

# Slough Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023-2026



*Slough is a place where domestic abuse is not tolerated, where everyone can expect respect in their relationships, and live free from domestic abuse*



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# A. Forewords

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## Foreword by Superintendent Lee Barnham

### Welcome to the Domestic Abuse Strategy for Slough

In the course of a year it is estimated that 2.1 million people aged over 16 experienced domestic abuse (Crime Survey for England and Wales). Two thirds of victims were women. For every person being abused there is someone responsible for perpetrating that abuse. And all too often children are in the home living with the impact. Domestic abuse crosses geographic boundaries and affects our communities regardless of social class, age, race, religion or sexual orientation thriving on being hidden behind closed doors. We must make tackling domestic abuse everybody's business.

We need to work together to change attitudes and behaviours towards domestic abuse and sexual violence. The whole community needs to come together to take action. Whether it is part of your job or whether it is in your capacity as a community member, a faith member, a neighbour, a family member, a friend, an employer, or a colleague we can all make a difference.

The prevention of domestic abuse and the protection of victims lies at the heart of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Domestic Abuse and sexual violence, including Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse, can have a devastating effect on the health and wellbeing of the people involved, as well as their families, friends and wider society. The Safer Slough Partnership has made it a priority to tackle domestic abuse in Slough.

This strategy has been set out in partnership with all agencies represented at the Slough Domestic Abuse Partnership Board because it is only through working together and sharing our collective expertise and experience that we can make the most impact on the harm caused by domestic abuse. This strategy charts the course of the next three years and details the commitments that the partnership, along with other agencies and groups, have made to tackle domestic abuse. By building on the work that has already been done in this area, we will work together to eliminate this destructive form of abuse in our Borough.

*This local strategy  
recognises the need for  
clear leadership and  
direction from across the  
partnership*



**Superintendent Lee Barnham**  
Local Police Area Commander  
Slough

## Foreword by survivor - BRAVE Ambassador

### Survivor's response to Domestic Abuse Strategy

I feel very privileged and honoured that an awful real life experience I lived with for many years can be turned into a positive to help develop and shape structures and procedures to help others who may find themselves in a similar situation. The fact that I, a survivor, has been asked to look at and provide input to such an important document shows that domestic abuse is taken seriously and that there is a real keenness to understand the experience of abuse.

I am impressed how the whole of domestic abuse, from the earliest stages, to support afterwards, has been included in this strategy, which I think reduces the hidden 'behind closed doors' stigma attached to domestic abuse. Prevention at an early age is essential to ensure that relationship boundaries are understood and respected, so it is encouraging to see that the strategy is based upon this. I am happy to hear that Slough will be rolling out delivery of educational programs that promote healthy relationships as this is so important.

The second priority of early intervention is vital to ensure safety and requires highly specialised and trained domestic abuse professionals who understand the level of involvement that is required

for each individual case. I was fortunate to have a very experienced and well trained arresting officer from Slough who was able to see through the attempts of charm and could see the danger I was in. Her belief in me ensured my safety and her diligence and persistence resulted in charges made against the perpetrator. For many people, myself included, there is such shame around services involvement and the worry around the stigma of that, so sensitivity to this and treating everyone and every situation as unique is so important. I was very aware of this stigma in my child's school and the impact of that on him.

The idea of a survivor's forum is fantastic to highlight both what is working well and what isn't to ensure that the survivor's needs are met. The support addressing the trauma and long term effects of living within an abusive relationship and feeling unable to leave, cannot be under-estimated. Counselling can play an important part in recovery, especially when it is delivered by professionals who are trained in domestic abuse. For me, the psychological support from the BRAVE programme has been invaluable and has helped me to reclaim my identity and build resilience to move on and have the confidence thrive and push forward with my own goals for the life I want to lead. I am proud to be a BRAVE Ambassador which has given me the opportunity to be involved in other projects like this around domestic abuse.

Building Resilience and Valuing Emotions (BRAVE) provides therapeutic support by qualified Psychologists for people of all genders across Berkshire who have experienced domestic abuse and who also experience emotional difficulties including trauma following domestic abuse.

We recognise that abuse is complex and can continue far beyond separation from the abuser. You will learn about alternative ways to cope with life's difficulties, engage in group problem-solving, and get support from your peers.

*This local strategy places the voice of the victim/survivor at its heart and will ensure their voice drives change*

## B. Introduction

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### Defining and understanding domestic abuse (DA)

Domestic abuse has wide-ranging effects on various individuals and communities.

The primary victims of domestic abuse are the individuals who experience the abuse first-hand. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, although women are disproportionately affected. Domestic abuse can have severe physical, emotional, and psychological consequences for survivors. They may suffer from physical injuries, develop mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), experience low self-esteem, and have difficulties forming healthy relationships in the future.

Children who witness domestic abuse, even if they are not direct targets, can be significantly impacted and are victims in their own right. They may experience emotional trauma, fear, and confusion, which can affect their overall well-being and development. These children are more likely to have behavioural problems, academic difficulties, and struggle with forming healthy relationships in adulthood. There is also a higher risk that they may become either victims or perpetrators of domestic abuse themselves later in life.

**Perpetrators/Abusers:** While it is vital to focus on supporting survivors, it is also important to address the underlying issues of the individuals who engage in abusive behaviour. Abusers may have experienced violence or trauma themselves, have unresolved anger or control issues, or struggle with substance misuse problems. By addressing these factors, interventions can be designed to help abusers break the cycle of violence and learn healthier ways of dealing with conflict.

**Family and friends:** Domestic abuse can impact the wider network of family and friends surrounding the survivor. They may feel helpless, confused, or burdened by the situation. Witnessing the suffering of their loved ones can also have emotional and psychological effects on these individuals.

**Communities and society:** Domestic abuse has a broader impact on society as a whole. It leads to increased physical and mental healthcare costs, strain on social services, and a decrease in productivity due to survivors missing work or school. Moreover, domestic abuse contributes to a culture of violence and inequality, affecting societal norms and values. Addressing domestic abuse requires collective efforts to raise awareness, change attitudes, and implement policies that promote prevention, support, and accountability.

This strategy recognises that domestic abuse extends beyond the traditional interpretation of intimate partner violence/abuse to incorporate wider intrafamilial abuse between siblings, adult child versus parent, and parent versus adult child. The strategy also recognises that understanding of abuse within a domestic setting continually evolves, such as the recent 2021 review by the DA commissioner's office entitled 'Understanding Child/Adolescent to parent violence and abuse'.<sup>1</sup>



*This local strategy puts the needs of victims first and in so doing evolves in accordance with ongoing developments and research*

## Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021<sup>1</sup> received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. This strategy adopts the definition of domestic abuse introduced by the Act.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory definition of domestic abuse is: "Any single incident or a course of conduct of physical or sexual abuse, violence or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological, emotional or other abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been personally connected to each other"

### Children as victims

The new domestic abuse definition, under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, makes the positive move to define children who see, hear or otherwise experience the abuse as victims or survivors of that abuse in their own right, and as such, this strategy will consider their needs throughout its priorities. It is acknowledged that children who witness domestic abuse at home to be considered in need of help and protection from the Local Authority, as well as those that are directly injured or abused. An estimated 16,000 children in England are currently living in households where domestic abuse is taking place.



## How are children affected by domestic abuse?

Children who experience domestic abuse are at risk of both short and long-term physical and mental health problems. Every child will be affected differently to the trauma of domestic abuse.

### Short-terms effects of domestic abuse

For young children this can include:

- bed-wetting
- increased sensitivity and crying
- difficulty sleeping or falling asleep
- separation anxiety

For school aged children this can include:

- a loss of drive to participate in activities and school
- lower grades in school
- feeling guilty and to blame for the abuse happening
- getting into trouble more often
- physical signs such as constant state of hyper vigilance, headaches and stomach aches

For teenagers this can include:

- acting out in negative ways such as missing school or fighting with family members
- having low self-esteem
- finding it difficult to make friends
- engaging in risky behaviours such as using alcohol and other drugs

### Long-term effects of domestic abuse

- mental health problems, such as becoming anxious or depressed. Low mental health can also lead to big impacts on physical health, including post traumatic stress disorder, self-harm or developing an eating disorder
- having a lowered sense of self-worth
- using alcohol and other drugs as unhealthy coping mechanisms
- repeating behaviours seen in their domestic setting rather than just witnesses affecting future relationships and the ability to handle stress.

*This local strategy recognises the importance to address the needs of survivors, children, families, and wider society*



## Wider Policy and Legal Context considerations

### Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The key objectives of the Act are to:

- **Promote awareness:** to recognise children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right.
- **Protect and support victims:** to enhance the safety of victims and the support they receive, including their children in safe accommodation.
- **Tackle perpetrators:** to provide an effective response to perpetrators to end the cycle of abuse.
- **Transform the justice response:** to provide support to victims throughout the justice process.
- **Improve performance:** to drive consistency and enhance the response to domestic abuse to improve outcomes.



Commitments relating to the government's response to domestic abuse and the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 were published in the National Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan in March 2022<sup>2</sup> which is closely aligned to the government's Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, published in July 2021.<sup>3</sup>

### Safe Accommodation Duty

The "Safe Accommodation Duty", refers to a provision within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021<sup>3</sup>. Under this duty, local authorities in England will have a legal obligation to provide support and safe accommodation to survivors of domestic abuse and their children. This duty expands on the existing duty of local authorities to provide accommodation under the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities. The Safe Accommodation Duty aims to ensure that survivors have access to safe and suitable housing, recognising the importance of stable accommodation in helping them rebuild their lives away from abusive situations.



The new duty requires Tier One authorities, of which Slough is one, in England to bring together key local partners, including local domestic abuse charities, in a domestic abuse Local Partnership Board. They must also undertake a robust assessment to determine the need for domestic abuse support in their area for all victims (and their children) in relevant safe accommodation.

The specific duties placed on Tier One local authorities are:

- To appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, which it must consult as it performs certain specified functions.
- To assess the need for domestic abuse support in their area for all victims (and their children) who reside in relevant safe accommodation, including those who come from outside of their area.
- To prepare and publish a stand-alone 'Safer Accommodation' strategy for the provision of such support to cover their area having regard to the needs assessment.
- To give effect to the strategy (through commissioning/de-commissioning decisions).
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.
- To report back annually to central government.

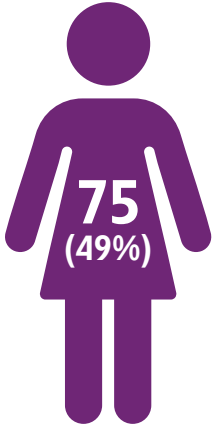
The guidance states that accommodation such as bed and breakfast accommodation is not considered relevant safe accommodation and is specifically excluded under the Regulations.

Duties under other Acts, such as temporary accommodation provided under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, continue to be met by Slough Borough Council and regard is given to victims presenting as homelessness who are considered priority need in terms of access to accommodation, safe move-on accommodation from refuges and the ability to maintain secure tenancies where applicable.



## National data

Domestic abuse is widespread. Recently we completed a domestic abuse needs assessment as part of the statutory duty within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The following shows key themes nationally and locally.



In the year ending March 2021, police recorded crime data showed almost half of adult female homicide victims in England and Wales were killed in a domestic homicide



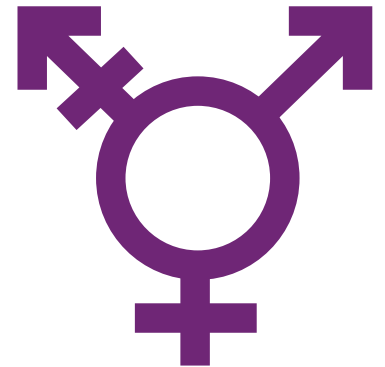
Disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse as non-disabled women, and typically experience abuse for a longer period before accessing support



will be a victim of domestic abuse in their lifetime<sup>11</sup>



were impacted by domestic abuse, a study by Kent University found, March 2023<sup>4</sup>



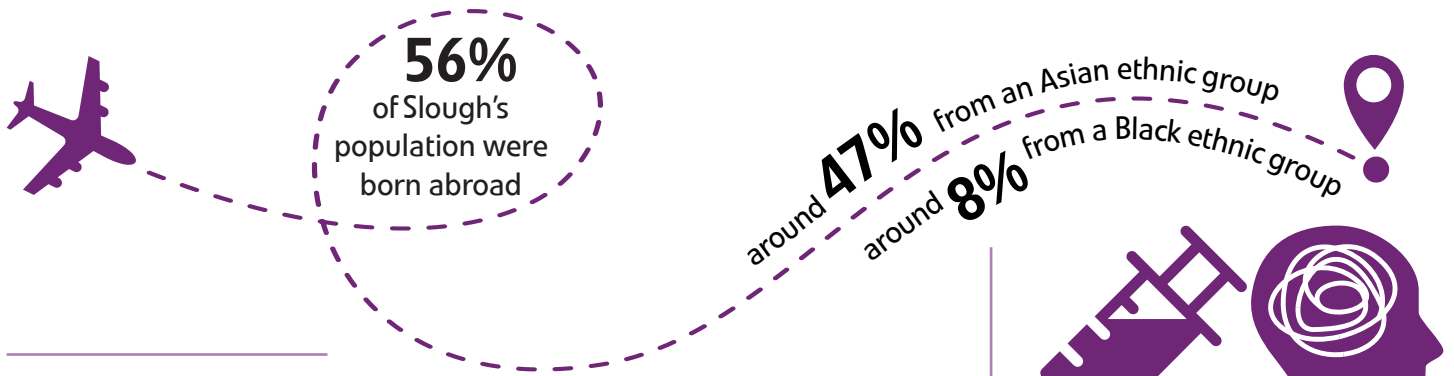
LGBTQ+ victims/survivors present with higher levels of risk and complex needs by the time they access support<sup>10</sup>



Victims aged 60+ are much more likely to experience abuse from an adult family member or current intimate partners than those 60 and under<sup>6</sup>



## Local data



The proportion of victims is approximately



Over the 4-year period 2019-2022, there were on average 4,800 domestic incidents of which the proportion classified as crimes has risen from 2,614 to 3,017

**The crime recorded data does not capture reliable data in respect of victim profiles across a range of protected characteristics**



Approximately 11% of Slough's population declared a disability and a significant proportion of high-risk cases have specialist needs regarding mental health and substance misuse<sup>12</sup>

The proportion of repeat domestic incidents has grown over the 4 years from 20% of all incidents to 30% of all incidents



In 2022 there were 17 addresses with at least 10 repeat calls in a year



The commissioned domestic abuse specialist provider received 21 referrals for honour-based violence, and 4 regarding forced marriage in the same year



The locally commissioned domestic abuse specialist provider received 598 referrals in the most recent financial year (2022/2023). This has grown for each of the last 3 years



The service user data for victims, shows that Black and Minority ethnic victims are under-represented when compared to borough population profiles<sup>7&8</sup>

The MARAC data indicates under-representation for victims across a range of protected characteristics such as disabilities and LGBTQ+<sup>9</sup>



## Local survivors and community voice

As part of developing the needs assessment and strategy, multiple methods of engagement were employed to seek the views of partner organisations, front-line staff, survivors, and voluntary and community sector providers, including:

- A public consultation/survey
- Presentations to and discussions with local professionals
- One to one and group meetings with survivors.

## Consultation with the community

- The most frequently used words in the free text elements of the survey were, in order: training, control, coercion, housing.
- The top three barriers preventing survivors reporting abuse are (a) fear of agencies, (b) fear of not being believed and (c) fear of breaking up the family.
- Around 30% of respondents to the survey did not know where to go for help regarding domestic abuse.
- Over 35% of respondents to the survey, said they had been experiencing abuse for over ten years.
- Work with young people revealed elements such as, role of social media, lack of depth in PHSE classes, cultural differences as to how healthy relationships are discussed across different cultures with limited conversations in Asian households.
- Research carried out within past two years, showed that school year 7, 8 and 9 boys held traditional gendered opinions about the role of women.
- A community event in the South Asian community revealed a number of barriers to services, and opportunities to improve services.
- Barriers; Fear of breaking up family, reliance on husbands for money, lack of awareness, feelings of being judged by communities, lack of support post exit, normalisation of domestic abuse.
- Opportunities; Education, identifying more south Asian women role models/influencers, group support work, better education for boys, working in faith settings.

## Discussions with professionals

Findings include;

- Opportunities to improve the approach by housing staff and professionals.
- Lack of service provision for those who are not high risk i.e. standard and medium.
- Risk levels varied across agencies, with the police less likely to assess the risk as high.
- Several agencies wrestled with the challenge of 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (people not able to access UK benefits), with a reliance on ad-hoc charitable and/or short-term emergency funding from children's services and/or Hestia.

## Group work with survivors

Findings include:

- Survivors frustrated that they are forced to leave their community/local connections to places of safety
- An opportunity to consider how people could be better supported to remain in their home.
- There is a lack of dedicated short-term, emergency accommodation for victims that provide them the space to consider their options.
- Mistrust of statutory services such as Police and social services.



## Research

There is a range of research on the subject of domestic abuse.

- A report by Women’s Aid “Whatever their experiences, women from Black, Asian or minority ethnic communities are likely to face additional barriers to receiving the help that they need”<sup>8</sup>
- SafeLives report “there is clear evidence that Black and Asian women are disproportionately at risk of being killed by a domestic abuser”<sup>9</sup>
- Academic research suggests that those whose sexual identity is different from that at birth, face additional barriers and isolation from seeking support as victims of domestic abuse. In an article Domestic Violence in the Transgender Community “Transgender people may face unique barriers in seeking help for domestic violence. According to the Williams Institute report, they may experience: The risk of rejection and isolation from family and friends if they “out” themselves”<sup>10</sup>
- ‘The rate of violent victimization of lesbian or gay persons (43.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons aged 16 or older) was more than two times the rate for straight persons (19.0 per 1,000)”<sup>11</sup>
- The quality of data capture in crimes recorded as categorised by protected characteristics would benefit from substantial improvement<sup>14</sup>
- Almost two-thirds of domestic abuse survivors experience PTSD symptoms
- 63% of survivors feel depressed or have suicidal thoughts, a 2019 Kent & Medway study found
- PTSD is experienced by 51% to 75% of women who are victims of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) compared to an average of 10.4% of women in the general population
- In one study, 20% of men who reported sustaining physical IPV had moderate-to-severe PTSD symptoms.

## Equality Impact Needs Assessment

The following actions were undertaken to gain insight of the diverse needs of those accessing support within safe accommodation and opportunities for earlier intervention:

 <p>Ensure accessibility for male victims of domestic abuse</p>	 <p>Sexual orientation: The proportion of LGBTQ+ survivors spoken about at MARAC was under-represented</p>
 <p>Elderly residents are under-represented as victims of abuse</p>	 <p>Disabled victims are under-represented as victims of abuse</p>
 <p>Those with complex and multiple needs often do not receive a service</p>	 <p>Residents from diverse communities may feel that they cannot access services due to cultural barriers ie. language</p>

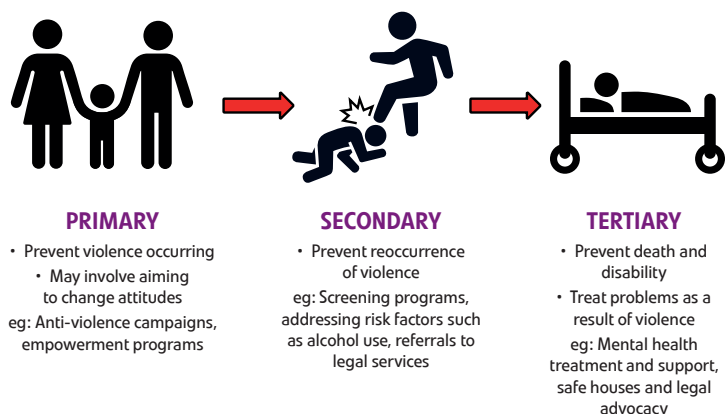
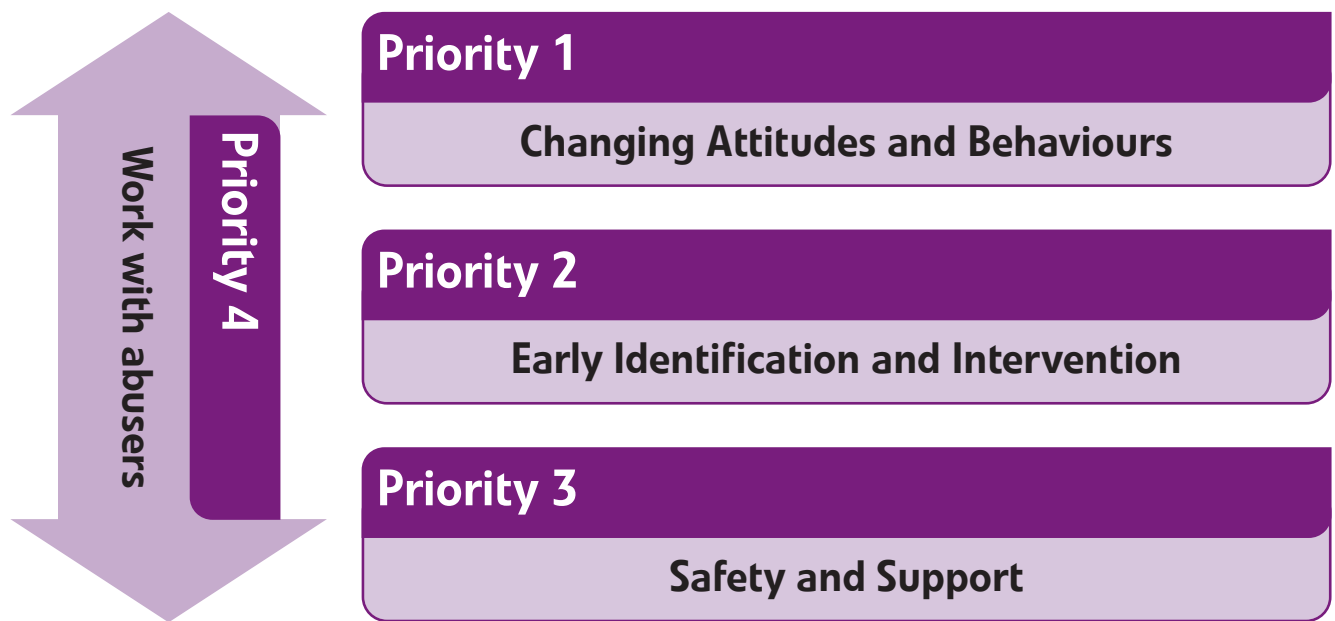
# C. Vision and priorities

*Slough is a place where domestic abuse is not tolerated, where everyone can expect respect in their relationships, and live free from domestic abuse.*

Our vision is ambitious and cannot be achieved by one organisation. It requires true partnership of agencies and communities working together. To be successful, will mean that domestic abuse must become everyone’s business.

Our strategy is based upon a prevention model, focusing on four key prevention priorities. The first

three are frequently referred to in a pyramid of need, from universal through to secondary and tertiary prevention, and tend to be victim focused. This strategy recognises that long-term change cannot be achieved without focusing on the behaviour of the abuser, hence a fourth clear priority related to perpetrators.



*This strategy will set out what we aim to achieve against each of the priority areas, but will also set out how, operating principles that guide professionals*

## D. Priorities in detail

### Priority 1: Changing attitudes and behaviours

**Mission:** To change attitudes and behaviours surrounding domestic abuse to prevent it from happening.

**What we aim to achieve:** The goal of this priority area is to reduce incidences of domestic abuse by changing societal attitudes and behaviours towards domestic abuse. This will be achieved by promoting healthy relationships and preventing abusive behaviours before they occur.

**How we are going to achieve our mission:** We will, through schools, ensure delivery of educational programs that promote healthy relationships and discourage abusive behaviours. We will work with schools, community organisations, and workplaces to promote awareness and education on domestic abuse. We will encourage faith groups, youth and community projects, including the voluntary sector agencies to pro-actively promote clear messaging about domestic abuse and coercive control and how to get support.

Encouraging public bodies and employers to adopt a common approach to supporting employees who experience abuse, ensuring policies are in place, staff and managers are trained and creating the confidence for employees to disclose abuse. We will also partner with media outlets to increase public awareness of domestic abuse and promote campaigns relating to positive behaviours and attitudes.

**How we know we are achieving our aims:** We will test our progress through regular consultation to determine changes in attitudes and behaviours surrounding domestic abuse, to measure public awareness of domestic abuse and to ensure there are improvements in knowledge of where to seek support. We will measure our progress by tracking the number of people who have participated in educational programs and the increase in public awareness of domestic abuse as well as in the workplace. We fully anticipate there being a steady increase in the volume of domestic abuse reported.

### Priority 2: Early identification and intervention

**Mission:** To provide early help and trauma informed intervention to victims of domestic abuse.

**What we aim to achieve:** The goal of this priority area is to ensure that all victims of domestic abuse are offered and receive early help and intervention to prevent further harm.

**How we are going to achieve our mission:** We will develop a coordinated response to domestic abuse that involves law enforcement, healthcare providers, social services, places of education and community organisations. We will support the provision of universal and specialist Early Help services that are of good quality and can adapt to survivors needs. We will identify gaps in services and develop solutions to address them. We will ensure that children are recognised as victims, with appropriate alerts to children's services and ensuring there is an

offer of support available for all children present at the scene of domestic abuse incidents. We will also provide training to professionals to recognise signs of abuse and to respond appropriately. We will ensure practitioners will have a good understanding of the dynamics of domestic abuse (including Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage) and know how to ask the routine question, assess risk, and keep survivors safe by matching services to need.

**How we know we are achieving our aims:** We will measure our progress by tracking the number of victims who receive early help and intervention, the effectiveness of the coordinated response, and the number of perpetrators who are held accountable for their actions. We will measure the number of referrals across partner agencies to commissioned services, and to the MARAC.



## Priority 3: Safety and support

**Mission:** To provide high-quality services to victims of domestic abuse to ensure their safety and well-being.

**What we aim to achieve:** The goal of this priority area is to ensure that victims of domestic abuse have access to high-quality services that address their safety and support needs.

**How we are going to achieve our mission:** We will support the provision of specialist support services for victims and children, through effective commissioning and utilisation of grant funding, that is of a high quality and matches local need. We will provide safe and secure accommodation for victims of domestic abuse, including emergency shelter, transitional housing, and long-term housing solutions. We will ensure that there is an effective MARAC in place for Slough guaranteeing partnership

working for those at highest risk of abuse. We will also provide a mental health provision of counselling and support services, such as group counselling, one-on-one counselling, and peer support groups. Services will be culturally sensitive and inclusive of all communities.

**How we know we are achieving our aims:** We will measure our progress by tracking the number of victims who access high-quality services, the level of satisfaction with these services, and the outcomes of these services, such as reduced trauma and increased well-being and the reduction of repeat incidents. We will test how well we are doing, from police, to social care, to housing, to domestic abuse services, voluntary and health services through actively seeking feedback, and via a survivor's forum.

## Priority 4: Work with abusers

**Mission:** To hold perpetrators of domestic abuse accountable for their actions, offer support and prevent further harm. To increase the number of people accessing Clare's Law (see bibliography for reference).

**What we aim to achieve:** The goal of this priority area is to prevent further harm by holding perpetrators of domestic abuse accountable for their actions and supporting them to change their behaviour. To support those who are making an educated decision about their relationship when accessing Clare's Law information, so they are better informed.

**How we are going to achieve our mission:** We will work with criminal justice partners and legal professionals to ensure that perpetrators of domestic abuse are held accountable for their actions. This may include criminal charges, restraining orders, and other legal actions. We will

also work with perpetrators to address their behaviours and provide support for them to make positive changes. We will track the use of judicial restraints, to identify best practice and barriers to accessing appropriate support through criminal justice systems. Identified interventions for those heard at the MARAC and MATAAC group meetings. We will promote the purpose of Clare's Law so the public can access the service.

**How we know we are achieving our aims:** We will measure our progress by tracking; - the numbers of perpetrators offered and those successfully completing educational programmes, - the number of positive criminal justice outcomes for perpetrators, - the number of repeats will decrease - the Police call outs to the same address will decrease, - the number of people accessing the Clare's Law service will increase.

## E. Partnership principles

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### Survivor voice

We will ensure that the voices of survivors, communities and professionals are listened to. This includes early education through to support from specialist organisations and training for our professionals, face to face, consultation, voice of the survivor at the Board, questionnaires and feedback via practitioners.

### Equalities and intersectionality

We will ensure that we understand the interconnected nature of social classification, ensuring service delivery reflects service demand and seeks to address the gaps that exist in services, to support those with protected characteristics and those disproportionately affected. We commit to actively seeking to support the duties instilled by the Equalities Act 2010, having due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance the equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between people from different groups. This includes population groups with protected characteristics of, Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual orientation.

### Values

**(honesty, integrity, reflection, objectivity, accountability)**

We will say what we are doing and acknowledge our challenges.

We will show integrity by ensuring that domestic abuse is championed across Slough and that victims feel supported.

We will reflect on what has worked and change and develop where improvements can be made.

We understand that domestic abuse is complex and will always listen to the voices of those with real experience.

We will be accountable to Slough residents and victims of domestic abuse.

### Co-ordinated community response

No single agency can be responsible for our vision of ending domestic abuse. Working in partnership across all agencies and the community will ensure that we can achieve the best possible outcomes for victims/survivors in Slough. The response to the pandemic in Slough has demonstrated the power of communities, capable of springing rapidly into action. The crisis showed that great things can be achieved when everyone in the community works together.

### Continuous learning and development

Tackling Domestic Abuse is complex, where our understanding continues to evolve.

We will deliver practice and process that reflects and embraces emerging intelligence and research, that continually develops and is based upon reflection and learning, from Domestic Homicide Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and Adult Reviews, legislation, and policy changes as well as best practice.

### Performance management and accountability

We will ensure that we develop and implement processes to improve and maintain good performance. Managing performance effectively with coordinated planning and reviewing systems to ensure that can action is based on reliable information, i.e, information that is complete, accurate, timely. and relevant, through the effective use of quantitative data and qualitative review and reflection.

This will be underpinned by seeking the survivors voice throughout all performance and contract management processes.

# F. Governance and delivery

This strategy will be subject to the governance of the Slough Domestic Abuse Partnership Board that sits within a wider partnership framework. A detailed action plan will enable progress to be monitored and reported to the Safer Slough Partnership.

## Governance

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021<sup>13</sup> required Local Authorities to appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Partnership Board. In response, the longstanding Slough Domestic Abuse Delivery Group expanded to meet this duty. Whilst the Statutory Duty to convene a board is placed on the Council, there must be specific representation from a number of agencies. It is this Board who commissioned the needs assessment that informs this strategy. The Slough Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (SDAPB) is a subgroup of the Safer Slough Partnership which is Slough's Community Safety Partnership.

The SDAPB is a partnership group responsible for supporting Slough Borough Council's in meeting its

duty under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, namely that people harmed by domestic abuse have access to adequate and appropriate support within safe accommodation services.

The Board will work together to assess ongoing performance against the Strategy action plan and support, advise, and work in partnership with partners and residents regarding issues relating to men, women and children who are harmed or who harm others in a domestic abuse context.

A number of subgroups feed into the SDAPB, including the MARAC (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference) group where high risk victims of domestic abuse are risk assessed and supported through a local partnership group. The MATAC refers to the Multi-Agency Tasking And Coordination process of identifying and tackling serial perpetrators of domestic abuse. The overarching objectives of the MATAC are to safeguard adults and children at risk of domestic abuse and to reduce the offending of domestic abuse perpetrators.

## Domestic Abuse Partnership Board



## G. Our plan

The plan summarised below, shows key activities against each of the priorities, that describe the actions to be undertaken, the outcome of those actions, and the responsible agency. This is a summary only of a more granular plan, that describes further actions being undertaken. An additional section shows further activities that are required to drive the overall vision.

Priority 1: Changing attitudes and behaviours		
No.	Action	Outcome
1.1	<p><i>(Community voice)</i> Implement a survivor forum to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listen, learn and hear directly from men, women and children and young people with lived experiences of domestic abuse from across all the communities of Slough and,</li> <li>for their voice to be represented at the Slough Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survivors feel heard and listened to.</li> <li>Residents, communities, and partners better understand Domestic Abuse and its impact through hearing the lived experiences of survivors.</li> <li>Services are better able to meet need.</li> </ul>
1.2	<p><i>(Education)</i> Work with schools and all educational settings (including home schooling) to support learning and understanding of healthy relationships and abuse. This will be based on evidenced best practice that strengthens equality and respect and supports children and young people to increase their understanding, and knowledge of how to report abuse and receive support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people: (a) Recognise healthy relationships, abuse and wider abuse and the impact and effect of it (b) Understand how to report it and where to get support (c) Feel empowered and safer as a result.</li> </ul>
1.3	<p><i>(Communication and awareness)</i> Deliver a public-facing and culturally relevant communications campaign annually, to raise awareness of domestic abuse in all its forms and educate on how to get support from local and national services. Examples include</p> <p><a href="#">Ask for ANI domestic abuse codeword: information for pharmacies - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>  <a href="#">Home - Ask For Angela askforangela.co.uk</a>  <a href="#">NHS England » Bright Sky</a>  <a href="#">White Ribbon - www.whiteribbon.org.uk</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in reported crime, and referrals to domestic abuse services.</li> <li>Increased public awareness and understanding of what Domestic Abuse is and the many strands and forms it takes.</li> <li>The wider public recognises and understands abuse and feel empowered and comfortable to report - supported to disclose sexual offences and harmful behaviours.</li> <li>Increase knowledge of campaigns that can help support them.</li> <li>Increased community engagement by providing information of services that can be contacted via telephone, email and links for access to all.</li> </ul>
1.4	<p><i>(Policy)</i> Encourage partner organisations to have a bespoke domestic abuse policy for employees and clients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All organisations to have a policy that increases knowledge of DA for employees and gives guidelines of how to access support within the workplace.</li> </ul>
1.5	<p><i>(Culture)</i> Encourage partner organisations and businesses to work towards "White Ribbon Accreditation".</p> <p><a href="#">How White Ribbon Accreditation enables organisations to support their employees experiencing domestic abuse - White Ribbon UK</a></p>	<p>Accreditation will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>make a difference in your communities to end violence.</li> <li>improve your organisational culture, safety and morale.</li> <li>increase the knowledge and skills of your staff to address violence.</li> </ul>

## Priority 2: Early help and intervention

No.	Action	Outcome
2.1	<i>(Service Offer)</i> Develop a comprehensive offer of trauma informed support to victims and survivors from the point of help and identification (for all victims across all groups of characteristics).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victims/survivors feel supported and have positive outcomes from the interventions.</li> <li>Lessen barriers, believe victims so they only need to tell their story once shifting the focus from 'what is wrong with you' to 'what happened to you'.</li> </ul>
2.2	<i>(Service Provision)</i> Ensure an integrated blend of commissioned, grant funded and community response to domestic abuse (for all victims across all groups of characteristics).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easy to navigate pathway to a variety of support at the time and in the place where it is needed.</li> </ul>
2.3	<i>(Training)</i> Ensure that partner agencies receive a minimum standard of domestic abuse training, that enables a safe response to domestic abuse. Training initiatives such as 'CUT IT OUT' for hairdressers and beauticians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase rate of disclosure and identification.</li> <li>Victims report feeling more comfortable and supported to disclose.</li> <li>All statutory and voluntary services feel confident in identifying and supporting incidents of abuse inclusive of harmful practices.</li> </ul>
2.4	<i>(Routine enquiry)</i> Encourage partner agencies to 'routinely enquire' about domestic abuse. This will include Police, Social Care, Primary and Secondary Healthcare, Housing Providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agencies feel confident and know how to approach DA routine question.</li> <li>Increase rates of disclosure to professionals.</li> <li>Increased referral rates to advocacy services.</li> </ul>
2.5	<i>(Children)</i> Ensure there is a minimum offer to all children who are present at the scene of all incidents of domestic abuse irrespective of the risk grade.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documented system/offer to all children.</li> <li>Understanding/gap analysis in support for children.</li> <li>Right offer of right support at right time addressing the issue early to enable support to be provided.</li> </ul>

## Priority 3: Safety and support

No.	Action	Outcome
3.1	<i>(Service provision - advocacy)</i> Ensure the provision of effective support for all survivors of abuse, so that survivors from all communities can access the right support and help at the right time to keep themselves and their children safe. (links with 2.1 & 2.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in number of repeat cases.</li> <li>Reduction in lower level of risk at point of entry to service, compared to exit.</li> <li>Improved outcomes across suite of indicators.</li> </ul>
3.2	<i>(Service provision - No recourse to public funds)</i> Develop a local partnership response to victims who have no recourse to public funds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A clear local pathway that local partners can navigate.</li> </ul>
3.3	<i>(Safe accommodation)</i> Ensure that the provisions of Part IV of the Domestic Abuse Act is adhered to and that appropriate assistance is put in place for those living in 'Safe Accommodation'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adherence to legislation within the Safe Accommodation Strategy and the local offer.</li> <li>Improved offer for those in need of emergency and local housing.</li> </ul>
3.4	<i>(MARAC)</i> Ensure there is an effective Slough MARAC in place, where partners work collectively to mitigate the risk of serious harm to survivors and children. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DA Board members to attend one MARAC per year for training and quality assurance.</li> <li>Policy in place regarding repeat domestic incidents.</li> <li>Quality assure a minimum of four MARAC cases per annum via the DA Board.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in number of repeat cases heard at MARAC.</li> <li>Reduction in volume, comparing 12 months of data pre MARAC to post MARAC.</li> </ul>
3.5	<i>(DA Act - Part 3)</i> Ensure that front line agencies are aware of, and prepared for implementation of Domestic Abuse Protection Notice (DAPN) and, Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO) and the community have knowledge of the schemes and can ask for either to be implemented for them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DAPN and DAPO requests will increase.</li> <li>People will feel safer when a DAPN and DAPO has been issued. This will provide a choice as to whether they need to move area.</li> </ul>

## Priority 4: Perpetrators

No.	Action	Outcome
4.1	Review MATAAC process and the impact it is having on the cases presented there.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MATAAC will be fit for purpose and making an impact for Slough residents and the data and outcomes will reflect this.</li> </ul>
4.2	<i>(Perpetrator strategy)</i> Develop and implement a strategy and plan to address/change perpetrator behaviour. Placing the emphasis on 'change', being innovative and considering various evidence based focus panels and programmes, etc. for everyone that needs support to alter their behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in reoffending.</li> <li>Reduction in revictimisation.</li> <li>Reduction in first time offending.</li> <li>Strategy and (1) disrupt behaviours, (2) hear the voice of the perp to shape intervention (3) end victim blaming plan in place.</li> <li>Perpetrators are able to recognise their own behaviours as unhealthy and abusive.</li> <li>Reduction in repeat incidents of violence or abuse.</li> </ul>
4.3	<i>(Criminal Justice)</i> Holding perpetrators to account through appropriate use of criminal justice processes/restraints. Review and increase the use of protection orders, including Domestic Abuse Protection Orders, FGM Protection Orders and Forced Marriage Protection Orders, as an effective tool for limiting a perpetrators space for action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Increase in use of restraints such as DAPO (Domestic Abuse Protection Order).</li> </ul>
4.4	<i>(Training)</i> Multi-agency staff receive training on the dynamics of DA and typologies of different perpetrators, making them more likely to identify and be confident to address coercive, controlling, and manipulative behaviours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-agency staff:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Are able to recognise key attributes of perpetrators - manipulation and control.</li> <li>(b) Feel knowledgeable and supported to act to prevent incident occurring.</li> <li>(c) Work with perpetrators to manage their behaviours before incidents occur.</li> <li>(d) Know how to refer to a perpetrator programme.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Governance, systems and performance management

No.	Action	Outcome
5.1	Develop, a performance dashboard that partner agencies feed into, and report upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly report enables early identification of highlights and barriers, themes, good practice and an insight into domestic abuse in Slough.</li> </ul>
5.2	Receive an annual report from MARAC (High Risk Victim Panel) and MATAAC (Focus on perpetrators).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report highlights, effective performance and areas for improvement.</li> </ul>
5.3	Ensure that adult survivors and childrens voice is captured at every stage from strategy development, progress monitoring through to tactical delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representation from survivor groups at operational and strategic groups.</li> <li>Annual public consultation that help refresh the action plan regularly.</li> </ul>
5.4	Ensure that 'continuous learning' is at the heart of the Slough partnership approach to domestic abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) including suicide action plan and policy to monitor progress regarding DHRs</li> <li>International, National, and local learning are shared and inform local service delivery.</li> <li>An accessible training programme for professionals from universal training for all staff, to specialist training according to needs such as substance misuse and domestic abuse.</li> </ul>



# Appendix A:

## Service map signposting support

Organisation/ link to website	Telephone number
Aroua New Dawn Stalking Service Email: <a href="mailto:stalking@aurorand.org.uk">stalking@aurorand.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.aurorand.org.uk">www.aurorand.org.uk</a>	023 9247 9254
ChildLine <a href="http://www.truehonour.org.uk">www.truehonour.org.uk</a>	0800 11 11
Citizens Advice Bureau <a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk">www.citizensadvice.org.uk</a>	Slough freephone number: 08081 697766  Slough local number: 01753 981040  National help to claim advice: 0800 144 8444
Community Mental Health Team (The Gateway) <a href="http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/make-a-referral/make-an-adult-mental-health-referral">www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/make-a-referral/make-an-adult-mental-health-referral</a>	0300 365 2000
Family Information Service - Domestic Abuse advice <a href="http://www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk">www.sloughfamilyservices.org.uk</a>	01753 476589
Forced Marriage Unit <a href="http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk">nationalfgmcentre.org.uk</a>	0207 008 0151
Hestia (Slough Domestic abuse service) • Hestia Service information • Hestia contact details <a href="http://www.hestia.org/slough">www.hestia.org/slough</a>	01753 477352 (opening hours 9am-5pm)
Honour Based Violence and Force Marriage Helpline <a href="http://www.truehonour.org.uk">www.truehonour.org.uk</a>	0800 5999247
IMKAAN (Domestic violence for black and minoritised women and girls) <a href="http://www.imkaan.org.uk">www.imkaan.org.uk</a>	020 7842 8525
Karma Nirvana (honour based violence and forced marriage support service) <a href="http://karmanirvana.org.uk">karmanirvana.org.uk</a>	0800 5999 247
LGBT DA Helpline (Galop) <a href="http://karmanirvana.org.uk">karmanirvana.org.uk</a>	0800 999 5428

Organisation/ link to website	Telephone number
Mankind (for male survivors) <a href="http://mankind.org.uk">mankind.org.uk</a>	01823 334 244
National Domestic Abuse Helpline <a href="http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk">www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk</a>	0808 2000 247 (24 hours a day)
National Stalking Helpline <a href="http://www.suzylamplugh.org">www.suzylamplugh.org</a>	0808 802 0300
NCDV (24 hr Injunction Service) <a href="http://www.ncdv.org.uk">www.ncdv.org.uk</a>	0800 970 2070
NSPCC Adult Helpline <a href="http://www.ncdv.org.uk">www.ncdv.org.uk</a>	0808 800 5000
Respect (if you have hurt loved ones) <a href="http://www.respect.uk.net">www.respect.uk.net</a>	0808 802 4040
Sexual Violence Service (ISVA) <a href="http://www.thesurvivorstrust.org">www.thesurvivorstrust.org</a>	0118 958 4033
Slough Children First <a href="http://www.sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk">www.sloughchildrenfirst.co.uk</a>	01753 477321
Slough Drug Services (Turning Point) <a href="http://www.turning-point.co.uk">www.turning-point.co.uk</a>	01753 692548
Slough Samaritans <a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a>	0330 094 5717 Text 116 123
Solace SARC - Slough Email: <a href="mailto:info@solacesarc.org.uk">info@solacesarc.org.uk</a>	0800 970 9952
Survivors UK (for male survivors) <a href="http://www.survivorsuk.org">www.survivorsuk.org</a>	020 3598 3898
Thames Valley Police <a href="http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk">www.thamesvalley.police.uk</a>	101 (non-emergency) 999 emergency
The Dash Charity (older persons IDVA support) <a href="http://thedashcharity.org.uk">thedashcharity.org.uk</a>	01753 549865
The Female Genital Mutilation Helpline <a href="http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk">nationalfgmcentre.org.uk</a>	0800 028 3550
The Men's Advice Line (for male survivors) <a href="http://mensadvice.org.uk">mensadvice.org.uk</a>	0808 801 0327
Victims First <a href="http://www.victims-first.org.uk">www.victims-first.org.uk</a>	0300 1234 148

# Appendix B:

## Relevant legislation

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All statutory agencies responsible for safeguarding and protecting adults and children hold the duty to respond to domestic abuse. Wider legislation includes:

- The Children Act 2004, includes cases of domestic abuse
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021, creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse and sets out the expectations of statutory organizations to respond. Children and young people are now recognised as victims in their own right.
- The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, which extends provisions to combat domestic abuse and creates a new offence of 'causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult'. Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007, which aims to protect victims of forced marriage including empowering the courts to make Forced Marriage Protection Orders (FMPOs)
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, which makes stalking a criminal offence
- The Care Act 2014, which sets out how the Health and Social Care system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect. Within the Act it specifies that freedom from abuse (and neglect) is key to a person's wellbeing.
- The Housing Act 1996, which outlines duties for the local authority where a person is threatened with homelessness as a result of domestic abuse or is homeless after fleeing domestic abuse. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021, has amended the Housing Act to say that a person who is homeless as a result of being a victim of domestic abuse will automatically be in "priority need".

- The Serious Crime Act 2015, which introduced the offence of coercive or controlling behaviour against an intimate partner or family member and holds a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

- The Serious Violence Duty 2021

This strategy links to other key local and regional strategies and action plans relevant to the domestic abuse agenda:

- Thames Valley Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2021-2025 (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner - OPCC)
- Thames Valley Police Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2022-2023
- Safer Slough Partnership Strategy and Plan
- Slough Safer Accommodation Strategy
- Thames Valley Police Strategic Plan 2021-2022
- Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy 2021-2026
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Children Act 1989
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Coercive Control Offence (Serious Crime Act) 2015
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997 [Protection from Harassment Act 1997 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Stalking Protection Act 2019
- Equalities Act 2010
- Serious Violence Duty 2023
- The Prevent Duty 2015

# Appendix C:

## Glossary

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**BAME:** Black and Minoritised Ethnic

**CYP:** Children and Young Person

**DA:** Domestic Abuse

**DAPN:** Domestic Abuse Protection Notices

**DAPO:** Domestic Abuse Protection Orders

**DASH RIC:** Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment Risk Indicator Checklist

**DHR:** Domestic Homicide Review

**DLUHC:** Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

**FGM:** Female Genital Mutilation

**FGMPO:** Female Genital Mutilation Protection Order

**FM:** Forced Marriage

**FMPO:** Forced Marriage Protection Order

**IDVA:** Independent Domestic Violence Advisor

**ISVA:** Independent Sexual Violence Advisor

**LGBTQ+:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and + to include other gender identities and sexual orientations

**MARAC:** Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

**MATAC:** Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination

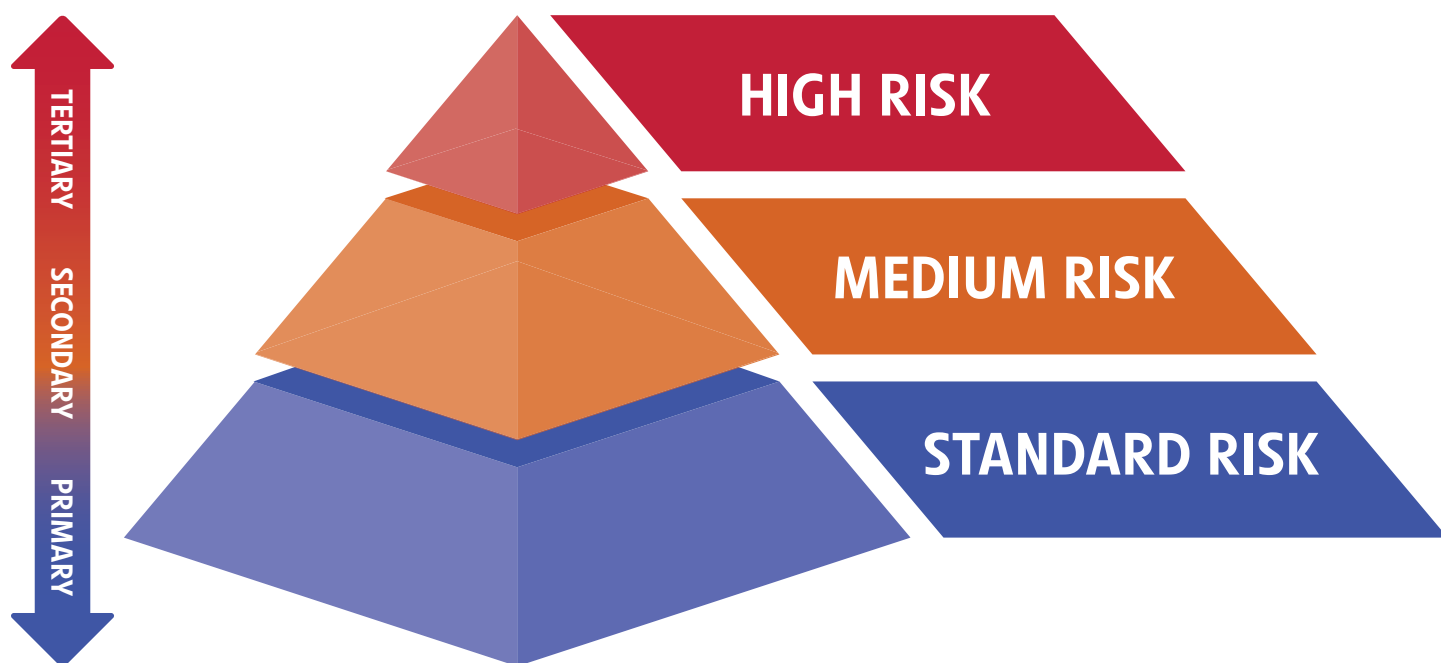
**NRPF:** No Recourse to Public Funds

**PTSD:** Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

**SDAPB:** Slough Domestic Abuse Partnership Board

**VAWG:** Violence Against Women and Girls

# Appendix D: Slough Domestic Abuse Services



## Standard Risk

- SAFE! Project (Support for Children as victims of domestic abuse)
- Emotional Support & Counselling Service (via Victim First Hub)
- School based Emotional Coaching (For staff)
- Telephone Helpline (via Victim First Hub)
- Choices Programme (Healthy Relationships Schools)
- Free Legal Advice (via Victim First Hub)

## Medium Risk

- Specialist Advocacy Specialist Service (Hestia)
- Building Better Relationships (Probation)
- Shine Project (Children First Cases)
- Family Support (Statutory & Early Help)
- 1:1 Perpetrator Worker (Children First Cases)
- BRAVE Project (Psychological Support for Victims of Domestic Abuse)
- Psycho-educational Programme (Hestia)
- SAFE! Project (Support for Children as victims of domestic abuse)
- Sehali Project (Support for South Asian women)
- Safety Planner (via Victim First Hub)

## High Risk

- Specialist Advocacy Specialist Service (Hestia)
- Specialist Advocacy Over 55 (DASH)
- Specialist Advocacy Diverse Community (DASH)
- Specialist Advocacy (In patient Emergency Dept. Wexham Park Hospital)
- Specialist Complex Needs Advocacy (Hestia Ealing/Harrow Partnership)
- Sanctuary Scheme (Target Hardening) Housing
- Refuge Provision (DASH)
- DRIVE Project
- MARAC (Victim Focus)
- MATAAC (Perpetrator Focus)
- MAPP (Post Prison Safety Planning)
- Specialist Stalking Service (Aurora New Dawn)
- Specialist Sexual Violence Service (Thames Valley Partnership)
- The Solace Centre (SARC based in Slough)

# Appendix E:

# Bibliography

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Link on page 19

