

INTRODUCTION

Domestic Abuse can have a devastating impact; not only on victims, but also their families, friends and the wider community. It is an issue which disproportionately affects women as victims but can also affect men from all walks of life, threatening the physical and mental wellbeing of those it affects, damaging relationships with others and limiting the ability of individuals and families to live happy and fulfilling lives. Domestic Abuse is defined as:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse; psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional”.

This strategy is also intended to encompass Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The purpose of this document is to set out what the Luton Community Safety Partnership intends to do over the next four years in order to “break the cycle” of Domestic Abuse within our communities. The detail of this work will be provided in a Partnership Action Plan which will support this document; however, our key aims and ambitions are presented here.

CORE PRINCIPLES

The Partnership accepts that Domestic Abuse is a complex issue and one which no single organisation can tackle alone. Underpinning this strategy is a principle of collaborative working across agencies in both the statutory and voluntary sector. Furthermore, central to the strategy is the voice of the victim. As a Partnership, we are committed to consulting with and being influenced by service users. Their experiences of Domestic Abuse and of the services in place to support them will be fundamental to shaping new services and our strategic approaches, as well as future involvement with services providers.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This strategy identifies; our plans to increase our effectiveness in the **prevention** of Domestic Abuse, how we will **pursue** those who perpetrate it, how we will **protect** victims including children and young people who are at risk, and our commitment to the **provision** of services that support victims and their children and assist perpetrators to address their behaviour.

GOVERNANCE This strategy will be overseen by the Domestic Abuse Delivery Group which reports to the Partnership Delivery Board. The strategic lead is Gerry Taylor, Director of Public Health.

OUR AIM IS TO REDUCE THE FREQUENCY, SEVERITY AND IMPACT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE IN LUTON BY PREVENTING ABUSE, PURSUING THOSE WHO PERPETRATE IT, PROTECTING VICTIMS AND CHILDREN AND PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY SERVICES AND SUPPORT

PREVENTION
WORK TO ADDRESS THE FACTORS WHICH SUPPORT AND/OR CONTRIBUTE TO DOMESTIC ABUSE IN ORDER TO PREVENT ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- Challenge attitudes which support violence in relationships, particularly with children and young people.
- Promote and progress the White Ribbon Campaign within the town and encourage more men, particularly community leaders, to speak out against Domestic Abuse.
- Campaign and work with schools, colleges and the university around young people’s perception to violence.
- Strengthen and develop early intervention work including the provision of parenting programmes which model respectful relationships to provide families with the skills and confidence to recognise harmful relationships.

Success in PREVENTION will mean:

- Decrease in the level of acceptance by CYP of DV
- Increase in the number of White Ribbon Ambassadors across Luton

PURSUE
ACT TO ENSURE THOSE WHO COMMIT DOMESTIC ABUSE ARE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE AND DESIST FROM FURTHER OFFENDING AND/OR ABUSE

- Make use of new technologies and powers to ensure victimless prosecutions are undertaken wherever possible.
- Develop a multi-agency approach to managing prolific perpetrators through the Integrated Offender Management Scheme to reduce re-offending and increase support to victims.
- Expand the Domestic Abuse Training programme to include training staff to recognise, understand and challenge perpetrator behaviour.
- Increase multi-agency actions being set through the MARAC to make use of programmes to address the risk posed by perpetrators.

Success in PURSUE will mean:

- Increase in the number of successful prosecutions including victimless prosecutions
- Reduction in re-offending among IOM DV Cohort
- Increase in victims making use of local programmes

PROTECT
PROTECT AND SUPPORT VICTIMS OF ABUSE INCLUDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO MINIMISE THE IMPACT OF ABUSE AND ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS OF LUTON CAN FEEL SAFE AND SECURE

- Ensure all Partnership staff are trained to recognise and offer appropriate support/ signposting to victims including (where appropriate) use of routine enquiry and the DASH risk assessment.
- Develop co-ordinated service provision and pathways to provide access to services for victims including: standard / medium risk victims, male victims, children and young people.
- Generate increased awareness among professionals and the local community regarding available services which can provide advice and support, including promotion of the Partnership website and information line.
- Ensure that the risk and impact on children (including emotional harm) is recognised and responded to appropriately, ensuring they are safeguarded from further harm and are supported to recover.

Success in PROTECT will mean:

- Clear referral pathways in place for all victims of DV
- Decrease in % of children on CP Plans as a result of DV
- Decrease in severity of repeat incidents
- Reduction in levels of repeat victimisation

PROVISION
ENSURING THE AVAILABILITY OF HIGH QUALITY SERVICES FOR VICTIMS, CHILDREN AND PERPETRATORS

- Continue to provide and develop targeted Multi Agency services and responses for vulnerable and high risk victims of Domestic Abuse, Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse and FGM, including community responses and accommodation based responses (refuge).
- Ensure the availability and accessibility of support groups, including the Freedom Programme.
- Maintain the availability of and increase the volume of appropriate referrals to the Voluntary Community Perpetrator Programme.
- Work together to prevent and reduce homelessness experienced by domestic abuse victims.
- Develop care co-ordination pathways for service users of drug and alcohol services to provide co-ordinated support and interventions.

Success in PROVISION will mean:

- IDVA service operating in line with SafeLives quotas
- Reduction in unsuccessful refuge requests
- Increased referrals and completions of VCPP
- Reduce number of victims who become homeless

REDUCE THE FREQUENCY, SEVERITY AND IMPACT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE IN LUTON