



**safe in...**  
warwickshire

**Warwickshire's Violence Against  
Women and Girls Strategy**

2015-18

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# Foreword

Every year in the UK 3 million women experience rape, domestic violence, forced marriage and so-called 'honour' crimes, female genital mutilation, stalking, trafficking and sexual exploitation. Such violence is a major cause of death and disability and is linked to other issues such as poor health, child poverty, social exclusion, economic and educational disadvantage.

Over the last few years we have made significant progress in improving our services for those who experience gender-based violence, particularly domestic and sexual violence. However, we have more to do, including developing our response to all forms of violence against women and girls.

We are pleased, therefore, to present Warwickshire's first partnership Violence against Women and Girls Strategy, which draws on national and local evidence and consultation with key stakeholders, including victim-survivors themselves, to outline our approach to dealing with this important issue.

The Strategy brings together our existing work in these areas and sets out work we would like to do to improve services and address the gaps. We see this very much as a 'live' document which will evolve as the national and local context changes.

We will do as much as we can within our resources to lead this agenda in Warwickshire and deliver improved outcomes for victims. However, we cannot tackle this alone. We will endeavour to support and lobby others to play their part in delivering the national version of this strategy.

## **Cllr Les Caborn**

*Chair of the Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Warwickshire County Council*

## **Helen King**

*Deputy Director of Public Health in Warwickshire, Chair of the Violence Against Women and Girls Board*

# 1. Introduction

This is Warwickshire's first Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy. It brings together our existing work on domestic abuse with a new broader approach that addresses all forms of violence against women and girls.

Over the last few years significant progress has been made as to how public and voluntary sector partners in Warwickshire respond; raise awareness and deliver support and prevention work in relation to the issue of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

We still however have a long way to go to deliver this work effectively and in developing our response to other types of violence against women and girls. This includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation, so-called 'honour' based violence, stalking, trafficking, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation.

The Strategy commits us to working together and strengthening our efforts to prevent and tackle violence against women and girls in all its forms.

Our key objectives are as follows:

<b>Prevention</b>	Preventing violence against women and girls from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviour which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it
<b>Provision</b>	Providing high quality, joined-up support for victims where violence does occur
<b>Protection</b>	Taking action to reduce the risk of women and girls who are victims of violence and ensuring that perpetrators are brought to justice and provided with opportunities for change in a way that maximises safety
<b>Partnership</b>	Working in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families

## How the Strategy has been developed

The Strategy has been developed following an in-depth consultation process both with professionals and agencies from the voluntary and statutory sectors and with victim-survivors themselves. The consultation process sought to map what is currently in place in Warwickshire for VAWG and to undertake a gap analysis to help identify what more needs to be done.

The Strategy will continue to evolve as the national and local VAWG context changes.

## How the Strategy will be delivered

A Strategy Implementation Plan will be developed and monitored by the multi-agency VAWG Strategic Board to support the delivery of the Strategy. This will be reviewed and refreshed annually.

## VAWG Strategic Board Members

Warwickshire County Council

North Warwickshire Borough Council

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

Rugby Borough Council

Stratford District Council

Warwick District Council

National Probation Service

Warwickshire and West Mercia Police Strategic Alliance

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board

Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Health – Acute Trusts, Clinical Commissioning Groups

Warwickshire & West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company

Local Criminal Justice Board

Voluntary and Community Sector

## Interdependencies with other work

The Strategy does not sit in isolation. VAWG is closely connected to other issues such as poor health, child poverty, social exclusion and economic and educational disadvantage. It therefore has an impact on other local strategies and initiatives such as:

- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Safeguarding Strategies
- Priority Families
- Care Act 2014 Implementation Plans
- County and District Community Safety Plans
- Housing and Homelessness Strategies
- Drug and Alcohol Implementation Plans
- Warwickshire Police and Crime Plan
- Police Domestic Abuse Strategy

The Strategy does not intend to duplicate work being led by others. It aims to bring together work across all sectors on the issue of VAWG into one cohesive, co-ordinated statement.

VAWG is closely connected to other issues such as poor health, child poverty, social exclusion and economic and educational disadvantage.

## 2. Why Violence Against Women and Girls?

### Definitions

The United Nations defines violence against women and girls (VAWG) as **any act of gender based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women (or girls), including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty (United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence towards Women (1993, Article 1).**

Adopting this definition does not mean we will neglect violence and abuse directed towards men and boys, or other groups and individuals who experience these forms of violence, however, women and girls are at substantially greater risk of these crimes, therefore a gendered approach to VAWG is both appropriate and necessary.

Forms of VAWG referenced in this Strategy are explained as follows:

#### Forms of VAWG

**Domestic abuse** is a pattern of coercive control, which includes physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse by a current or former partner and can, in extreme cases, include murder.

**Sexual violence including rape** is sexual contact without the consent of the woman/girl, where perpetrators range from total strangers to relatives and intimate partners, but most are known in some way.

**Female genital mutilation (FGM)** is the complete or partial removal or alteration of external genitalia and is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and 15 years.

**Forced marriage** is a marriage conducted without valid consent of one or both parties, where duress is a factor.

**'Honour' based violence** is violence committed to protect or defend the 'honour' of a family and/or community where young women are the most common targets and can, in extreme cases, include murder.

**Prostitution/sex work and trafficking** involves women and girls being forced, coerced or deceived to enter into prostitution. Trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation and exploitation of women and children for the purposes of prostitution and domestic servitude across international borders and within countries ('internal trafficking').

**Sexual exploitation** involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where someone receives 'something' (e.g. food, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, protection money) as a result of them performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Young women and girls involved in or connected to gangs are at risk of sexual exploitation by gang members.

**Sexual harassment** is unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can take place anywhere, including the workplace, schools, streets, public transport and social situations. It includes 'flashing', obscene and threatening calls, and online harassment.

**Stalking** is repeated (i.e. on at least two occasions) harassment causing fear, alarm or distress. It can include threatening phone calls, texts or letters; damaging property; spying on and following the victim.

## From domestic abuse to VAWG

Warwickshire has followed the national approach by moving away from a domestic abuse strategy to one which encompasses all forms of violence ensuring a more integrated approach and effective response that better reflects the experiences of those affected.

Extensive research shows that violence, or the threat of violence, is rarely a one-off event and women are likely to have experienced multiple and intersecting forms of violence throughout their lives. For example:

- Histories of sexual violence, abuse and harassment are common among women in prostitution and the sex industry
- Around half of the women in prison have lived with domestic abuse and a third have survived sexual abuse
- The prevalence of sexual violence among victim-survivors of domestic abuse is extremely high
- The likelihood of being re-victimised as an adult is greater for women abused in childhood
- Sexual harassment in the workplace for women is a common experience
- Children who have been sexually exploited have a history of child sexual abuse in intra-familial settings

The strategic shift to a wider VAWG agenda also makes sense considering the overlaps and connections between forms of violence experienced by victim-survivors that are often missed in agency responses, such as:

- Domestic abuse includes sexual violence and stalking (in the form of post-separation violence), and some women are coerced into prostitution by abusive partners
- Domestic abuse overlaps with child abuse, including child sexual abuse, which is connected to early entry into the sex industry
- Sexual abuse in childhood increases the likelihood of experiencing sexual and/or domestic abuse in adulthood; or of being sexually exploited as children
- A forced marriage will inevitably also involve coerced sex
- Trafficked women and girls are repeatedly raped

It also recognises the commonalities across all forms of VAWG: they are human rights violations and criminal offences; the impacts and consequences for health and well-being are similar; all are considerably under-reported; minimisation and myths exist across all forms; those affected are under-supported by services; and perpetrators are often known to victim-survivors.

Greater integration creates opportunities to address these multiple issues through targeting limited resources more effectively.

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that violence,  
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violence, is rarely  
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## Why a gendered approach?

The Strategy recognises that men and boys can also be victims of violence and therefore does not exclude them from this work. Perpetrators may also be female. However, a gendered approach to VAWG is both appropriate and necessary because the majority of violence is perpetrated by men, against women and is gender-based.

Understanding gender as the central factor in VAWG allows us to understand the causes and consequences of VAWG and for the response to be developed accordingly. This approach is supported by robust research and a sound theoretical framework. Research and data presented to challenge a gendered approach does not adequately address the complex dynamic of such violence and abuse or influential social factors. Approaches which do not recognise the influence of gender in everyday experiences fail both men and women, and assumptions that experiences of men and women are equivalent will not achieve equality of outcome.

Understanding gender as the central factor in VAWG allows us to understand the causes and consequences of VAWG and for the response to be developed accordingly.



# 3. Background facts and figures

## National context

Highlights from the data and research available nationally on VAWG are as follows:



**Each year around three million women and girls in the UK** experience some form of violence, including domestic violence and abuse, rape, forced marriage, stalking, female genital mutilation, sexual exploitation, trafficking and crimes in the name of honour (Coy et al, 2008)

In England and Wales, **2 women a week are killed** by a partner or ex-partner (Women's Aid, 2014)

**85,000 women are raped and 400,000 women are sexually assaulted** every year in England and Wales (MoJ, 2013)

Each year **23,000 girls under 15** in England and Wales are at risk of **female genital mutilation**. A further **66,000** are living with its consequences (Dorkenoo et al, 2007)

The Forced Marriage Unit recorded **1,485 cases of forced marriage** across the UK in 2012

**1,000-10,000 women and girls** trafficked into the UK each year for **sexual exploitation** (Townsend, 2007)

An overwhelming majority of VAWG is perpetrated by **known men** – family members, friends, neighbours, colleagues – as well as strangers

VAWG remains **hugely under-reported** with only one in four of those experiencing domestic abuse, and **one in eight** of those experiencing sexual violence, making an official report (Walby and Allen, 2004)

Some communities are **less likely to report domestic abuse** than others including BME groups, LGBT groups, disabled women, rural and more affluent communities, and male victims

VAWG has **high rates** of repeat victimisation compared to other crimes, and even when reported, **conviction rates** for perpetrators remain low

The societal cost of VAWG, in England and Wales, is estimated to be over **£40 billion** a year (including health, legal and social services).

The **long-term human and emotional cost** of VAWG to individuals is **immeasurable**

## Warwickshire context

Given its hidden nature and under-reporting, it is difficult to gain an accurate picture of the scale and extent of VAWG locally. Agency monitoring data and reported incidents to the police have been collated, however given the past focus on domestic abuse (and more recently sexual violence); data is mainly available for this form of VAWG. Data for other forms of VAWG remains a gap and requires addressing. This is picked up within the Strategy

Key points from the datasets available are as follows:



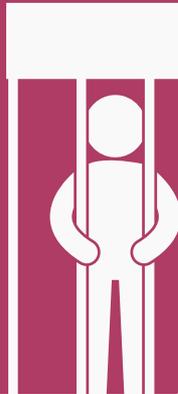
**9,183**  
female victims

**Each year there will be an estimated 9,183 female victims of domestic abuse in Warwickshire.** This compares to 7,253 'incidents' of domestic abuse (approximately 20 per day) and 1,114 domestic abuse 'crimes' recorded by Warwickshire Police in 2013-14. Existing data does not tell us the actual number of victims who report to the police which will be less as some of these incidents and crimes will be repeats

Research suggests **only 40%** of domestic abuse incidents are reported to the police.

Assuming this, there may actually be **20,000 incidents** of domestic abuse occurring in Warwickshire each year

**347** of the 1,114 domestic abuse crimes recorded in 2013-14 resulted in a **prosecution** and 289 converted into **convictions**



**1,451 referrals** were made to the Domestic Abuse Support Service in 2013-14. 361 individuals were taken on to the caseload. **80 individuals** were supported in Warwickshire refuges in 2013-14

**538 high risk cases** were discussed at MARACs in Warwickshire in 2013-14.

**15.8%** were repeat victims, **710** children were involved, **62** cases were BME and **31** were male victims

**5 Domestic Homicide Reviews** have been/are being undertaken in Warwickshire since the legislation came into force in 2011 (as of October 2014). 8 cases have been referred for consideration.



Local research estimates that there are around **184 sex workers** operating in Warwickshire with most sex work taking the form of escorting



**522 sexual offences** were recorded by Warwickshire Police in 2013-14 up from 424 in 2012-13.

Prevalence is likely to be much higher – national research suggests **35% of women** aged 15-59 years will have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.

**167 Warwickshire residents** were seen at the Coventry and Warwickshire Sexual Assault Referral Centre in 2013-14.

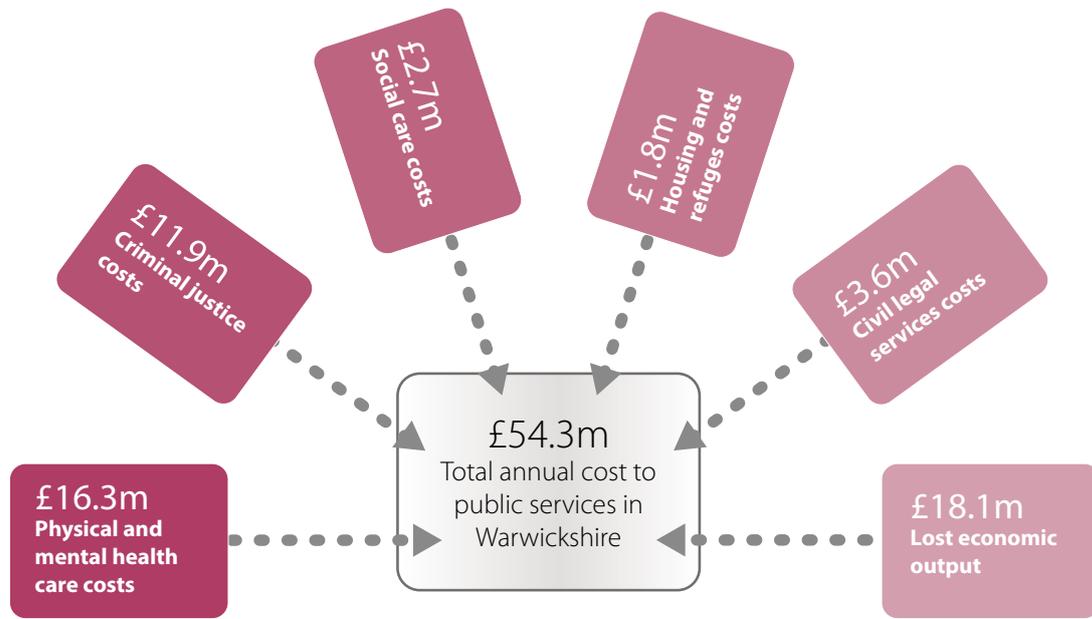
The majority were white females and almost half were children and young people. Most were assaulted by an acquaintance with rape being the most prevalent offence



## The cost of VAWG in Warwickshire

Based on the prevalence data available the estimated cost of domestic abuse to public services alone in Warwickshire is £54.3 million per annum:

When the human and emotional cost is included the total rises to £147.9 million per annum. These estimates are based on 2009 data and are therefore considered a conservative estimate. A more detailed analysis of the cost of VAWG as a whole needs to be undertaken and will be referenced within the Strategy.



# 4. Strategy Objectives and Next Steps

Warwickshire's Strategy objectives and outcomes have been adapted from the national strategy, "Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls", published by the Home Office in 2010.

This section highlights what we have in place already and what we will do to develop provision and address the gaps.

More information about the initiatives and services already in place is available at Appendix B.

A VAWG Strategy Implementation Plan is in development. This will prioritise the work we intend to do and provide details in relation to how, who and when the identified work will be delivered.

Whilst the Strategy seeks to be aspirational, recognition is given to the tight financial climate within which all public sector agencies are working. The first priority therefore is to protect and enhance what is already in place, but maximise efficiency and reduce duplication thereby freeing up resources to support the areas for development.

A Communications Plan will be developed by the VAWG Board during the early part of 2015-16 to support the Strategy. It will set out the approach and the key messages for use within both reactive and proactive scenarios.

The first priority is therefore to protect what is already in place, but maximise efficiency and reduce duplication



# Prevention



## Key objective

**Preventing violence against women and girls from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviour which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it**

### Outcomes

- ➔ Victims, perpetrators and communities recognise that violence against women and girls is unacceptable and are empowered to challenge this behaviour
- ➔ Children and young people are provided with appropriate and joined-up education on the issue of violence against women and girls
- ➔ Attitudes towards harmful practices like female genital mutilation are changed
- ➔ Frontline professionals are better able to identify and respond to violence against women and girls at an early stage
- ➔ More employers are able to recognise and support victims of violence

### What we've got already

- Respect Yourself Campaign
- Taking Care Programme
- Victim Support Domestic Violence and Relationship Abuse Project
- Coaching for a Healthy and Respectful Masculinity Programme
- Warwickshire Against Domestic Abuse helpline/website (single point of contact)
- Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Violence "Statement of Intent"
- Multi-agency and single agency training
- Police training
- CSE unit, protocol and training

### What we will do to improve services and address gaps

- Centrally coordinate our public campaigns and community engagement activity to ensure a consistent message and enable VAWG issues, both in the general and harder-to-reach/protected communities, to be more effectively addressed. Campaign work will cover all forms of VAWG.
- Develop a co-ordinated package of VAWG education for schools to ensure messages are consistent and that schools are clear which programmes to offer to their staff and pupils.
- Undertake a training needs analysis to understand what frontline professionals within universal services require to support them in identifying and responding to VAWG.
- Develop and deliver a coordinated package of training for frontline professionals within universal services to improve and increase VAWG identification and response.
- Support universal services with developing and implementing VAWG policies and protocols which are supportive of disclosure and prioritise safety.
- Explore options for a professionals portal which will provide information and advice on all forms of VAWG, their impact, interfaces and risks, and the services available for people who experience or perpetrate VAWG.
- Introduce VAWG champions in universal services. VAWG champions would be responsible for developing their service's response (including training, enquiry, and referral pathways) and act as the "expert" when a team member has concerns and is unsure how to respond.
- Develop and promote a training package for employers, to raise awareness of VAWG, how to identify it and how to respond.
- Support the development of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Warwickshire ensuring that VAWG issues are an integral part of this new way of working.

# Provision



## Key objective

**Providing high quality, joined-up support for victims where violence does occur.**

### Outcomes

- ➔ Commissioners identify and provide high quality, joined-up support services which meet the needs of victims and perpetrators and prioritises the safety of victims and their families
- ➔ The service delivery model is clear to the end that statutory, voluntary and community sector agencies get the response right the first time
- ➔ Service users achieve their identified outcomes including long-term sustainable safety

### What we've got already

- Public sector services: Police Protecting Vulnerable People Department, DA Social Work Team, Designated Young Persons Violence Advocate, Probation Women's Safety Workers
- Services commissioned by the public sector: National Domestic Violence Helpline, Domestic Abuse Support Service (including IDVAs), Refuge Service, Victim Support, Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA), IRIS GP Liaison Service
- Non-commissioned specialist services: Domestic Abuse Counselling Service (DACS) Barnados Child Sexual Exploitation Worker, RoSA, Safeline, Terrence Higgins Trust (THT)
- Universal services working with individuals and families

### What we will do to improve services and address gaps

- Explore options to improve access and provision of services to hard-to-reach/protected communities including BME and emerging Eastern European communities.
- Explore options to develop specialist support services for children and young people affected by VAWG.
- Explore options to improve service provision for individuals and families with complex needs e.g. substance misuse and/or mental health.
- Continue to commission refuge services but explore additional safe accommodation options for victims and their families who do not need/want refuge.
- Develop guidance for working with young people aged 16 and 17 who are affected by VAWG.

# Protection



## Key objective

**Taking action to reduce the risk to women and girls who are victims of violence and ensuring that perpetrators are brought to justice and provided with opportunities for change in a way that maximises safety**

### Outcomes

- ➔ Victims feel confident in accessing the criminal justice system
- ➔ The criminal justice experience and outcomes for victims, including the rate of convictions, is significantly improved
- ➔ Multiple incidents of violence are reduced
- ➔ The rehabilitation rate of both perpetrators and female offenders who are subjected to violence is increased

### What we've got already

- Specialist Domestic Abuse Court
- DASH Risk Indicator Checklist endorsed as preferred risk assessment tool
- MARACs to reduce risk in high risk cases
- Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)
- Court Mandated Perpetrator Programme
- Voluntary perpetrator work (fee payable)
- New Police training programme

### What we will do to improve services and address gaps

- Explore ways to improve the criminal justice pathway and court room experience in line with the new Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and new Witness Charter.
- Work with universal services that have regular contact with victims of VAWG to ensure that they are systematically assessing risk and are using the preferred risk assessment tool: the DASH Risk Indicator Checklist. We will ensure that services take up appropriate training in risk assessment and have a good understanding of how to respond.
- Undertake work to ensure compliance with the Safe Lives national quality assurance framework for MARACs with the aim of developing a more systematic approach to the identification of who is at risk, what risks they face and from whom, and how the risk can be reduced.
- Develop a model workplace policy for employers to adopt to ensure that employees affected by VAWG are protected and supported. This will be promoted through the Chamber of Commerce alongside an appropriate training package.
- Develop an improved approach to dealing with perpetrators which includes equipping frontline professionals with the skills to engage and work with them.
- Explore options to address the needs of women offenders with a history of DVA. This will include the consideration of community-based alternatives to a custodial sentence to divert vulnerable women away from crime and tackle the root causes of their offending.

# Partnership



## Key objective

**Working in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families**

### Outcome

- ➔ Coordinated action across all services and partnerships, informed by consistent and coordinated policies, systems and leadership, in order to deliver the Violence Against Women Girls Strategy in Warwickshire

### What we've got already

- Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Board
- Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board and local Community Safety Partnerships
- Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board
- MARAC Steering Group
- Honour-Based Violence and Forced Marriage Group
- Specialist Domestic Abuse Court Steering Group
- Annual VAWG conferences

### What we will do to improve services and address gaps

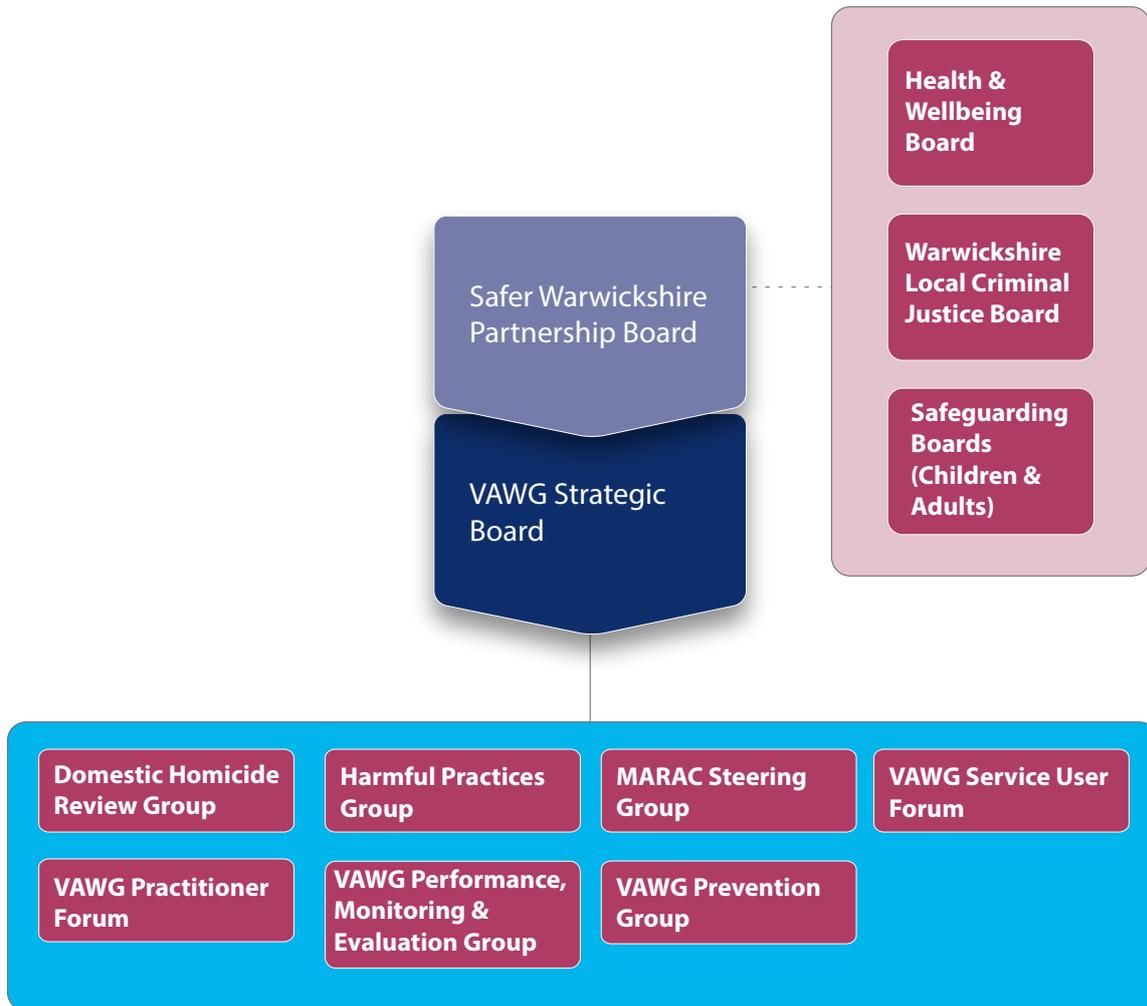
- Ensure that VAWG is a priority for all partners and partnerships whose work impacts on the VAWG agenda. This will include not only community safety partners but the Safeguarding Boards, the Health and Wellbeing Board, etc, and their associated strategies.
- Explore the concept of a "whole place community budget" as a means of delivering a coordinated, partnership response to those affected by VAWG, and increasing capacity to meet the needs of both medium and high risk victims.
- Explore options to improve information sharing between statutory and voluntary sector agencies.
- Deliver a programme of needs assessments on all forms of VAWG to ensure we fully understand prevalence in Warwickshire and to inform future service commissioning. We will ensure VAWG features in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Develop core data requirements for services to support the ongoing assessment of need.
- Explore collaborative working options between agencies to increase capacity and improve the response to individuals and families affected by VAWG.
- Establish a VAWG Practitioner Forum for frontline professionals to come together and learn about the latest policy and practice developments, raise emerging issues and develop stronger working relationships. The Forum will report into the VAWG Board to ensure that any issues raised have an escalation route.
- Develop a VAWG performance dashboard which will support the VAWG Strategic Board in monitoring the success of the Strategy.

## Abbreviations

BME	Black and minority ethnic
CAADA	Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company
CSE	Child sexual exploitation
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
DA	Domestic abuse
DVA	Domestic violence and abuse
DACS	Domestic abuse counselling service
DAU	Domestic Abuse Unit
DHR	Domestic homicide review
FGM	Female genital mutilation
FM	Forced marriage
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
ISVA	Independent Sexual Violence Advisor
HBV	Honour-based violence
HWB	Health and Wellbeing Board
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
MARAC	Multi-agency risk assessment conference
MAPPA	Multi-agency public protection arrangements
NPS	National Probation Service
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
SARC	Sexual assault referral centre
SDAC	Specialist Domestic Abuse Court
SWPB	Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board
WADA	Warwickshire Against Domestic Abuse
WCC	Warwickshire County Council
WSCB	Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
YPVA	Young Persons Violence Advocate

# Appendix A

## VAWG Partnership Governance Arrangements



## Appendix B

### What We've Got Already – Further Information

**If you are affected by any of the issues covered within this document and would like someone to talk to, please visit [www.talk2someone.org.uk](http://www.talk2someone.org.uk) or telephone the helpline on 0800 408 1552. In an emergency, please dial 999.**

#### Prevention

*Respect Yourself Campaign* – Based in public health, the campaign involves provision of training to professionals so that they have the skills and expertise to support and change the behaviour of young people. Issues of domestic abuse, sexual violence and emotional wellbeing are integrated with messages about eating well and being healthy. The campaign also has a website for young people containing advice and information about services – [www.respectyourself.info](http://www.respectyourself.info).

*Taking Care Programme* – Organised by the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board, this programme works with children in primary schools teaching them how to keep safe in a variety of situations. The programme covers empowerment, communication, self-esteem and other life skills, to help prevent abuse, reduce violence and promote life enhancing experiences.

*Victim Support Domestic Violence and Relationship Abuse Project* – Warwickshire is one of four pilot sites for this project which is funded by the DfE. It works with children aged four and over where they are living with domestic violence and abuse at home, and works with those aged thirteen and above at risk of being in their own abusive relationships. The project will also be developing work with schools to support teachers and other professionals. The project is funded until March 2015.

*Coaching for a Healthy and Respectful Masculinity Programme* – Offered by the Youth Justice Service in response to an increase in the number of young people serving community orders relating to sexual offences, or where discriminatory attitudes towards females have been identified during assessment.

*Warwickshire Against Domestic Abuse helpline/website (single point of contact)* – Warwickshire operates a single-point-of-contact for any member of the public concerned about domestic abuse or professionals with a query about services. This is run by the commissioned Domestic Abuse Support Service with the aim of not only offering support over the phone but being able to refer individuals to other specialist services where appropriate. WCC also maintains the WADA website which provides information and signposting – [www.talk2someone.org.uk](http://www.talk2someone.org.uk).

*Forced Marriage and Honour-Based Violence "Statement of Intent"* – Warwickshire has developed a "statement of Intent" which supports agencies in identifying and responding to FM and HBV. Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board co-ordinates and delivers training on this issue which also includes legal and other tools for keeping victim-survivors safe.

*Multi-agency training* – Multi-agency training, funded by the County Council, is provided free of charge to all Warwickshire agencies and delivered by external trainers. Training has included identification and risk assessment of domestic abuse, understanding FM/ HBV, Forced Marriage Protection Orders, Domestic Violence and Disabled Women, Substance Misuse Awareness for DA practitioners, and most recently the

Freedom Programme for Professionals (experiential programme exploring the impact of living with DA). Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board also offers a range of training on VAWG issues. This includes raising awareness of domestic abuse, domestic abuse and child protection, forced marriage awareness and child sexual exploitation awareness. Courses are free to member agencies and other agencies can attend for a small charge.

*Single-agency training* – In addition to the above, organisations also organise their own training e.g. police mandatory training is provided by an independent trainer and specialist training for children’s and adult’s social care staff is provided through the County Council’s Learning and Development Team. In health, the Clinical Commissioning Group’s designated nurse for child protection offers awareness raising to staff in GP and dental practices; Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (responsible for adult mental health) has a specialist DA nurse who works with the safeguarding team to develop training and awareness raising for staff.

*CSE protocol and training* – A procedure on child sexual exploitation (CSE) has been developed by WSCB and a programme of work is being devised with links to the Respect Yourself Campaign and the police. A new CSE sub-committee of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board has been established to steer strategy development in this area.

*Single-agency training* – In addition to the above, organisations also organise their own training e.g. specialist training for children’s and adult’s social care staff is provided through the County Council’s Learning and Development Team. In health, the Clinical Commissioning Group’s designated nurse for child protection offers awareness raising to staff in GP and dental practices; Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (responsible for adult mental health) has a specialist DA nurse who works with the safeguarding team to develop training and awareness raising for staff.

*Police training* – Warwickshire & West Mercia Police Strategic Alliance have developed a revised training programme following the HMIC inspection into the police response to DA. All frontline officers are now required to do a new DA awareness course; DA specialist officers are required to complete the Freedom Programme; and a new requirement for all staff to undertake face-to-face sessions in relation to safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable People is being pursued.

*CSE protocol and training & CSE Unit* – A procedure on child sexual exploitation (CSE) has been developed by WSCB and a programme of work is being devised with links to the Respect Yourself Campaign and the police. A new CSE sub-committee of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board has been established to steer strategy development in this area. A multi-agency CSE unit has recently been established to improve Warwickshire’s identification and response to CSE concerns.

## **Provision**

### **Public sector services:**

*Police Protecting Vulnerable People Department* – The Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) department oversees the police response to child protection, safeguarding vulnerable adults, domestic abuse, missing persons and the management of registered sex offenders. Within the PVP sits a specialist Domestic Abuse Unit (DAU), which focuses on risk management/reduction in “high risk” domestic abuse cases reported to the police. Risk Officers in the DAU support high risk victims regardless of whether a charge is pursued against the perpetrator. The DAU is regaining a small specialist investigative function for high risk cases

as part of the drive to increase prosecution rates in domestic abuse cases. Within the PVP, a new multi-agency CSE team has also been established.

*DA Social Work Team* – Aside from the overarching safeguarding functions and services provided by Children’s Social Care, Warwickshire operates a specialist domestic abuse social work team. The team specialises in undertaking risk assessments with perpetrators and preparing reports for family proceedings. The team also provides training to social care teams in Warwickshire. The team works closely with victims and children in complex cases open to social care focusing on safety planning, wishes and feelings. In partnership with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, the DA Social Work Team developed the Feeling Safe therapeutic group work programme for children and their non-abusing carers. The team is developing training for professionals across the county so this programme can be delivered in other settings i.e. Children’s Centres and Schools. The team (which also includes the Missing Children’s Worker) is based in the police DAU and is overseen by the specialist Children’s Services Police Liaison Manager. Protocols are in place between Warwickshire Police and Children’s Social Care to manage referrals from the police where an incident of domestic abuse has been reported and children are identified at the address.

*Designated Young Persons Violence Advocate* – The DfE have resourced training and accreditation for each local authority area to appoint a designated Young Persons Violence Advocate (YPVA). YPVAs work to ensure that young people experiencing serious intimate violence and abuse are offered easier access and engagement with someone who can offer help. They also provide training locally to other professionals.

*Probation Women’s Safety Workers* – The National Probation Service (NPS) in Warwickshire resources a part-time Women’s Safety Officer (WSO) and hosts a DA admin support that is directly funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner. The WSO provides support and signposting to other DA services and updates victims and new partners on the progress of perpetrators attending the domestic abuse group work programme, Building Better Relationships, which has replaced the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme. The DA admin post checks all offenders either pre or post sentence where there is a Probation sentence outcome on the police information systems, to provide Offender Managers/ report authors both in the NPS and the local Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) with detailed summary information of all police DA call outs. This information is essential to ensure that all offenders are accurately risk assessed and allocated to the correct organisation. The NPS are responsible for managing all dangerous high risk of serious harm and MAPPA eligible offenders and the CRC are responsible for managing low and medium risk offenders. Locally Probation has also developed a DA Workbook to be used on a one-to-one basis in DA cases where the offender is unsuitable or unavailable to attend the group work programme.

### **Services commissioned by the public sector:**

*National Domestic Violence Helpline* – The national domestic violence helpline is delivered in partnership by Women’s Aid and Refuge. The helpline, which operates 24 hours a day 365 days a year, offers support over the phone and refers women to local services.

*Refuge Service* – Commissioned by the County Council, there are 18 units of supported refuge accommodation available to women aged 16 and over and their children in Warwickshire. These units are currently provided in Nuneaton, Leamington and Rugby.

*Domestic Abuse Support Service* – Commissioned by the County Council, the Domestic Abuse Support Service provides practical and emotional support to victims of domestic abuse over the age of 16. The service offers drop-in sessions, support workers, specialist support for male and BME victims, sanctuary scheme, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and MARAC coordination.

*IRIS GP Liaison Service* – Commissioned by the County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, IRIS is a collaboration between primary care and the Domestic Abuse Support Service. Advocate Educators provide training and specialist DVA support to GP practices across Warwickshire. This service is funded by the Ministry of Justice

*Victim Support* – Victim Support provides a service to victims of all crime types. This is a national contract originally commissioned by the Ministry of Justice but has been devolved to Police and Crime Commissioners from 2015. Domestic abuse referrals to Victim Support are given priority and a response within 24 hours. If a service is requested each case is risk assessed and referrals made to other services e.g. DA Support Service if required. Victim Support have a team of dedicated DA volunteers which provide practical and emotional support to those not at high risk of DA.

*Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)* – Coventry and Warwickshire SARC opened in 2013. It is a one-stop location for all victims of sexual violence to receive a high quality and empathetic health and forensic response and a careful assessment of their wider and on-going support needs. The SARC operates 24 hours, 365 days and takes referrals through self-referral, police and other agencies and provides direct access or referral to Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs).

*Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA)* – Commissioned by Public Health, the ISVA service provides advocacy, mediation, practical support and signposting for sexual crime victims regardless of whether or not they have chosen to report this to the police.

Non-commissioned specialist services:

*Domestic Abuse Counselling Service (DACS)* – DACS is based in Nuneaton but offers a countywide service. The service is funded through a range of donors and they focus on three areas of work: victims of domestic abuse, perpetrators and support for the partners of perpetrators. In order to ensure the continuation of free counselling for victims, DACS has introduced a charge for the work with perpetrators.

*Barnados: Child Sexual Exploitation Worker* – Funded by the PCC this worker provides support to those at risk of and affected by child sexual exploitation. The worker is based in the Police DAU.

*RoSA* – In addition to providing Warwickshire's ISVA service, RoSA provides confidential counselling and support to victims and survivors of rape, sexual violence and sexual abuse. They work with both male and female survivors, young survivors from the age of five years and family members/carers/partners. Supervision and support is also offered to professionals working with survivors in any capacity.

*Safeline* – Safeline is a specialist charity offering confidential therapeutic and non-clinical support for survivors – men, women and young people – of sexual abuse and rape. Support is also offered to partners, carers and friends of survivors and other interested parties who want to learn more about the subject of sexual abuse such as working with survivors and those who self-harm. This might include health professionals and teaching staff, who can attend workshops and training on these subjects.

*Terrence Higgins Trust (THT)* – THT offers a range of services for people affected by or living with HIV and STI's in Coventry and Warwickshire. One of the specialist services THT provide is SWISH (Sex Workers into Sexual Health). SWISH provides a range of sexual health and harm reduction services to women, men and the transgender community who sell sex both street and indoor based.

*Generalist services working with individuals and families* – There are a number of agencies and services in Warwickshire who do not provide specialist work on VAWG issues but who work with individuals and families affected by VAWG. These include Priority Families; Family and Parenting Service including Children's Centres and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Team; The Recovery Partnership (alcohol and substance misuse service) and Youth Justice Service. Universal health services (hospitals, health visiting, midwifery, school nursing, GP's) and secondary health services, most significantly mental health, are all in contact with those affected by VAWG but at present do not offer specialist support.

## **Protection**

*Specialist Domestic Abuse Court* – Warwickshire's Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC) provides protection and support to victims and witnesses of domestic abuse. It better enables appropriate sanctions to be made against perpetrators and manages cases more effectively thereby reducing delays and minimising risk. The SDAC increases agency coordination, including the Crown Court, in dealing with cases and holding perpetrators to account. The SDAC provides dedicated court sittings within the Magistrates Courts.

*DASH Risk Indicator Checklist endorsed as preferred risk assessment tool* – Warwickshire has endorsed the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Risk Indicator Checklist as the preferred tool for identifying risks to victims of domestic violence and abuse. Both statutory and voluntary agencies are encouraged and supported to use the DASH, though it is recognised that some agencies also have their own risk assessment tools.

*MARACs to reduce risk in high risk cases* – A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a multi-agency meeting which domestic abuse victims who have been identified as at high risk of serious harm or homicide are referred to. The MARAC is attended by representatives from a range of statutory and voluntary sector agencies. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim. However, taking in to account the UK law which prioritises the safety of children, the MARAC will also make links with other multi-agency meetings and processes to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator. Warwickshire operates three localised MARACs each month which are overseen at county level.

*Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)* – DHRs are a statutory responsibility for Community Safety Partnerships to review the circumstances in which the death (including suicide or 'near miss') of a person appears to have resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person to whom he (or she) was closely related/involved. They are aimed at identifying the lessons to be learnt from the incident of death/near miss. In Warwickshire, a shared risk approach to resourcing of DHRs and a single policy and procedure has been developed to ensure a consistent and shared approach throughout the county.

*Court Mandated Perpetrator Programme* – Warwickshire and West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company deliver an accredited group work programme, the Building Better Relationships Programme, for perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse as either a condition of a Community Order or Suspended Sentence Order or as a licence condition for offenders released from prison.

*Voluntary perpetrator work (fee payable)* – Outside of the criminal justice system there is little available to challenge perpetrators of VAWG. DACS is the only agency in Warwickshire offering work with perpetrators. DACS undertake an initial assessment to ascertain resistance to work; 6 weeks work of challenge; and if able to engage further then therapeutic work through 10 weekly modules based on individual history, current circumstances and patterns of relating.

## **Partnership**

*Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Board* – The VAWG Strategic Board was established in 2013 in response to an identified strategic gap. The Board is responsible for the VAWG strategy and will oversee delivery of the implementation plan. It is chaired by the Deputy Director of Public Health and reports to the Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board. VAWG partnership governance arrangements are summarised at Appendix A.

*Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board and local Community Safety Partnerships* – The VAWG Board reports into the Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board at each meeting. Violence is a priority area of work for the Board and the local CSPs.

*Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board* – The Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board is an interagency forum for agreeing how the different services and professional groups should cooperate to safeguard children, and make sure that local arrangements work effectively to bring about good outcomes for children in Warwickshire. On the subject of VAWG, the Board provides on-going training on domestic abuse and held a conference on forced marriage and honour based violence in 2012. The 2013 annual conference focused on CSE.

*Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board* – Works in a similar way to the WSCB but on issues relating to adult safeguarding.

*MARAC Steering Group* – Warwickshire's MARACs are overseen by a MARAC Steering Group which aims to provide strategic governance to the MARAC in order to reduce repeat victimisation and reduce levels of harm posed to high risk victims of domestic abuse in Warwickshire, as well as provide quality assurance of the MARAC process. The Group reports into the VAWG Board.

*Honour-Based Violence and Forced Marriage Group* – This is a multi-agency group which is working together to combat all forms of HBV and FM in the county. The group draws its membership from statutory and voluntary sectors and reports to the VAWG Board. The group has developed a specific *implementation* plan to tackle this issue.

*Specialist Domestic Abuse Court Steering Group* – A multi-agency group which guides and monitors the work of the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court. This Group reports into the Local Criminal Justice Board.

*VAWG Annual conference* – Annual conferences are held to review progress and consider new developments in the VAWG arena. In 2014, the annual conference focused on learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews.