



Violence and Abuse: a strategy against violence and abuse against women and girls and domestic and sexual violence against men 2012-15

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bristol is a city that is committed to equality between women and men, girls and boys, and does not tolerate or accept the use of gender-based violence against women and girls or domestic/sexual violence against men in any circumstances or for any excuse. Every adult survivor/victim, women or men, every child and young person, every perpetrator and communities and local residents are entitled to responses.

Violence and abuse of women and girls blights the lives of a significant proportion of our communities locally, nationally and internationally, as does violence and abuse against men. Not only are the victims themselves seriously adversely affected but the tentacles of abuse reach their children, extended family and friends and perniciously permeate our society.

This new strategy has been widely consulted amongst organisations, communities and individuals across the city, who have made substantial inputs. The work has been informed by the support and insights from our local universities and by the views of local survivors and service users.

For full strategy, go to www.bdaf.org.uk

For further information, contact:
Safer Bristol
Princess House, Princess street, Bristol BS3 4AG
safer@bristol.gov.uk; T: 0117 914 2222; F: 0117 914 2223

What is meant by violence and abuse against women and girls (VAAWG) and domestic and sexual violence against men

This new strategy brings together responses to all forms of violence and abuse against women and girls (VAAWG) and domestic and sexual violence against men, to best protect women, men and children and to work towards prevention and eradication of such violations of human rights, to challenge the inequalities between women and men and to promote human rights. It addresses the following 'strands':

- Domestic violence and abuse
- Sexual violence
- Forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation
- Human trafficking
- Prostitution/sex work
- Sexual harassment

The scope of the problem

Many thousands of women, children and smaller numbers of men are affected in Bristol, with several millions affected across the UK. National research suggests that prevalence of intimate partner violence and abuse in the context of coercive control is predominantly against women¹, with similar levels in same sex relationships both between men and between women² and smaller numbers of men abused by women. There is no known prevalence information about intimate partner violence against transgender people, but this strategy seeks to address all.

These forms of violence and abuse cost the public and private sectors of Bristol's economy tens of millions of pounds per year, with the estimated cost of domestic violence and abuse alone £49 million per year³

Areas of improvement by Safer Bristol partners in 2008-11

The strategy builds on success and learning, of which highlights range from funding a consortium of independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs), including a specialist IDVA working with black and minority ethnic women, to funding two independent sexual violence advisors (ISVAs). In addition, Bristol has run a pilot IDVA service with the Ministry of Justice for victims of forced marriage, and set up and funded The Bridge Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). Regular free training is provided to professionals from all agencies, who are supported with practitioners' networks and support-seeking has been increased through regular publicity campaigns. A voluntary behaviour-change programme for male perpetrators has been set up.

Much of the additional resourcing has come from pooling statutory funding to provide

¹ Walby, S and Allen, J, *Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: findings from the British Crime Survey* (Home Office research Study 276, 2004)

² Donovan, C, Hester, M, Holmes, J & McCarry, M, *Comparing Domestic Abuse in Same Sex and Heterosexual Relationships* (Universities of Sunderland & Bristol 2006)

³ From *Domestic violence/abuse strategy 2008/11*, Safer Bristol, calculation based on Walby, S, *The Cost of Domestic Violence* (Women & Equality Unit, Office of National Statistics, 2004)

mainstream funding for support for victims and behaviour change for perpetrators.

Planning for the future: strategic objectives

These are grouped under the themes of 1) Prevention, 2) Provision and 3) Risk Reduction and Justice. Each theme describes the need shown by available evidence, what will be achieved by March 2014 at the current level of resources and what we hope to do if additional resources can be made available.

Theme 1: Prevention – changing attitudes, behaviour and practices through education, training and campaigns

Objective 1: Education

- Working in schools, early years settings and further/higher education to deliver training and curriculum resources for safer and healthier relationships

Objective 2: Training

- Deliver and enable training in awareness identification and support of victims and abusers, risk assessment and safety planning

Objective 3: Campaigns

- Campaign and inform the public about the impact of domestic violence and abuse and other VAAWG campaigns, oppose objectification of women's bodies, promote positive male images and challenge gender stereotypes

Theme 2: Provision – overseeing and improving support services for victims and survivors, including children and young people

Objective 1: Support for adult survivors

- Offer both emotional support and practical safety support for women and men, acknowledging the use and impact of discrimination on survivors of violence and abuse and maintaining and developing specialist support services where possible

Objective 2: Support for children and young people

- Support children through supporting the non-abusing parent, specific support services for children and working with schools and other children's agencies to support and offer relevant treatment to children; acknowledge and inform of the impact of teen abuse

Objective 3: Support for communities

- Reduce harm resulting from by sex work markets; work to prevent violence against women in communities affected by lapdancing clubs

Theme 3: Risk Reduction & Justice – identifying and assessing risk, protecting victims with civil and criminal legal interventions and addressing the behaviour of perpetrators by all available means including criminal and civil justice measures.

Objective 1: Risk Reduction

- Use risk assessment procedures, specialist support services, multi-agency safety planning for high risk victims including support for sex workers; maintain programmes for perpetrator behaviour change (court-mandated and voluntary); encourage use of all forms of legal action against perpetrators.

Objective 2: Justice

- High priority, timely and proportionate criminal justice response to crime reports; specialist support agencies to encourage engagement of victims in criminal and civil justice processes; use integrated offender management to manage the most serious and serial offenders.

Equalities Impact Assessment

The strategy includes a full equalities impact assessment, to ensure that we've thought about everyone who could be affected. Throughout the strategy, the dynamics of inequality and discrimination and how this relates to the dynamics of domestic violence and abuse and others forms of VAAWG are acknowledged and corresponding actions, including commitment of resources, are incorporated into the commitments made by the strategy.

The full Violence and Abuse: a strategy against violence and abuse against women and girls and domestic and sexual violence against men 2012-15 can be found on www.bdaf.org.uk.

Up-to-date Action Plan to achieve the strategy are published at the same link.