

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE Fact Sheet

Background

Eighty five women and 23 men were killed by their partners or ex-partners in England and Wales in 2013/14,¹ and in 2014 a major review of the police response to domestic violence (DV) reported that, on average, the police receive an emergency call relating to domestic abuse every 30 seconds.² In 2013/14 there was an average of 7 domestic incidents per day recorded in Sutton (2,548 incidents in one year).³

Inflicting domestic violence and abuse is against the Human Rights Act and in Sutton domestic violence is reported to be a considerable contributing factor within local Child Protection issues.⁴ In addition to causing considerable harm to the physical and mental health and wellbeing of individuals and society,⁵ domestic violence and abuse represents a large proportion of crimes, and costs an estimated £15.7 billion per year in the UK.⁶

Although nationally there has been a downward trend in violent crime by domestic offender from 2001/02 to 2013/14 (**Figure 1**), the estimated number of victims of any domestic abuse has remained relatively stable for the past six years (**Figure 2**).

In 2013/14 the police service recorded 19.4 domestic abuse incidents per 1,000 population nationally. A significantly higher rate was recorded by the Metropolitan Police; 20 incidents per 1,000 population of London in 2013/14; which was a significant increase from 18 per thousand population in the previous year.⁷

Policy context

Domestic violence and abuse is defined as: “any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, 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. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.”⁸ Domestic violence and abuse extends to female genital mutilation, forced marriage and ‘honour crimes’.

¹ Homicide index, Home Office.

² Everyone’s business: Improving the police response to domestic abuse, HMIC 2014.

³ Domestic and Sexual Violence dashboard www.london.gov.uk/priorities/policing-crime/data-information/vawg-dashboard.

⁴ Sutton Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment (2014/15).

⁵ Violence against women, WHO Fact Sheet no. 239

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/>.

⁶ Walby S. (2009). The cost of domestic violence: Update 2009.

⁷ Public Health Outcomes Framework (2013/14 data) <http://www.phoutcomes.info/>

⁸ Home Office, Violence against women and girls (2012) www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls

In support of this definition of domestic violence and abuse, in December 2014 the Home Secretary announced a change to the law to include “coercive and controlling behaviour” as a criminal offence; carrying a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment and a fine.⁹

Under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, charges can be brought against a perpetrator without an abused person’s permission,¹⁰ and since March 2014 a domestic violence disclosure scheme has been implemented across England and Wales. An individual or agency can request police to check whether or not a partner (new or existing) has a history of violence that may put the individual at risk of domestic violence.¹¹ Witnessing domestic violence against another person (seeing or hearing) is a source of harm for children,¹² and therefore health professionals should follow child safeguarding procedures in cases where this has occurred.¹³

In March 2014 a new process was implemented nationally to enable police and magistrates to implement Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) in the aftermath of an incident, expediting the protection of victims. When served with a DVPO, perpetrators of domestic violence can be banned from returning to a residence or having contact with a victim for up to 28 days.¹⁴

In the July 2015 national budget a £3.2 million funding boost was announced, to fund provision of domestic violence services including refuges.¹⁵

Risk factors

Deprivation National data for England and Wales shows a higher proportion of adult victims of domestic violence in households with lower income (**Figure 3Error! Reference source not found.**). In Sutton a strong relationship has also been identified between the persistence of statistically significant hotspots of domestic abuse and areas of deprivation. Domestic incidents were found to be more common in the areas of Roundshaw/South Beddington in the east of the borough, and the north of the wards St Helier and Wandle Valley in the north of Sutton.¹⁶

Alcohol It has also been found in Sutton that there is higher incidence of domestic violence nearer to pubs, clubs and off-licenses; the distance to these venues

⁹ Government to create new domestic abuse offence www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-create-new-domestic-abuse-offence.

¹⁰ Responding to domestic abuse: a handbook for health professionals, Department of Health (2005).

¹¹ Home Office Guidance; Domestic Violence and Abuse. www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse

¹² Children Act 1989. www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/body.

¹³ Responding to domestic abuse: a handbook for health professionals, Department of Health (2005).

¹⁴ Home office guidance, Domestic violence and abuse. www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse

¹⁵ Department for Communities and Local Government, Press release www.gov.uk/government/news/32-million-funding-to-help-victims-of-domestic-violence-and-abuse

¹⁶ Domestic Abuse Review and Alcohol Connection Study (Dec 2014); commissioned by the Safer Sutton Partnership Service and conducted by Professor Allan Brimicombe. Geographical location was based on victim’s home address.



that sell alcohol correlates with the number of domestic events, in a similar way to the correlation with all violent crime.¹⁵

Pregnancy Has also been identified as a risk factor for domestic violence against women to be initiated, or worsen.

Domestic violence and abuse is thought to increase the likelihood of poor lifestyle choices such as alcohol and substance misuse, and victims have been reported to have an increased likelihood of being diagnosed with mental ill-health and attempt suicide. Therefore reducing domestic violence and abuse is likely to lead to improvements in a number of Public Health outcomes.

The Local Picture

Key facts

Annual data from July 2014 to June 2015 indicated that Sutton had 3 cases of domestic violence with injury per 1,000 adult population (aged 16 or over). This was the second highest rate amongst the London boroughs with populations similar to Sutton (**Figure 4**). In one year (November 2013 to October 2014) there were 2,722 police Crime Reporting Information System (CRIS) reports characterised as Domestic Incidents in Sutton; 38% (1,030) of which were classified as crimes. Of these crimes just fewer than four out of five were violent offences (**Figure 5**).

The Sutton Community Safety Partnership reported:¹⁷

- 22% increase in the number of reports of domestic violence offences in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14. This is a good thing, as it shows more victims are confident that if they report, something positive will happen. We don't believe this indicates a rise in actual incidents, but rather a rise in reporting.
- 27.9% overall reduction in violence against the person in the 10 year period 2004/5 to 2014/15
- Over a third of all violent offences reported in Sutton are domestic offences
- The percentage of first time reporters has increased, with a decrease in reports of repeat victimisation
- The most common age of victims of domestic violence has decreased year on year, which is a positive indicator that victims are reporting abuse earlier (the Crime Survey for England and Wales shows that the age of actual victimisation is far lower than the age at which DV is reported)
- Sutton has one of the highest conviction rates in Magistrate and Crown courts across London
- Recent changes and improvements in the recording practice of the police

¹⁷ Sutton Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment (2014/15).

These data suggest that the incidence of domestic abuse is increasing in Sutton, both in terms of the number of offences and the proportion of violent crime. However the data shows that repeat victimisation has decreased and the number of first-time reporters has increased. In Sutton the most common age for reports of DV victimisation is 25-31 years (**Figure 6**), which is higher than the national profile (16-25 years).¹⁸ It is important to note that the CSEW reports the age at which victims experience DV, not when they report it, therefore, a lowering of the average age of reporting in Sutton is an indication that victims are reporting earlier. The distribution of victim age does not appear to be a reflection of the age distribution of the population of Sutton (**Figure 6**). The recent reduction in victim age in Sutton may indicate that victims are choosing to report DV earlier.

Consequently when all of the information is taken into account, caution should be exercised when interpreting the increase in number of offences; it may reflect increased reporting, rather than increased incidence, of domestic violence and abuse.

Assets available

A number of services for both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse are available locally, nationally and internationally, and are commissioned and provided by public sector and non-governmental/charity organisations (summarised in **Table 1**).

¹⁸ Crime survey for England and Wales 2011/12.

Table 1: Domestic violence and abuse services available to adult residents of Sutton

	Service name	Description	Clients
Local Services	The Metropolitan Police	Response to domestic abuse including arrangement of safe places for victims to go.	Victims (all)
	Domestic violence one stop shop	Walk in morning (Wed 9.30am – 11.30am) at Sutton Baptist Church.	Victims (all)
	Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)	3 provided by Victim Support (1 at St Helier Hospital) and 1 provided by Sutton Women's Aid (to support victims with housing-related needs)	Victims (all)
	Housing options and support	LBS may increase the priority of an application for local authority housing made by someone who has had to leave a previous home due to abuse, violence or threats	Victims (all)
	Mirage project	A nine week group work programme for parents being abused by their teenage children	Victims (parents)
	Sutton Women's Aid	Provides free emotional support, safety planning, and practical advice to victims of domestic violence with housing-related needs. Also provide the 'Helping Hands' volunteer service to support victims of DV to integrate into the community	Victims (female)
	The Freedom programme	Twelve week programme held at Sutton Women's Centre for women who wish to learn more about the reality of domestic violence and abuse, and break the cycle	Victims (female)
	Rape Crisis South London	Provides counselling and advocacy to female victims of rape and sexual violence.	Victims (female)
	Sutton Women's Centre	One to one counselling service, telephone counselling service and free confidential advice	Victims (female)
		Drop in sessions every Wednesday afternoon (open house), classes for confidence building, English as a second language and IT, and Meet a Mum toddler group (not specific to domestic violence and abuse)	Any female
	Family nurse partnership	An internationally recognised, evidence-based public health, primary prevention and early help programme for first time young mothers and their babies. The programme has demonstrated evidence of reduced domestic abuse	Victims (pregnant teenagers)
	Building Better Relationships	Programme for male heterosexual perpetrators that can be court-ordered as part of a community of custodial sentence.	Perpetrators (male)
	Phoenix Perpetrator Programme	15 week group programme including one to one support	Perpetrators (male)
Women's Hub	Women offenders and those at risk of offending, can attend the Sutton Women's Hub, which will help to empower them to build a more positive future for themselves and their children. We know that many women offenders have experienced domestic and sexual violence, so this is an important factor to address	Victims (female)	
National services	Shelter	Provision of detailed information on rights to local authority housing.	Victims (all)
	Victim support	National independent charity for victims of all crime, with a South West London office (02078011777). provides free emotional support, safety planning, and practical advice to victims of domestic violence and other crimes.	Victims (all)
	National Centre for Domestic Violence	Free, fast emergency injunction service to any survivor of domestic violence.	Victims (all)
	National stalking helpline	Guidance and information to anybody who is currently or has previously been affected by harassment or stalking.	Victims (all)
	Network for surviving stalking	Representation for stalking victims and their families.	Victims (all)
	Action on Elder Abuse	Free helpline providing emotional support, information and guidance.	Victims (elderly)
	Broken Rainbow UK	Domestic violence charity providing helpline, email, online chat and information for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals, their families, friends and agencies supporting them.	Victims (LGBT)
	Destitute Domestic Violence Concession	Migrants who have been admitted to the UK with leave as spouses, unmarried partners or civil partners of a British citizen/non-British citizen settled in the UK who are victims of domestic violence can access help from the government on a temporary basis (maximum 3 months; despite the "no recourse to public funds" policy). Victims of domestic violence are also able to apply for indefinite leave to remain in their own right.	Victims (migrant)
	National Domestic Violence Helpline	Free, 24 hour phone helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge (0808 2000 247).	Victims (female)
	Women and Girls Network	Offers counselling, support and advice for women who have been affected by gendered violence, including sexual and domestic violence.	Victims (female)
	Maternity Services	NICE guidelines 2001 specify that all women should be routinely asked about domestic violence, and women should have the opportunity to speak with a midwife in privacy (without their partner) at least once in the antenatal period.	Victims (pregnant women)



	Service name	Description	Clients
	Mankind initiative	Male victims of domestic violence and abuse; helpline and website with information.	Victims (male)
	Men's advice line	Telephone helpline Mon-Wed 10am – 1pm and 2pm – 5pm.	Victims (male)
	NHS Choices	Website with advice for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse.	Victims and perpetrators (all)
	Respect	For male and female abusers who want to stop; a number of programmes working with young people and adult perpetrators. Also work with male victims of domestic violence and abuse.	Victims (male) and perpetrators (all)
<i>International</i>	The Forced Marriage Unit	British Government office providing support and assistance to British nationals being forced into marriage overseas.	Victims (all)

What works

In 2011 the Government issued a “Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls.”^{19,20} It is advised that in order to tackle domestic violence a multidisciplinary approach from agencies including health, police, housing, safeguarding and adult social services will be required.

An economic analysis performed on behalf of National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) indicates that the cost of domestic violence to society is so high that interventions leading to modest reductions in domestic violence are cost-effective.²¹ The Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) service model in particular has been shown to save resources and improve the quality of life, and is therefore cost saving when compared to no intervention.²² NICE issued guidelines for responding to domestic violence and abuse in 2014.²³

Progress in Sutton

Local authorities were advised by NICE to implement specific guidelines from the complete set of guidelines issued in 2014. These guidelines and how work in Sutton addresses them are presented in Table 2. The DVA/VAWG Strategic Board maintains a Delivery Plan, linked to the 3 year strategy, which has also taken the NICE guidelines into consideration.

¹⁹ Call to end violence against women and girls: action plan (2011)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/call-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls-action-plan

²⁰ Violence against women and girls; Home Office and The Rt Hon Mike Penning MP – Policy paper; 2010 to 2015 government policy: violence against women and girls.

²¹ Guidance PH50: Economic analysis of interventions to reduce incidence and harm of domestic violence. NICE, 2013.

²² Guidance PH50: Economic analysis of interventions to reduce incidence and harm of domestic violence. NICE, 2013.

²³ Domestic violence and abuse: how health services, social care and the organisations they work with can respond effectively. NICE guidelines [PH50]; (2014) www.nice.org.uk/guidance/PH50



Table 2: Guidelines issued to Local Authorities by NICE and their implementation in Sutton. [PH50] Domestic violence and abuse: how health services, social care and the organisations they work with can respond effectively.

NICE Guideline	Implementation in Sutton
"Plan services based on an assessment of need and service mapping"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. • Mapping of Sutton Domestic Violence and Abuse Service Provision. • Sutton Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment. • 3-year Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy
"Participate in a local strategic multi-agency partnership to prevent domestic violence and abuse"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Sutton Partnership; Partnership between the London Borough of Sutton (LBS) and Metropolitan Police. Eighteen Safer Neighbourhood teams throughout the borough with priorities including tackling domestic abuse. • Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) held monthly. • A Coordinated Community Response (CCR) model operates in Sutton, to improve response to domestic violence and abuse through linking a range of services and agencies facilitating service users to permanently break the cycle of abuse.
"Develop an integrated commissioning strategy"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic violence and abuse services in Sutton are commissioned by Safer Sutton Partnership Service, People Directorate, Housing, Local Authority Public Health, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), and the voluntary and community sector.
"Provide specialist advice, advocacy and support as part of a comprehensive referral pathway"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and support is provided through commissioned services; by Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA), domestic violence-trained Police Officer, Solicitor, Citizen's Advice and others. • Designated professionals within Sutton CCG with a safeguarding remit across all commissioned health services. • The multi-agency safeguarding hub and Children's social care make referrals into services for domestic violence and abuse. • Domestic Violence One Stop Shop; walk-in centre providing advice and support for victims of domestic violence. • The Freedom programme, Student Counselling Service, and Helping Hands service are 3 examples of specialist support provided
"Provide people who experience domestic violence and abuse and have a mental health condition with evidence-based treatment for that condition"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling services provided by Sutton women's centre to improve self-esteem, emotional and mental health. • Safer Sutton Partnership includes members from the drug and alcohol partnership and integrated offender management (including substance misuse). • Quarterly domestic violence forum; including partners from healthcare to improve delivery of coordinated community response.
"Commission and evaluate tailored interventions for people who perpetrate domestic violence and abuse"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phoenix Perpetrator Programme; a 15 week group programme, with 1 to 1 support, for male perpetrators of domestic violence. • Building Better Relationships Programme can be court-ordered as part of a community or custodial sentence.

Key indicators and targets

The following lists key indicators and targets applicable to domestic abuse.

Public Health Outcomes Framework

www.phoutomes.info/

Improving the wider determinants of health:

- 1.11 – Domestic Abuse
- 1.12i – Violent crime (including sexual violence) – hospital admissions for violence
- 1.12ii – Violent crime (including sexual violence) – violence offences per 1000 population
- 1.12iii – Violent crime (including sexual violence) – rate of sexual offences per 1000 population

Improvements in these indicators will contribute towards the objective of “Improvements against wider factors that affect health and wellbeing and health inequalities.”²⁴

Links to further information

- See Fact sheet on Community Safety and Crime
- London Borough of Sutton advice regarding domestic abuse
www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200337/staying_safe/1090/domestic_abuse/7
- Links to available services are provided in Table 1

Priorities for Sutton

MARAC referrals from primary care and acute NHS Trusts

Most recent data shows that only 8% of referrals to MARAC come from the Acute NHS Trust, in neighbouring borough Merton this proportion is 30%.²⁵ Investigate ways to improve identification and referrals from GPs and other primary care providers through initiatives such as IRIS (www.irisdomeesticviolence.org.uk). MARAC referrals from the Acute Trust may also benefit from increasing the awareness of referral pathways and training for frontline acute Trust staff. This is being done by the IDVA based in St Helier Hospital, who has a remit both to train staff and support victims identified there.

Young people experiencing abuse

Educating young people about healthy relationships and providing relevant services will not only provide earlier intervention for those currently experiencing abuse, but in the future address the reported abuse in the 16-24 year old age group, which experiences the highest incidence of DV (Crime Survey for England and Wales), and the 25-31 year old age group (highest reported prevalence of domestic crimes). This is due to the average delay of 3 years between experiencing domestic abuse and accessing help.²⁶

²⁴ Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013 to 2016, Department of Health (2012).

²⁵ Sutton Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment 2014/15.

²⁶ Getting it right first time, Safe Lives (2015).



Adolescent to parent violence and abuse

Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA) is widely recognised by practitioners working with families; however the evidence base and documented occurrences are not as comprehensive as for other forms of domestic violence and abuse. A National charity “Family lives” runs a helpline for parents, and for nine months in 2008, 8% of 30,000 calls received related to physical aggression from children towards their parents.²⁷ In March 2015 the Home Office released an information guide to APVA.²⁸ Local provision of APVA services in Sutton currently exists as the Mirage Project funded by Sutton Women’s Aid; a nine week programme to keep parents safe by equipping them with strategies to manage their children’s behaviour. This may prove to be an area of service provision that warrants expansion in the future; as based on the use of the Family Lives national helpline, and historical and recent population estimates (2008 and 2015), it can be roughly estimated that the demand for such a service in 2015 would equal the parents of at least 11 adolescents per year.

Perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse

The Building Better Relationships programme provides an opportunity to help perpetrators recognise and change their abusive behaviours through a court-ordered community or custodial sentence. The Phoenix Perpetrator Programme (

Table 1) is currently funded to provide support for 45 men. Subject to evaluation of the programme, should it prove effective, this may represent an area requiring additional resource as there were 7,871 successful prosecutions for domestic violence crimes in London in 2014/15²⁹ which equates to an estimated 183 successful prosecutions in Sutton in one year.

Recommendations

- Continue to involve service users in the development of all services
- Increase the awareness of MARAC referral pathways for frontline acute NHS Trust staff
- Review training provided to acute NHS Trust staff regarding domestic violence and abuse
- Explore ways of identifying and helping victims and their children earlier
- Educate young people about healthy relationships and provide relevant interventions for those experiencing abuse, as teenage victims experience a high incidence of domestic violence, abuse and sexual violence
- Consider focusing on identifying harder to reach victims (who are more likely to under-report); including male victims, LGBT people, black and minority ethnic people, older people, and people with disabilities
- Upon review of the Mirage Project consider expansion of a local service for those affected by adolescent to parent violence and abuse
- If it is shown to be successful, provide additional support to the Phoenix Perpetrator Programme to facilitate interventions for more clients

²⁷ Aggressive behaviour in children: parents’ experiences and needs (2008). Family Lives.

²⁸ Information guide: adolescent to parent violence and abuse (APVA), Home Office 2015. www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/420963/APVA.pdf

²⁹ Crown Prosecution Service.

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