

# Domestic violence and abuse strategy 2022-2024

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## Foreword

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed so many aspects of our daily lives but for some the reality of getting through that time has been made even more challenging by abuse they have suffered from those who should be looking after them.

As a Ward Councillor, and then as the Executive Member for Communities and Local Place I have seen first-hand the harm caused by domestic violence and abuse, and the devastating impact it has on the lives of adults and children. I have also seen fantastic work carried out by individuals and by organisations to make these victims safe and to help them recover.

I am passionate about making sure people who are abused get the best possible support and help. I was therefore delighted to be asked to chair the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership and am proud to present this Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy 2022-24 to you. This strategy builds on the strong foundations created by the previous strategy 2016-21 as well as taking into account new duties within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The Strategy sets out a local approach that not only provides support for those experiencing domestic abuse, but also involves work to prevent that abuse through education and training, early intervention, and work to help perpetrators change their behaviour. It is a robust and inclusive response based on high quality local data and insight both from community partners and from a range of victims.

Our evidence shows there is already a great deal of excellent work being carried out locally. This strategy also explores ways in which our delivery can better meet the changing needs of different groups and people. It needs to be something that drives action rather than sitting unused on a shelf though. The Strategic Partnership will be regularly updating and publishing information to show the extent to which we are achieving the objectives and actions laid out within it.

Through delivery of this strategy the Strategic Partnership wants to make South Gloucestershire a place where domestic abuse is not tolerated and one where the impact of domestic abuse across all generations but particularly on children and young people living with it is fully recognised and responded to. I am grateful for your interest, and hope you find the strategy useful as well as interesting.



Cllr Rachael Hunt  
Executive Member for Communities and Local Place

# Section 1: Background to the Strategy

## 1.1 Executive Summary

Domestic abuse can affect anyone, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. In the year to March 2020, it is estimated that 1.6 million females and 757,000 males aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse, with more women killed as a result of domestic abuse than men.

This Domestic Abuse Strategy outlines how we will meet the challenges posed by domestic abuse in South Gloucestershire. It includes South Gloucestershire Council's strategic response to the statutory duties imposed by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 but includes much more than that. As well as our support for victims it also includes how we will work to reduce the level and harm caused by domestic violence and abuse within South Gloucestershire.

Whether as direct victims, or as children living in a household that see it in the relationships around them, domestic abuse has a devastating impact both immediately and on the long-term future of individuals.

We estimate around 44,100 South Gloucestershire residents will have experienced domestic abuse over their lifetime. On an annual basis, this equates to 13,410 individuals every year who experience domestic abuse (both familial and intimate partner violence).

This strategy identifies some of the strengths in our local response to domestic violence and abuse, but also areas where we want to improve provision and our services.

Domestic Violence and Abuse is a topic of concern both nationally and locally. South Gloucestershire Council alongside partners from both the public and voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors have invested significantly in safe accommodation and support services, and the needs of many survivors are being met in an appropriate way.

However, our detailed needs assessment shows there are many areas in which improvement is needed to meet local needs. In particular we need to increase understanding and awareness of domestic violence and abuse so that both victims and perpetrators can recognise it and take steps to avoid it.

We also need to be better at establishing and responding to the particular needs of different parts of our community including young people, older people, those from different ethnic or faith backgrounds, LGBTQ+, and those with disabilities.

In response to the findings of our needs assessment we will focus on achieving the following objectives over the next three years.

- 1 Provide a range of appropriate Safe Accommodation options for all survivors of Domestic Abuse who need it**
- 2 Improve support enabling survivors to return home safely or to move into alternative permanent accommodation more quickly**
- 3 Early intervention to prevent homelessness caused by domestic abuse**
- 4 Provide accessible and effective support services to help survivors**
- 5 Improve communication and the confidence of survivors to report domestic abuse**
- 6 Prevent domestic violence and abuse and reduce the level and harm caused through preventative activity, early intervention, and work with perpetrators**
- 7 Improve how we work together and with partners**

## 1.2 Context

### Scope of the Domestic Abuse Strategy

The Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy 2022-2024 outlines how South Gloucestershire will implement the statutory duties related to safe accommodation included within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It describes how South Gloucestershire Council will meet those duties, supported with guidance, advice, and expertise from the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership

However, this strategy goes further than this minimum required by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It is a holistic approach that includes our broader partnership response to domestic abuse and includes elements such as communications, and our work to prevent domestic violence and abuse including work with perpetrators.

Delivery of the strategy will therefore be carried out by a range of partners and co-ordinated through the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership

## What is Domestic Abuse

Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if:

- **A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and**
- **the behaviour is abusive.**

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- **physical or sexual abuse**
- **violent or threatening behaviour**
- **controlling or coercive behaviour**
- **economic abuse (see subsection (4))**
- **psychological, emotional, or other abuse**

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

“Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to:

- **acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or**
- **obtain goods or services.**

For the purposes of this Act A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).

Two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies:

- they are, or have been, married to each other;
- they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
- they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;
- they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- they are relatives.

This definition includes a child who:

- sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, the abuse, and
- is related to A or B.

## Domestic Abuse Act 2021

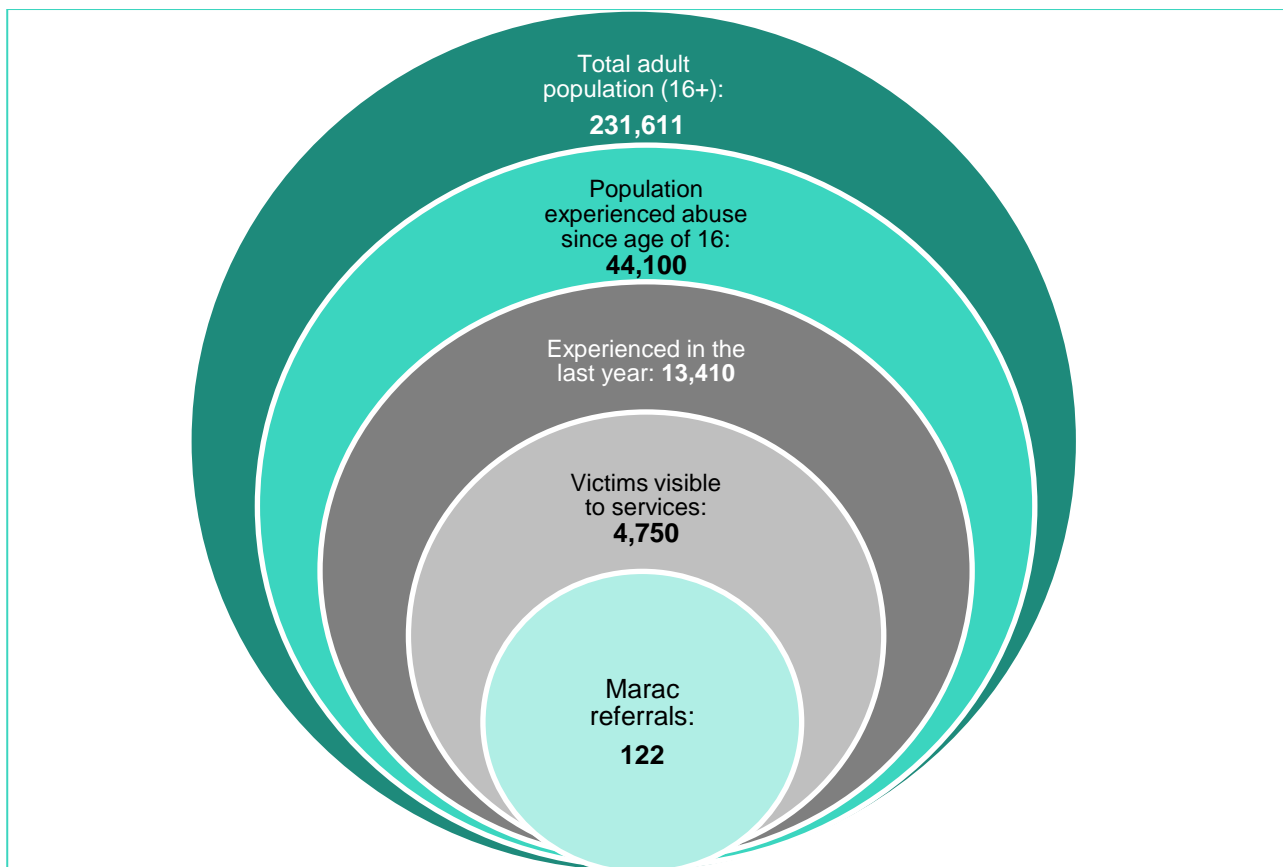
The Domestic Abuse Act achieved Royal Assent in April 2021 and is intended to improve the response to domestic abuse as follows:

- **Protect and support victims** – to enhance the safety of victims and the support they receive;
- **Transform the justice process** – to provide support to victims throughout the justice process and an effective response to perpetrators to end the cycle of abuse;
- **Improve performance** – to drive consistency and better performance in the response to domestic abuse; and
- **Promote awareness** – put domestic abuse at the top of everybody’s agenda.

## 1.3 Summary of Domestic Abuse in South Gloucestershire

### How much domestic abuse is there?

Levels of Domestic Abuse are notoriously difficult to accurately assess, as so many incidents are not reported to the Police or partners. However, using estimated prevalence based on national data adjusted to the local population level, and the Crime Survey for England and Wales (2020) prevalence ratios we estimate around **44,100 will have experienced domestic abuse over their lifetime**. On an annual basis, this equates to 13,410 individuals every year who experience domestic abuse (both familial and intimate partner violence).



**This figure for the number of people in South Gloucestershire each year who experience domestic abuse includes**

- **2,850 young people between 16-24 (Around one fifth of these will be 16-17 year olds)**
- **2,650 individuals over the age of 60**
- **9,060 female, and 4,350 male victims**
- **1,660 victims within the LGBTQ+ community**
- **272 pregnant women**
- **840 victims of domestic abuse from a BAME community**

### Impact of Covid-19

Lockdowns to reduce the spread of Covid-19 are believed to have increased the levels of domestic abuse, while also reducing the confidence of victims to come forward and report. Referrals to services in South Gloucestershire show a marked increase during 2020 compared to the previous year.

	22nd March to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2019	22nd March to 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2020	Percentage Increase
Contacts to duty team	331	616	86%
Referrals to Safe house	45	58	29%
Referrals to community for outreach workers	88	118	34%
Referrals to community for IDVA support	100	127	27%

### How much of this domestic abuse is hidden?

As shown above 4,750 victims of domestic abuse reported to services in 2020/21. This represents just 35% of victims, leaving 65% not confident to come forward and receive support.

### Reported crime

During the past 3-years, the rate of domestic abuse related crime increased year-on-year from 9.4 crimes per 1,000 population in 2018-19 in to 11.1 per 1,000 population in 2020-21



### Domestic abuse related crimes per 1,000 population

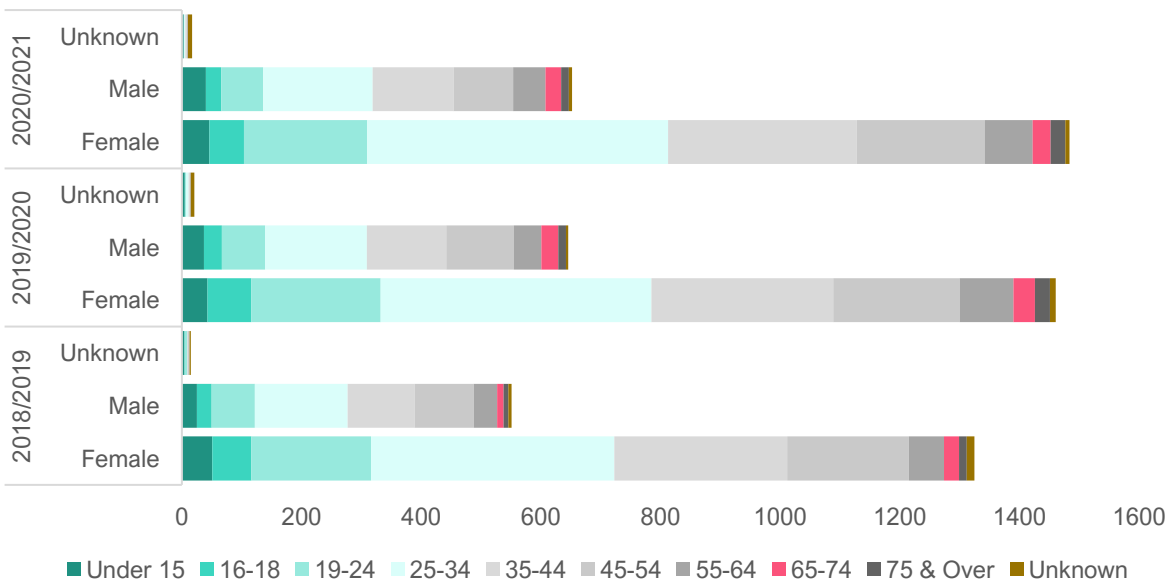


Simultaneously there was also an increase in violence against the person domestic abuse-related offences from a low of 1,935 in 2018-19 to a high of 2,297 in 2020-21. During this 3-year period the percentage of all violence offences that were domestic abuse related experienced an increase, from 38.1% in 2018-19 up to 43.0% in 2020-21. This increase in violence connected with domestic abuse puts South Gloucestershire above the 2020/21 Avon and Somerset average of 38%.

In each of the past 3-years, female victims have consistently accounted for approximately 69% to 70% of all domestic abuse victims in South Gloucestershire.

The 25-to-34-year age banding forms the largest age group of domestic abuse victims, accounting for 32% of the total in the most recent year.

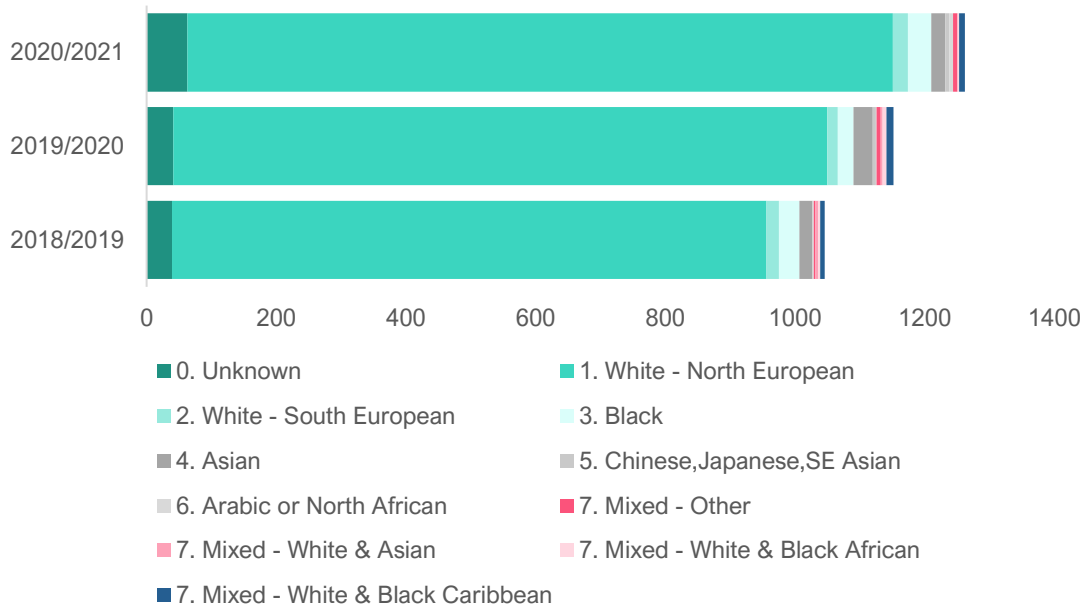
### Victim Demographics



Ethnicity data has not been recorded for approximately 44% of domestic abuse victims in South Gloucestershire in the past 3 years.

Where known, and as defined by Avon and Somerset police force, the largest proportion of victims have been defined as 'White – North European'. The next largest group have been defined as 'Black', followed by 'Asian'.

Victim ethnicity (as recorded by Avon and Somerset police force)



## Section 2: Safe accommodation

### 2.1 The safe accommodation duty

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 includes a number of measures for Local Authorities including placing a statutory duty on South Gloucestershire Council to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children within refuges and other safe accommodation. It has created a four-part statutory framework for the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation and provide clarity over governance and accountability:

- Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support for all victims in their area, including those who require cross-border support.
- Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their locality, having regard to the needs assessment.
- Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning / de-commissioning decisions).
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.

Safe Accommodation is “**solely dedicated to providing a safe place to stay for victims of domestic abuse, including expert support**”

Safe accommodation can be any one of the following

**Refuge Accommodation** – a refuge offers single gender or single sex accommodation and domestic abuse support tied to that accommodation. Survivors, including their children, will have access to a programme of support.

**Specialist Safe Accommodation** – is refuge accommodation which is tailored to also supporting those who share particular protected characteristics and/or share one or more vulnerabilities requiring additional support. They may include ‘By and For’ services led by those who share the same protected characteristics.

**Dispersed Accommodation** – is still secure and dedicated to supporting survivors of Domestic Abuse

- I. Accommodation with the same level of specialist support as provided within a refuge, but for victims unable to stay in a refuge with communal spaces due to complex support needs, or for other reasons such as teenage sons who may not be suitable for a women’s / family refuge.
- II. ‘Semi-independent’ accommodation which provides support to survivors still at risk of abuse from their perpetrators, but who need less intense support than that provided in a refuge.

**Sanctuary Schemes** – provide enhanced physical security measures within the home to enable survivors to continue living in their own home if they wish, providing it is safe to do so and the perpetrator does not live there.

**Move on / Second Stage accommodation** – temporarily accommodate survivors and families who no longer need the intense support provided in a Refuge, but still need a lower level of support before moving to fully independent and permanent accommodation. Not every survivor will need this, but it may be helpful in some cases.

**Domestic Abuse emergency accommodation** – a safe place with support to give survivors a temporary period of time to make decisions in a safe environment.

Accommodation such as Bed and Breakfast accommodation is not considered relevant safe accommodation and for this reason is specifically excluded from the Regulations.

## 2.2 What are we doing already?

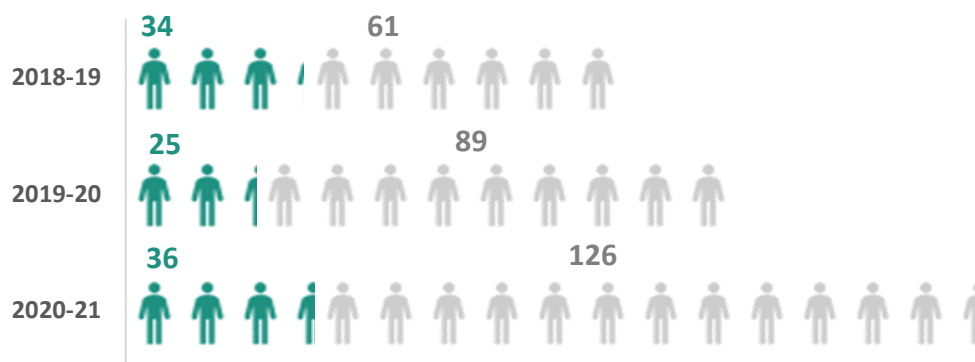
Refuge accommodation is prioritised on the basis of Risk to the individual/family. In total, there were 162 referrals in 2020/21. The number of referrals has increased year on year

from 95 in 2018/19. The most common way victim/survivors are referred into the service is via a self-referral, followed by a referral from the Local Domestic Abuse Community Based Service and 'Other'.

The number of referrals from outside the local authority area has increased over the past 3 years, and in 2020/21 131 referrals came from outside of the local authority area.

### Referrals to Refuge Accepted and Declined

♣ Number of referrals accepted ♣ Number of referrals declined



The most common reason for a declined referral was due to no capacity to support/ no space. In 2020/21 there were increases in no space and in victims/survivors not wanting support. In response to extra demands caused by Covid-19 South Gloucestershire Council commissioned an additional 8 refuge spaces in 2021/22.

Upon exit from the service, victims/ survivors most commonly moved into social rented or supported housing. In 2020/21 there was a small increase in the number who went into social rented or supported housing compared to the previous year. Those who did not were likely to find accommodation in another Refuge and a small proportion stayed with friends or family.

The majority of victims/survivors stayed for less than 4 months in Refuge with fewer staying for 4-6 months. However, a number stayed between 6 months and 2 years which significantly affects service capacity.

We provide 16 Refuge places (8 for a single person; 3 for 1 a woman 2 for a woman and a child; 3 for woman and 2 children; 2 for a woman and 3 children). All spaces that accommodate children will accommodate children up to the age of 16. The majority of victims/survivors needing refuge are either single persons with no children or have 1 child.

This includes 2 refuge places for male victims.

Our Refuge accommodation provider also provides refuge places in other areas and so survivors can be accommodated outside South Gloucestershire where necessary for their safety, with South Gloucestershire accommodation used for survivors from those areas.

## 2.3 How do we want to improve?

We will review provision looking at the full range of Safe Accommodation options to ensure maximum effective provision with the resources available. As part of this work we want to introduce facilities to meet the needs of those with protected characteristics.

We will ensure all accommodation and support meets the national quality standards set by the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing.

We will promote the range of tools and support available to help survivors remain safe within their own home, including Sanctuary schemes and the tools available to the Police.

We will work with Housing and homelessness services to prevent survivors becoming homeless because of the domestic abuse they experience

We want to improve move-on options, so survivors do not have to stay in Refuges any longer than necessary.

## Section 3: Support services

### 3.1 Standards

All those in safe accommodation, as well as many survivors who do not go into safe accommodation need to be provided with support services. The requirement for support services for those in safe accommodation is:

**Overall management of services within the safe accommodation** – capacity building, support and supervision of staff, financial and day to day management, reporting to the council

**Support for day to day running of the service** – scheduling sessions, group activities

**Advocacy** – development of personal safety plans, liaison with other public services

**Domestic Abuse prevention advice** –to help recognise signs of abusive relationships, help remain safe, and prevent repeat victimisation

**Specialist support** for those with relevant protected characteristics or who have additional and/or complex needs

**Children's Support** – play therapy, child advocacy or specialist children worker

**Housing related support** – housing advice such as securing a permanent home, rights to existing accommodation, advice on living safely and independently

**Advice service** – financial and legal support to access benefits, support into work, and establish independent financial arrangements

**Counselling and therapy** (including group support) for both adults and children

## 3.2 What are we doing already?

We provide a comprehensive range of support to all survivors over the age of 16 in safe accommodation through Independent Domestic Violence Advisors including a range of specialists.

We have worked with the service provider and with the Police and Crime Commissioner to secure 5 additional IDVAs to cope with the increased demand following Covid-19 lockdowns.

We provide support services to those survivors whose needs do not necessitate safe accommodation.

## 3.3 How do we want to improve?

We will review the provision targeted at particular groups to ensure these match local needs and priorities, and address the gaps identified in our ongoing assessment of needs such as access to specialist provision for older survivors.

We will ensure all accommodation and support meets the national quality standards set by the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing.

We want to continue the improvements made over the last year in our Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences to assess risk and safely plan support for survivors while reducing the risk of repeat abuse.

## Section 4: Communication and reporting of domestic abuse

### 4.1 Standards

As identified earlier, although 4,750 victims of domestic abuse reported to services in 2020/21, 65% of victims did not come forward to receive support. This may be because they are not aware of our services, or because they are not yet confident in accessing services safely.

Many people, especially young people, are not aware of the different forms of domestic abuse and so do not recognise this in the behaviour of themselves or others.

### 4.2 What are we doing already?

We provide a comprehensive range of support to all survivors over the age of 16 including a helpline and single point of contact for anyone requiring advice and support about domestic abuse.

The service is made available through a range of methods including social media, posters, brochures and the internet.

Staff in public services are trained in recognising the signs of abuse and encourage people to come forward and report it. We train GPs in this and provide IDVAs at hospitals.

### 4.3 How do we want to improve?

We want to enhance communications to those survivors and communities that are less confident about reporting domestic abuse. To achieve this, we will target communication through a range of methods to make information available in the right place and at the times when it is most needed.

We will raise awareness amongst individuals and communities of the different forms of domestic abuse.

We will improve the confidence of individuals and families to come forward and report at an earlier stage in the cycle of abuse, so that

- they can access support earlier
- children, young people and adults will be able to recover and move on from the trauma of their experiences as a direct victim of abuse, or from being in a household where they observe abuse and its effect.

## Section 5: Preventing Domestic Violence and Abuse

### 5.1 Approach

Much of the focus of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Act, and certainly the Safe Accommodation duty placed on Local Authorities, is on support for victims/survivors. Where there are survivors, we shall help provide them with the safe accommodation and the support that they need. But we also want to stop them becoming victims in the first place.

Longer term preventative work including education around healthy relationships, consent, and gender inequality, and raising self-awareness of the effect of actions, can help prevent domestic violence and abuse.

Consistently addressing underlying issues that lead to abusive behaviour and the normalisation of abuse, preventing flashpoints that lead to cases, can reduce domestic violence and abuse, as can the effective use of sanctions where cases do occur.

It is also a simple fact that for every victim / survivor there is a perpetrator who abuses them. Some perpetrators will abuse multiple victims. Some perpetrators will also be (or have been) victims themselves.

Domestic Violence Perpetrators do so in many different ways, for many different reasons, and with many different consequences. Many will also be involved in other specific crimes against their victim.

It is rare that individuals start at the most serious end of the continuum of perpetrators. More usually their behaviour will escalate and increase in frequency and seriousness over time unless something happens to change it.

While this is a general trend, we need to be mindful it is not the same in every case though. Analysis of Domestic Homicide Reviews shows often the perpetrator has been previously characterised as posing a low or medium risk.

### 5.2 What are we doing already?

We provide an extensive programme of preventative work including education and relationship guidance and raising self-awareness of the effect of actions. We also support people to build a different life through settled accommodation, employment, and community links to reduce flashpoints that contribute to Domestic Violence and Abuse.

Probation work with offenders to help them build better relationships that avoid domestic violence and abuse.

A range of organisations use sanctions to prevent repeat cases of Domestic Violence and Abuse



A joint funded partnership between the Avon & Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner, South Gloucestershire Council, and the National Community Lottery Fund, has introduced the national DRIVE programme in South Gloucestershire on a pilot basis. This deals with high-harm offenders committing multiple offences, often against multiple victims, and with high levels of violence involved. Delivered by Cranstoun, the service went live in April 2021. Although it is too early to see the effect of this yet, elsewhere DRIVE has seen reductions of 82% in physical abuse; 88% in sexual abuse; 75% in harassment and stalking behaviours and 73% in jealous and controlling behaviours by the perpetrators DRIVE engages with. 82% of survivors see their personal risk reduced

## 5.3 How do we want to improve?

We want to introduce effective provision for **Medium / Standard Harm** perpetrators (involved in more than one incident, may involve violence but not cause injuries requiring hospitalisation or medical care. (Probably identified because dealt with by the Police using domestic violence protection notices and orders) and **Low** harm perpetrators (who may commit one or a low number of incidents not causing injuries requiring hospitalisation or medical care and may self-identify and seek help voluntarily)

We want to improve the co-ordination and effectiveness of sanctions used against perpetrators in order to reduce repeat violence and abuse.

We will review our longer-term preventative work such as relationship guidance, supporting people to build a different life through settled accommodation, education, employment, financial advice, and community links, and use this to break the chain of domestic violence and abuse from generation to generation.

We will explore with social landlords whether domestic abuse can be treated as a breach of tenancy conditions so perpetrators can be accountable and potentially evicted as part of a multi-agency response

We want to continue the improvements made over the last year in our Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences to assess risk and safely plan support for survivors while reducing the risk of repeat abuse.

Accommodation problems may mean some perpetrators have to continue living with their victims, increasing the risk of further abuse. We will explore the potential of providing accommodation for perpetrators where this will prevent future abuse.

## Section 6: Improving how we work

### 6.1 What is this about?

Responding effectively to domestic violence and abuse involves a range of activities, often provided by different organisations. Although this Strategy highlights some areas where we intend to improve our delivery, we need to ensure that all parts of the system work together seamlessly – the system is only as strong as its weakest link.

We therefore need to constantly monitor and improve the effectiveness of each part of our domestic violence and abuse work to make sure that not only is it effective in its own right, but it contributes to the whole system.

### 6.2 What are we doing already?

A whole range of local services and policies contribute to our overall response to domestic violence and abuse. The effectiveness of these is considered by multi-agency partnerships.

Local services are commissioned, and monitored by, a Joint Commissioning Group to make sure they are co-ordinated and work consistently towards the same end results.

We have updated the domestic violence and abuse needs assessment to provide a clear picture of the demand for different services; the effectiveness of the ways in which we meet this demand, and the areas in which improvement is needed.

### 6.3 How do we want to improve?

We want to improve links to other local strategies and plans so that these help achieve our Domestic Violence and Abuse Objectives.

We want to improve the quality of the data we have available to draw conclusions from, and to use this effectively in driving our understanding and decision-making.

We want to carry out a series of reviews to understand better the factors behind some of the apparent anomalies in existing results so we know whether there are genuine differences in access and outcomes, and change our approach to reduce inequality in service outcomes if this is the case.

## Section 7: Domestic Abuse Strategy

### 7.1 Strategy and Objectives

This Domestic Abuse Strategy outlines changes we will make to meet the needs of those subjected to domestic abuse.

While the Strategy itself covers a three-year period it will be reviewed annually to ensure we respond to changes in the pattern of domestic abuse; to the effect of our actions, and to the changing needs of survivors.

An Action Plan will be developed and implemented annually, providing clarity over how we will meet the objectives within this strategy. This action plan will include steps to address gaps in our knowledge or in the effectiveness of our delivery. It will focus on both the immediate and longer-term actions that will be needed to enhance our safe accommodation service and our wider support to survivors of domestic abuse.

Our strategy will focus on achieving the following objectives 2022-2024.

- 1 Provide a range of appropriate Safe Accommodation options for all survivors of Domestic Abuse who need it**
- 2 Improve support enabling survivors to return home safely or to move into alternative permanent accommodation more quickly**
- 3 Early intervention to prevent homelessness caused by domestic abuse**
- 4 Provide accessible and effective support services to help survivors**
- 5 Improve communication and the confidence of survivors to report domestic abuse**
- 6 Prevent domestic violence and abuse and reduce the level and harm caused through preventative activity, early intervention, and work with perpetrators**
- 7 Improve how we work together and with partners**

### 7.2 Delivery of the Strategy

The strategy will be implemented by partners represented on the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership, through an operational delivery group, and through individual task and finish groups. Those involved in these groups include those responsible for the local response to a range of community safety topics including violence against women and girls; modern slavery; victim support, housing and homelessness reduction; child and adult exploitation, safeguarding, organised crime disruption and supporting families. This ensures ongoing implementation of the domestic abuse strategy will be linked closely to these areas of work.

## 7.3 Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership

The Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership is a partnership group responsible for ensuring delivery of this Strategy. It does this by

- Providing advice and data to support South Gloucestershire Council to undertake a robust local needs assessment to identify and understand the needs of domestic abuse victims within relevant safe accommodation, in their area (including those that present from out of area).
- Providing expert advice and data to support the development of a local strategy, agreeing the appropriate steps needed to meet the needs identified – ensuring the needs of all victims, including those with protected characteristics and / or additional complex needs, are represented and met through the strategy.
- Monitoring the delivery of this local Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy
- Supporting South Gloucestershire Council to effectively engage with domestic abuse victims and expert services in understanding the range and complexity of needs.
- Supporting South Gloucestershire Council to make commissioning and decommissioning decisions. including advising on when and how commissioning is undertaken to ensure the best and most appropriate services are made available for victims.
- Ensuring join up across other related areas such as alcohol and drug treatment services, housing, health, early years and childhood support, social services and police and crime services
- Advising and supporting dealing with issues raised and identified from engagement through formal and informal routes.
- Raising community awareness of Domestic Violence and Abuse, and of access to support and services
- Raising awareness amongst professionals of access to support and Domestic Violence and Abuse services
- Providing advice to South Gloucestershire Council about the provision of other local authority domestic abuse services.
- Monitoring the implementation of recommendations from Domestic Homicide reviews
- Escalating issues and concerns to the relevant representative / body

Membership of Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership comprises

- Executive Member for Communities and Local Place, South Gloucestershire Council,
- Adult Social Care, South Gloucestershire Council, to represent adults as victims of domestic abuse
- Integrated Children's Services South Gloucestershire Council, to represent adults as victims of domestic abuse
- Equality Voice to represent victims with protected characteristics
- Next Link as a voluntary organisation working with victims of domestic abuse locally.

- Julian House as a voluntary organisation working with victims of domestic abuse locally.
- Bristol North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group to represent health care services
- Public Health, South Gloucestershire Council to represent health care services
- Avon and Somerset Police to represent policing and criminal justice.
- Homechoice service, South Gloucestershire Council, to represent housing and homelessness services
- Strategic Safeguarding Manager, South Gloucestershire Council, as chair of domestic abuse operational delivery group.

The Strategic Partnership hears direct input from survivors of domestic abuse so their experiences both of abuse and of receiving services can be taken into account in improving those services.

The Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership reports annually to the Cabinet of South Gloucestershire Council and supports South Gloucestershire Council in reporting back to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on delivery of the statutory duties laid out in the Domestic Violence and Abuse Act 2021.

## Section 8: Areas of focus

We will work on a continual basis to achieve the broad objectives laid out in this Strategy. An action plan will be developed and agreed annually before the start of the financial year, providing clarity over the work we will carry out each year. That action plan will include steps to address gaps in our knowledge or in the effectiveness of our delivery. It will focus on both the immediate and longer-term actions that will be needed to enhance our safe accommodation service and our wider support to survivors of domestic abuse.

Over the life of this Strategy there are also some priority areas of focus in each year. These are:

### 2021/22

- Complete a detailed Needs Assessment for Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Agree a Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy
- Ensure the voice of victims is fully heard by the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership
- Audit current services against the standards set by the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing

### 2022/23

- Recommission Safe Accommodation and support services
- Devise and implement a communications strategy to raise individual and community awareness of forms of domestic violence and abuse, and the support available.
- Identify and address data gaps, including targeted reviews of apparent service access / outcome anomalies

## 2023/24

- Complete the recommissioning of Safe Accommodation and support services, and go live with the new provision
- Decide on Future of the DRIVE programme

## 2024/25

- Complete a detailed Needs Assessment for Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Revise the Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy

## Section 9: How will we know we are making a difference?

### 9.1 Measuring performance

In addition to monitoring delivery of our action plan we will use a small number of focussed Performance Indicators to monitor our success in delivery this strategy.

These Performance Indicators provide an overall indicator of strategic impact. Individual results will be explored in more detail to draw conclusions including about equality of provision and delivery.

Performance Indicator		
Number of survivors accepted into safe accommodation		
Number reaching the threshold to need safe accommodation to unable to access it		
Number staying in safe accommodation over 6 months		
Number of those who had to move to alternative housing because of domestic abuse		
Number of those prevented from being made homeless after reporting domestic abuse		
Number of victims reporting domestic violence or abuse to the Police		
Number of victims reporting repeat domestic violence or abuse to the Police within 2 years of previous report		

Number of victims reporting domestic violence or abuse to local (non-Police services)		
Number of victims reporting domestic violence or abuse to local (non-Police) services within 2 years of previous incidents		
Repeat Victimization rate following Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference for vulnerable victims		
Number of repeat DVA offences carried out by perpetrators on the DRIVE programme.		
Number of crimes involving domestic violence reported to the Police		
Public awareness of domestic violence and of services as measured through public surveys		
School pupils' awareness of domestic violence and of services as measured through the online public survey		
Number of Domestic Violence Protection Notices issued		
Number of Domestic Violence Protection Orders issued		
Number of Domestic Violence Protection Orders breached		