

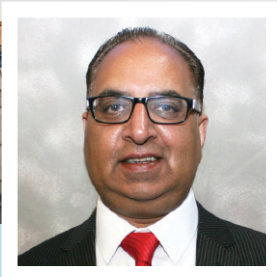


BRADFORD DISTRICT
DOMESTIC ABUSE AND
SEXUAL VIOLENCE STRATEGY

2021-2024

Taking positive action, changing attitudes and improving lives





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CHAIR OF THE
COMMUNITY SAFETY
PARTNERSHIP

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BOARD

FOREWORD

As Chairs of the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board and Community Safety Partnership in Bradford, we have worked in partnership with a huge number of people to set an ambitious strategy for the district; this is never more relevant than now. On a national level, the Domestic Abuse Bill was passed by Parliament and made law on 29 April 2021. This law has, for the first time, given us an agreed definition of domestic abuse. It makes children victims in their own right and strengthens the rights and increases the protection of survivors through the courts. Locally we are driven by how these issues impact so many. In Bradford, estimates show that 6.1% of adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2020 and 2.2% of adults had experienced sexual assault (including attempted offences). We want to encourage people to ask for help, create safe spaces where people feel they have time to talk and be a partnership that is ready to respond to a request for help.

We have heard from survivors of abuse and we have listened to their story to ensure that we have prioritised the things that matter to them. We are committed in this strategy to increase the influence people with experience of abuse have in shaping our services and ways of working into the future and have made this one of our aims.

Bradford has a young population, with the fourth highest proportion of under 16 year olds in England. We recognise that an experience of domestic abuse in childhood can have long term mental health consequences. We need to equip practitioners to recognise the signs of abuse and intervene early through a preventative approach. We are committed to developing a culture that nurtures our young and helps them have aspirations that break cycles of abusive behaviour becoming generational, and provides guidance on healthy relationships. Working with education, early help and youth service practitioners is essential to achieve this aim.

We have to ensure that equal access to quality service provision is always in our minds. Bradford District is an ethnically diverse area, with the largest proportion of people of Pakistani ethnic origin in England. One in four people living in the District describe themselves as Asian / Asian British ethnic origin, compared to under 1 in 10 people on average for England as a whole. Opening up the labour market to EU Accession states in 2004 led to a large influx of economic migrants with applications from Polish, Slovak, Lithuanian and Latvian



nationals forming the largest proportions from these countries. We acknowledge that we have work to do to ensure that everyone's first request for help allows them to be navigated into the right service to meet their needs. One example of this is the priority given to support the work of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to improve the services and response for victims of sexual abuse.

In Bradford we have a strong approach to holding perpetrators to account which has been overseen by a dedicated group. In this strategy, we now commit to an additional focus to our work with perpetrators, acknowledging that perpetrators can also have support needs. Our partnership priority is to develop additional ways of working with perpetrators to meet those needs, in addition to supporting behavioural change programmes. We feel in this way we will reduce the risk of abuse in a more coordinated way.



Given the scale of the issue, we have to acknowledge the financial pressure this places on our ability to move resources to have an early help offer and to diversify how we offer support. As a partnership we will foster creativity and be at the forefront of innovation. In doing so, we will hope to attract investment to the district that will allow us to develop new skills and achieve our strategic aims.





SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

This strategy is intended to guide the work of the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board in the Bradford District and to provide framework for all those individuals and partners working towards the vision set out within this document. Anticipated legislative changes will be implemented locally to support the strategic approach in this document. The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board and its strategy is governed by Bradford's Community Safety Partnership.

The board will lead and oversee all work, support and programs covering domestic abuse and sexual violence and the impact they have. With this focus we will collaborate with the other strategic boards who have linked agendas, or hold statutory responsibility for safeguarding survivors. For the purpose of this strategy the following definitions will apply within the Bradford District:

DEFINITIONS

'Domestic abuse' is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between individuals 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:

- physical or sexual;
- violent or threatening behaviour;
- controlling or coercive behaviour;
- economic;
- psychological or emotional.

'**economic abuse**' is any behaviour that has a substantial and adverse effect on a person's ability to acquire, use or maintain money, or other property or obtain goods or services.

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

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

'**sexual violence**' is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting. Coercion can encompass:

- varying degrees of force;
- psychological intimidation;
- blackmail; or
- threats (of physical harm or of not obtaining a job/grade etc.).

In addition, sexual violence may also take place when someone is not able to give consent – for instance, while intoxicated, drugged, asleep or mentally incapacitated.

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

OUR VISION

We will collaborate as a multi-agency partnership to ensure adults, children and young people can live free from harm caused by sexual violence and from coercion and domestic abuse in their intimate and family relationships. Through co-operation and leadership we will improve our processes, maximise our resources and secure investment in relation to domestic abuse and sexual violence in the Bradford District.

OUR MISSION

- We listen to the voices of survivors, believe in them and act protectively.
- We support and empower survivors to make informed choices, make changes and live free from the fear of abuse.
- We are bold in challenging the abusive behaviours of those causing harm and combining that with support when it will improve outcomes for all.
- We will strengthen the district wide understanding of need by accessing and analysing available data, evidence, service standards and intelligence.

OUR VALUES

Our success is built on core values which are embedded in all we do:

- We respect ourselves, each other and our communities.
- We care for each other and treat each other with kindness.
- We share ideas, resources, knowledge and skills, as well as our challenges and opportunities so that we can all be the best we can be.
- We protect each other and the world we share so we can be happy, healthy and safe.



STRATEGIC AIMS

STRATEGIC AIM 1

PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

We will prevent domestic abuse and sexual violence, by changing attitudes alongside running programs that stop escalation of risk through early intervention and support by:

- 1.1 Placing domestic abuse and sexual violence as a central issue to be considered within the district's early help work, focus on those vulnerable to exploitation and Adverse Childhood Experiences' approach and trauma informed practice. Sharing any evaluation or learning of these approaches to inform future direction.
- 1.2 Piloting and evaluating a whole education approach that has been adapted for the Bradford District. Strengthening the links between schools, businesses, community and faith groups and the multi-agency partnership to ensure that domestic abuse and sexual violence is recognised and responded to in line with contextual safeguarding principle.
- 1.3 Integrating a domestic abuse or sexual violence focus, when possible, in wider support programs such as the Liaison and Diversion Service and the Reducing Parental Conflict project. Learning

from the programs will be used to change practice and contribute to wider service development. This will include promoting community and workforce awareness of the distinction between parental conflict and domestic abuse (using the Intimate Relationship Continuum).

- 1.4 Focusing partnership working through the creation and implementation of a communication plan designed to generate a culture of shared learning and campaigning to raise awareness including focusing on reaching a diverse population. This plan will also incorporate the joint work with other boards in the district, faith groups and people of influence.
- 1.5 Ensuring training provision is underpinned by a training needs assessment and form part of a wider strategic safeguarding training offer.

STRATEGIC AIM 2

CO-PRODUCTION

We will co-produce strategy, policy, process and service delivery with those with lived experience and the voluntary, faith and community sector organisations by:

- 2.1 Creating a project group to design how co-production will be imbedded to include survivors, representatives from the Voluntary Community Sector Organisations and faith groups.
- 2.2 Starting a forum that will inform the role of the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board and that will receive a real opportunity to impact change through opportunity and representation on other sub-groups.
- 2.3 Approaching this opportunity safely to create impact with both survivors and perpetrators.
- 2.4 Developing an offer of support for families either caring for children due to domestic abuse or families bereaved through a domestic homicide using previous experiences.
- 2.5 Creating strategic, policy or service change through the adoption of this approach.





STRATEGIC AIM 3

SUPPORTING SURVIVORS AND THEIR FAMILIES

We intend to enhance our services to improve access to and experience of support to protect victims and facilitate recovery by:

- 3.1 Transforming how we support survivors through the multi-agency risk assessment conference, in accommodation and with teenagers and children who have suffered or witnessed abuse. Including to encourage the use of different communication methods, including digital and ensure communication considers the individual wishes of service users.
- 3.2 Developing a West Yorkshire approach to provide consistency for survivors. To include the adoption or creation of evidence-based approaches in cases of domestic abuse and sexual violence so that it is used to assist the recovery of victims in appropriate cases and to produce a regional quality assurance framework for Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- 3.3 Continuing to transform service provision to be inclusive for all. There will be a particular focus on male provision, refugee and asylum communities, LGBTQ+ survivors and those who present with complexity of need. This will require us to pilot new ways of working to engage populations that face barriers into provision.
- 3.4 Having an impact framework that supplements data from statutory and VCSO partners to ensure that the board is sighted on, and reacts to, issues and trends as they arise. This will allow us to adopt a creative and proactive approach to applying for funding from the government, grant funders and other sources of income to meet gaps and need for provision in the

district. This approach will allow us to manage the risk, as well as to meet the response arising from Covid.

- 3.5 To give effect to the changes in practice and statutory duties now that the Domestic Abuse Bill has been passed.

STRATEGIC AIM 4

PERPETRATORS

We intend to hold perpetrators of violence and abuse to account, offer programs to change behaviour and target support to reduce future risk by:

- 4.1 Raising issues that impact nationally through appropriate forums to make the case for change.
- 4.2 Piloting new interventions and projects to meet the support needs of perpetrators with a focus on risk reduction for survivors. Considering the links with the West Yorkshire Cautioning and Relationship Abuse program and collaborating to see how we create a structure that provides an offer to a wider range of perpetrators.
- 4.3 Undertaking a peer-review process with other local authorities focusing on improving justice processes for victims and how we ensure more perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. After the review, the partnership will implement the learning.
- 4.4 Making sure that Domestic Violence Protection Orders, Clare's Law disclosures and wider legal options are routinely considered and data collected that shows the value of the intervention.
- 4.5 Ensuring that knowledge of the impact of adverse childhood experiences informs practice in the district and that stronger links are made with mental health initiatives.



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