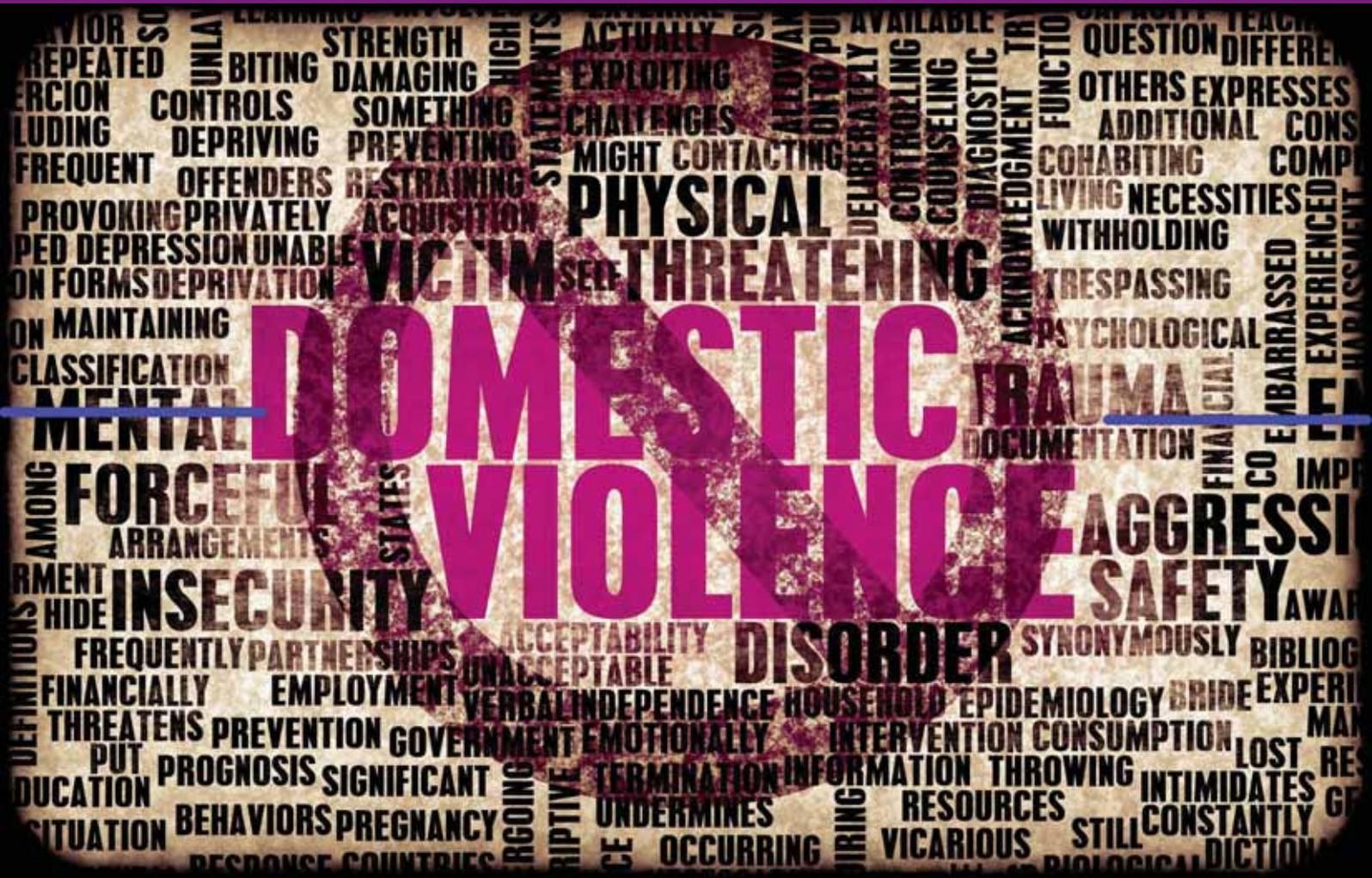


# Slough Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy 2015-2018





# Foreword

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Domestic Abuse and sexual violence can have a devastating effect on the health and wellbeing of the people involved, as well as their families and friends and wider society. The Safer Slough Partnership has made it a priority to tackle domestic abuse in Slough however it is impossible for any group of agencies to do this in isolation.

This is everyone's business; anyone can be at risk, whatever their social background, age, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity. It is not a cultural issue, it is a crime.

We need to work together to change attitudes and behaviours towards domestic abuse and sexual violence. The whole community needs to come together and take action. That might involve your role as a community member, a faith member, a neighbour, a family member, a friend an employer or a colleague.

This strategy also encompasses violence against women and girls (VAWG) as it is accepted that domestic abuse and VAWG are often interlinked. Although women are predominantly the victims, this strategy accepts and includes men as potential victims too. Further, this strategy accepts that LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual) individuals can also be victims of such crimes.

This strategy has been set out in partnership with all agencies represented at the domestic abuse strategic partnership meetings, as it is only through multi-agency working that we can effectively deal with such issues. This strategy charts the course of the next three years and details the commitments that the partnership, along with other agencies and groups, has made in tackling domestic abuse.

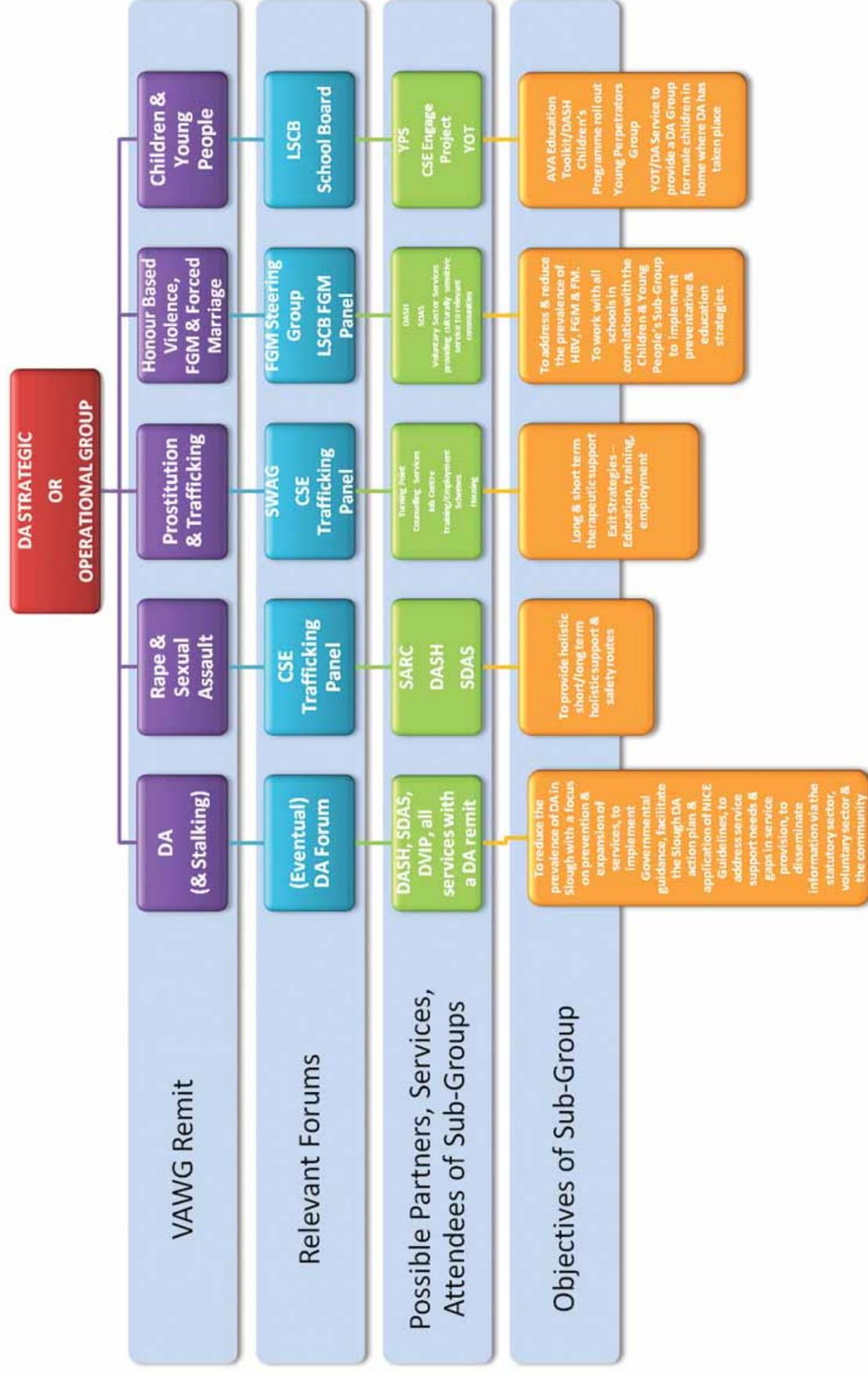
By building on the work that has already been done in this area we will work together to eliminate this destructive crime in our Borough.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Sharif', written in a cursive style.

**Councillor Mohammed Sharif**  
*Slough Borough Council - Commissioner for Performance and Accountability*  
*Safer Slough Partnership Board Member*

The strategy sets out the plans for dealing with Domestic Abuse in Slough; many other forms of abuse are covered by the forums detailed in the diagram below together with their linked strategies and plans.

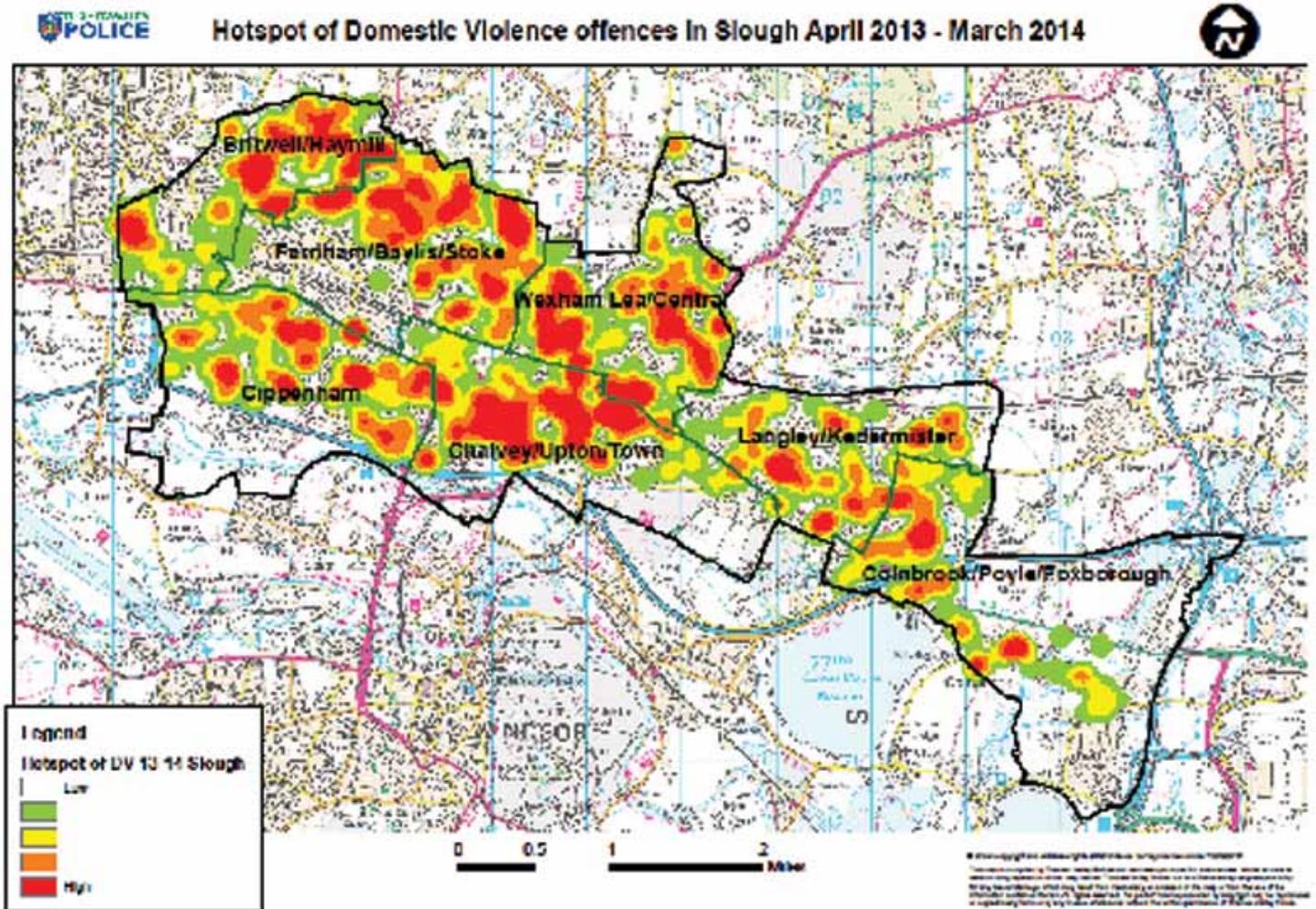


# About this strategy

The Slough Wellbeing Board (SWB) is committed to partnership working to enhance and develop services to combat domestic abuse (DA). The Safer Slough Partnership (a Priority Delivery Group of the SWB) aims to make improvements on the quality, co-ordination and provision of support services aimed at DA in the borough.

The Slough Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (SJHWS) includes a priority action for commissioning services to support Domestic Abuse issues, in order to reduce crime and safeguard and support vulnerable adults and children, and this Strategy works to deliver that priority action.

The broader issues highlighted by the Government's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy will be delivered through the work of individual partners, Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership, the Safer Slough Partnership, Slough Local Safeguarding Children Board, and Slough Adult Safeguarding Board. This Strategy is intended to complement the work on these other, related, issues so that we can offer a comprehensive, co-ordinated approach to deal with all forms of violence against women and girls (and men/boys where these forms of violence are perpetrated against them).



This strategy draws on and is consistent with both national and local strategies and plans. These include:

### National

- Human Rights Act (1998)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Every Child Matters and the Children Act (2004)
- Ending Violence Against Women Strategy, Conservative Party (2008)
- Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls, Home Office (2009)
- Mainstreaming the Commissioning of Local Services to Address VAWG, HM Government (2009)
- Specialist Domestic Violence Court Programme Resource Manual, Home Office, CPS, HMCS (2008)
- Responding to Violence Against Women and Children - The Role of the NHS (March 2010)
- Violence Against Women and Girls. Advisory Group final report and recommendations, DCSF 2010.

### Local

- Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2016
- Safer Slough Partnership Strategic Assessment 2014/15
- Standing Together Against Domestic Violence - Responding to Domestic Violence in Slough - The Next Steps (2013)
- Slough Borough Council's Five Year Plan
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Early Help Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Slough Safeguarding Adults Board
- Slough Local Safeguarding Children Board

At the heart of this strategy is the vision that all victims of domestic abuse will receive the appropriate level of support at all times. The most straightforward way of describing this method of enquiry is:

**Ask - Believe - Record - Assess risk  
Support - Refer if necessary**

# Vision

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Domestic Abuse in Slough will be addressed through partnership working to provide a co-ordinated response based on prevention, early intervention and risk reduction, increasing the safety of those experiencing Domestic Abuse and achieving the best possible outcomes for victims and their families.

The Domestic Abuse Partnership groups will work together to reduce levels of Domestic Abuse in Slough, to reduce the impact on children and young people, and to provide high quality support, protection and safeguarding services to all those experiencing abuse. All partners will seek to minimise the impact of domestic abuse on children by means of effective screening, risk assessment and referral to Children's Social Care.

## What will look different because of this Strategy?

- People will know how to recognise abusive relationships and how to get help at an early stage for themselves, their family and their friends.
- Young people will have the right knowledge and skills to build and maintain healthy and positive relationships for themselves and their family.
- All victims will be kept safe in the short and long term.
- Repeat victimisation will be prevented as victims are enabled to rebuild their lives including restoring their confidence and resilience to make changes in their lives.
- Perpetrators will be held accountable and their behaviour tackled effectively.
- Services will be coordinated to provide the right support at the right time.
- Partnership working will develop capacity across all organisations.

# Definition of domestic abuse

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Domestic Abuse is not just limited to acts of physical violence and can encompass multiple types of abuse including: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

In 2012, the Home Office extended its definition of Domestic Abuse to

*“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality”*

# National context

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Nationally, in 2013 1.2 million women suffered domestic abuse, with 66% of these being repeat victims. Incidents of Domestic Abuse are significantly under-reported, with less than one quarter of people who suffer from domestic abuse, and only 1 in 10 women who experience a serious sexual assault, reporting it to the police.<sup>1</sup>

- In recent years two women each week were killed by their partner or former partner, equating to approximately one third of all female homicide victims<sup>2</sup>
- In 65-77% of households where a women has be subjected to domestic abuse, children have also been maltreated<sup>3</sup>
- Where one or both parents in a household have drug or alcohol problems, it is estimated that it is three times more likely that there will be domestic abuse - this is known as the Toxic Trio<sup>4</sup>
- In 2012/13, 88,110 domestic abuse cases were referred to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)<sup>5</sup>

Nationally, the cost of domestic abuse is approximately £5.47 billion per year. Additional costs related to the wider violence against women and girls categories include £6 billion direct costs to the economy and £17 billion in human and emotional costs.<sup>6</sup>

The four main principles of the Government's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG) provides a framework for dealing with Domestic Abuse and is reflected in this strategy:

- 1) **Prevention** to stop abuse from happening in the first place, by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it, and intervening early to prevent it.
- 2) **Provision** of adequate levels of support where abuse occurs.
- 3) **Partnership** working to obtain the best outcomes for victims and their families.
- 4) **Protection** of victims, taking action to reduce the risk and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

<sup>1</sup> Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan 2014

<sup>2</sup> Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Violence

<sup>3</sup> Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Violence

<sup>4</sup> Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Violence

<sup>5</sup> Violence Against Women Crime Report, CPS 2013

<sup>6</sup> FROM PRESENTATION - NO SOURCE QUOTED

# Domestic Abuse in Slough

In 2013 there were 3,786 cases of Domestic Abuse reported to the police, 31% of which were recorded as a crime. Approximately 40% of victims had suffered Domestic Abuse previously and many had witnessed it as a child.<sup>1</sup> In 2014 there were 2,027 cases of Domestic Abuse reported to the police, 31% of which were recorded as a crime with a repeat offence rate of 40%.

Across the Thames Valley, Slough has significantly higher rates of Domestic Abuse than other Local Authority areas, except for Milton Keynes. However, Slough is below both the Thames Valley average (43%), Milton Keynes (46%) and Reading (46%) in the rates of repeat incidents.<sup>2</sup>

Domestic Abuse incidents made up 41% of all violent crime reported in Slough in 2013.

- 16% recorded as domestic abuse with injury
- 25% being recorded as domestic abuse without injury.

Data from the Police Foundation demonstrates that there are Domestic Abuse hotspots in the majority of wards in Slough.

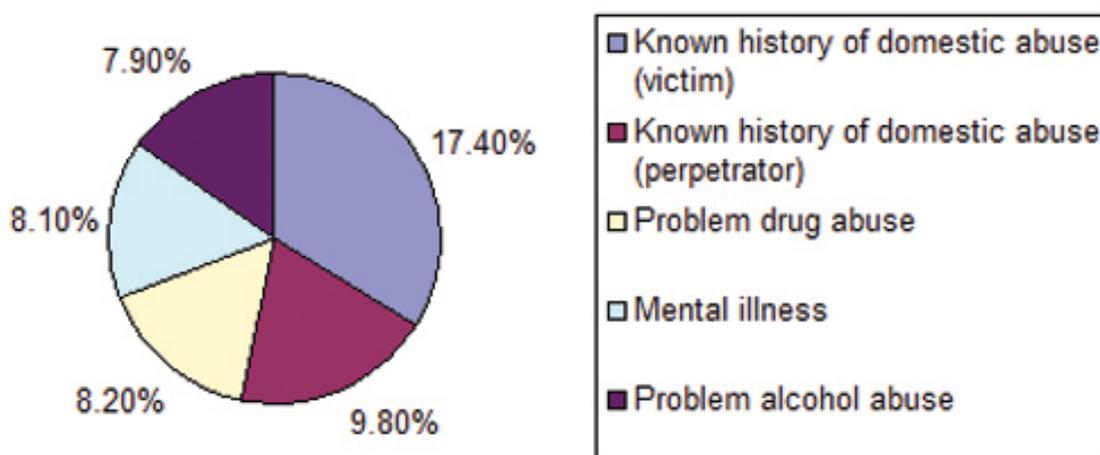
## Victims

Locally, the annual cost of Domestic Abuse in Slough is estimated to be £22 million, which includes costs to Social Care, Health Services, Police, Criminal Justice and Housing. There is no way to quantify the human and emotional costs which may continue over generations.<sup>3</sup>

Victims of Domestic Abuse in Slough come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds with the largest groups identifying themselves as being White British (39.8%), followed closely by Asian/Asian British (31.2%) which is in line with the demographic of Slough.

The age profile of victims accessing services in Slough show that the largest group are aged between 21-40 years. This age group also make up the majority of the borough's population, and include those most likely to have dependent children in the household. This is mirrored in data from Slough Children's Social Care, which shows that Domestic Abuse accounts for the majority of referrals.

## Top 5 Most Prevalent Factors For All Open Cases



<sup>1</sup> Safer Slough Partnership Strategic Needs Assessment 2014/15

<sup>2</sup> Safer Slough Partnership Strategic Needs Assessment 2014/15

<sup>3</sup> Domestic and Sexual violence Ready Reckoner, Home Office

Incidents of Domestic Abuse affect the lives of the victim, the wider family and the perpetrator themselves, and as such have serious implications for many services, particularly Children's Social Care Services who have a duty to safeguard children from the affects of abuse. Effective early intervention support for families has been proven to play a critical role in reducing the numbers of children in the Care system, along with reducing repeat referrals. Over half of all referrals made to Slough Domestic Abuse Service last year were repeat referrals.

Although the types of Domestic Abuse experienced by victims in Slough vary, all cases had elements of jealous and controlling behaviour, and many experienced physical and emotional abuse.

Slough's MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) deals with high risk cases of Domestic Abuse by co-ordinating the partnership response. It is of concern that the number of repeat cases to the MARAC in the last year was 15%, evidencing the need for greater support and intervention for those deemed at high risk of abuse.

Approximately 87% of cases referred to SDAS were risk assessed as standard to medium risk, indicating a need for more timely family interventions including outreach support, Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) services or group programmes. The DASH charity reports that in 2013-14 42% of referrals high risk and 58% standard/medium.

Most victims accepted IDVA support with 53% of victims attending up to 5 sessions with their IDVA. 21% of victims had panic alarms fitted in their properties and 39% were assisted to obtain Court Orders against the perpetrator. Only 4% of victims accepted the offer of a place in refuge, indicating that most victims prefer to receive community support whilst they remain in their own homes.

## Perpetrators

Recent national research into the efficacy of Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) treatment programmes has shown that men who completed the programme stopped or reduced their abusive behaviour. Their partners and children stated that they felt safer; and that there was a reduction in the abuse witnessed by children.

There have been over 100 perpetrators referred to the commissioned DVIP service over the last two years who were aged between 20 and 39 years. Over half accepted the offer of addressing their abusive behaviour through a structured programme, and 53% of those completed the full 26 week intervention.

The fact that almost half of the perpetrators offered DVIP refused to attend the course, and of those that do, many fail to complete it, needs to be addressed. Future commissioning will consider greater use of whole family interventions to address Domestic Abuse.

# Tackling Domestic Abuse

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## Prevention

- Implement a comprehensive Corporate DA Training programme in a tiered approach to ensure suitability for all professionals
- Provide appropriate structured support for children and young people who have witnessed, or been victims or perpetrators of abuse
- Ensure all professionals within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub have sufficient DA knowledge and skills to refer or signpost appropriately
- Pilot whole family interventions for the most complex families to prevent issues from escalating

## Provision

- Ensure sufficient IDVA and outreach provision to meet identified needs
- Maintain refuge provision for victims who have fled to Slough as per the national agreement
- Support local families to remain at home with Sanctuary Scheme services when safe to do so or support victims to access refuge in other areas
- Develop holistic family services in collaboration with the Families First programme for families wishing to remain together

## Protection

- Encourage greater use of 'Prevention Orders' and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme
- Widen the range of agencies referring to MARAC and attending monthly meetings, to coordinate resources and ensure a positive outcome, disposal and reduction of repeat referrals
- Reduce the number of children subject to Child in Need and Child Protection Plans due to Domestic Abuse

## Partnership

- The DA Executive and Operational groups will champion the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan with accountability through the Safer Slough Partnership and Wellbeing Boards
- To support the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan, the Partnership will seek to maintain the DA Partnership Lead role
- Develop an agreed data set and sharing of information across the Partnership for robust monitoring and management of the Strategy
- Develop a partnership communications strategy to ensure all agencies are aware of available services and referral routes

# Measuring Impact

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The Domestic Abuse Partnership are developing an Action Plan containing specific actions and targets to measure the impact of this Strategy, but will include:

## Outcome 1

Children and Young People affected by Domestic Abuse are identified early and protected from further harm.

### Performance Indicators

- Number of staff completing appropriate safeguarding training courses
- Number of injunctions and protection orders gained through IDVA support
- Number using the Sanctuary Scheme to enable victims to remain safely in their own home
- Increased completion of Early Help Assessments by IDVA/Outreach workers

## Outcome 2

Reduce the number of DA victims entering services at higher tiers of need

### Performance Indicators

- Reduction in number of CiN, CPP and LAC due to DA
- Improved co-ordination of services currently commissioned for DA (Outreach and IDVA), Mental Health (Coaching and Wellbeing), Drug and Alcohol (Family Intensive Engagement Service)
- Improve detection and reporting rates across all agencies by developing clear referral pathways into services
- Link DA and Families First targets

## Outcome 3

Reduce the number of repeat referrals to MARAC through better coordinated support for victims.

### Performance Indicators

- Review MARAC procedures to ensure best practice using SafeLives guidance
- Improve coordination of early intervention services to deliver outreach family support for medium risk cases
- Number of agencies signed up to a Data and Information Sharing Protocol

# Governance

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The Domestic Abuse Operational Partnership will champion the development and delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan with quarterly reporting to the Domestic Abuse Executive group.

The Domestic Abuse Executive will ensure the delivery of outcomes by monitoring the progress achieved against the Action Plan on a quarterly basis.

The Safer Slough Partnership as a Priority Delivery Group of the Slough Wellbeing Board, will take responsibility for providing effective leadership and guidance.

Progress made against the identified outcomes will be reported annually to the Slough Wellbeing Board, Slough Local Safeguarding Children Board and Slough Adult Safeguarding Board.

This Strategy will also be reviewed annually, and refreshed in 2017/18.

# Appendix 1

## DA Stakeholder Consultation

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### Services

- DASH Charity - Refuge - Inc Children's Worker, Therapist, IDVA, Programmes, Training
- SDAS commissioned services - Refuge, IDVA, Early Help
- DVIP - Perp programmes in Children's Social Care and Probation
- Haybrook College programmes
- Schools - PSHE, Healthy Relationships
- Primary Mental Health Team - Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Jeena International - HBV, FGM, Forced Marriage
- SEBDOS - staffing wellbeing hub
- T2, Family Intensive Engagement Service (Drugs and Alcohol)
- Parental Coaching and Wellbeing Service (Mental Health)
- Save the Children 'FAST' for 3-5 years at Montem, Foxborough, Marish, Claycotts Children's Centres
- Children's Centre - resilience work
- Early Help Assessment Form and training

### Information Sharing Partnerships

- MAPPA
- MARAC
- MASH
- VMAP
- Families First
- Health and Wellbeing Board

### Gaps in service provision identified in consultation

#### Early Help and Preventative Services

- Peri-Natal mental health or wellbeing services
- Specific DA services or programmes for Young People
- Group survivor programmes for parents
- Very limited Prevention and Early Intervention services
- Targeted Early Help or family outreach support - Need to build expert Lead Professional/Key Worker roles (Pre IDVA)
- No mediation or crisis intervention to keep families together, and insufficient accommodation to keep splitting families
- Lack of assertive support for complex families to build resilience, too many repeat referrals
- 'Restorative' services for CiN/CPP/LAC who live in DA households
- Community Champions
- Need greater use of powers 'Prevention Orders', 'Protection Notices' to enable the family to stay in their home and the perpetrator is removed
- Limited use of Early Help Assessment tool

#### Cultural Issues

- Language barriers affect service delivery
- Financial difficulties for women with No Recourse to Public Funds - Spousal Visa

### Communication and Service Delivery

- No coordination of services and group programmes in the community to maximise capacity
- Lack of evidence to support the impact and outcomes of interventions

### Developing Community Champions

There is the potential to have a range of DA Champions for example:

Executive Level Champions to attend the Strategic DA group who will monitor the delivery of the DA Strategy and Action Plan.

This may include Councillors, Business executives, Senior reps from Job Centre Plus, College, Health Authority etc, who will make a pledge to tackle DASV in their own workplaces by various means for example, training, awareness raising of service availability and HR policy review etc,

Statutory and VCS service Providers to form the DA Champion Operational Forum group who will commit to actions on the DA Action Plan to deliver service development in their respective agencies.

Community based DA Champions to form a voluntary group which may include faith group reps, local VCS group reps and individuals who will receive signposting training to assist anyone who discloses DA to the volunteer Champion's VCS agency and thereby raise awareness of the services available to people experiencing DASV.

### The DA Forum - Attendance and Remit

Previous remit of the DA Forum was information sharing but there was limited commitment to this. There are now other information sharing groups in operation and the DA Forum should not duplicate the work e.g. VMAP, MARAC

The DA Forum requires a strong Chair, should meet quarterly and have clear roles and responsibilities.

The DA Forum to re-group as the DA Champion Operational Forum

An Away Day to be arranged to focus Champions on new direction, Elect a strong Chair and to set Terms of Reference.

#### DA Forum Purpose

- The Forum should focus on Universal, Prevention and Early Help services and should drive the DA Strategy
- Identify any gaps or challenges and plan solutions
- Share best practice examples and information about activities and events, invite guest speakers including survivors
- Contribute to JSNA and other Strategies and Plans
- Strategic meeting is important as this group makes decisions which drive the DA strategy and develop services.

