

Our Priority

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone; it can be sexual, psychological, financial, emotional, or physical. It is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are family members, or have been intimate partners. West Yorkshire Police deal with four incidents of domestic abuse every hour. Not all incidents are reported to the police, so even these figures do not reflect the full scale of the problem. A quarter of respondents to our 'Your Priorities, Your Plan' survey said that domestic abuse was a priority for them.

How we are going to deliver

Our main objective is to develop a strategic approach between the OPCC, West Yorkshire Police and key partners, which overcomes some of the challenges to services which are delivered, funded and managed at a local level. The Domestic Abuse Board was set up in 2015 to bring key stakeholders together and a Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy published in February 2017. The Domestic Abuse Board and Strategy provides the framework to enable the delivery of our intentions including that we will:

- Engage with and respond to the needs of victims and survivors by ensuring they are at the heart of any planning, risk management and provision of victim services. **Listening to people.**
- Work with and listen to the needs of communities to provide appropriate support to all victims/survivors of domestic abuse – regardless of their gender, ethnicity, age, sexuality, or locality. **Understanding our communities.**
- Encourage closer working between services and where appropriate encourage service integration to enable a consistent and effective service across West Yorkshire to victims or those at risk of harm. The Domestic Abuse Board remit will be broadened to reflect the wider agenda and deliver the commitments made in the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy **Working together.**
- Encourage evidenced based practice whilst also having an openness to innovation. Joining with partner organisations to work with families and perpetrators to devise preventative approaches, and challenge the myths and stereotypes about the victims and survivors of domestic abuse. **Preventing and intervening earlier.**
- Increase capacity and flexibility, to support more people, to respond when and where people need help, and to accommodate people's diverse needs. This includes a need for gender and age specific services, and services targeted at vulnerable communities. **Improving our services.**
- Make the most of the available resources by continuing to provide funding alongside partners, according to the needs that are identified. **Providing resources.**

How we will know whether we've delivered

We will measure our progress against this priority (and our objectives set out in the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy), through the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board, and quarterly contract meetings with service providers and grant recipients. In addition to this, we will monitor performance around a number of relevant indicators through our Community Outcome Meetings and through the Delivery Quarterly process, carrying out more detailed analysis where necessary. Some of the key indicators of progress include:

- The repeat victimisation rate of domestic abuse will reduce.
- The reoffending rate of those on the domestic abuse perpetrator programme will reduce.
- West Yorkshire Police will make schools aware of domestic incidents where their pupils have been present.

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Sexual violence and abuse is any sexual behaviour which is unwanted and takes place without consent or understanding. Sexual offences include rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, forced marriage, so-called honour based violence/abuse, female genital mutilation, sexual exploitation, and organised abuse. The majority of incidents take place with someone who is known to the victim - only a minority of perpetrators are strangers. This type of crime can have a devastating effect on a person's health and wellbeing. Many victims and survivors do not want their immediate family to know what has happened and are reluctant to report the crime to the police. The under-reporting of sexual abuse exists in all communities, so it is important that every victim in West Yorkshire can feel confident that the police and its partners will put their needs first when handling reports of sexual violence.

How we are going to deliver

Our main objective is to ensure that the right services are in place to meet the needs of victims and survivors, meeting their immediate and longer term health needs, and maximising the chance of a conviction. West Yorkshire now has a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC); an Independent Sexual Assault Adviser (ISVA) service; and a network of rape crisis centres. Demand for these services is increasing as more victims come forward. It is important to build on what has been achieved so far. The Domestic Abuse Board and Strategy provides the framework to enable the delivery of our intentions including that we will:

- Engage with and respond to the needs of victims and survivors and those who use our support services to make sure that we deliver the most appropriate support. **Listening to people.**
- Develop strategies to reach out to communities where we believe there is under-reporting of sexual violence incidents or who may not be aware of the services available, such as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. Understanding our communities. Encourage closer working between agencies to enable (where appropriate) integration and provision of consistent services across West Yorkshire. The Domestic Abuse Board remit will be broadened to incorporate sexual violence and deliver the commitments made in the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy. **Working together.**
- Encouraging early intervention, evidenced based practice, and an openness to innovation, to prevent abusive behaviour before it happens, and challenge myths and stereotypes about its victims and survivors. **Preventing and intervening earlier.**
- Monitor and evaluate the services that have been commissioned, and respond to issues that arise, such as the current need for SARC premises that will enable greater integration of therapeutic and courts services. **Improving our services.**
- Utilise available resources to provide support to all victims/survivors of sexual violence – regardless of gender, ethnicity, age or locality. **Providing resources.**

How we will know whether we've delivered

We will measure our progress against this priority, and our objectives set out in the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy, through the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board and quarterly contract meetings with service providers and grant recipients. A range of qualitative and quantitative data, information, and national guidance will be provided to enable us to assess progress. In addition to this, we will monitor performance through our Delivery Quarterly report (which will assess how we safeguard vulnerable people), and through our Community Outcome Meetings, which allow scrutiny of police and partner activity and the work to support victims.

- More people will report sexual abuse as confidence increases.
- More victims of sexual abuse will be satisfied with the service they receive.

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'Honour' based abuse (or HBA) describes a range of controlling actions which put pressure on individuals to conform to social, cultural, or religious norms. In extreme cases, HBA can include Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage or other aspects of domestic abuse. Victims of HBA can find themselves in conflict with the people they care about the most and can be left feeling that there is nowhere they can go for help. As a consequence, it is vital that victims can be confident that the police and criminal justice system will handle complaints sensitively, bring perpetrators to justice, and that providers of victims' services are able to provide the right support. The OPCC has brought people together to raise awareness about HBA across all the communities of West Yorkshire, for example through 2015's FGM Partnership Conference.

How we are going to deliver

Under-reporting can make it difficult to estimate the true impact of honour based abuse, which is why closer collaboration between partners is needed (particularly in the health sector) to help understand the scale and the impact of the problem. Awareness of HBA crimes is increasing but we will continue to work with all relevant organisations and community groups. Together we will:

- Engage with and listen to those affected by this awful crime to ensure that we can support victims in the best way possible, and build an understanding of the vulnerabilities of others. **Listening to people.**
- Ensure partners have a greater understanding of the broad spectrum of groups and communities that may be affected by HBA and the severity of the problems in our communities. We will work with community, faith, education, and health organisations to build understanding and inform prevention programmes and victim services. **Understanding our communities.**
- Partners will comply with the duty to report and refer HBA accordingly. We will monitor their compliance and identify barriers that may prevent reporting and referrals and victims having the confidence to report. We will also monitor the number of FGM and Forced Marriage orders. **Working together.**
- Bringing partners together through the Domestic Abuse Board to identify better short term and long term support services for victims, survivors and those affected by HBA. Encourage joint-working and, in particular, the sharing of information. **Preventing and intervening earlier.**
- Consult with partners and communities to identify ways to improve the services we provide and strengthen our collective response to these crimes when they happen. We will look for ways to provide tailored support to the victims of these crimes. **Improving our services.**
- Support partners in raising awareness through joint campaigns and support projects, and work with victims of all types of HBA, including forced marriage and FGM. Encourage grass-roots education and prevention projects, for example through the Safer Communities Fund. **Providing resources**

How we will know whether we've delivered

We will measure our progress against this priority through our Community Outcome Meetings, through which an in depth report into HBA will present the progress of the OPCC, West Yorkshire Police, and relevant partners against the objectives above. It will draw on a range of information available including HMIC inspection reports, national guidance, and statistical indicators including those listed below. In addition to this, we will monitor performance through our Delivery Quarterly process and will carry out more detailed analysis where necessary.

- The volume of HBA crimes will increase as more people are confident to report it.
- More projects, campaigns and initiatives focused on HBA will be supported by the Safer Communities Fund.
- HMIC will grade West Yorkshire Police as GOOD in how it safeguards vulnerable people