

Background Paper 1 National updates for Domestic abuse and Sexual Violence

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This document examines the updates relating to key areas of national policy and news surrounding VAWG and addressing domestic abuse and sexual violence (Since July 2022).

To be circulated at: Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board

| Category | Source | Update | Notes |
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| Domestic Homicide Reviews | Annex A DHRs Review Report 2020-2021.pdf | <p>Quantitative Analysis of Domestic Homicide Reviews October 2020 – September 2021</p> <p>13 April 2023</p> | <p>This report presents key information from data provided by 108 Domestic Homicide reviews which were assessed through the Home Office quality assurance process from October 2020 to the end of September 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sixty-nine percent of the deaths in the reviews occurred in 2018 and 2019. • Across all the reviews there have been 113 victims (of which 15 were, or appeared to be, victims of domestic abuse who died by suicide). • The age of victims was from under 18 yrs to 92yrs (the average was 43 years old). The oldest perpetrator was aged 88 and the average age was 39. • 77 percent of the victims were female and 23% were male. For perpetrators, 89% were male and 10% female. • The 108 reviews have information on 94 perpetrators. • In 40% of the DHRs children were living or staying in the household. • Analysing the relationships between the victims and perpetrators shows that for 68% of the victims the perpetrator was a partner or ex-partner. Within these relationships 29% were partners who had separated |

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| | | | <p>or were separating from the perpetrator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thirty-two percent of the victims had a family relationship with the perpetrator and, of these, half the victims were parents. |
| Domestic Abuse | Annual progress report from the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation | <p>Annual progress report from the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation National Expert Steering Group 2021-22</p> <p>5 April 2023</p> | <p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced new duties on Tier 1 councils in England to provide support for victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation.</p> <p>The National Expert Steering Group’s annual progress report highlights the achievements and challenges faced in first year of the delivery of the safe accommodation-based support duties.</p> <p>Report includes outcomes from the local authority data collection and best practice case studies.</p> <p>During this first-year local authorities reported there were at least 36,545 recorded instances of individuals (adults and children) supported in commissioned safe accommodation services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46% supported in refuge • 28% sanctuary schemes • 13% dispersed accommodation • 5% specialist accommodation, • 1% second-stage accommodation • 7% in other safe accommodation |
| Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence | Victims and Prisoners Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament | <p>Victims’ experiences to be transformed through new Victims and Prisoners Bill</p> | <p>New measures listed in the Victim’s Bill include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a statutory duty on Police and Crime Commissioners, health and local authorities in England |

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| | | <p>29 March 2023</p> | <p>to work together when commissioning support services for victims of sexual violence, domestic abuse and serious violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce statutory guidance on Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) setting out minimum expectations and best practice, to increase awareness and consistency of these roles • Place a duty on criminal justice bodies and non-territorial police forces to review their compliance with the Victims’ Code and collect compliance data which is intended to include information from victims on how they are supported • Give PCCs a greater role in overseeing local compliance monitoring of the Victims’ Code with the Victims’ Commissioner retaining national oversight |
| <p>Forced Marriage (links to workstreams in Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence)</p> | <p>Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage and multi-agency practice guidelines</p> | <p>Government updates guidance on forced marriage</p> <p>27 March 2023</p> | <p>Government has released revised guidance on the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme which aims to help front-line officers and those who work in the area of public protection apply the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme.</p> <p>It states that forced marriage can be committed if a person lacks capacity, whether or not coercion plays a part. Since February 2023, it also states that it is an offence to carry out any conduct for the purpose of causing a child to enter into a marriage before the child’s eighteenth birthday (whether or not the conduct</p> |

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| | | | amounts to violence, threats, any other form of coercion or deception). If the person is found guilty on indictment, the maximum penalty is seven years' imprisonment. The Act also makes it an offence to lure someone overseas for the purpose of forced marriage. |
| Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence | Baroness Casey Review | The Baroness Casey Review 21 March 2023 | <p>The Casey Review report documents the findings of Baroness Casey's independent review of the Metropolitan Police's standards following the murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021.</p> <p>Overall, the report highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate management and vetting practices, which are partly a reflection of an overstretched service. • A bullying culture where discriminatory acts are tolerated. • A failing neighbourhood police service, and policing which lacks accountability and transparency across large 'Basic Command Units'. • Generational mistrust of the police among Black Londoners. |
| Domestic Abuse | Government response to 'A Patchwork of Provision' mapping report | Government response to 'A Patchwork of Provision' mapping report 6 March 2023 | <p>This report touches on wide ranging issues surrounding the provision of domestic abuse services. This includes the funding available for domestic abuse services, provision of specialist services including for those facing multiple disadvantages and increasing awareness and outreach of the support services already available.</p> <p>The Government's response to the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's report recognises the value in a framework to bring local commissioners together when commissioning support services and</p> |

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| | | | that a strong multi-agency response to domestic abuse is vital. |
| Domestic Abuse | Domestic abusers face crackdown in raft of new measures | <p>Dangerous domestic abusers will be added to the violent and sex offender register</p> <p>Feb 2023</p> | <p>The most dangerous domestic abusers will be added to the violent and sex offender register, under new proposals to crack down on the crimes.</p> <p>Abusers will be monitored more closely and electronically tagged, under the new laws.</p> <p>The government also plans to invest up to £8.4 million over two years to fund specialist victim support programmes, and push police to prioritise tackling violence against women and girls.</p> <p>The law will be changed so the police, prison and probation services have to jointly manage offenders with a conviction of controlling or coercive behaviour sentenced to at least a year or a suspended sentence, in order to better protect the public.</p> |
| Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence | Standards for domestic abuse perpetrator interventions | <p>Standards for domestic abuse perpetrator interventions</p> <p>9 Jan 2023</p> | <p>The Home Office published new standards for domestic abuse perpetrator interventions. The standards are intended to foster a consistent approach to determining the quality of perpetrator interventions, particularly on safeguarding and victim and survivor safety.</p> <p>In the 2022 Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan, the Home Office set out its intention to work with Durham University, Respect, and SafeLives to develop these standards. Seven standards have been developed, and each of the 7 standards are linked to practice guidelines.</p> |
| Domestic Abuse | Crown Prosecution Service – new guidance | Children classed as domestic abuse victims | Children affected by domestic abuse will be automatically treated as victims regardless of whether they were present during violent |

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| | | <p>Dec 2022</p> | <p>incidents.</p> <p>In line with new domestic abuse legislation which mean young people will get automatic access to support like mental health and safeguarding services, we've updated our guidance, asking prosecutors to consider the powers available to them regarding Special Measures.</p> <p>Updated legal guidance released by the Crown Prosecution Service specifically asks prosecutors to consider the impact domestic abuse has on young people when making a charging decision. This includes speaking to schools or Child Services to support evidence of long-standing abuse.</p> |
| <p>Sexual Violence</p> | <p>End to End Rape Review Progress Report</p> | <p>This report provides an update on the progress we have made in implementing the Rape Review Action Plan, 18 months on from its publication.</p> | <p>The latest progress report sets out that government are on track to meet our ambitions in the Review, to more than double the number of adult rape cases reaching court by the end of this parliament.</p> <p>In Q2 2022, compared to the 2019 quarterly average, adult rape police referrals to the Crown Prosecution Service were up 95%, CPS adult rape charges were up 65% and the number of adult rape cases reaching Crown Court were up 91%.</p> <p>Also published a series of user-friendly guides on gov.uk for victims of rape and sexual assault, to enable victims to better understand what they can expect as their case progresses through the criminal justice system.</p> <p>Launched the 24/7 Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Line which will provide all victims and survivors access to dedicated support whenever and wherever they need it.</p> <p>Completed the expansion of</p> |

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| | | | Operation Soteria to a further 14 police forces and three further CPS areas. |
| Sexual Violence | Creating an offence of public sexual harassment | Consultation outcome | <p>The Government think that public sexual harassment is already covered in these laws so it doesn't need a new separate law.</p> <p>Five months after launching a consultation, the Home Office says there was significant support for the move.</p> <p>The Home Office announced its decision on the government website, saying the option it supported would see higher sentencing for behaviour that falls within section 4A of the Public Order Act 1986 - namely when a person uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour - when done because of the victim's sex.</p> |
| Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse | His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report: Vetting, misconduct and misogyny | The inspection included assessing forces' abilities to detect and deal with misogynistic and predatory behaviour. | <p>The Home Secretary commissioned an inspection into current vetting and counter-corruption arrangements across policing following the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving Metropolitan Police Service officer in March 2021.</p> <p>The inspection included assessing forces' abilities to detect and deal with misogynistic and predatory behaviour. They found that 'in too many places, a culture of misogyny, sexism and predatory behaviour towards members of the public and female police officers and staff still exists'.</p> |
| Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse | Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) | <p>The number of crimes recorded by police in England and Wales has hit an all-time high, with a significant increase in violent and sexual offences.</p> <p>October 2022</p> | <p>The increase could reflect several factors, including "the impact of high-profile incidents, media coverage and campaigns on people's willingness to report incidents to the police" or a "potential increase" in victims.</p> <p>The number of rapes rose by 20% on pre-COVID figures, with 70,600 recorded in the year to June, a new record.</p> |

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| | | | There were 912,181 domestic abuse offences, 6% more than last year and 14% more than in 2019-20. |
| Sexual Violence | Crown Prosecution Service | <p>A blueprint for prosecuting rape and serious sexual offences has taken a significant step forward today - as new data reveals charge rates for rape have increased to 72.8%.</p> <p>October 2022</p> | <p>Quarterly statistics from the Crown Prosecution Service also show rape referrals from forces increased by 10%. It comes as police and CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) commit to a new programme of joint working to drive improvements right across England and Wales.</p> <p>The refreshed commitment – under the Joint National Action Plan – doubles down on the pledge for police and prosecutors to work together earlier to build strong cases which can pass swiftly through the justice system. A significant amount of work has taken place to transform the way rape cases are handled and this will be used to inform an ambitious, national operating model for these offences next year. This work has already led to an increase in the number of rape referrals from the police to the CPS and in charges.</p> |
| Sexual Violence | Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse Report | <p>Inquiry into child sexual abuse highlights urgent need for gendered and intersectional response</p> <p>October 2022</p> | <p>The Inquiry was established by the then Home Secretary in March 2015, and this final report is the culmination of years of investigations, hearings and research into child sexual abuse, including the Truth Project which gave voice to thousands of survivors.</p> <p>The report sets out the main findings about the extent to which state and non-state institutions in England and Wales failed in their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.</p> <p>Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a form of violence against women and girls. Like all forms of sexual violence, it is a deeply gendered issue: 89% of the Truth Project survivors were abused by men or multiple men.</p> |

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| | | | While acknowledging that the true scale of sexual abuse of children is likely to have been much higher than the actual numbers recorded, the Inquiry also highlighted that CSA disproportionately affects girls (1 in 6 girls under 16 were victims compared to 1 in 20 boys of the same age). |
| Domestic Abuse | Better protection for victims under pre-charge bail reforms | Victims of crimes like domestic abuse and sexual assault will be better protected following arrests of perpetrators under new provisions collectively known as ‘Kay’s Law’, Safeguarding Minister Mims Davis announced today 25 October 2022 | The reforms, which will come into force this week, will mean police have a duty to consider the views of victims before releasing someone on bail. Police will be encouraged to use pre-charge bail instead of releasing suspects under investigation, where it is necessary and proportionate. Kay’s Law, named after a victim of domestic violence, is one of many measures the government has taken to support victims, bring perpetrators to justice and protect women and girls across the country. |
| Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse | ENOUGH’ campaign | Second Phase of Campaign. The campaign aims to provide bystanders with a range of safe ways to intervene if they witness an incident of violence. October 2022 | This includes the ‘ENOUGH’ campaign to tackle violence against women and girls, the second phase of which has launched today (25 October). The campaign aims to provide bystanders with a range of safe ways to intervene if they witness an incident of violence against women and girls, ranging from sexual harassment on the street, public transport or at work, to unwanted touching, sharing intimate images of someone without their consent and coercive control in a relationship. |
| Sexual Violence | The Justice Committee report | The Justice Committee has published a report on its pre-legislative scrutiny of the | This proposal features amongst several other welcome recommendations from the committee to strengthen the Bill and improve end-to-end support for victims of crime. |

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| | | <p>Government’s draft Victims Bill, recommending that children born of rape should be recognised as secondary victims and included in the Victims’ Code.</p> <p>30 September 2022</p> | <p>In support of Daisy’s campaign for this reform, CWJ (Centre for Women’s Justice) have published a policy briefing urging the Government to support ‘Daisy’s Law’ a reform which would recognise children born because of rape, legally, as victims of crime, and entitle them to specialist care and support.</p> <p>The briefing is supported by an evidence review commissioned by Centre for Women’s Justice detailing research available on the impacts and harms suffered by children born because of rape which often continues into later life.</p> |
| Sexual Violence | Tackling violence against women and Girls | <p>International Ministerial Conference on Preventing Sexual Violence</p> | <p>The UK (United Kingdom) government will host the International Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) Conference in central London from 28 to 29 November.</p> <p>Use the conference to drive international support and commitment for existing frameworks that keep survivor rights and wellbeing protected. Lessons and updates following this.</p> |
| Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse | Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) progress report | <p>Updated police misconduct outcomes guidance published by the College of Policing.</p> <p>September 2022</p> | <p>An NPCC (National Police Chiefs Council) and College of Policing national sexual harassment policy framework supported by an effective practice toolkit for managing sexual harassment in the workplace (winter 2022).</p> <p>An update to the Code of Ethics for policing from the College of Policing reflecting the need to ensure policing upholds the culture and high standards the public expect (public consultation October 2022).</p> <p>A College of Policing response to actions arising from the forthcoming police perpetrated domestic abuse</p> |

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| | | | <p>super-complaint investigation report, including amending relevant authorised professional practice (APP) and reviewing College-owned training and curricula.</p> <p>The College and the Independent Office for Police Conduct will also hold a national learning lessons event with forces in 2023, to share learning and identify best practice.</p> <p>To improve understanding of domestic homicide and suicide following domestic abuse and support prevention activity, the VKPP is tracking reporting levels nationally and characteristics of those committing domestic abuse, victimised by it, their backgrounds and the methods used.</p> <p>The work is ongoing but a year two report sharing key learning is due in September 2022</p> |
| Sexual Violence | Government Rape Review Action Plan | Pre-recorded evidence for rape victims available nationwide – September 2022 | <p>Modern technology which spares victims of rape the stress of being cross-examined during a live trial is now available at every Crown Court in England and Wales.</p> <p>The successful rollout of pre-recorded evidence meets a key pledge within the Government’s Rape Review Action Plan which sets out clear actions for the police, prosecutors, and courts.</p> |
| Sexual Violence | Rape Strategy update | CPS sets out the law on street-based sexual harassment August 2022 | <p>Street harassment such as cyber-flashing, up-skirting or the exposure of genitals in a public place are crimes which can and will be prosecuted the CPS has stressed, as new legal guidance is published</p> |

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| <p>Sexual Violence</p> | <p>Tackling violence against women and Girls</p> | <p>£50 million awarded through the Safer Street Fund to tackle violence against women and girls and make streets safer</p> <p>July 2022</p> | <p>£50 million of new funding will be given to communities across England and Wales to make the streets safer for all.</p> <p>The money will go to police forces, local authorities, British Transport Police and eligible community groups across England and Wales to prevent violence against women and girls in public, neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour.</p> |
| <p>Domestic Abuse</p> | <p>Domestic Abuse Act 2021</p> | <p>Domestic abusers barred from cross-examining victims in family and civil courts</p> <p>July 2022</p> | <p>Victims of domestic abuse can be spared from being cross-examined by their alleged attackers in family and civil courts under measures come into force.</p> <p>The change is part of the government's landmark Domestic Abuse Act (2021). It places a legal bar on parties cross-examining each other where there is evidence of abuse.</p> |