

Domestic Violence and Abuse: A Partnership Strategy for Suffolk
2008 – 2011

Suffolk County Domestic Violence & Abuse Forum

Working together to tackle domestic abuse in Suffolk

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Section 1.

1.1

FOREWORD

Domestic violence and abuse is a serious problem. It is a major cause of distress that has a devastating impact on victims and their families causing physical, psychological and emotional harm and disrupting lives; the financial costs are considerable the human costs are immeasurable.

To address this problem effectively requires a partnership approach and collective efforts from agencies to ensure domestic abuse is not tolerated. The County Domestic Abuse Forum is committed to tackling both the causes and effects of domestic abuse in Suffolk. The forum is a multi-agency partnership that has a wide membership including; District and Borough Community Safety Partnerships, Public Protection, Social Inclusion and Diversity Directorate, Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk PCT, Children & Young Peoples Services, the Safeguarding Children Board, Adult Safeguarding, Housing Services, Local Domestic Abuse Fora, Suffolk Probation Services, Crown Prosecution Service, Women's Aid, Family Welfare Association and other direct providers of services. Members of the Forum have been consulted and contributed to the review of this strategy.

In Suffolk we have seen some positive changes and developments through the period of our first Domestic Violence Strategy and action plan (2005 – 2008) including an increase in awareness by organisations and the public, training with staff to improve responses and for survivors an increase in support services and group programmes aimed at empowerment and restoring lost confidence. MARAC has been introduced to address high-risk cases and Specialist Domestic Violence Courts and the IDAP programme are in place to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions.

Through working in partnership we are building on the good work already undertaken to achieve profound long term changes and a more consistent and co-ordinated response. It is with this shared aim for real change that we continue to make tackling domestic abuse a priority and this is reflected in this strategy for 2008 – 2011 focused on Prevention and Early Intervention, Protection and Justice and Support for Victims.

Chair Suffolk County Domestic Abuse Forum

1.2. VISION STATEMENT

In Suffolk there is a strong commitment to address all forms of domestic violence and abuse through a partnership approach that recognises victim's experiences, and is focused on developing and sustaining responsive, consistent and coordinated services in the County that:

- Reduce the level and impact of domestic abuse
- Increase the safety of victims and their children
- Raise the profile of all forms of domestic abuse

1.3. AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

The multi-agency strategy 2008 – 2011 continues to be focused on providing a framework for working together to address domestic abuse in Suffolk. The overarching aim is to achieve a reduction in domestic abuse and repeat victimisation, and increase the safety of those experiencing violence and abuse through:

Prevention and Early Intervention

Ensure an effective and consistent response by trained and informed staff, supported by policies and systems that promote safe choices.

Protection and Justice

Ensure the effective protection of survivors including children in the wider community and in their own homes.

Support for Victims

Ensure accessible, coordinated and appropriate services to effectively meet the needs of those experiencing domestic abuse.

1.4 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTNERS

The strategy has been reviewed through consultation with County Forum members and informed by Suffolk County Council's Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2008. The strategy recognises the contribution made by all agencies and particularly voluntary organisations providing refuge and support services for women and children. The County Domestic Violence and Abuse Forum through the Strategy Group will oversee the delivery action plan (2008 – 2011) which will be reviewed and updated annually.

1.5. WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic abuse occurs in all groups and sections of society, affecting people across all social, economic and geographic backgrounds regardless of age, income, ethnicity or sexual orientation. In addition to the physical effects and injuries resulting from violence; threats, intimidation, harassment and other forms of abusive behaviour are commonplace. Victims are often isolated and experience emotional and psychological trauma. In Suffolk despite an increase in reporting domestic violence and abuse remains a significantly under reported crime.

In Suffolk many partner organisations have adopted the following widely used Home Office 'core' definition of domestic abuse.

- 'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality'.

It is recognised that some agencies may in addition define domestic abuse in relation to their service area. Family members include mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, and grandparents, whether directly related, in laws or stepfamily.

1.6. SCALE OF THE PROBLEM IN SUFFOLK

- Domestic violence and abuse has consistently accounted for more than 25% of all reported crime.
- The average repeat offending rate is 3 times higher than for any other crime.
- Reported incidents to the Police increased during 2002/03 and 2003/2004 due to changes in reporting criteria and awareness raising campaigns. Since then they have stabilised to around 5,500 per year.
- There is no significant increase in any particular District or Borough, Lowestoft continues to have the highest number of reported incidents; however, there is still considerable under reporting per population in rural areas.
- Feedback from the general public in surveys (Suffolk Speaks and MORI polls) presentations and events such as Suffolk Show indicate concerns about the incidence of domestic abuse in Suffolk.
- The cost of domestic violence in Suffolk has been estimated at £43,311,200 per year for agencies (Criminal Justice, Health care, Physical/Mental Health, Social services, Housing, Civil legal costs) or £318,381,400 if you include the cost to the individual of lost time from work and physical or psychological harm.

1.7 CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The issue of children living with domestic violence is recognised as a matter for concern in its own right by Government and children's services agencies. All the five key outcomes identified in Every Child Matters can be adversely affected for a child / children living with domestic violence and abuse. Domestic abuse is a priority for Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board.

Research also suggests children and young people are likely to be at risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse in the context of domestic violence and that the presence of violence and abuse is in itself an indicator of risk.

- 30% of domestic abuse starts in pregnancy (Why mothers die enquiry - Maternal & Child Health, DH 2004)
- At least 750,000 children witness domestic violence every year (DH 2003)
- Nearly three quarters of children on the 'at risk' register live in households where domestic violence occurs (DH 2003)

In Suffolk

- Over a 5 year period children were present at 45% - 49% of incidents reported to the police
- Over 50% of referrals to Children and Young People's Services involve domestic abuse

1.8 ADULT SAFEGUARDING

The **Suffolk Adult Safeguarding Board** is an inter-agency forum which promotes the protection of vulnerable adults from abusive behaviour and practice. It achieves this by developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating procedures and practice models, which encourage the prevention, detection, and reporting of abuse in all its forms.

It is essential that all partners and stakeholders work closely to develop a robust response in order to protect vulnerable people from abuse and harm. Working in partnership with vulnerable people to promote their levels of awareness, assertiveness and empowerment; Screening out and preventing potential abusers coming into contact with vulnerable people;

Safeguarding Adults Framework of National Minimum Standards:

Standards 1 & 2 outline the need for partnership working and sets out the framework within which planning, implementation and monitoring of safeguarding initiatives should take place. The rationale for a multi agency approach lies in the recognition that many organisations are now involved in providing services to vulnerable people. In addition there also exists a range of published inquiries into situations where the abuse of vulnerable people has previously been ignored or dismissed.

In Suffolk

- 66% of referrals to Adult Safeguarding are categorised as domestic abuse

1.9 SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY SAFETY UNIT and LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS

Suffolk County Council's Community Safety Unit provides a strategic lead and framework for domestic abuse developments. Following a strategic assessment all Community Safety Partnerships in Suffolk - Babergh, Ipswich, Suffolk Coastal, Waveney and Western, have agreed domestic abuse as a key priority in a 3 year rolling plan. The Community Safety Unit works in partnership to coordinate the delivery of local actions plans to meet LAA targets and national indicators and to assist local commissioning arrangements. Community Safety Partnership's domestic abuse priorities are:

- *Building confidence in victims of abuse*
- *Effective perpetrator intervention*
- *Raising awareness*
- *Education for young people*

These priorities are now represented in an overall priority to *Support Vulnerable Families* and are reflected throughout the sections of this strategy and action plan.

1.10 LAA TARGETS and NATIONAL INDICATORS

LAA target: Reduce repeat victimization

NI 32: Repeat incidents of domestic violence

PSA 23: Reduce the most serious violence, including tackling serious sexual offences and domestic violence

Other targets are also influential because of the links between domestic abuse and other crimes.

In Suffolk

- The repeat incident rate of 38.7% is three times that of other crimes.
- A recent Suffolk Constabulary Homicide review found that more than a third of all homicides since 1997 were domestic violence related, with alcohol a co-existing factor.

1.11 EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY

The experience of domestic abuse may vary considerably between diverse people in Suffolk; and not all individuals will be able to, or willing to access support on an equal basis. The strategy will seek to ensure fairness and equality of opportunity in all initiatives and services and enable minority groups to access appropriate support

1.12. USE OF TERMINOLOGY

The term domestic violence is used in this strategy to apply to all forms of violent and non-violent abusive behaviours. This includes sexual assault and rape, all forms of intimidation including harassment and stalking and financial deprivation in recognition of many people's experiences in this context

Section 2:

Summary of Current Services and Priorities for Action 2008 - 2011

2.1

Prevention & Early Intervention

2.1.1 Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

- i. Children may suffer both directly and indirectly if they live in households where there is domestic violence and abuse. Domestic violence and abuse is likely to have a damaging effect on the health and development of children, and it is often appropriate for such children to be regarded as children in need. Children living in families where they are exposed to domestic violence and abuse have been shown to be at risk of behavioural, emotional, physical, cognitive functioning, attitude and long-term developmental problems. Everyone working with women and children should be alert to the frequent inter-relationship between domestic violence and the abuse and neglect of children.
- ii. HM Government's Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006) contains both statutory and non-statutory guidance and highlights the significance of the impact of domestic violence on children and young people.

- iii. Commissioning guidance for Directors of Children's Services and LSCBs focuses on meeting the needs of children affected by domestic violence and abuse within the planning of integrated children's services. It provides a framework to ensure that the range of different needs that children/young people experience in relation to domestic violence and abuse are identified and addressed. It uses the now familiar tiers of intervention, and links needs and services to the five outcomes. It brings together the evidence from research, with best practice in the delivery of mainstream services, but also highlights the specialist services to which children require access. The guidance assists authorities to assure themselves that they have in place the services and responses that will satisfy the Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework target: *children affected by domestic violence and abuse are identified, protected and supported*
- iv. Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board recognises that "*where there is evidence of domestic violence, the implications for any of the children in the household should be considered, including the possibility that the children may themselves be subject to violence or may be harmed by witnessing or overhearing violence.*"

Service Summary

Safeguarding Children Board

- SCB Annual Report 2007 – 2008 reports that new guidance to safeguard children and young people who are especially vulnerable must be developed.
- A multi-agency domestic abuse policy has been ratified by SCB in March 2008. It is being developed further to include human trafficking and forced marriage
- The SCB supports the Suffolk DV Forum. They will be evaluating the SCB training to ensure the focus on the effects of domestic abuse on children is adequately addressed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children..

NHS Health Services

- Domestic violence and abuse forms a quarter of all violent crime. All health staff are advised to follow the guidance of “Responding to Domestic Abuse – a handbook for health professionals”, DOH 2006, and the Suffolk SCB guidance.
Since April 2004 Primary Care Trusts have had a statutory duty to work with other local agencies to prevent crime. (Crime & Disorder Act 1998).

2.1.1 Priority - Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

Safeguarding Children Board

Implementation of this guidance is a priority and requires to be evaluated and audited to measure compliance and effectiveness by July 2008. Multi agency DV training will be embedded into the core SCB Training Strategy. Tools for Practitioners materials to be provided to support and promote safe choices for victims

Serious Case Reviews

Learning lessons locally

NHS Health Services

Ensure that all maternity services in Suffolk include a question as part of the social history take during pregnancy. This should be introduced with the appropriate training

All NHS Trust policy makers and managers to:

Create strategies and policies for delivering local service provision which reflects national domestic violence and abuse guidance.

Ensure staff participate fully in multi-agency initiatives.

Monitor, evaluate and audit health services domestic violence and abuse initiatives and collect appropriate data.

Make decisions that ensure the safety of women and children who have experienced abuse

Ensure the Primary Care Contracted Services (Pharmacists, Dentists and General Practitioners) have domestic abuse recognition and response as part of their Quality Assessment Framework

2.1.2 Education for Young People

Each Community Safety Partnership in Suffolk invites representation from Children & Young People's Services, the Youth Offending Service, the local Safeguarding Children Board and other child focused organisations to consider the adequacy of local arrangements and implications of domestic abuse for local services.

The focus is in preventing young people developing relationships based on violence and abuse and reducing the effect of domestic abuse by providing information and engaging with young people to improve their understanding. There is a particular focus on preventing young people offending or re-offending.

In addition other services for young people aimed to raise awareness of domestic abuse, support the development of healthy relationships, build confidence and enhance resilience are encouraged to develop

2.1.3 Harmony Project

Externally funded by the Alcohol Education Research Council the Harmony Project was developed to increase understanding of the issues and impact of domestic violence and alcohol misuse on victims, perpetrators, their families and the wider community and to introduce and encourage integrated approaches. The aims of the project were to:

- To increase safe choices for families experiencing domestic violence and to hold perpetrators accountable for their behaviour - by raising awareness and developing the knowledge and skills within existing alcohol misuse and domestic violence projects.
- Influencing change, improving practice and promoting organisational development

Service Summary

Education for Young People

- Domestic abuse materials to support the PSHE curriculum have been developed are being introduced across Suffolk schools as part of 'whole school' approach model to enable staff to effectively support young people and the nurturing parent

Harmony Project

- A comprehensive Harmony Toolkit has been produced and launched at a County conference. Information sessions have been carried out with groups of Health Visitors, School Nurses, Social workers and staff from other statutory and voluntary agencies with regard to the dual issues of domestic violence and alcohol misuse using good practice from the Tool Kit. A screening question has been included on the countywide Drug & Alcohol assessment. Reported incidents to the Police, where alcohol is a factor have also reduced and met the 3 year LAA target.

2.1.2 Priority - Education for Young People

Engage with schools and other youth establishments to educate young people about domestic abuse

2.1.3 Priority - Harmony Project

Implement the Harmony Project Suffolk wide to reduce alcohol related domestic abuse

2.1.4 Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse

i. County Domestic Abuse Training Programme

Suffolk's training strategy and plan is an integral part of a collective commitment to work together to address the causes and effects of domestic abuse in Suffolk. Training is aimed to improve the response to those experiencing all forms of domestic abuse through informing and developing working practices across agencies. A programme of multi and single agency training, annual conferences and other developmental opportunities is published annually and is open to managers and staff from all statutory and voluntary agencies in Suffolk.

ii. County and local Domestic Abuse Forums

The County Domestic Violence and Abuse Forum is committed to continuing to raise awareness of domestic violence and abuse within the community of Suffolk through partnerships with member organisations including Suffolk Constabulary and Women's Aid. Local Domestic Abuse Forums provide a focus for local developments, promoting communication between agencies and facilitating sharing best practice. Local Forums have the lead role in delivering local publicity campaigns and events and organise and deliver ongoing activities to raise awareness with staff, local organisations and communities. The annual White Ribbon Campaign is delivered locally and gives local forums the opportunity to plan events to involve local agencies and communities.

iii. Public Awareness Campaigns

County wide and local publicity awareness campaigns are supported by leaflets, posters, promotion materials and white ribbons for annual White Ribbon Campaign. These are provided to organisations without charge to enable effective and consistent information for the general public and victims. This is supported by financial contributions from each Community Safety Partnership and Suffolk County Council.

iv. Supporting Information for Agencies

Raising awareness and training is supported by informative materials, provided by Suffolk County Council including the Suffolk Resource Directory and Suffolk Domestic Abuse handbook.

2.1.5 Corporate Social Responsibility & the Employer's Role

Supporting the development and implementation of effective domestic abuse policies and guidelines is an ongoing commitment. These include:

- i Suffolk Safeguarding Board Inter-agency Policy and Procedures for Dealing with Domestic Violence and Incidents of Domestic Abuse where Children are Members of the Household
- ii Suffolk County Council Domestic Abuse: Workplace Policy & Guidance for Head Teachers & Managers
- iii The County implementation of Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Healthcare Professionals

Service Summary

Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse

- A coordinated training programme funded by Suffolk County Council is being provided; all courses are free of charge. [www](#).
- To celebrate International Women's Day a networking breakfast was held in partnership with Suffolk Association of Women in Policing and attended by 76 representatives from a diverse range of agencies; money was raised for Women's Aid.
- Local Domestic Abuse Forums organised a range local events during White Ribbon Campaign.
- Waveney Domestic Abuse Forum delivered a series of progressive training for Gt Yarmouth & Waveney PCT in partnership with the Police, Adult Safeguarding, Waveney Women's Aid and County Training. DV briefing were delivered to local GP surgeries
- Babergh Domestic Abuse Forum developed and produced the 'Survivors Stories' DVD supported by Babergh District Council [www](#).

Corporate Responsibility & the Employers Role

- SCB developed new 'Guidance for dealing with Domestic Violence and Incidents of Domestic Abuse where Children are Members of the Household'. This is implemented for all agencies working with children and young people and extends and compliments 'Working Together to Safeguard Children from Harm. www.suffolkscb.org.uk for more information.
- Suffolk County Council's revised 'Workplace Policy on Domestic Abuse and Guidance for Head Teachers, Managers and Staff' will be launched during the White Ribbon Campaign in November/December 2008. A programme of ongoing training, supporting materials and publicity will support the implementation of the policy
- Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Healthcare Professionals is being supported through the provision of joint inter-agency training and practice development

2.1.4 Priority - Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse

Develop staff awareness and level of knowledge and skills

Raise awareness with local agencies and public campaigns

2.1.5 Priority - Corporate Social Responsibility and the employer's role

Develop and implement domestic abuse workplace policies within Suffolk County Council , Local Authorities partners and other partner Organisations.

2.2.1 Specialist Domestic Violence Courts

Suffolk Criminal Justice Board is supporting the provision of Specialist Domestic Violence Courts in Suffolk based on the national model. Magistrates and court officials have been specially trained and other measures are in place aimed to reduce the rate of attrition and improve successful prosecutions of perpetrators. Dedicated courts for domestic violence cases are held on one day each week and following the success of the Ipswich Magistrates pilot, courts have been introduced in East and West Suffolk (Lowestoft and St Edmundsbury Magistrates courts.)

2.2.2 Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy

The introduction of Specialist Domestic Violence Courts is supported by the development of an effective and accredited trained advocacy service (IDVA) aimed to support and encourage all victims to participate with the prosecution service, reduce attrition and support better outcomes for victims and families. The service is in place in Ipswich and is now extended to cover the courts in Lowestoft and Bury St Edmunds. The IDVA service provides dedicated support and works alongside other outreach services provided by Women's Aid, Victim Support Suffolk and other agencies

2.2.3 Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing (MARAC)

Based on a national model the MARAC aims to identify all high risk domestic violence and to reduce the risk of serious harm or homicide for a victim and to increase the safety, health and well-being of victims – adults and any children. Information about the risks faced by victims, the actions needed to ensure their safety and the resources available locally are shared and used to create a risk management plan involving all agencies. The focus is on both adult and young people as victims and coordinates with child protection arrangements. See www.suffolkscb.org.uk for more information. The introduction of the MARAC model to Suffolk is supported by specialised training. MARAC meetings have been held in Ipswich area since August 2007 meetings in Waveney and Western area will begin in November 2008. See www.breakthepattern.org.uk for more details.

2.2.4 Suffolk Constabulary

The Suffolk Constabulary has a policy of enhanced service provision to victims of Domestic Abuse delivered and managed, primarily, through the Victim Care Centres. These services are linked to the arrangements for MARAC and the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts. There is a specific focus on both repeat victims and repeat offenders. Risk assessment tools

are utilised in assessing risk to victims and families. Domestic Abuse and its link to Child Protection remains a priority for the Constabulary and all the partners it works with

2.2.5 Perpetrator Intervention

Suffolk Probation Area is delivering the National accredited Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) in Lowestoft, Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. Dedicated Women's safety Workers are employed to provide support to partners or ex partner victims and use safety planning techniques (Tools for Practitioners) to promote the safety of victims and their families. SPA also works extensively with individual perpetrators using various models of intervention as laid out in guidance produced by the National Offender Management Service. Outside of Probation other providers, funded by Suffolk County Council and Community Safety Partnerships are introducing voluntary Early Intervention Perpetrator Programmes, based on the RESPECT model, throughout Suffolk.

2.2.6 Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)

The CPS work within a multi-agency approach to prosecute domestic abuse cases effectively while recognising that criminal proceedings are just one element of this approach and that criminal and civil law may need to be used in conjunction. However, stopping domestic violence and bringing perpetrators to justice remain a priority.

2.2.7 Sexual Assault and Rape

The links between sexual assault and rape in the context of domestic abuse are recognised by all agencies in Suffolk concerned with prevention, protection and support. To increase reporting/prosecution and provide effective access to forensic examination and support services (especially where victims are initially unwilling to involve the Police) a SARC (sexual assault referral centre) based on a 3rd party reporting model will be established in Suffolk as a joint project between Police, Health and other statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

2.2.8 Forced Marriage, Honour-Based Violence

Forced marriage and so called honour-based violence are issues that affect Suffolk residents, those in temporary residence and victims fleeing to Suffolk as place of safety. Specific guidelines based on best practices are being developed see www.breakthepattern.org.uk

2.2.9 Data Collection and Information Sharing

To support data collection and information sharing a new product has been funded by the Home Office Regional Government Office. MODUS is a secure system accessed via the intranet, with specific features for the domestic abuse field, that can be used for case management and/or information sharing/ data collection. Training user support will be provided

Service Summary

Specialist Domestic Violence Courts

- *Specialist Domestic Violence Courts are being held on one day a week in Ipswich, Lowestoft and St Edmundsbury Magistrates Courts.*

Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service

- *The Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service has been extended to cover all Suffolk.*

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing (MARAC)

- *MARAC's have been held covering the Ipswich area, and since they began in August 2007, 103 victims and families considered to be at high risk have been supported*
- *MARAC's began to accept cases for the whole of Suffolk in November 2008.*
- *MARAC training is being provided to practitioners in a domestic violence support role as part of the Suffolk County Council Domestic Abuse Programme*
- *Common risk assessment has been developed and implemented by agencies in Suffolk based on the MARAC risk assessment model.*

Effective Perpetrator Intervention

- *A voluntary Early Intervention Perpetrator Programme has been developed to provide non-court mandated services to enable perpetrators to examine their beliefs and behaviour and to make positive changes and reduce risk of harm. Support is provided to partners/ex partners.*

Crown Prosecution Service

- *The Crown Prosecution Service has introduced a policy and guidance relating to prosecuting cases of domestic violence*

Sexual Assault and Rape

- *A SARC (sexual assault referral centre) based on 3rd party recording is being developed in Suffolk*

Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Violence

- *A conference was held to raise awareness of the issues of Forced Marriage and so called 'Honour-Based Violence' and to increase knowledge about appropriate support and specialist referral. Staff have already reported using the information gained from this event. A member of staff with specialist skills has been appointed by the Constabulary to develop this work*

Data Collection & Information Sharing

- *A secure system MODUS is being made available for recording domestic abuse. Training is being provided.*

Priorities

2.2.1 Specialist Domestic Violence Courts

Establish cluster model in each Magistrates court in Suffolk

2.2.2 Independent Domestic Violence Advocates

Provide specialist IDVAs nationally trained to support Specialist Domestic Violence Court and MARAC models, and to support victims especially who are unwilling/unable to work with Criminal Justice System agencies.

2.2.3 Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing (MARAC)

Provide specialist training and establish MARAC structure countywide.

2.2.4 Suffolk Constabulary

Domestic Abuse and its link to Child Protection remains a priority for the Suffolk Constabulary

2.2.5 Effective Perpetrator Intervention

Develop local programmes

2.2.6 Crown Prosecution Service

Stopping domestic violence and bringing perpetrators to justice remain a priority

2.2.7 Sexual Assault and Rape

Evaluate and develop an effective 3rd party reporting model (based on SARC national minimum standards) to increase reporting and prosecution and to enable victims especially those who are unwilling/unable to report to the Police to access support services and forensic examination.

2.2.8 Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Violence

Increase understanding and knowledge of practitioners to reduce risk of harm and increase positive life choices for victims and families

2.2.9 Data Collection and Information Sharing

Provide secure and accessible system to enable effective recording of statistics from all agencies and to provide alternative case management system where agencies do not have currently, with appropriate service level agreements and information sharing protocols.

2.3.1 Services, Advice and Information

Providing effective and integrated county wide local services focused on safe routes out of violent and abusive relationship, empowering victims to make safe choices and help in building their confidence is a key priority. A range of services, local and national initiatives have been developed and adopted as best practice in Suffolk to meet the needs of victims, improve their quality of life and outcomes for their children. These materials and services form part of a consistent approach to domestic abuse across the county to ensure victims receive the same level of service and information where ever they may live in Suffolk. These include:

i. Domestic Abuse Service

The service is operated by Family Action supported by funds from the Children's Fund. The service works with survivors of abuse and any children in the household between 5-13 years where the perpetrator is no longer resident.

ii. Freedom Programme for Women

The programme is structured to provide the opportunity for women to develop ways of thinking and behaving to protect themselves, their children and others from harm. The focus is on safe empowerment building the confidence of victims through education and awareness about the tactics, behaviours and beliefs of perpetrators.

iii. Support Groups

Local support groups and befriending schemes are set up locally and aimed to meet local needs. These groups have an essential role in the overall network of support for victims. Groups encourage dialogue and sharing experiences through emotional support aimed to alleviate isolation and feeling alone and provide victims / survivors with information.

iv. Leaflets, Helpline and Website

Non gender specific information is available in a variety of forms for victims and for agencies to use in their work with victims /survivors and for wider use with the general public. A 24 hour free phone Suffolk Helpline is operated by trained experienced staff with local knowledge providing advice and information. The dedicated website www.breakthepattern.org.uk provides information for victims / survivors and the general public.

v. Safety and Crisis Planning booklets

Safety and Crisis Planning booklets are provided to victims / survivors by trained practitioners from statutory and voluntary agencies across Suffolk. These form part of the Tools for Practitioners integrated approach to domestic abuse.

Service Summary

Domestic Abuse Service

- 3 part time officers working in Ipswich/ Felixstowe, Lowestoft/Beccles and Stowmarket area providing programmes in schools and therapeutic support to adult survivors and children. Officers work closely with CYP, health, police victim care centre and other agencies

Freedom Programme

- Freedom Programmes have been run in Waveney, Suffolk Coastal; Ipswich, St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath

Support Groups

- Befriending Scheme, Sudbury; SODA support group, Bury St Edmunds; support group Mildenhall and Haverhill Other support groups are in place in Refuges

Home-Start

- Support and practical help for families in Babergh, Suffolk Coastal and Mid Suffolk. In house DV training is provided for volunteers and staff annually.

Break the Pattern Leaflets, Helpline and Website

- Leaflets and other materials are provided county-wide
- The 24 hour free Suffolk Helpline provides advice and information
- The website has a safety contact feature, all requests are answered the same day

2.3.1 Priority: Services, Advice and Information

Develop local programmes, support groups and services to improve the life chances of local victims/survivors including children

2.3.2 Housing and Refuge Support

i. Local Authorities & Registered Social Landlords (RSL's)

Local Housing Authorities have a statutory duty to provide emergency accommodation for people fleeing domestic violence and to treat as homeless, persons who have been subjected to or are in fear of violence from both within or outside the home. These responsibilities are set out in the 'Homelessness Act', 2002. Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlord's are providing support for their tenants who are victims of domestic abuse and have developed domestic policies and guidance for staff.

ii. Sanctuary Housing Schemes

Sanctuary schemes are designed to enable victims to stay in their own tenancies / homes by finding security measures where this is possible and desired, rather than being forced to move disrupting education, employment and family networks. These problems can be exacerbated when victims of domestic abuse are forced to move on numerous occasions. The scheme is available to any person who is experiencing domestic violence. The scheme is not means tested.

iii. Accommodation and Support for Victims of Domestic Violence

Emergency accommodation is provided through 4 women's refuges in Suffolk, located in Bury St. Edmunds, Lowestoft and Ipswich (2), additional refuge accommodation is available in Diss, Norfolk. In addition refuges provide a range support services for victims and children.. Research indicates that the number of refuge places in Suffolk is below the recommended national average.

iv. Supporting People

Suffolk Supporting People provides funding for the refuges in Suffolk for housing related support. In response to the need for additional support Supporting People are funding a domestic violence pilot across Suffolk to deliver information and support in rural areas.

Service Summary

Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlord's

- *Havebury Housing Partnership has developed and implemented a Domestic Abuse Policy. In house training has been provided for staff.*
- *Suffolk Heritage Housing Association has domestic abuse guidelines in place for their Customer Services*
- *Registered Social Landlords are represented on local Domestic Abuse Forums*

Sanctuary Housing Schemes

- *Ipswich Borough Council has implemented a Sanctuary Housing Scheme*
- *The West Suffolk Sanctuary Scheme was launched in 2008 incorporating St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and Forest Heath District Council*

Refuge Accommodation and Support

- *Ipswich Women's Aid provides outreach and resettlement services, the Freedom Programme, a drop in centre and free legal advice at monthly surgeries.*
- *Waveney Women's Aid has developed 3 move-on accommodation units*
- *Ipswich and Waveney Women's Aid jointly run the 24 hour Suffolk Domestic Abuse Helpline.*

Supporting People

- *Supporting People are funding a domestic violence pilot with a Manager and 3 Outreach Workers who work across Suffolk to deliver information and support in rural areas.*

2.3.2 Priority: Housing and Refuge Support

Develop local programmes, support groups and services to improve the life chances of local victims/survivors including children

2.3.3 Adult Safeguarding

The Adult Safeguarding Board has representation on the County Domestic Abuse Forum and domestic violence is represented at Safeguarding Locality Committees. Adult Safeguarding Managers are based within the Police Victim Care Centres in Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, and Lowestoft, providing operational advice to those staff undertaking complex investigations and taking a lead role in developing safeguarding services referral process. This ensures that the right staff or team receives the referral to enable strategy discussions and decisions to take place quickly. The number of adult safeguarding referrals has increased year on year; this trend continues correlating with a growing awareness of adult abuse and the development of safeguarding services, the staff development programme and the emergence of the 3 safeguarding locality committees.

For more information contact: www.suffolkas.org.

Service Summary

Adult Safeguarding

- *Training courses Adult Abuse & Law; Consent & Capability; Chairing Case Conferences;& Undertaking Joint Investigations delivered. Electronic training developed for care providers accompanied by staff work book mirroring care standards within the NVQ syllabus. Adult Community Services booklet entitled "Adult's are abused to" made available. A Safer Recruitment Pack available for customers in receipt individualised budgets and direct payments.*

Prostitution Strategy

- *Development Manager & multi-agency team focused on developing existing & new services, liaised with PCT & benefits agency, housing/housing benefits to speed up access. Funding secured from a variety of sources*

2.3.3 Priority: Adult Safeguarding

Coordinate domestic abuse with Adult Safeguarding within the Public Protection agenda

2.3.4 Priority: Ipswich Prostitution Strategy

Provide domestic abuse input & support strategy

2.3.4 Ipswich Prostitution Strategy and Make a Change Project

In 2007 a new strategy was developed with an overall aim of removing street prostitution from Ipswich. The strategy stressed the commitment from all agencies to address the issues for safety of the women on the streets and communities affected by the activity. The strategy highlights the close links between domestic violence and prostitution and issues of drug treatment, housing, speedy access to benefits, domestic violence /refuge, flexible funding, assessment of risk from kerb crawlers, preventing sexual exploitation of children and training for staff. The implementation group for the strategy includes community representation as well as representation from other statutory and voluntary agencies providing services for the women involved in the Make a Change project

For more information contact helen.hepburn@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Section 3 Summary of Progress - Priorities for Action 2005 – 2008				
Prevention & Early Intervention	Priority	Lead / Partner	Progress / Comment	Status
Safeguarding & Promoting the Welfare of Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop additional support for women and children where domestic abuse affects their lives 	DAS SODA On Track IWA	Service ongoing Ipswich & Lowestoft. Worker recruited for Stowmarket Support Group, Bury Support Group, Haverhill Women/children groups	Under review by CYP CSP supported Continuing and offering Freedom Programme " At Risk – CYP Funding?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate domestic violence in practice development and in the multi-agency strategic agenda 	Shirley Osborne / SCB Shirley Osborne	SCB DV Guidance developed Contribute to Prostitution Strategy	Achieved Achieved
Schools, Colleges & Youth Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and promote in partnership with local education authority guidelines for education staff and materials for PSHE curriculum for schools and informal youth settings. 	Marianne Fellowes / PSHE Advisors	Pilot project 4 schools countywide Roll out County-wide	Achieved Project in progress
Health & related services including the voluntary sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide safety materials that support and promote safe choices for victims. Provide multi-agency training and development opportunities Develop local services and networks so all midwives and health professionals are trained to respond appropriately Raise awareness with GP practices and establish a nominated point of contact at each surgery. 	Shirley Osborne Shirley Osborne Janis Scott Shirley Osborne Marianne Fellowes DV Forums - Dreena Black Waveney DVAF	Materials provided at training & as requested Multi/single agency training – County programme Police notify HV's of DV incidents Pathway for domestic abuse – guidance for staff in safeguarding policies & procedures Multi-Agency liaison & referral to CYP Disseminate learning from serious case reviews Training provided (mandatory WS Hospital Trust) CAADA risk assessment training	Achieved Achieved Achieved Achieved Achieved Achieved Achieved – WDVAF

<p>Health & related services including the voluntary sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Influence Primary Care Trust commissioning of mental health services that involve mental health services for those affected by domestic violence.</i> <i>Establish effective integrated and responsive services for those whose lives are also affected by alcohol through Alcohol & Education Research Council funded project</i> <i>Encourage Children's Trusts, information advice & guidance models & personal health MOT for children aged 12-13</i> 	<p>Julia Dessaur</p> <p>Julia Dessaur</p> <p>Janis Scott Suffolk PCT</p>	<p>As part of Harmony project presentations to Mental Health services to raise awareness of issues and integrated approach.</p> <p>Harmony project – Toolkit produced & launched. Information sessions delivered to key workers</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
<p>Public Awareness Campaigns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Build on good practice and past public consultation results as to where information is best located.</i> <i>Further develop awareness raising opportunities, including those facing additional barriers such as black and minority ethnic groups, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people or those with disabilities.</i> <i>Achieve funding contributions from each local Borough/District area.</i> <i>Extend web site to provide easily updatable pages for each Local Forum.</i> 	<p>Cathy Press Babergh DVAF & Babergh DC DVA Forums Sue Poole & Community News, Suffolk</p> <p>Sue Poole & Wellington CC</p> <p>Marianne Fellowes</p> <p>Shirley Osborne Marianne Fellowes Ipswich WA</p> <p>Marianne Fellowes</p>	<p>Survivors Stories DVD developed & launched Nov 07</p> <p>White Ribbon Campaigns How Healthy is Your Relationship? Press inserts for community newspaper</p> <p>Bangladeshi Women's Group</p> <p>Domestic Violence & Men conference – aimed to raise awareness of male victims & work with male perpetrators</p> <p>Funding from CSP's for County Projects</p> <p>Funding from Ipswich BC, Suffolk Coastal DC, Babergh DC & Mid Suffolk DC</p> <p>To enable information sharing, exchange of best practise and support and to promote work of the forum</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>In progress –target date Dec 2008</p>

Prevention & Early Intervention	Priority	Lead / Partner	Progress / Comment	Status
Public & Corporate Social Responsibility & the Employer's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and support the implementation of domestic violence policies for service users and workplace policies for staff within the County Council, with partners and other agencies Provide easy access to information about support services and helpline telephone numbers, through resource directory, posters and leaflets. 	Shirley Osborne Shirley Osborne Ipswich WA Waveney WA	Approval of revised SCC Workplace Policy for Employees/Guidance for Managers & Head Teachers Partnership SG set up & policy launch agreed Initial adoption discussion with Ipswich BC Delayed Helpline for victims Free helpline for victims	Achieved In progress Achieved Achieved
Convicted & Non-convicted Perpetrator Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop the IDAP programme with supporting outreach services to partners and ex-partners. Secure funding for development and delivery of early intervention perpetrator group work, to RESPECT guidelines 	Suffolk Probation Service Marianne Fellowes	IDAP set up Ipswich, Lowestoft, Bury St Edmunds. Women's safety workers supporting victims whose abusers on programme Contributions from all CSP's Programme run in Waveney in partnership with Norfolk CC Materials developed, and additional team identified and trained.	Achieved Achieved – Waveney Awaiting funding to deliver in other geographic area to start Jan 09 .

Protection & Justice	Priority	Lead / Partner	Comment	Status
Police Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to strengthen and build on current example of good practice and partnership work. Implement remaining recommendations of ACPO guidance. Incorporate the provisions of the 'Domestic Violence Crime & Victims Act' and the Victims Code including development of a customer satisfaction procedure. Respond to the future requirements of the Children Act 2004, the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act such as Quality video recording and Sensitive medical examination 	Suffolk Constabulary	<p>A staffing structure has been developed to reflect both the SDVC and MARAC roll out with amended risk assessment processes.</p> <p>Policies within the Constabulary reflect ACPO Guidance.</p> <p>Specialist DV staff are available at all VCC across the County but currently victims of sexual offences and DA are not subject of survey. This will be reviewed in light of SARC developments.</p> <p>Central to development of the SARC model is the widening of availability of appropriate medical and forensic responses. Video recording equipment has recently been upgraded, 2008</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
Local Criminal Justice Board and CPS, Fast track and Specialist Domestic Violence Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suffolk Criminal Justice Board to support the provision of Specialist Courts, including an effective and accredited trained advocacy service - to encourage all victims to participate with the prosecution service, reduce attrition and contribute to new Victims & Witnesses Code and better outcomes for victims and families 	Marianne Fellowes	<p>DV Court pilot & operational Ipswich Magistrates DV Courts operational Lowestoft & Bury St Edmunds</p> <p>Thrive Project</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
Access to Solicitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop advocacy services to assist with access to solicitors and civil remedies and further opportunities to engage with Solicitors' staff such as providing information and sharing good practice. Encourage nominated solicitors, who would be available to cover out of office hours response, with a location system 	<p>Marianne Fellowes</p> <p>Ipswich WA Ashton Graham Solicitors</p>	<p>Advocacy Service in place</p> <p>Ipswich Women's Aid operate a free legal advice service monthly</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved - continuing</p>

Support for Victims	Priority	Lead / Partner	Comment	Status
Helpline & Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain funding to continue provision of the helpline and website. with feedback from users to upgrading the helpline and website. Develop the promotion of the helpline and website. Distribute leaflets and posters through local events and through the local forum Develop and promote local inserts, and specific z-cards for victims/survivors at the point of crisis. 	Marianne Fellowes	<p>Joint staffing of Suffolk Free DV Helpline by Ipswich & Waveney WA, funded by contributions from CSP's & SCC</p> <p>Branding and marketing strategy are robust, range of materials are developed and widely available promoting county and local support services.</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>
Meeting the Housing & Support Needs of Survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the achievement of the minimum of 1 refuge place per ten thousand of the population Implement Sanctuary scheme for those who wish to remain in their own homes, where it is safe for them to do so In line with guidance provided by the Local Government Agency. Promote culture change to encourage Borough/District council departments to have a tenancy agreement with a specific clause stating that the perpetration of domestic violence by a tenant can be considered grounds for eviction 	<p>Hilary Anderson</p> <p>LA Housing</p> <p>LA Housing / RSL's</p> <p>Housing Network Group</p>	<p>This will not be achieved as many of the rural LAs in Suffolk do not feel it is appropriate to provide a Refuge in their area. Supporting People have partly set up the 2 Year Pilot Outreach Project to see if support can be provided to women who are victims of DV but who are choosing to stay at home rather than access a Refuge.</p> <p>Ipswich scheme implemented Western Scheme (St Edmundsbury, Forest Heath & Mid Suffolk) launched 2008 Waveney, Babergh, Suffolk Coastal Pilot Outreach Project will support women who have chosen to stay at home with the protection of a Sanctuary Scheme</p>	<p>Not Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>
Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Housing Protocol and support implementation to improve responses to victims through a consistent approach. Promote access to training for staff and support the development DV nominated role within Housing organisations 	<p>Housing Network Group</p> <p>Shirley Osborne</p>	<p>Initial review completed further work pending</p> <p>Housing training module developed, training delivered Babergh, Waveney; Havebury HA and access to County training promoted Nominated officers in LA & RSL's</p>	<p>Delayed</p> <p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved</p>

Support for Victims	Priority	Lead / Partner	Comment	Status
Local Authority Housing & Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute towards the reduction of the % of cases accepted as homeless due to domestic violence that have been previously re-housed in the previous two years by the local authority as a result of domestic violence. All agencies to be encouraged to prioritise support to those who have previously been re-housed. 	LA Housing	Clarity required regarding progress	
Links with Sexual Assault, Rape & Stalking within the context of domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable service providers and support agencies to share information and further develop training opportunities and the understanding of the links between domestic violence, sexual assault, rape and stalking 	Cathy Press Babergh DVAF Marianne Fellowes	Funded counselling for DV victims – Sudbury & Area Campaign on links between sexual assault, rape and domestic abuse	Completed – funding sought for further work
Advocacy Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a local advocacy scheme in support of victims as recommended by the Home Office, and as part of the Specialist Domestic Violence Court mode 	Cathy Press Babergh DVAF Marianne Fellowes	Befriending Service, Sudbury Included	Achieved - continuing
Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Every Child Matters recommendations including; Improved support to parents, Early intervention and protection of children and young people. Integration of services such as Children Trust model Continue to integrate domestic violence into protection & support services linked to continuous practice development with practitioners and managers. 	Shirley Osborne/ SCB Cathy Press Babergh DVAF Shirley Osborne	Included Safeguarding & promoting the Welfare of Children priority Adolescent counselling, Sudbury & area Included Safeguarding & promoting the Welfare of Children & Health & related services priorities	Achieved Achieved
Young People With Offending Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in partnership with youth offending service collect evidence of the number of young people with offending behaviour who are identified as having family/relationship risk factors. 	Marianne Fellowes	Collect evidence of the number of young people	

Support for Victims	Priority	Lead / Partner	Progress / Comment	Status
Adult Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to maintain a joint approach to policy and practice development within adult protection. 	Shirley Osborne	Provide DVA link to County & locality Area Boards	Achieved
Multi-Agency Co-Ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work towards a coordinated and consistent approach across agencies to improve services to victims and families. Secure funding for the co-ordination of multi agency work leading to a reduction in, or preventing need for, intensive crisis response. Development and implementation of the Domestic Violence Partnership strategy will contribute 	Suzy Turner Jones / Shirley Osborne Marianne Fellowes Shirley Osborne	Pilot child centred approach for children/families living with DV - Wellington CC Completed	Achieved Achieved
Data Collection & Information Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand data collection to include disclosures to all agencies, consistent measurement of caseload and service use, needs and performance monitoring. Develop common risk assessment and work towards a model of Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference. 	Marianne Fellowes Shirley Osborne / SCB Marianne Fellowes	Guidance / Protocol / common risk assessment for all those working with children – included Safeguarding & Promoting the Welfare of Children priority MARAC in place Ipswich, Lowestoft & Bury St Edmunds from September 2008 MARAC Training provided	Achieved Achieved Achieved