

**Somerset
Interpersonal
Violence Strategy
2011-2014**

Foreword

Welcome to the new Somerset Interpersonal Violence Strategy 2011-2014, which has been produced by the Somerset Domestic Abuse Strategic Group, part of the Somerset Community Safety Partnership. This has been produced as a result of the opportunity to create a local response to complement the publication of the Government's "Call to end violence against women and girls" strategy published in November 2010 and subsequent action plan published in March 2011,

Somerset has long recognised the importance of developing services to help those fleeing domestic abuse. As a result we have seen some positive developments over the previous few years, including expanding the MARAC process and supporting the establishment of an Avon & Somerset wide Sexual Assault Referral Centre and Independent Sexual Violence Advisor service.

The complexity of the problem of tackling gender-based violence requires a broad response. So this strategy represents a partnership commitment to address the issue. The strategic action plan particularly highlights the breadth of organisations that need to be involved – both statutory community safety partners (local authorities, Police, Health, etc) to the voluntary and private sectors. We aim to continue to support agencies in the delivery of services and recognise that it's through all agencies working together, which can only help achieve a co-ordinated and consistent response to help those affected by interpersonal violence and abuse.

Whilst we recognise the existing good practice within the county, we are also aware that the violence against women and girls agenda is greater than it perhaps once was. Therefore this interpersonal violence strategy not only encompasses domestic abuse, but also sexual violence, stalking, honour based violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and trafficking for sexual exploitation. Tackling the wider interpersonal violence agenda will require a proportionate, yet focussed approach by the Somerset Community Partnership and its colleagues in the voluntary and private sectors.

Nikki Watson

Chair of the Somerset Domestic Abuse Strategy Group
Chief Superintendent, Avon & Somerset Constabulary



The Somerset Community Safety Partnership has the following vision:

“We aim to lead a co-ordinated effort to both prevent and reduce incidences of gender-based interpersonal violence in Somerset. Everyone can contribute to raise awareness of not just the effects that this has, but to challenge those who condone it and help protect those affected.”

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is Somerset’s first “Interpersonal Violence” strategy and is for the 3 years, April 2011 to March 2014.

The national “Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls” strategic narrative published by HM Government in November 2010, outlined four key themes and so has provided direction to this Somerset strategy. The Somerset strategic plan for tackling interpersonal violence is therefore grouped into these four nationally highlighted areas of **“Prevention”, “Provision”, “Partnership Working”** and **“Risk Reduction and Justice Outcomes”**.

- 1.2 Somerset’s Community Safety Partnership recognises that domestic abuse and sexual violence affects the health and wellbeing of many children and families, from all backgrounds.

It’s also accepted that no one agency can tackle violence against women and girls alone, – it requires a co-ordinated approach, hence why there are already a wide variety of services offered within Somerset to help those experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence – see figure 1 below.

Appendix one illustrates a draft ‘Somerset County Domestic Abuse Pathway’; this is in development but highlights the variety of services required to help someone from the point of crisis.

- 1.3 This strategy is primarily focussed on prevention, so that in the long-term, domestic abuse, sexual violence and other forms of gender-based interpersonal violence can be reduced through greater awareness and education. This includes ensuring that there are services available for children/young people (of both genders) experiencing domestic abuse.

For those children affected by interpersonal violence, it can have devastating effects on their health and development. To date services for children/young people who are experiencing or have specifically experienced domestic abuse, have been provided in some Districts but not in all. This strategy looks to address this inequity of provision.



Figure 1 - Specialist Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Services within Somerset - Overview

2 Definition of domestic abuse

2.1 There are sometimes different interpretations of what constitutes domestic abuse and sexual violence. For consistency with HM Government’s strategic vision, this Somerset Interpersonal Violence Strategy is adopting the same definition – the United Nations (UN) Declaration (1993) on the elimination of violence against women:

“Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public, or in private life.”

2.2 It’s acknowledged both within HM Government’s strategic vision and within the Somerset Community Safety Partnership, that men and boys can also be victims of violence, therefore, this Somerset Interpersonal Violence Strategy also encompasses male victims too.

2.3 This definition goes beyond abuse which occurs between intimate partners, and so incorporates the many other forms of gender based violence, for example: domestic abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, “honour” crimes, prostitution, sexual violence, stalking and trafficking for sexual exploitation.

3 Cost and Statistics – Local and National

3.1 To help set the context for interpersonal violence within Somerset, this section comprises some key statistics both national and local. It should be noted though that it’s widely accepted that incidents of domestic abuse and sexual violence are under-reported¹. Also included is a suggestion of the cost of domestic abuse.

¹ British Crime Survey 2009/10 refers to this fact

3.2 More information on all aspects of interpersonal violence, including the impact it can have, can be found via the organisations listed in section 6 “Useful Contacts”.

3.3 National statistics

- In 2009/10, women were the victims of over seven out of ten (73%) incidents of **domestic violence**².
- During 2006-7, the **National Domestic Violence Helpline** answered an average of 387 calls per day: 500 a day on weekdays, 250 on Saturdays and 200 on Sundays.³
- 1 in 10 men (10.2%) and 1 in 5 women (19.9%) aged 16 or over have been victims of **stalking** in their lifetime. This equates to a gender-victim ratio of: 34% male: 66% female; or 1 in 3 victims of stalking are male.⁴
- In the UK, it is estimated that up to 24,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of **female genital mutilation**.⁵
- At least 12 “**honour**” killings per year in the UK⁶ and 5,000 “honour killings” worldwide⁷.
- In 2010 the **Forced Marriage Unit** (the joint initiative between Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Home Office), gave advice or support to 1735 cases. 86 percent of these cases involved females and 14 percent involved males. (These statistics reflect an upward trend).
- "In relationships where there is domestic violence, children witness about three-quarters of the abusive incidents." (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2004). This comes to a total of at least 750,000 children in the UK per year.⁸

3.4 Local statistics

Below are some key statistics from each of the main Somerset domestic abuse and sexual violence service areas. (Please note that the time period varies for each data set).

² Figures derived from 2009/10 British Crime Survey data, as referred to p.5, HM Government ‘Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls’, November 2010

³ Women’s Aid Domestic Violence Statistics (June 2007) www.womensaid.org.uk

⁴ The ManKind Initiative April 2010

⁵ Dorkenoo et al, 2007. Available from FORWARD UK

⁶ Cowan, 2004

⁷ United Nations

⁸ Department of Health, 2002. (Women’s Aid, Children affected by dv statistics)

- Supporting People statistics

Number of families who received an accommodation/floating support/resettlement service (and left that service each quarter) Domestic Abuse Services in Somerset 2009 – 2010						
	West Somerset	Taunton Deane	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Mendip	Totals
	Magna	Taunton Women's Aid	Home Group – Bridgwater Women's Aid	Barnabas Housing	Home Group – Mendip Refuge	
Capacity (No of Units)	29	25	7	11	10	82
Qtr 1 (Apr 09 – Jun 09)	7	15	6	3	2	33
Qtr 2 (Jul 09 – Sept 09)	13	24	8	20	6	71
Qtr 3 (Oct 09 – Dec 09)	9	12	4	9	3	37
Qtr 4 (Jan 10 – Mar 10)	4	16	7	12	5	44
Total number of families supported in the year	33	67	25	44	16	185

- Children within Refuges/Safe-houses in Somerset

Number of Children Who Stayed at Each Refuge or Safe-house (February 2010 to January 2011)				
Bridgwater Refuge	Mendip Refuge	South Somerset Refuge	Taunton Women's Aid	West Somerset (Safe-houses)
40	27	32	70	14

- Avon & Somerset Police - Domestic Violence 'Flagged' Statistics

	October 2010	November 2010	December 2010
Somerset East Incidences	141	230	206
Somerset West Incidences	156	218	250
Somerset East Crimes	80	94	84
Somerset West Crimes	85	62	84

- Current MARAC data (i.e. rolling 12 months to Jan 2011);

	Referrals	Repeats	Repeat rate
East:	202	62	30.7%
West	211	47	22.3%
Somerset total	413	109	26.4%

- Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (Children/Young People and Adult services)

Adult ISVA service (April 2009 to August 2010)	
	Referrals
Avon & Somerset Total	474
% of A & S total which are Somerset clients	20%

Children/Young Person ISVA service (September 2009 to October 2010)	
	Referrals
Avon & Somerset Total	106
Somerset East	7
Somerset West	13
% of A & S total which are Somerset clients	18.87%

- Independent Domestic Violence Advisor

Somerset IDVA service (April 2009 to March 2010)		
	Somerset East ⁹	Somerset West
Referrals	133	355
Assessed as High Risk	52%	36%

- Voluntary Perpetrator Programme

Somerset Voluntary Perpetrator Programme April 2009 to March 2010 ¹⁰		
Referrals	Commenced Programme	Completions
76	41	15

3.5 Cost of domestic abuse and sexual violence in Somerset

The following figures generated by the Home Office's "Ready Reckoner" tool show the estimated cost of domestic abuse and sexual violence in Somerset (2008/09), based upon the Somerset adult female population. ¹¹ The figures do *not* include additional costs from stalking, female genital mutilation, "honour" based violence and forced marriage.

Physical and mental health care costs	Criminal justice costs	Social services costs	Other costs (incl. housing, civil legal & employment costs)	Total Costs (not including human and emotional costs)
£11,702,958	£7,371,291	£1,388,157	£33,847,237	£54,309,643
Human and emotional costs				Total Costs (including human/ emotional costs)
£173,399,655				£227,709,298

⁹ There was only 1 IDVA working in Somerset East during the whole of this year as there was no funding for a Mendip IDVA, so the South Somerset IDVA was also providing cover for Mendip

¹⁰ VPP Somerset has 2 voluntary community rolling programmes with 26 weekly sessions each

¹¹ *The costs for local areas are derived from the national estimates of cost published by Järvinen et al (2008), and given by the proportion of the national population resident in your area. The HM Treasury GDP deflator multiplier of 1.136 has been used to bring the costs up to 2008/09 levels. More details on the services included in each category can be found in Walby (2004).

3.6 As illustrated earlier in figure 1, there are several specialist domestic abuse and sexual violence services established within the county. The provision of funding for these services remains a priority for the Somerset Community Safety Partnership.

4 Somerset Interpersonal Violence Strategic Action Plan

The full action plan is attached as appendix two and comprises the following key aims:

4.1 Prevention

Aim 1) Staff across all relevant agencies have access to the appropriate training and guidance, so that they can effectively support those experiencing domestic abuse or sexual violence.

Aim 2) Continue to raise public awareness of the unacceptability of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Aim 3) Teenagers/young people are less likely to become either victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse/ sexual violence

4.2 Theme 2 - Provision

Aim 1) Ensure provision of services to all high-risk¹² victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence in Somerset – irrespective of any “protected characteristics” (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

Aim 2) Develop services for low-medium risk victims of interpersonal violence

4.3 Theme 3 - Partnership Working

Aim 1) Effective links between statutory and voluntary sector organisations with reference to delivery of domestic abuse and sexual violence services in Somerset

Aim 2) Ensure that interpersonal violence is included within the SCC & Community Safety response to the EDF consultation for the impact of Hinkley Point.

4.4 Theme 4 - Risk Reduction and Justice Outcomes

Aim 1) Members of Somerset Community Safety Partnership understand the extent and impact of domestic violence and sexual violence in Somerset

Aim 2) High risk victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence are effectively supported in Somerset

Aim 3) Civil legislative pathways are responsive to domestic abuse/ sexual violence

Aim 4) Reduce repeat offending (domestic abuse / sexual violence)

¹² ‘High Risk’ is defined as ‘a risk which is life threatening and/or traumatic, and from which recovery, whether physical or psychological, can be expected to be difficult or impossible. “Safety in Numbers” report (The Hestia Fund, The Sigrid Rausing Trust & The Henry Smith Charity) referencing the “Offender Assessment System” definition used by MAPPA Responsible Authorities.

5 Strategy Reporting

- 5.1 The Somerset Interpersonal Violence Strategic Action Plan, will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Somerset Domestic Abuse Forum. Additionally, this strategy will be reviewed regularly (at least annually), and updated as appropriate.

An annual report will be compiled for and reviewed by the Somerset Community Safety Partnership, to update on progress made via the Action Plan. A copy of this annual report will be made available to partners.

- 5.2 This strategy will impact upon other strategies within the county (e.g. housing, substance misuse, safeguarding, etc), and therefore any issues/reports arising from this strategy should encompass any relevant developments within those other strategies.

All members of the Somerset Community Safety Partnership and Somerset Domestic Abuse Forum, are expected to share relevant information and intelligence to help ensure Somerset continues to respond effectively to tackling violence against women and girls within the county.

6 Useful contacts

Telephone Helplines

Local

- Somerset Domestic Abuse FreeFone Support line (DAFFS) 0800 69 49 999
- Somerset Direct: Adults and Older People 0845 345 9133
- Somerset Direct: Children / Young People 0845 345 9122

National

- Broken Rainbow (LGBT DA Support) 0300 999 5428
- Honour Network Helpline (victims of honour based abuse) 0800 5999 247
- National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247
- Mankind 01823 334244
- Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327
- National Stalking Helpline 0300 636 0300
- Unseen (helpline for victims of human trafficking) 0844 800 3314

Websites

Local

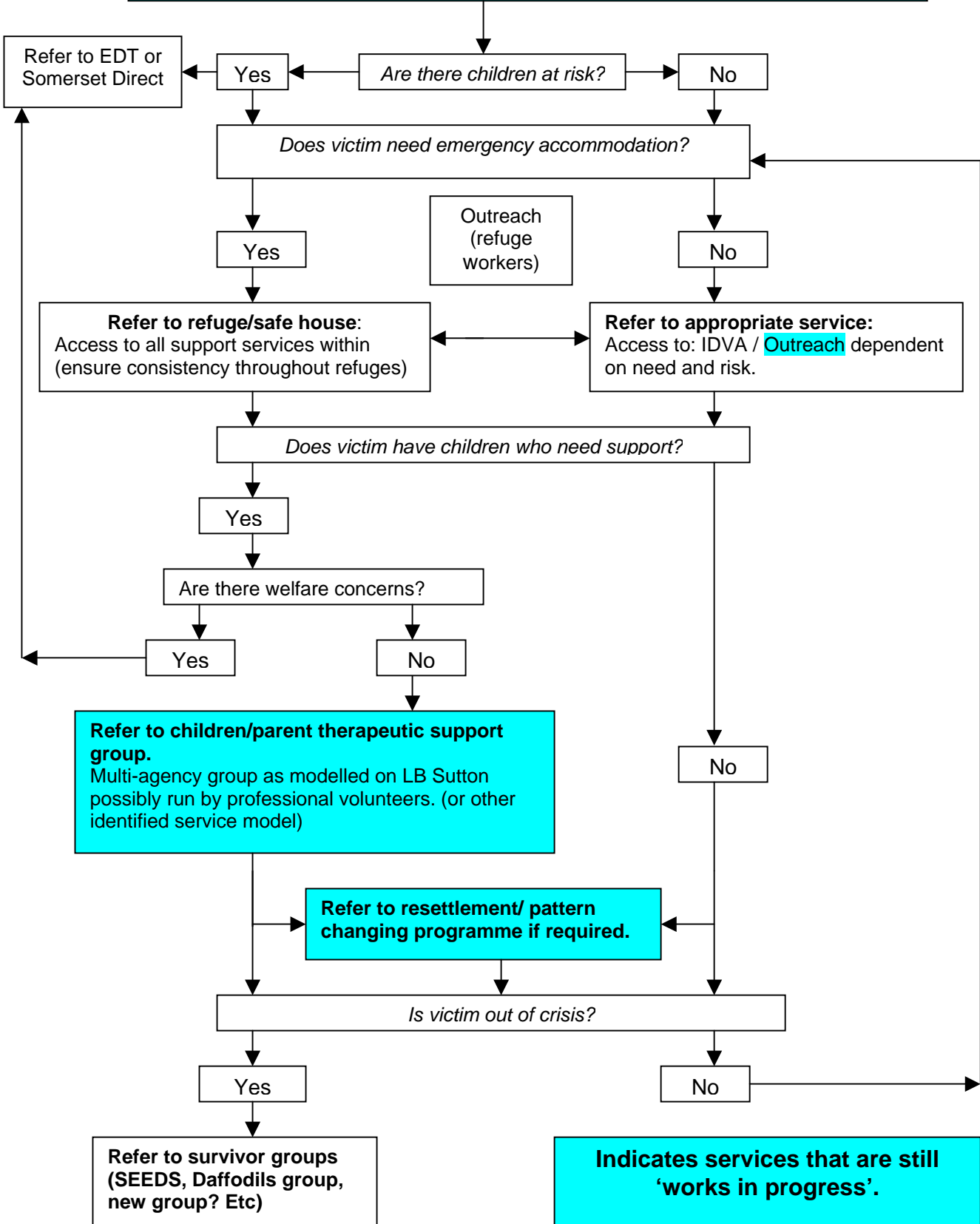
- Somerset Survivors www.somersetsurvivors.org.uk
- Somerset LSCB www.somersetsafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk

National

- Forced Marriage Unit
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/forced-marriage/>
- The Hideout (Children/Young People focus) www.thehideout.org.uk
- Home Office Violence Against Women & Girls
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/
- Karma Nirvana (Honour Based Abuse & Forced Marriage Support)
www.karmanirvana.org.uk
- Mankind www.mankind.org.uk
- National Stalking Helpline www.stalkinghelpline.org
- Refuge www.refuge.org.uk
- Unseen (Human Trafficking focus) www.unseenuk.org
- Victim Support www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Women's Aid (UK) www.womensaid.org.uk

Somerset County Domestic Abuse Service Access Pathway

24 HR GATEWAY NUMBER
 DAFFS line feeding into Victim Support 8am-8pm or National Helpline out of hours. DA/ DASH trained person to answer phone, risk assess and signpost.



TRAINING