domestic abuse related offence
- Being released from a London prison (or HMP Onley or Highpoint) to a release address in a London borough
- Being released before the pilot end date, which will be 31st March 2022.

Supporting victims through the criminal justice system

The Government VAWG strategy²³ highlights victim's experiences of reporting to the police, with 69% saying they had reported their abuse. 8% of those whose abuse was reported to the police had it reported by someone else on their behalf, and 29% chose not to report to the police. Reasons given for not reporting included that they did not believe anything would be done by the criminal justice system (46%), embarrassment (40%), and a fear of not being believed (33%).

We want residents of Barnet to know how to report and to feel confident that they will be believed, and that action will be taken.

²³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy#supporting-victims-1>

As a pathfinder force on Operation Bluestone, the Met Police is working with the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime, the National Police Chiefs' Council, academia and the Home Office to better understand how they should be approaching the response to rape cases. Building on learnings from Bluestone, they will consider in what way Operation Soteria, the Government response to rape, might be used in the Met, to transform further the response including strengthening investigations with improved victim engagement and treatment through the courts, with suspect-focused investigation, and with particular attention to repeat offending suspects.

The Met Police, in their refreshed VAWG Action Plan, highlight that all BCUs will increase their engagement with women and girls in their local communities to better understand their concerns and to build confidence. They will deliver Walk and Talk sessions, focused on preventing violence against women and girls. This will involve female officers buddying up with women from within the community to walk the streets of London and hear of their experiences, concerns and reflections.

DA Protection notice (DAPN) and DA Protection Order (DAPO)

Under the DA Act 2021, DAPNs and DAPOs will be used to protect victims from all forms of domestic abuse, including non-physical abuse and controlling or coercive behaviour.

A new DAPN will be introduced which, like the current Domestic Violence Protection Notice, will give victims immediate protection following an incident. A DAPN would be issued by the police and could, for example, require a perpetrator to leave the victim's home for up to 48 hours.

As with the current DVPO, police will make an application for a DAPO to a magistrates' court. However, alternative application routes will be introduced so that victims and specified third parties can apply for a DAPO directly to the family court. It will also enable criminal, family, and civil courts to make a DAPO of their own volition during existing court proceedings, which do not have to be domestic abuse related.

DAPOs will have flexible duration so that longer-term protection can be provided where necessary and proportionate.

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) also known as Clare's law

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), also known as 'Clare's Law' enables the police to disclose information to a victim or potential victim of DA about their partner's or ex-partner's previous abusive or violence behaviour. The guidance on which the DVDS is based will be based in statute.

The scheme has two elements:

- The right to ask (an individual or relevant third party can ask the police to check whether a current or ex-partner has a violent or abusive past).
- The right to know (enables the police to make a disclosure on their own initiative if they receive information about the violent or abusive behaviour of a person that may impact on the safety of that person's current or ex-partner).

We have heard from survivors that they were not aware of Clare's law, and they feel there should be more awareness about it in the borough. They suggested displaying the posters at GP surgeries, bus stops and so on to promote it widely. In the year ending March 2020, 17 applications were received. This increased to 52 for the year ending March 2021.



Women in contact with the Criminal Justice System

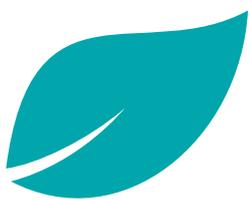
The Corston report²⁴ estimated that around half of women in custody have experienced domestic abuse, however a report by Women in Prison (2009) indicated that 80% of the women surveyed reported such victimisation.

London's Blueprint for a Whole System Approach to Women in Contact with the Criminal Justice System 2019 - 2022²⁵ has agreed:

- All women in London who are in contact with the criminal justice system (CJS) or at risk of such contact are entitled to receive a holistic, trauma informed, woman-centred approach throughout the criminal justice process and in the delivery of early prevention and intervention services. This includes women suspected or convicted of serious offences, as well as the majority of women who are prosecuted for suspected minor, non-violent offences.
- As stated in the government's Female Offender Strategy published in June 2018, there are a number of common underlying factors linked to women's offending, including domestic abuse, sexual abuse and coercion, human trafficking, modern slavery and exploitation, involvement in prostitution, poverty, homelessness, intersectional discrimination, mental health needs, learning disabilities, problematic substance use, and a lack of education and skills training.
- Most of the solutions to women's offending lie in the community, including through early intervention and prevention, diversion at the point of arrest and community sentencing options where available, rather than short custodial sentences for minor offences.
- We are committed to working together to transform the criminal justice response to women in London, improve outcomes and reduce women's imprisonment by developing and implementing an evidence-based, sustainable whole system approach. This includes a commitment to systemic change.

In Barnet, we will work with Probation service, Criminal Justice Crown Prosecution Service, Health, Social Care, NW BCU Police and local stakeholders to ensure the needs of women in contact with the Criminal Justice System in our local area are identified and are included in this strategy.

As of February 2022, women make up 9% of the Probation caseload in Barnet. Probation in Barnet benefits from specifically commissioned rehabilitative services for women provided by Advance Minerva and Women in Prison. Uptake and engagement with these services is high.



²⁴ https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/basw_31011-5_0.pdf

²⁵ <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s56437/Blueprint%20for%20Women.pdf>

Partnership Objective 4:

Strengthen the partnership response to improve multiagency working and information sharing to deliver improved outcomes

Tackling these crimes requires a ‘whole-system’ approach. There should be zero tolerance for DA and VAWG to occur – at home, at work, at school, online, or on the streets. A ‘whole system’ approach means different professionals and agencies (including criminal justice professionals, as well as teachers, health and social care professionals and others), local and national Government, charities, and others all working together to tackle domestic abuse and violence against women and girls. Partnerships at a local and regional level should be striving to ensure better joint working and more effective interventions.²⁶

We want to build on the strengths of the whole-system approach in Barnet to ensure victims of domestic abuse and VAWG, and their children, feel safe and supported whilst perpetrators are held to account for their behaviour.

We believe the whole-system also includes our communities and those who are impacted the most, which is why it is important this strategy reflects their views.

The VAWG delivery board is committed to a whole-system approach in Barnet.

We want to minimise the number of times victims and survivors have to re-tell their story. We know this can be retraumatising. By strengthening the system, and the way we communicate and share information, we can address this in Barnet.

DA MARAC

In Barnet, since March 2020 due to the pandemic, all VAWG partners pulled together to implement a fourfold increase in the frequency of our Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) from monthly to weekly. As a result, there is now a faster turnaround between referral of high risk and complex domestic abuse cases and multi-agency risk review and implementation of risk reduction safety plans. There is also improved attendance at the MARACs. As we were already piloting the use of a new multi-agency data management system called ECINS before the lock down, by using ECINS since first lock

down it made it easier for MARAC members to share information, upload their information and research ahead of the MARAC. We have also improved our MARAC referral form and it is now a web page online referral form for easy access to VAWG members.

We continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the MARAC through a quality assurance panel. The steering committee agreed to increase learning and shared experiences, self-learn on how effective we have been as a MARAC partnership. The quality assurance panel report on two complex cases highlights the learning and self-grading of the different domains like analysis of risks, information sharing, multi-agency working, diversity issues, action planning, voice of all members of the household, impact and the learning. With our NWBCU Police as Chair, our MARAC multi agency partnership has improved practice to safeguard survivors, children and other vulnerable members of the household of high risk domestic abuse in the borough.

We want all partners across the borough to be aware of the MARAC process for victims who are at high risk of harm so they can benefit from this multi-agency action plan. We need to ensure partners are aware of high risk indicators and encourage them to attend MARAC training which are held every quarter.

Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)

There were 114 domestic homicides in the year ending March 2021, a similar number to the average over the last five years, which amounts to 19% of all homicides of victims aged 16 and over recorded in that year. In Barnet, partners came together to conduct a review of four domestic violence homicides for the five Barnet residents who lost their lives because of domestic abuse during the four years of the last VAWG Strategy. Barnet Community Safety Team and Family Services led on the Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews (DHR). The Home Office Domestic Homicide Review Quality Assurance Panel has provided us with detailed feedback on one of the completed reviews that they found it to be thorough, well written and detailed, and demonstrates good analysis and excellent use of research. Another review was completed and submitted to the Home Office. To date, two are ongoing. All the four reviews have independent chairs. We would like to acknowledge the work of the Independent DHR Chairs, the VAWG partners and the engagement of the families of the victims for the review. This strategy and all our work is dedicated to them.



²⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>, July 2021.

Operation Encompass in Barnet

Domestic abuse is a safeguarding children issue; statistics show that in 90% of cases children are present in a household during a domestic abuse incident. Often the following day children might not be able to deal with the school day.

Operation Encompass is the implementation of key partnerships working between the Metropolitan Police (MPS), the local authority (LA) and designated safeguarding leads (DSL) in the school. This protocol sets out a joint-agency procedure to provide, by next day notification, appropriate support for Children and Young Persons who have experienced domestic abuse in their household.

This protocol does not replace or supersede existing protocols, or singularly address child welfare. The protocol should always be followed in conjunction with the current safeguarding procedures and practitioners' guidelines and is designed to reinforce safeguarding and ensure children's wellbeing support after a domestic incident. Schools will receive information when:

1. Police have been called out to a domestic incident
2. AND the child is present at the time of the incident
3. AND the child is Under 18

This knowledge, given to schools/ educational establishments through Operation Encompass, allows the

provision of next day notification to provide immediate silent observation and awareness. Any further needs identified will be processed via the school's standard pastoral care process.

Barnet schools have been signing up to Operation Encompass since February 2021, in September 2021 there were 59 schools signed up with ongoing work to enable all schools to do this. Operation Encompass has been discussed with school Designated Leads for safeguarding and there has been representation and presentations by police at DSL briefings.

Sharing intelligence

We will continue to work in partnership to share the intelligence and VAWG data to VAWG partners in the borough on a quarterly basis by reporting on the VAWG DASH board. They include data from Police, advocacy services, perpetrator programme, MARAC, One Stop shop, Children and Adult MASH.

We would like to improve data collection about harmful practices in the borough. We want to identify any emerging borough issues at the earliest opportunity and address them through this strategy and the partnership work.

To make sure that we are continuing to build our understanding of domestic abuse and VAWG, who they happen to, and who commits them, we will work across the Barnet borough partnership to improve data monitoring, and in turn improve understanding and our response to these crimes and behaviours.

Women experiencing Domestic Abuse with Multiple Disadvantage

The WiSER Project is a MHCLG-funded partnership project consisting of specialist charities working to end male violence and abuse. Support workers engage with women who are frequently excluded from mainstream services and/or find it hard to engage with support. The intensive outreach support is trauma informed and delivered flexibly as 1-1 and group support to meet the individual needs of the women. Barnet is one of 8 London boroughs to benefit from this service, which is currently provided in English, Turkish, Bengali and Sylheti.

All women who access support from WiSER have experienced violence against women and girls. Advocates work with women as human beings: they see the whole person including their strengths and challenges. They seek to understand how, collectively and intersectionally, their backgrounds, histories, experiences, and current circumstances link together, and the support they need as individuals who have experienced trauma.

The success of this project highlights the need for all services to work in an intersectional and trauma-informed approach, seeing the whole person.

In Barnet, we will build links between services; in particular mental health services, substance use services, homelessness services and VAWG services.



Partnership Objective 5:

Working together for safer streets, community and public spaces

Safety in the streets

Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa's murders showed the horrific violence and vulnerability experienced by women in the streets of the UK.

Women and girls disproportionately experience violence and abuse at school, at work, on buses and trains, on the street, and at home. The conviction rate for domestic or sexual violence remains low at the rate of 6.2% according to the Centre for Women's Justice. The low prosecution rate suggests clearly much more work is needed to protect women and understand the threats.

We want all Barnet residents to feel safe out in the community. We will work closely with the Community Safety team, TFL and NW BCU Police to understand the scale and nature of the problem in Barnet. We will talk to residents to understand how safe they feel in Barnet. Barnet Council teams, and others who work out and about in the community are key partners. We will gather their insight into public spaces, as well as increasing their knowledge about how to respond if they are worried about someone, whether that be someone who is at risk of domestic abuse in their home, or VAWG in a public space.

This conversation began during our consultation for this strategy. Respondents to the public consultation were asked how safe they feel from VAWG in Barnet during the day and at night. 78% said they feel safe during the daytime. This compares to 39% who said they feel safe at night. They made suggestions of what would help them feel safer during the night. The most common responses were physical actions such as better lighting, CCTV and cutting back shrubs and more visible police.

To help young people feel safer from VAWG in Barnet, the young people who took part in the consultation workshops suggested some good ideas. The ideas with more than one comment were:

- Men and boys as allies
- Greater police presence, particularly at night
- CCTV
- Well-lit streets

We want victims to feel able to report abuse to the police when they are ready. We want to see offenders being prosecuted. We also want to see changes in societal attitudes and will focus on an awareness raising campaign to help people recognise abusive behaviours and the attitudes and beliefs that underpin this abuse. We have to stop the culture of blaming women, that women are at fault and that it is up to women to ensure their own safety.

It is also about empowering all children at school and making them part of the discussion. If we want long lasting radical change and culture shift, we have to start with education about gender equality, respect and consent. Conversations must come from all schools, colleges and universities in UK, so that there is one clear message among all young people, children and parents.

In Barnet, we want all children and young people to understand what healthy relationships and behaviour look like.

The Home Office will be working with the police to pilot StreetSafe, an online tool which will enable the public to anonymously report areas where they feel unsafe. StreetSafe will enable everyone, including women and girls, to report locations where they feel or have felt unsafe and to identify the features about that location that made them feel this way. The data will be made available to Police and Crime Commissioners and local authorities



who will use it to support their local Policing and Crime Plans and influence community safety partnerships with stakeholders. We will review this for Barnet when it becomes available.

Safety in public transport

To help ensure women and girls are safe on our public transport, the Department for Transport will appoint a new Violence Against Women and Girls Transport Champion. The British Transport Police (BTP) and Transport for London (TfL) have undertaken innovative new approaches to address sexual offending through their 'Project Guardian' and 'Report It to Stop It' campaigns.

In Barnet we need to understand the local issues around sexual harassment and sexual offending on public transport, and how the 'Report it to stop it' campaign is being delivered on transport routes in the borough.

Police Community Support Officers from Barnet Safer Transport Team hold a Violence Against Women and Girls stall at transport hubs/bus stops twice monthly.

The aim is to interact with all people to promote female safety. Advice and literature is available on a number of safety topics, this includes awareness of a safety app that can turn a smart phone into a person alarm.

All Safer Transport Teams across London carry out these events. Locations are selected by assessing crime statistics and feedback from local residents.

Safety in public spaces

The Met and the Mayor of London have joined together with Safer Sounds, part of the Safer Business Network, and licensed venues across the capital to help keep people safe while enjoying a night out. They are also piloting Project Vigilant to prevent sexual offences linked to the night-time economy and to tackle predatory offending. Working closely with community partners, they aim to make busy night-time economy areas places offenders are afraid to operate. The Met are also committed to working with licensees and event organisers to enable them to respond better to female victims of violence, including through the 'Good Night Out Campaign'. This campaign works with and trains organisations so that they can better understand, respond to, and prevent sexual harassment and assault in their spaces. They have already worked with venues, bars, pubs, clubs, festivals, event organisers, promoters, students' unions, local authorities, security teams, ticket vendors, support services and more.

VAWG and Hate Crime

The objective of the Barnet Hate Crime Strategy 2020 - 2024²⁷ is "To keep the people of Barnet safe by reducing hate crime in the borough. This will be achieved by increasing people's confidence to report hate crimes in Barnet; improve the support for victims of Hate Crime; and raise awareness of how to report Hate Crime in Barnet while safeguarding the most vulnerable in the community who are impacted".

The hate crime team monitor and redress issues for adults at risk who experience domestic abuse and to pursue perpetrators who are also adults at risk through their Hate Crime Reporting Centres in the community.

Some sections of the community may lack the confidence to report crimes or seek support due to cultural, language or other issues. The hate crime team are working in partnership with local organisations to identify groups of women and girls that might be at risk of hate crime in the home or in the community and identify pathways for them to access support from our existing and, if relevant, new Hate Crime Reporting Centres.

The Hate crime project continues to increase awareness of the impact of hate crime. This includes delivering awareness-raising workshops to community groups and volunteers to identify where women may be at risk of hate crime, particularly where they also have protected characteristics including:

- Disability;
- Faith, Religion and Belief;
- Race, Ethnicity and Nationality;
- Sexual Orientation; and
- Gender Identity.

The hate crime project works with people with learning

disabilities and autism and their families to raise awareness of the issues and pathways they can follow, if they experience domestic abuse. They will monitor localised hate crime trends and address the specific needs of women who are potentially at risk of abuse from perpetrators in and around the home. This includes the monitoring of hate crime trends and raising awareness of women who are potentially at risk of racist and religious hate crime, women who are victims of violence because of their gender identity or sexual orientation and ensure there are clear pathways for support within the local community.

This new strategy recognises DA and VAWG as hate crime. We are working to expand the hate crime reporting model to include VAWG and DA where community groups can identify and receive reports and are supported by clear referral pathways to our DA and VAWG services - making VAWG everyone's business.

Cross partnership communications campaign

"People need to be educated that wolf whistling and shouting out windows is not a compliment. Police need to be aware how scary this can be especially when this starts happening to girls as young as 11 and needs to be taken much more seriously."

(Young Barnet resident, October 2021)

The partnership is committed to working together to increasing awareness of violence against women and girls in public spaces focusing on creating behaviour change. The aim is to target and challenge perpetrators and the harmful misogynistic attitudes that exist within wider society and ensure victims can recognise abuse and non-contact sexual offending, while seeking support at an earlier stage. We will launch a communications campaign to raise awareness on how to access support, and with clear messages about unacceptable behaviour in places such as bus adverts, bus stops, billboards, sports clubs, companies, supermarkets, and pharmacies.

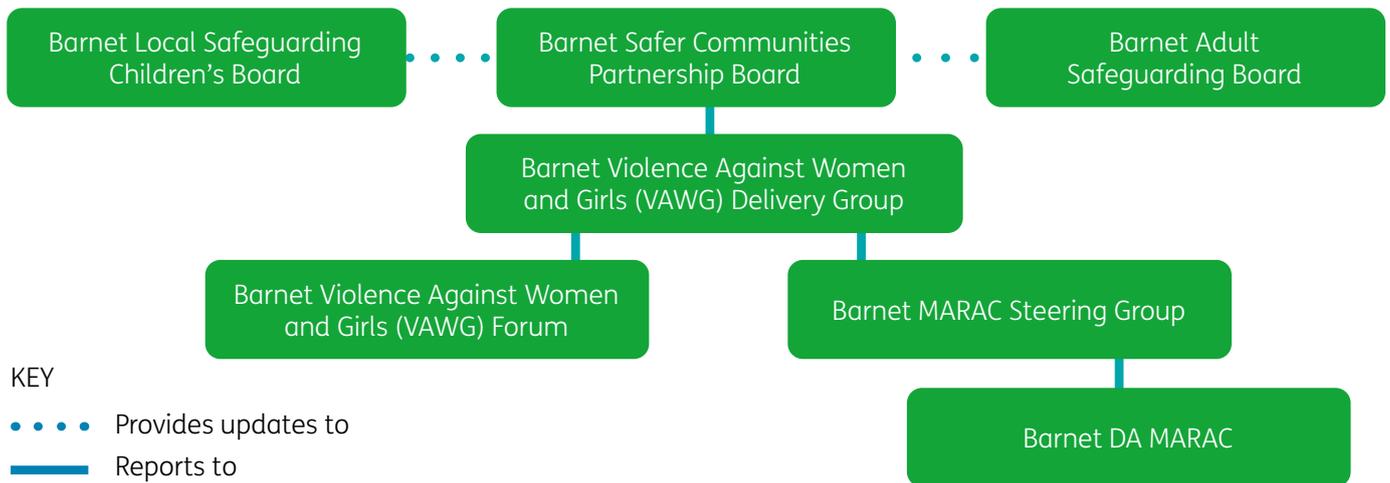


²⁷ <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s65975/Appendix%20A%20-%20Barnet%20Hate%20Crime%20Strategy%202020-2024.pdf>

Delivering the Strategy

Governance

This strategy will be overseen by **Barnet’s VAWG Delivery Group** - a subgroup of **Barnet’s Safer Communities Partnership Board** (the statutory board overseeing delivery of **Barnet’s Community Safety Partnership Plan**, which includes a priority on responding to and preventing violence against women and girls).



Measuring Success

The VAWG Delivery Group will agree an annual delivery action plan and a set of partnership indicators that will measure success and outcomes against the objectives set out in this strategy. These will be reported to the VAWG Delivery Group and the Safer Communities Partnership Board.

To support this Strategy, we will create a three-year (2022-2025) partnership action plan that will guide activities and actions across the partnership. The framework will include outcomes, key performance measures, delivery leads, completion dates, and will explain how data will be collected, when and by whom.

The indicators will help us to observe, measure and validate performance; to show whether progress has been made as planned; and provide early warning signs if things are not on track. Indicators will assist in identifying where changes might need to be made in practice or to the strategy.

During implementation, the quarterly VAWG dashboard will be discussed and

analysed on a regular basis at the VAWG Forum and VAWG Delivery group - to redress areas of poor performance. Data will inform decision-making and will be reported to all stakeholders where relevant. In relation to the performance monitoring of the DA and VAWG Strategy, the VAWG Delivery Board will report to and be accountable to the Safer Communities Partnership Board.

Data evaluation will look for planned or unplanned outcomes as well as the impact and will tell us what change has occurred and why. Data evaluation will make the partnership accountable, and new knowledge that is generated will be made available to stakeholders and to outside agencies. Learning from data evaluation will steer funding applications within future commissioning processes.

We want to involve survivors to help us evaluate our progress with the strategy and to validate our performance. We will work alongside support agencies to gather their feedback regularly. We intend to support this through setting up a Barnet survivor forum.



Appendix 1: List of specialist VAWG services in Barnet Governance

Central Government or MOPAC Funded Services

The North London Rape Crisis Service – supporting Barnet victims of rape

Forced Marriage Unit – supporting victims and survivors of forced marriage

National Domestic Abuse Help Line – Providing advice and emergency accommodation for victims wanting to flee domestic violence

Pan London DV Reciprocal agreement

1 Women's Refuge funded by MOPAC/MHCLG

Victim Support

Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) to Domestic Abuse in Barnet, Brent & Enfield (Barnet lead)

Services commissioned by Barnet Council:

Refuge provision (2)

Domestic Abuse Advocacy and Support Service (DAASS)

Perpetrator Programmes (adults and young people)

Multi-agency DA and VAWG training programme

Services commissioned by pooling of partnership budgets:

Barnet IRIS Programme

IRIS programme

Barnet DA One Stop Shop (led by Barnet Homes)

Barnet Sanctuary Scheme (led by Barnet Homes)

Inhouse service:

Barnet DA MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) delivered by Barnet Council and chaired by NWBCU Police

Details are on the Council's website: www.barnet.gov.uk/domesticabuse

Appendix 2: Forms and definitions of violence against women²⁸

Female genital mutilation (FGM) – 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 forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in some cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence), emotional and psychological (for example when someone is made to feel they are bringing shame on the family) or financial abuse (taking the victims wages or not giving them any money). Forced marriage is a crime and an abuse of human rights.

Honour based abuse – Abuse 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' (e.g. 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. 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.

²⁸ Mayor strategy on VAWG 2013-17

Appendix 3: List of Abbreviations

ASBI	Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction
BEHMHT	Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust
BPSI	Barnet Partnership for School Improvement
BSCB	Barnet Safeguarding Children Board
BSCP	Barnet Safer Communities Partnership
BSAB	Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board
BTP	British Transport Police
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
DA	Domestic Abuse
DHR	Domestic Homicide Review
DVDS	Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GLA	Greater London Authority
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons
IAPT	Improving access to psychological therapies
ICO	Information Commissioner's Office
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
IRIS	Identification and Referral to Improve Safety
LBB	London Borough of Barnet
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
MECC	Making Every Contact Count
MOPAC	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
NHS	National Health Service
NWBCU	North West Basic Command Unit (covering the London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent and Harrow)
SAR	Safeguarding Adults Review
TFL	Transport for London
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VCFS	Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector



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- Residents
- Statutory Partners
- NW BCU Police
- London Borough of Barnet - Community Safety; Public Health; Mental Health (MH) commissioning; Children's Social Care (Family Services MASH ,Early help teams, Vulnerability, Violence and Exploitation teams); Adult Safeguarding; DA MARAC. Strategy and Engagement team
- Barnet Homes
- Barnet Homes One Stop Shop
- North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group
- Education
- London Probation Service
- Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Middlesex University
- Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board
- Rise Mutual CIC
- Solace Women's Aid
- Barnet Victim Support
- Cyber Care
- Barnet Mencap
- Jewish Women's Aid
- Inclusion Barnet
- Community Barnet
- New Citizens' Gateway
- Galop
- All service user's voices
- Barnet elected Members for feedback at the Members workshop
- Our partners - statutory, voluntary and community who were involved in consultation
- Colleagues across Barnet Council and Barnet Homes for their continuous collaboration and support
- The Chair and Members of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee
- The Chair and Members of the London Borough of Barnet VAWG Delivery Group
- The Chair and Members of London Borough of Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board
- The Chair and Members of London Borough of Barnet VAWG Forum
- Barnet Partnership Board
- Barnet Council Women's Network
- Barnet Council Healthy Workstream
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For more information about support services in Barnet, please visit:
www.barnet.gov.uk/domesticabuse

email: DAVAWG@Barnet.gov.uk

or visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/domesticabuse

