



Nottinghamshire

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Improving the response to domestic violence and abuse in Nottinghamshire

A WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH

Position Paper

December 2020

About this paper

This paper has been compiled by the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner with contributions from domestic abuse strategic leads from Nottinghamshire Police, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Unit, Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Bassetlaw and Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups, other NHS health agencies, community safety partnerships, and local commissioned domestic abuse service providers.

It considers the current service landscape and opportunities to improve the response to domestic abuse across five potential phases of intervention as part of a 'whole-systems approach'. These include:

- Prevention of domestic abuse, from primary through to tertiary prevention
- Identification and discovery of domestic abuse and hidden harm
- Immediate safeguarding and crisis care response to domestic abuse
- Longer term recovery and rehabilitation among survivors and perpetrators respectively
- Criminal justice outcomes

The paper collates findings from a range of existing assessment and inspection reports which include:

- HMIC and HMCPSP: Evidence-led Domestic Abuse Prosecutions, 2020 (HMI-ELP2020)
- Nottinghamshire JSNA: Domestic Abuse, 2019 (NS-JSNA2019)
- Nottinghamshire DSVAP Partnership, 2019 (DSVAP-2019)
- HMICFRS: Nottinghamshire PEEL Inspection, 2019 (HMI-PEEL19)
- HMICFRS: Police Response to Domestic Abuse Follow Up, 2019 (HMI-DA2019)
- Nottingham JSNA: Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse, 2018 (NM-JSNA2018)
- Rural Crime Network 'Captive and Controlled' research reports (RCN2019)

The paper sets out recommendations for the Police and PCC in addition to areas for more systemic consideration by the wider domestic abuse partnerships in the city and county. Care has been taken to identify recommendations which fall into the PCC's purview.

This information will be used by the Police and Crime Commissioner ("the PCC") and other key partners to help inform scrutiny, planning and commissioning activity for 2020 and beyond.

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Key Findings

Domestic violence and abuse remains a critical shared priority for partner agencies across Nottinghamshire on account of the high level of individual harm it can cause, the prevalence and likelihood of abuse occurring in local communities and the extent to which presenting demand continues to exceed available service capacity. Despite this profile, the service response to domestic abuse in Nottinghamshire maintains a highly positive trajectory.

Nottinghamshire's response to domestic abuse is overseen by mature multi-agency governance arrangements, with the PCC, local authorities, clinical commissioning groups ("CCGs"), NHS Trusts and providers all recognising the need for and prioritising domestic abuse support. Domestic abuse is also a priority for Nottinghamshire Police and other criminal justice agencies.

The County's Domestic and Sexual Abuse Framework is due to expire in 2020 and the City's Violence Against Women and Girls ("VAWG") strategy is still in development. There is a gap for a city/county wide domestic abuse strategy which sets out clear measures of success. Given the link between domestic abuse, sexual violence, honour based abuse, female genital mutilation ("FGM") and stalking, and the need for any strategy to address all aspects of domestic abuse, including prevention activity as well as supporting survivors, a PCC led VAWG Strategy for Nottinghamshire would enable all strands to be brought together under one overarching plan with clear success measures.

Evidence suggests that both the prevalence and severity of domestic abuse occurring within our communities has been in steady decline over the last decade. However, our growing understanding of non-physical aspects of abuse, the use of technology to exercise power and control, the growing numbers of survivors presenting to support services with multiple and complex needs and increasing demand for support continue to present new challenges for victim service providers and the criminal justice system. Other emerging trends reported by specialist providers such as adolescent to parent violence may require the development of new approaches.

A good range of specialist primary prevention initiatives are in place across the force area. Healthy relationship provision in schools specifically covering domestic abuse has been consistently funded in the city for many years and is almost universal. Healthy relationship provision specifically covering domestic abuse has been more ad hoc across county schools, but has been growing year on year. Further work is required to secure a more stable and consistent strategic approach across Nottinghamshire.

Domestic abuse services across Nottinghamshire are generally, strong, resilient, well-embedded and mostly compliant with Public Health Guidance 116 and the Home Office's National Statement of Expectations for domestic abuse support in local areas, with some gaps in some areas which require further development, such as perpetrators - see below. Despite reductions in the overall budget for policing since 2010, the force has also maintained and invested in its response to domestic abuse over this period with dedicated investigators and specialists.

The proportion of domestic abuse coming to the attention of the police and other agencies is growing markedly, driven in part by better recording, greater recognition of coercive control and stalking, more police proactivity in identifying hidden harm and increases in victim disclosure. This positive trend is likely to continue to do so over the next three years given the increasing multi-agency focus on trauma-informed practice and routine enquiry.

Despite this, however, the number of domestic incidents recorded by police remains lower than that of other comparable police force areas and some groups, such as male victims, remain under-represented within the police recorded crime profile. This indicates opportunities for further partnership engagement, outreach and awareness raising activity. The number of domestic crimes remains broadly similar to that of other comparable areas.

The growth of domestic abuse-related demand and the complexity of that demand continues to grow in Nottinghamshire, placing increasing pressures on investigation, public protection caseloads, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences ("MARACs"), criminal justice and victim support services. Analysis of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers ("IDVAs") supporting survivors at high risk of harm demonstrates that there is a good level of local resourcing which is just under nationally recommended levels but well above East Midlands and national averages.

The first response to domestic abuse is a critical period in terms of safety planning, protecting victims and preventing future harm. Arrest rates for domestic abuse are marginally lower than average in Nottinghamshire, however arrest rates vary significantly and proportionately on the basis of the risk presented.

Further work should be undertaken to explore the reasons for variance in successful application rate for Domestic Violence Protection Orders ("DVPOs") and 'right to know' applications when compared to the national picture and ensure the police and other relevant agencies involved in the management of perpetrators are aware of new relationships and proactively engage with potential victims.

While positive outcome rates for domestic-related crime have been falling over recent years, Nottinghamshire Police maintains a stronger position than the East Midlands and England and Wales average. Reductions in positive outcomes rates are being driven in part by cases in which the survivor does not support further action.

Similarly, while CPS charging rates and conviction for domestic abuse related crimes have been increasing since 2014/15 and are in line with the England and Wales and East Midlands picture, the volume of legal decisions, charges and prosecutions has been falling. This has been driven in part by demand pressures on the police, clarification of charging expectations as a result of revisions to the Code for Crown Prosecutors and standards expected of digital and medical evidence and disclosure.

Consequently, while police recorded domestic abuse is rising, levels of charging, prosecution and conviction have been falling over recent years. Only around 8.4% of domestic abuse-related crimes reported to the police currently result in conviction. This local and national concern has led to an increasing focus on evidence-led prosecution.

The PCC, City and County Councils work together closely to co-commission evidence based support services which help survivors. The co-commissioned support services meet national Women's Aid, Respect and SafeLives quality standards as well as deliver much of the activity set out in the Home Office's VAWG National Statement of Expectations. They consistently deliver high rates of positive outcomes, for example in feelings of safety and greater confidence. They are well linked into and supported by health agencies including local NHS hospitals and healthcare trusts. They have made good progress in identifying and reaching out to survivors from groups which are under-represented in service, particularly focussing on honour based violence, forced marriage and FGM. However, there is more to do to meet unmet needs from other BAME survivors and further work to be done to understand and respond to the needs of migrant workers, which is an issue identified nationally. There is also a need to ensure that survivors living in rural areas can access support in the context of poor transport and fewer services in rural districts.

In terms of crisis intervention, there are capacity constraints relating to agencies attending increasing MARAC presentations and constraints on the availability of refuge places, with new statutory responsibilities for local authorities under the Domestic Abuse Bill likely to increase demand for community-based services and refuge. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire do not currently have sufficient refuge provision and a substantial proportion of existing refuge space in Nottinghamshire is funded nationally, with Ministry of Housing, Local Government and Communities (MHCLG) funding currently supporting over 40% of the refuge units across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Temporary MHCLG funding has recently been re-awarded until the new statutory duties are in force. If insufficient national funding is available to pay for current and additional refuge provision and other accommodation based support, the new Domestic Abuse Bill may have unintended consequences by diverting local funding from wider domestic abuse support services to refuge. Local partnership working will be required to ensure no negative impact on domestic abuse provision.

Despite national expectations and NICE recommendations for local areas to commission tailored interventions for people who perpetrate domestic violence, work in this area remains under-developed both nationally and locally. In Nottinghamshire there is already some primary, secondary and tertiary prevention activity in place to tackle perpetrators, often funded by the PCC. Nottinghamshire's DVA Integrated Offender Management (IOM) pilot has demonstrated a reduction in risk from high risk serial perpetrators and increasing the sense of safety of the survivors associated with them. In late 2020 the PCC secured national funding to roll out a new perpetrator programme in 2021.

However, the funding for the perpetrator programme is limited and there is a need to do more to address perpetrator behaviour. There are opportunities for further activity. Evidence suggests that it is unlikely that a universal, one-size fits all programme will be found that meets the needs of survivors, perpetrators, commissioners and police. Given this, a strategic long term local approach to prevention work is needed, based on best available evidence and considering where resources are best targeted (for example at emerging low risk perpetrators or high risk offenders). Any work funded should meet national Respect guidelines and complement Nottinghamshire's mature domestic abuse landscape. Great care must be taken to ensure that programmes are safe and do no further harm.

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions have presented challenges for domestic abuse services, with lockdown measures widely perceived to have exacerbated and escalated the risk of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse demand on Nottinghamshire Police dipped during lockdown then rose as restrictions were eased. Demand in the county continues to be higher than expected. Nottinghamshire's DSVAs Helpline has experienced very high demand and co-commissioned support services have been under moderate pressure during the pandemic, rising to severe pressure at times. Mitigation has been in place since April 2020 to help manage operational pressures.

Strong existing partnership structures helped to ensure a swift response to changes to domestic abuse provision during the lockdown. In addition, the PCC used emergency MoJ funding to bolster support services, however, more financial help may be needed when the national funding expires. There is a need to identify and implement the domestic abuse specific lessons learnt from the pandemic and an opportunity for public sector partners to work together strategically to ensure that employers in Nottinghamshire have the capacity to respond to domestic abuse experienced by employees.

Learning from domestic homicide reviews across Nottinghamshire since 2015 have reiterated many of the key messages set out in this paper, most notably the importance of an effective response to people with complex needs, rigorous and robust information sharing, comprehensive training across agencies and the value of a whole family approach.

This paper draws largely on information collected by the police, criminal justice bodies and locally commissioned survivor support services. It should be recognised that arrests, prosecutions and survivor support only hold part of the solution. Further work may be required to better understand the individual and family level impact of domestic abuse from a public health perspective as part of a sustainable long term approach.

The analysis in this paper offers only a point in time snapshot of what is a rapidly changing picture. Further policy and legislative changes are likely to impact upon the profile of domestic abuse over the coming year, including the Government's review of pre-charge bail and new duties and responsibilities under the Homelessness Reduction and Domestic Abuse Acts. In addition, Covid-19 measures will continue to have an impact on domestic abuse.

The momentum brought about by the Government's landmark Domestic Abuse Bill, combined with the focus on domestic abuse during Covid-19, provides a timely opportunity to drive further improvements in Nottinghamshire's approach to tackling and reducing domestic abuse, underpinned by dedicated funding and new duties and responsibilities. These developments, and the recommendations below, should be taken forward as part of an integrated multi-agency whole-systems approach across the Nottinghamshire Police force area.

1.2 Recommendations

Recommendation	Lead agencies
Policy context	
1. The PCC to work with key stakeholders across the violence against women and girls sector to develop a whole systems Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and Action plan for 2020-2025 by March 2021. This should include indicators of success against which performance will be tracked.	PCC City Council County Council VRU, CCGs
Nature and prevalence of domestic abuse	
2. The PCC to continue to work with local authority partners to co-commission professional development activity to embed coercive control, emotional abuse, economic abuse, parental abuse and technologically-assisted abuse through local training	PCC City Council County Council
3. As part of the VAWG strategy and action plan, the PCC to work with partners to take forward work to address the particular issues faced by migrants and children affected by domestic abuse, bidding for national funding if available.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
Prevention	
4. The PCC and local authority partners to continue to invest in universal and targeted education, prevention and awareness raising activities and campaigns across the city and county where there is clear evidence of impact, involving health agencies as delivery partners. Where possible, the PCC and partners to increase funding to ensure consistent city/county wide coverage.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
5. The PCC to work with the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Unit to continue to fund and then evaluate initiatives to respond to children and young people who have witnessed violence with knives.	PCC Violence Reduction Unit
Identification	
6. Nottinghamshire Police to drive further improvements in the domestic crime and incident identification rate, with a focus on spotting the signs of abuse and ensuring routine enquiry as part of interactions with potentially vulnerable groups.	Nottinghamshire Police
7. The PCC and City and County Councils to review front line capacity of the co-commissioned specialist domestic abuse support services in view of any increasing identification rate. Further resource may be required.	PCC City Council County Council

Recommendation	Lead agencies
8. The PCC to work with the City and County Council and clinical commissioning groups to review the access to support services across all of Nottinghamshire's communities and develop an action plan to improve take up from under-represented groups, including hidden harm in BAME and rural communities and amongst elderly, LGBT and male survivors.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
Safeguarding	
9. Nottinghamshire Police to lead work to improve the use of domestic violence protection orders.	Nottinghamshire Police
10. Nottinghamshire Police to work with co-commissioned support services to improve the rate of take up of Clare's law.	Nottinghamshire Police
11. The PCC to work with the City and County Councils to continue to co-commission high quality evidence based support services and monitor their capacity to provide high quality helpline, MARAC and IDVA support, reviewing the level of IDVA provision as necessary. To include work with CCGs to learn from hospital based IDVA provision.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
12. The PCC and partners to work together to ensure that the forthcoming statutory duty for domestic abuse accommodation is properly funded and does not have a negative impact on other specialist services.	PCC City Council County Council
Longer term support and recovery	
13. The clinical commissioning groups to review their responsibilities for domestic abuse services through their partnership arrangements with the PCC, and City and County Councils.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
14. The PCC and partners to improve understanding of the needs, experiences and service response to male survivors of domestic abuse, working with the existing male support service.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
Rehabilitation and behaviour change	
15. The PCC to work with partners to put a long term DVA prevention strategy in place, as part of the Violence Against Girls Strategy and Action Plan and informed by the VRU's literature review.	PCC, Police, Probation, VRU, Local authorities CCGs

Recommendation	Lead agencies
16. The PCC to ensure the successful roll out and evaluation of Nottinghamshire's Respect accredited DV perpetrator programme	PCC
17. The PCC, Nottinghamshire Police, CRC and commissioned support services to consider expansion to build on the success of the DVA IOM Scheme.	PCC Nottinghamshire Police
The Criminal Justice System	
18. Improve oversight and scrutiny of the appropriate use of 'release under investigation' and pre-charge bail pending legislative/ guidance changes.	PCC Nottinghamshire Police
19. Ensure ongoing monitoring of domestic abuse satisfaction rates and support action to maintain strong levels of survivor satisfaction with police, particularly via improvements in follow up and feedback.	PCC Nottinghamshire Police
20. Work with HM Courts and criminal justice partners to ensure access to justice and sufficient specialist DV provision across the city and county.	PCC Crown Prosecution Service HM Courts
21. Police and CPS to explore opportunities to improve use and understanding of evidence-led prosecutions alongside appropriate training, messaging and sharing of best practice.	Nottinghamshire Police Crown Prosecution Service
Covid-19	
22. The PCC work with local authorities and Nottinghamshire Police to ensure that critical specialist support services can continue safely throughout and after the pandemic.	PCC City Council County Council
23. The PCC to work with Nottinghamshire Police, local authorities, CCGs and commissioned support services to identify and implement specific domestic abuse related lessons learnt from Covid-19.	PCC, Police City Council County Council CCGs

2. Introduction

This document provides a high level overview of the profile of domestic abuse across Nottinghamshire, including demand for domestic violence and abuse-related services, the local service landscape and extent to which demand is being met. It also aims to highlight new and emerging trends and opportunities for more effective practice.

The report has been compiled by the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to help inform policy, practice and commissioning arrangements in relation to domestic violence and abuse service provision over the 2020-24 period.

The report is primarily informed by existing assessments and analytical products as referenced throughout, however, additional scanning, research, engagement and analysis has been undertaken as and where required. The report takes account of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the profile of domestic abuse in Nottinghamshire as at early August 2020. It recognises that the environment created by the pandemic is fast moving and is susceptible to change.

2.1 What do we mean by domestic violence and abuse?

Domestic abuse is defined as:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. The definition also includes domestic abuse stalking, so-called 'honour-based' abuse (HBA), female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage (FM).

Controlling behaviour includes a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

This is well articulated by Duluth Power and Control Wheel shown here.

Fig 1. Duluth Power and Control Wheel



2.2 Policy Context

In 2016 the Home Office published the [Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2016 to 2020](#) which re-affirmed the Government's commitment to tackling domestic abuse. It set an ambitious programme of work to 2020 which focussed on prevention, provision of services, partnership working and pursuing perpetrators. The strategy was underpinned by £80m dedicated funding for core support, refuges and other accommodation-based services and the launch of a VAWG Transformation Fund to promote and embed the best practice.

The strategy also prompted a greater focus on the criminal justice system's response to controlling or coercive behaviour¹ in an intimate or family relationship, introducing this as a criminal offence under s76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 in December 2015. Work continues within and across criminal justice agencies to ensure that patterns of domestic abuse which do not neatly align with existing categories of crime, including emotional and economic abuse, are recognised and understood.

The Home Office published a [Male Position Paper](#) in 2019 which recognised formally that boys and men can also be victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and they need a specialist response.

Further changes were made to police crime recording categories in April 2019 as a result of the Stalking Protection Bill 2019 which led to a significant increase in the number of recorded stalking offences. The legislation also provision for new stalking protection orders and ensured that a breach of a stalking protection order is a criminal offence, providing a stronger legislative context for protecting victims.

A [National Statement of Expectations](#) was issued in 2016, placing expectations on local areas to ensure that their strategies and services put the victim at the centre of service delivery; are locally led; safeguard individuals and have a clear focus on perpetrators in doing so; take a strategic approach recognising the gendered nature of domestic abuse; raise awareness locally and involve and engage communities to prevent violence against women and girls.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) reviewed existing [Public Health Guidance on Domestic Abuse](#) (NICE Guideline 116) in 2018 on how health, social care and other partner agencies can prevent and reduce domestic abuse among women and men in heterosexual or same-sex relationships. The guidance makes for the planning and delivery of multi-agency services for domestic violence and abuse which include:

- Participation in multi-agency strategic partnerships which develop a local integrated strategy and pathways;
- Ensuring frontline staff are trained and able to respond appropriately;

¹ Controlling behaviour constitutes a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour. Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

- Referrals to specialist services, particularly among individuals that may find it difficult to access support such as those with no recourse to public funds and children and young people.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has a quality standard relating specifically to domestic abuse (QS116)². The standard makes recommendations for the commissioning of evidence-based specialist support services including:

- Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) to ensure support for those deemed high risk;
- Advocacy - advice, safety planning, support, information and liaison between survivors, statutory agencies and other organisations to negotiate access to and use of police, health, criminal justice, housing and legal services;
- 24-hour helpline service to help abused women understand abuse, make changes to their lives, and provide links to available support and service provision;
- Refuge – access to refuge is a critical feature of the support landscape, providing a safe place for women and children escaping domestic abuse;
- IRIS (Identification and Referral to Improve Safety) - education and advocacy intervention for General Practitioners and their staff which includes training and support in identifying women experiencing domestic abuse, ensuring an appropriate initial response and referral to a specialist advocacy service;
- Mental health support - provide treatment for people with mental health problems who experience domestic abuse including trauma-focused psychological therapy;
- Perpetrators - commission robust evaluations of perpetrator programmes.

Following extensive Government [consultation](#) in 2018, it introduced the landmark [Domestic Abuse Bill](#) to parliament in July 2019 and re-introduced the bill with a number of key changes in December 2019 after the dissolution of parliament. The bill aims to raise awareness and understanding of the impact of domestic abuse on victims and families; improve the effectiveness of the justice system in providing protection for victims and bringing perpetrators to justice, and strengthen support for victims of abuse across statutory agencies. It aims to achieve this by:

- legislating for a [statutory definition](#) of domestic abuse
- provide for [Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Orders](#) to better protect victims
- placing a statutory duty on local authorities to provide [accommodation-based services](#)
- helping victims give [best evidence](#) and preventing [cross-examination](#) by abusers
- introducing a [Domestic Abuse Commissioner](#) to drive consistency / improvements
- [Secure tenancies](#) to support for victims in social housing in leaving abusive situations
- introducing mandatory [polygraph testing](#) as a license condition for perpetrators
- new statutory guidance on the [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#) (Clare's law)

² <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs116>

The elected Conservative Party [manifesto](#) in 2019 also pledged to support reforms to Universal Credit giving more independence to those trapped with coercive partners; increase support for refugees and community support for sexual abuse victims; continue to fight crime against women and girls, including rape, FGM and forced marriage and pilot integrated domestic abuse courts that address criminal and family matters.

Campaigners also subsequently launched a [call to action](#) for Government to publish and fund a perpetrator strategy, recognising that less than 1% of perpetrators currently receive a specialist intervention to challenge or change their behaviour.

The UK's first Independent [Domestic Abuse Commissioner](#), Nicole Jacobs, was announced in September 2019, who, with statutory powers granted via the Domestic Abuse Bill, will be tasked with encouraging good practice in preventing domestic abuse, identifying those at risk of abuse or offending, improving the protection and provision of support and holding statutory agencies and the Government to account. Ms Jacobs announced her priorities over the coming year to be mapping existing service provision and to shining a light on good practice or where good practice is lacking.

In November 2019, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government launched a Challenge Fund of up to £15m in 2020/21 to provide support in domestic abuse safe accommodation. Both Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have been awarded funding from the Fund, which will ensure short term continuity of local refuge provision.

The Government also announced continued funding for 18 Violence Reduction Units in 2020/21 to develop strategies to prevent serious violence by understanding its root causes and working with police, healthcare workers and community leaders as part of a long term Public Health approach. Nottinghamshire's Violence Reduction Unit ("VRU"), which incorporates serious domestic violence within the scope of its work, has been awarded an additional £880,000 funding for the 2020/21 financial year.

2.3 Local Policy and Approach

Domestic violence and abuse is a shared police and community safety partnership priority across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and a focus for targeted and enhanced partnership planning and commissioning.

Structured assessment processes, such as the PCNA 2020 MoRiLE assessment³, consistently highlight domestic violence and abuse among the most significant priority threats on account of the high level of individual harm, likelihood, prevalence and extent to which presenting demand exceeds available service capacity.

Issue	Individual Harm	Community Harm	Likelihood Prevalence	Trend	Knowledge Plans	Resources Capacity
Domestic violence and abuse	Very High	Low	High	◀ ▶	Evolved	Limited

³ [Management of Risk in Law Enforcement](#) (MoRiLE)

A wide range of agencies are committed to driving improvements in the response to domestic abuse via plans and strategies set out by the Police and Crime Commissioner, Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership, Safer Nottinghamshire Board, and Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Boards.

In the county, leadership across the sector is provided through the cross sector Nottinghamshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive (“DSA Executive”) and its sub-groups, which include the MARAC Steering Group and Domestic Homicide Review Assurance Learning and Implementation Group (DHR ALIG).

The DSA Executive reports directly to the Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB) and works under the *‘Framework for Tackling Domestic and Sexual Abuse in Nottinghamshire 2016-2020’*, which will be reviewed during 2020.

In the city, leadership is provided through the Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy Group and Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Joint Commissioning Group, both of which report into the Crime and Drugs Partnership. Operational groups sitting below the Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy Group include the MARAC Steering Group, Safeguarding, Domestic Homicide Assurance and Implementation Group, children’s, criminal justice and specialist voluntary sector groups. A multi-agency violence against women and girls strategy is in development in the city.

Where appropriate, agencies also maintain links with Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), the Integrated Offender Management Programme, Criminal Justice Steering Group and the Third Sector Forum.

Plans are already in place for local domestic abuse governance arrangements to evolve during 2020, in order to meet new national requirements for areas to set up a Local Partnership Board to commission and co-ordinate domestic abuse activity.

The PCC remains committed to tackling domestic abuse, and has identified this as a priority issue within each of his Police and Crime Plans since 2012. The PCC seeks to increase safety and resilience from victimisation and repeat victimisation among those at risk of abuse and help survivors to cope and recover from harm. The PCC also supports work with the highest risk domestic abuse perpetrators in order to reduce the harm they cause.

The PCC continues to work closely with the City and County Councils to align strategic and commissioning activity in order to achieve these aims.

3. Nature and prevalence of domestic violence and abuse

3.1 Prevalence of Domestic Abuse

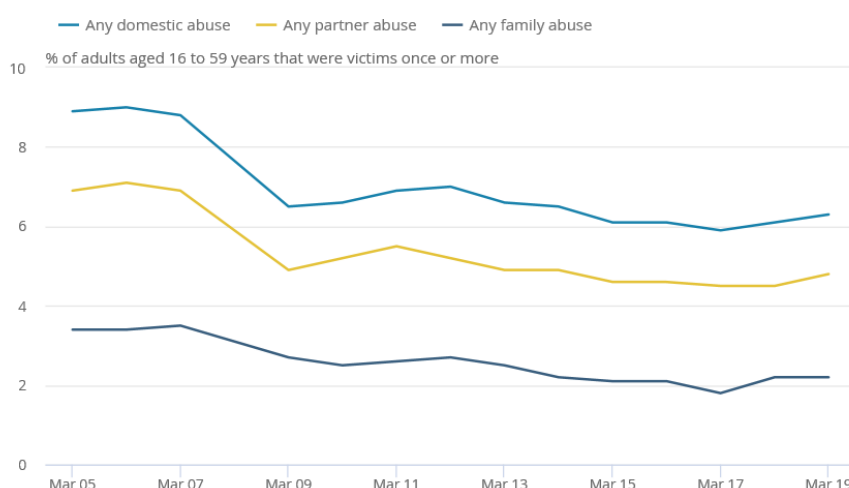
The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)⁴ provides one of the most reliable estimates of prevalence and trends in domestic abuse across England and Wales, recognising the extent to which victimisation remains under-reported. Extrapolations from the Crime Survey indicate that around 5.5% of adults (46,480 people) are likely to have experienced domestic abuse in Nottinghamshire within the last year, while around 176,400 are likely to have experienced some form of domestic abuse in their lifetime.

Fig 2. Experience of Domestic Abuse in Nottinghamshire in 2020 – experimental estimates

	Since the age of 16			In the last year		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Partner abuse (non-sexual)	39,560	88,460	128,020	8,890	20,960	29,850
Family abuse (non-sexual)	21,930	31,510	53,440	5,540	8,700	14,240
Sexual assault by a partner	2,610	27,040	29,650	320	2,290	2,610
Sexual assault by a family member	780	8,730	9,510	90	290	380
Stalking by a partner	11,390	34,950	46,340	2,170	4,120	6,290
Stalking by a family member	4,560	12,250	16,810	1,150	1,880	3,030
Any partner abuse	44,670	101,310	145,980	10,410	23,830	34,240
Any family abuse	24,980	43,400	68,380	6,430	10,100	16,530
Any domestic abuse	58,990	117,410	176,400	15,350	31,130	46,480

The survey also indicates that the prevalence of domestic abuse has shown no statistically significant change over the last three years, however the cumulative effect of small year-on-year reductions has resulted in a significantly lower prevalence of domestic abuse experienced in 2019/20 (5.5%) when compared to 2004/05 (8.9%).

Fig 3. Prevalence of Domestic Abuse (England and Wales) 2005 to 2019



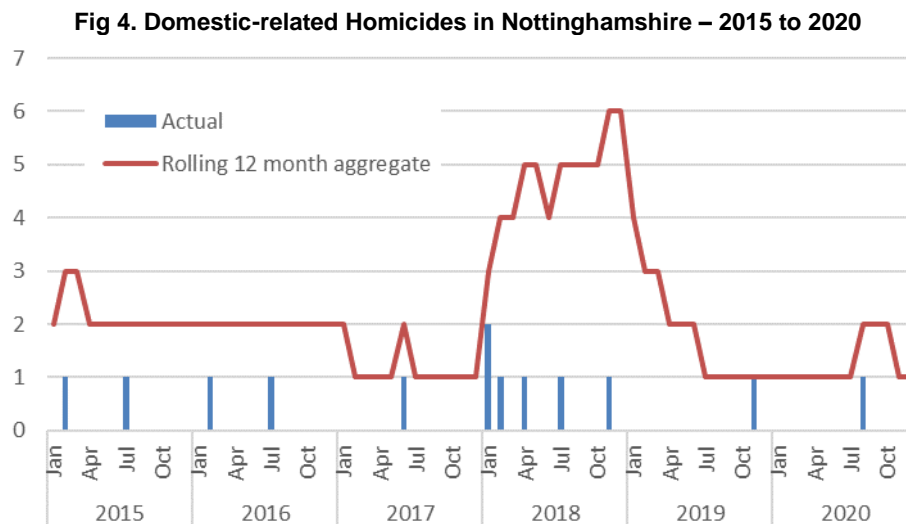
Source: Office for National Statistics - Crime Survey for England and Wales

⁴ [Domestic abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: year ending March 2020](#), ONS, published July 2020. Data collected via a self-completion module on domestic abuse and stalking where respondents input answers via a tablet computer

There are currently no reliable estimates of the underlying prevalence of coercive control or so called ‘honour’ based violence or forced marriage across Nottinghamshire. New questions relating to coercive control are currently being developed as part of the Crime Survey for England and Wales to provide better estimates.

The prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is estimated to have been in decline internationally over the last three decades with more than 15,000 communities in 20 countries having publicly declared that they are abandoning the practice. UNICEF⁵, however, has warned that current progress is insufficient to keep pace with population growth, which could lead to an increase in the *number* of women and girls affected by the practice over the next 15 years. There are no reliable estimates of the underlying prevalence of individuals affected by or newly subjected to FGM in Nottinghamshire.

Domestic Homicide rates provide a local indication of trends in the most serious domestic violence, with almost all being captured and recorded by police. Despite a cluster of (6) domestic homicides occurring in between January and November 2018, the long term trend has remained relatively stable in Nottinghamshire, with an average of 2 being recorded each year.



Domestic homicides account for around 20% of all homicides where the victim is over the age of 16, which is consistent with the national profile. Of the 6 domestic homicides recorded during 2018, all involved male perpetrators, 5 of which were in a relationship with their female victim, with the remaining case involving brothers. The homicide methods varied from stabbing (4), suffocation / smothering (1) and strangling (1).

⁵ [Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A Global Concern](#), UNICEF, 2016

3.2 Victims and Survivors of Domestic Abuse

Women account for around 67.0% of all domestic abuse victims captured via the CSEW and 74% of all domestic homicide victims recorded by police. This indicates that females (7.3%) are not only at disproportionately higher risk of domestic abuse compared to males (3.6%), but are also at greater risk of serious harm. The CSEW indicates that the risk of domestic abuse is also more pronounced among:

- Women aged 20 to 24 years (15.1%)
- Adults who were separated (17.7%) or divorced (13.5%)
- Adults living in urban areas (6.0%) as opposed to rural areas (4.2%)
- Women from mixed (20.0%) or Black Caribbean (18.7%) backgrounds
- Women that are unemployed (15.5%) or full time students (12.2%)
- Disabled men (7.1%) and women (13.8%)
- Bisexual men (12.0%) and women (17.0%) and lesbian women (10.2%)

A range of research studies have also identified correlation between the following factors and the likelihood, impact or escalation of domestic abuse:

- Women that are pregnant or have recently given birth⁶
- People with alcohol, substance abuse or mental health issues⁷
- Increased risk at the point of separation from an abusive partner⁸
- Personal, community or cultural acceptance of domestic abuse⁹
- Female offending / prison population where 50%-60% report experience of abuse
- Lower prevalence but higher impact of abuse in more isolated rural communities¹⁰
- Higher impact among those that are financially dependent upon their abuser¹¹
- Higher prevalence and impact among those with an uncertain immigration status¹².

In many cases, survivors across these groups are often less likely to access support due to factors such as social isolation, language barriers, increased vulnerability and a lack of awareness about what constitutes abuse and the services that are available.

⁶ Domestic abuse risk factors: Summary of findings from a Rapid Evidence Assessment, College of Policing, 2014

⁷ Domestic Abuse Problem Profile identified alcohol as a factor present in 41% of domestic abuse crimes recorded by the police in and is commonly recognised as both a catalyst for offending and a coping mechanism among victims of abuse Nottinghamshire Police, March 2017

⁸ Walby, S. and Allen, J. Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the BCS, Home Office, 2004

⁹ Changing cultural and social norms that support violence, World Health Organisation, 2009

¹⁰ Captive & Controlled: Domestic Abuse in Rural Areas, National Rural Crime Network, July 2019 - Research highlighting disparity in the police response and access to survivor support services that exist between rural and urban districts. Makes recommendations for Chief Constables to assess and improve service provision in rural areas, the Government to apply its 'rural proofing' policy to domestic abuse and PCCs to account for the specific needs of victims and survivors in rural communities

¹¹ The Domestic Abuse Report 2019: The Economics of Abuse, Women's Aid, 2019

¹² Migrant victims of domestic abuse review, Home Office, July 2020 - highlighted the unique challenges faced by migrant victims of domestic abuse with no recourse to public funds (i.e. most non-EEA migrant victims). Uncertain immigration status can be used by perpetrators to control and manipulate victims and act as a barrier to victims presenting to the police or sharing information.

3.3 Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

Police recorded around 2,157 domestic abuse related perpetrators in 2019, marking a further reduction on levels recorded in 2018 (2,328). Only a small number (14) were identified as having committed 10 or more offences over the 2 year period (January 2018 to December 2019). Police recorded crime data provides the most composite profile of domestic abuse perpetrators in Nottinghamshire, but will only capture those known to and recorded by the police.

Groups disproportionately represented within the profile of police recorded perpetrators include:

- Men (90%)
- Men from BAME backgrounds (18% of perpetrators, 15% male population)
- Men from Caribbean (2.4%) and White and Black Caribbean backgrounds (2.4%)
- People with alcohol or substance misuse issues¹³
- History of abuse, either personal experience or witnessing abuse of a parent
- Personal community or cultural acceptance of domestic abuse
- Adults who were separated (17.7%) or divorced (13.5%)
- Male on female abuse in areas of high economic and social deprivation¹⁴

3.4 Children

Of all adults disclosing experience of domestic abuse via the Crime Survey for England and Wales¹⁵, around 40.9% reported that children were present in the household at the time. Of these, around 20.5% states that the children saw or heard the abuse. Other evidence¹⁶ suggests that around 75% of children living in households where domestic abuse occurs are exposed to actual incidents.

The long term impact of this exposure to abuse is well documented, with children being at increased risk of developing acute physical and emotional health problems. For example, adults aged 18 to 74 reporting that they had witnessed domestic violence or abuse before the age of 16 are more likely to:

- Have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 (54.3% v 17.6%)
- Have experienced domestic abuse in the last year (16.9% v 4.2%)
- Experienced 3 or more adverse childhood experiences (5.4% v 0.4%)
- Have a long-term mental health condition or disability (29.1% v 19.0%)

¹³ An Alcohol Concern and AVA study (2016) learning lessons from Domestic Homicide Reviews noted that 'whilst there is evidence that alcohol use by perpetrators, and to a lesser extent by victims, increases the frequency of violence and the seriousness of the outcomes, this does not mean that alcohol use causes domestic abuse. It is neither an excuse nor an explanation.'

¹⁴ [Khalifeh et al.](#) (2013), [Walby & Allen](#) (2004), [Pearlman et al.](#) (2001). Note: Local area deprivation was found to be associated with physical domestic violence affecting females. There is no evidence of this association among amongst DV affecting males. Furthermore, Walby and Allen (2004) suggested that the association between domestic violence and social deprivation may also be a result of a greater willingness to report among some communities rather than a higher underlying prevalence rate.

¹⁵ Crime Survey for England and Wales, Year Ending March 2018, Office for National Statistics

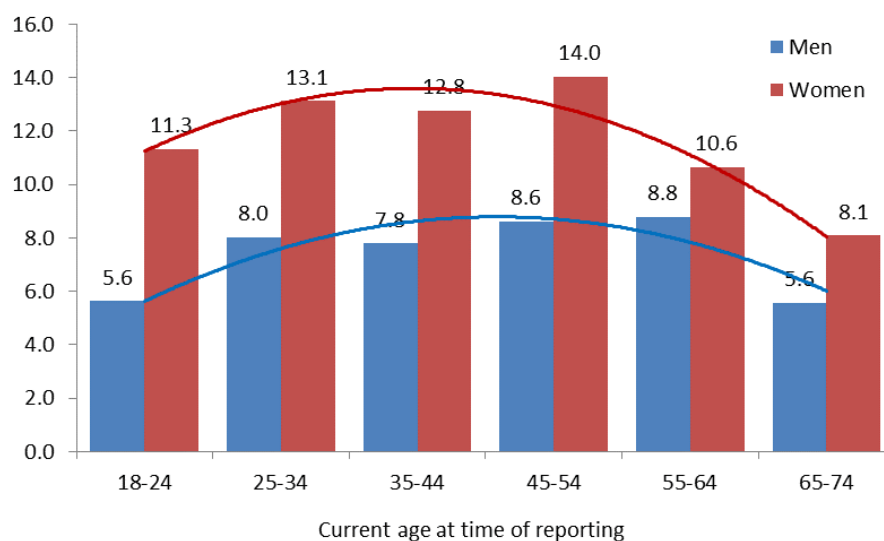
¹⁶ [Domestic Violence: its effects on children, Factsheet for parents and teachers](#), Royal College of Psychiatrists (2004). [The Effectiveness of Targeted Interventions for Children Exposed to Domestic Violence: Measuring Success in Ways that Matter to Children, Parents and Professionals. Child Abuse](#), Howarth E, Moore THM, Shaw ARG, Welton NJ, Feder GS, Hester M, MacMillan HL, and Stanley N. (2015)

Other research has identified clear correlations between experience of domestic violence, abuse or trauma in childhood and:

- Harmful sexual behaviour - a study by Hackett et al (2013)¹⁷ of children and young people with harmful sexual behaviour found that two-thirds had experienced some kind of abuse or trauma, including domestic violence;
- Serious youth violence – a Home Office study in 2019 found that around 14% of 18 year olds exposed to domestic violence had engaged in some form of serious youth violence compared with 7.4% who had no experience of abuse in the home;
- Youth offending - A review¹⁸ published by the Victim's Commissioner in 2020 found a clear overlap between children's experience of domestic abuse and children's offending behaviour, although the precise relationship remains unclear.

It can be estimated¹⁹ that around 80,771 adults aged 18 to 74 across Nottinghamshire (9.78%) are likely to be living with the effects of having witnessed domestic abuse before the age of 16.

Fig 5. Percentage of adults reporting experience of having witnessed domestic abuse before the age of 16, CSEW, March 2019



Respondents aged 18 to 24 were among the least likely to report experience of witnessing abuse before the age of 16 indicating reductions in childhood exposure to domestic abuse since the 1970s and 1980s.

Women's Aid England has recognised the need for pro-active action to tackle the harm to children and young caused by domestic abuse²⁰, including recommendations to recognise children and young people as survivors in their own right, and ensuring support for children and young and the professionals that work with them.

¹⁷ [Children and Young People with harmful sexual behaviours](#), Hackett, 2013

¹⁸ Children's Experiences of domestic abuse and criminality: a literature review, Victim's Commissioner, June 2020

¹⁹ [Child abuse in England and Wales: January 2020](#), findings from the 2018/19 Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics, January 2020

²⁰ Nowhere to Turn for Children and Young People, documenting the journeys of children and young people into refuge, Women's Aid England September 2020 <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/nowhere-to-turn-for-children-and-young-people/>

3.5 The changing nature of domestic abuse

Below is a summary of the long term trends in domestic abuse. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a substantial impact on domestic abuse in Nottinghamshire, and this is explored in more detail in Section 10.

Anecdotal evidence from domestic abuse service providers²¹ indicates that the likelihood of survivors presenting with physical injuries has declined over recent years, while presentations for other forms of abuse, such as emotional, financial and psychological have increased. This is similarly reflected within the police recorded crime profile where average 'crime harm' has fallen by 3.9% over the last year from 175.1 to 168.3.

While further academic research may help to develop the local understanding of changing trends in the nature of domestic abuse, it is likely that increased awareness of what constitutes abuse and a more proactive police response may have led to reductions in physical and overt offending over recent years.

Other factors that are contributing to the changing profile of domestic abuse include:

- Technology as an emerging means of perpetrating abuse: A national study²² involving surveys with 152 domestic violence advocates and 46 victims showed that technology and use of social networking websites via mobile phones and tablets is commonly used in intimate partner stalking. Technology was used to create a sense of the perpetrator's omnipresence, and to isolate, punish, and humiliate domestic violence victims. Technology can also act as an enabler to offences such as so-called "revenge porn".
- Increasing complexity of cases: the public sector commissioned specialist domestic abuse providers Juno and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid and Equation have all reported rising complexity across significant numbers of survivors. Increasing numbers of survivor are presenting with complex needs including mental health problems, alcohol and other substance misuse. The National Commission on Domestic and Sexual Abuse and Multiple Disadvantage²³ highlighted connections between domestic and sexual abuse and multiple disadvantage and made recommendations for greater service collaboration, routine enquiry relating to domestic abuse and more trauma informed services.
- Rising mental and other health-related need: Juno Women's Aid has reported that trauma focussed specialist counselling has improved the wellbeing of survivors with complex needs in the city. There is a need for more research in this area²⁴.
- Although low in volume, Juno and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid have also reported anecdotal increases in the number of older women supported where the alleged perpetrator suffers from dementia. This is likely to become an increasingly prevalent as the number of people affected by dementia continues to rise. This will have an impact on service provision with a need to reach out to and support more elderly survivors. A lack of consistent arrangements for recording cases involving dementia

²¹ N.B – further consultation and triangulation required (Juno Women's Aid, 2019)

²² [The Abuse of Technology in Domestic Violence and Stalking](#), Delanie Woodlock, Sage Journal publication, May 2016

²³ <https://avaproject.org.uk/?s=breaking+down+the+barriers+2019>

²⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27404807>

and other mental health related factors currently inhibits our ability to robustly monitor prevalence and presenting demand in this area.

- Knife crime: While evidence relating specifically to knife crime and domestic abuse is limited, data from Domestic Homicide Reviews have identified the use of knives and sharp instruments to be a common factor in domestic homicides among both male and female victims aged 16 and over, both nationally²⁵ (46%) and locally (66%). [Public Health Approaches to Reducing Violence](#)²⁶ offer some of the most promising methods of identifying what works to combat knife crime.
- Parental abuse: Commissioned service providers are increasingly identifying cases involving adolescent sons perpetrating violence and abuse towards parents. While seeking support to resolve the situation, it is rare that any form of criminal justice outcome will be sought by victims.
- Economic abuse is becoming increasingly recognised as a form of control within intimate partner relationships, with the Domestic Abuse Bill 2019 having outlined a clear definition. Economic abuse goes beyond financial abuse and can involve behaviours that control a person's ability to acquire, use and maintain economic resources. This may include money, food, transport and housing – for example, restricting the use of a car or ruining credit ratings.
- The Home Office's Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse Review July 2020²⁷ found the forthcoming Domestic Abuse Bill missed the opportunity to address the needs of migrant women with no recourse to public funds. It makes recommendations about exploring ways to extend existing support and to separate the reporting of crime and access to support services from immigration control. More data is required nationally and a new national "Support for Migrant Victims" pilot scheme was launched in 2020. The scheme will assess gaps and gather data to inform future commissioning.
- NSPCC Guidance: Domestic Abuse Learning from Case Reviews June 2020²⁸ analysed 11 serious case reviews and found that professionals sometimes struggle to keep their focus on children when they are working with families where there is domestic abuse. Learning highlights that professionals need to understand the effect of domestic abuse on children, not make assumptions about gender roles and prioritise the impact that living with domestic abuse has on children.
- A review published by the Victims' Commissioner in 2020²⁹ calls for the Government to ensure that children who experience domestic abuse are recognised in statute as victims of crime. The report also calls for targeted interventions and support to help these children and young people recover from domestic abuse. This is informed by the Victims' Commissioner's earlier 'Sowing the Seeds' report April 2020³⁰: which recommends earlier intervention and more consistent working practices.

²⁵ Home Office Study (2016) based on Domestic Homicides recorded between 2007/8 and 2014/15

²⁶ [Public Health Approaches to Reducing Violence](#), LGA, July 2018

²⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migrant-victims-of-domestic-abuse-review>

²⁸ <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/learning-from-case-reviews/domestic-abuse>

²⁹ Children's Experiences of domestic abuse and criminality: a literature review, Victim's Commissioner, June 2020

³⁰ <https://victimscommissioner.org.uk/published-reviews/sowing-the-seeds-childrens-experience-of-domestic-abuse-and-criminality/>

3.6 Local response to emerging trends

The PCC commissions a number of initiatives which aim to build understanding and awareness of the changing nature of domestic abuse as well as respond to new trends. This includes:

- PCC, City and County Council co-commissioned provider Equation provides city and county specialist multi-agency domestic abuse seminars, briefings and training sessions which raise awareness of different types of domestic abuse and how to respond appropriately (further detail in 5.3).
- PCC, City and County Council co-commissioned providers Juno Women's Aid and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid to lead on developing long term approaches to support female survivors with multiple and complex needs. This has included securing MHCLG funding for therapy for a small number of survivors and for specialist refuge provision.
- The VRU has funded initiatives to work with children and young people who have been affected by witnessing violence and abuse to their non-abusing parent with the use of a knife.

4. Prevention

4.1 Prevention in Context

Preventing domestic violence and abuse remains a core priority for local partner agencies. This includes work in relation to:

- **Primary prevention:** Universal action aimed at the whole population to prevent abuse occurring in the first place. This may involve education; information; social media campaigns and resources; and support to children and young people;
- **Secondary prevention:** Targeted services for adults and children at risk of experiencing domestic violence, with the aim of minimising risk and the adverse effects of abuse;
- **Tertiary prevention:** targeting individuals or families who have already been identified as living with domestic violence, with the aim of minimising adverse effects, protecting from further harm and helping to overcoming the harm already caused.

4.2 What Works

Evidence from the Early Intervention Foundation supports three key forms of preventive measures that address the specific challenges of domestic violence and abuse:

- Universal services in embedding an understanding of good relationships in childhood and adolescence;
- Specialist early intervention and activity to support social and emotional skills and provide other support to at risk groups;
- Work to support survivors, safeguard children and reduce re-offending by perpetrators. This category of services can be classified as late activity on account of sometimes large costs involved in tackling issues that are harder to address, however these services have elements that aim to prevent recurrence³¹.

The Lancet journal³² identifies several interventions that have been proven effective in combating violence against women and girls. These are commonly participatory, engage multiple stakeholders, support critical discussion about gender relationships and the acceptability of violence, and support greater communication/shared decision making among family members in relation to both violent and non-violent behaviour.

Since April 2011, local statutory safeguarding agencies have been required³³ to review learning from all Domestic Homicides in their area, with the aim of preventing future domestic violence and ensuring agency respond effectively at the earliest opportunity. Domestic homicides often involve medium and standard risk survivors who are subject to less intensive monitoring and management than those assessed as high risk.

³¹ <https://www.eif.org.uk/report/early-intervention-in-domestic-violence-and-abuse>

³² [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(14\)61703-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(14)61703-7/fulltext)

³³ Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004)

Local partners have undertaken more than 13 DHRs in Nottinghamshire relating to homicides that occurred between 2015 and 2018. Notable learning points from this process have included the:

- importance of rigorous information sharing, including third party information;
- response to people with vulnerabilities or complex needs;
- issue of victims not engaging with services;
- requirement for accurate record keeping;
- value of a whole family approach;
- need for specialist knowledge within the criminal justice system in relation to perpetrators and young people who harm;
- need for DSVa training across partner agencies, including risk assessment and perpetrator identification.

Learning from DHRs and ensuring action is taken is led by the city DHR Assurance Implementation and Learning Group (ALIG). An ALIG is also in place in the county.

4.3 Local service provision

The PCC, City and County Councils have co-commissioned Equation to provide a range of schools-based evidence based primary prevention activities and initiatives across Nottinghamshire. These initiatives specifically cover domestic abuse. The city provision has been consistently funded by the PCC and City Council over many years, which has enabled Equation to work with high numbers of schools and Pupil Referral Units/alternative provision in the city. Although Nottinghamshire Schools Health Hub provides activity in schools around consent, specific domestic abuse related healthy relationship provision coverage in the county is more ad hoc, as it is not county wide and has been funded annually when funds permit through PCC funding via the Safer Nottinghamshire Board and local community safety partnerships. The programmes include:

- **GREAT (Good Relationships are Equal and Trusting) project** – 4 week programme in primary schools for years 5/6 which explores healthy and unhealthy relationships, domestic abuse and gender equality. 94 training events were held in 2018/19³⁴.
- **GREAT Connections** – resources for primary schools to work on relationships from reception to year 6. Resources cover what relationships are, including families, friends, communities, romantic; and difference (gender equality).
- **Equate** – healthy relationship programme aimed at years 7, 8, and 9 in secondary schools building on the GREAT project. The programme covers teen abuse, personal space, sex, consent and consequences, sexting, online behaviours and misogyny.

³⁴ Schools based programmes run on an academic year so 2018-9 data has been included, as 2019-0 programmes were cancelled because of Covid-19

In addition to schools based work the PCC has funded a number of grassroots community based primary and secondary prevention projects during his term in office, which in 2020/21 included:

- Delivery of bilingual Freedom programmes and Know Your Rights workshops, delivered by Nottingham Muslim Women's Network, building on previous work with Imams to raise awareness of domestic abuse;
- Support for African Women's Empowerment Forum to build their capacity to respond to BAME women who are experiencing domestic abuse;
- Prevention of FGM, delivered for several years by Mojatu.

The PCC and City and County Councils also co-commission a wide range of secondary prevention activity, which includes:

- **Co-commissioned evidence based support services for survivors** - Juno Women's Aid and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid provide outcomes focussed support for women and children experiencing domestic abuse and Equation provides support for men experiencing domestic abuse. The services provide safety planning to reduce the risk of harm (see Section 6, Safeguarding and Crisis Care) as well as practical and emotional support (see Section 7, Recovery and Rehabilitation). They empower survivors to recognise domestic abuse and understand the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships. The support services deliver evidence based initiatives as set out by NICE Guideline 116.
- **Freedom Programme** - Nottinghamshire Women's Aid and Juno Women's Aid deliver domestic abuse awareness/healthy relationship programmes for women.
- **Hands are not for Hurting** – Nottinghamshire Women's Aid and Juno Women's Aid provide children and Young People's workers which offer one to one support and group work for children. The approach has been shown to be valued by children and parents with outcomes focussing on safety and wellbeing, ability to express feelings, increasing school performance and having positive peer relationships.
- **Awareness raising activity** - campaigns such as Equation's 'Help a Friend' Campaign and PCC and City and County Council funded survivor information cards aim to increase access to support services at an early stage.

In addition to support service and awareness raising, the PCC and City and County Councils also fund Equation to provide a range of targeted evidence-based activity including:

- **Choices** - Targeted 8 week project in secondary schools for up to 12 young men per group, who are beginning to display damaging attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. Sessions focus in more depth on healthy and unhealthy behaviours as well as self-esteem, role models, aspirations, pressures and managing emotions.
- **Know More** - Targeted 8 week project in secondary schools for up to 12 young women in a group. Sessions focus in more depth on healthy and unhealthy behaviours as well as self-esteem, role models, aspirations, pressures and managing emotions. 2,158 individuals were trained as part of this work in 2018/19.

- **Horizons (pilot)** – Equation, with Juno and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid, are delivering a County Council funded pilot project for young people who have been identified as causing harm in family relationships. The programme, which was originally developed with PCC funding via the SNB, takes a whole family approach to tackling abuse.
- **My Connections** - a toolkit developed with PCC funding, aimed for use by professionals working with young people (aged 14-18 years) who have begun to harm in their relationships. County Council funding is supporting the roll out with youth offending services to provide an early intervention to challenge damaging attitudes, beliefs and behaviours and build positive relationship values. The toolkit is also being piloted with Nottinghamshire Women's Aid.

The PCC has also funded Juno Women's Aid and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid, via the VRU, to deliver initiatives to work with children and young people who have been affected by witnessing violence and abuse to their non-abusing parent with the use of a knife.

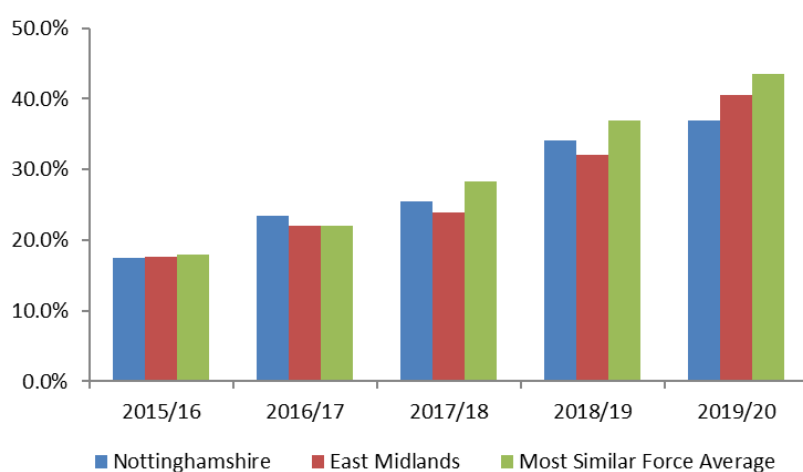
5. Identification

5.1 Identification Rate

Nottinghamshire Police recorded 20,628 domestic abuse crimes³⁵ and incidents in 2019/20 with the overall volume having risen by 45.2% since 2016/17 (14,228). Comparing underlying prevalence rates to the recorded crime and incident profile, it can be estimated that the 'identification rate' for domestic abuse-related crime has increased significantly since 2015/16 - from around 17.4% to 36.9% in 2019/20³⁶.

Although increasing, the domestic abuse identification rate has remained lower than that of most similar police force areas³⁷ since 2017/18 in terms of both crimes and incidents recorded.

Fig 6. Domestic Abuse Identification Rate
Experimental estimates based on police recorded crime



Domestic Abuse Crimes	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Nottinghamshire	17.4%	23.5%	25.5%	34.1%	36.9%
East Midlands	17.6%	22.0%	23.9%	32.0%	40.5%
Most Similar Police force average	17.9%	22.0%	28.3%	36.9%	43.5%

The sustained increase seen in police recorded domestic crimes and the 'identification rate' at both a local and national level up to March 2020³⁸ was largely driven by:

- Ongoing improvements in crime recording standards and practices;
- The introduction of new 'coercive control' and stalking offences;
- Greater proactive identification of abuse and;
- Likely increase in the proportion of victims coming forward to report these crimes.

³⁵ 15,119 domestic abuse-related crimes were recorded in 2019/20. With the exception of coercive or controlling behaviour, domestic abuse is not a specific criminal offence. Offences that are domestic abuse-related will be recorded by police under the respective offence that has been committed but flagged as domestic abuse-related. The Home Office has been collecting this information from forces since April 2015

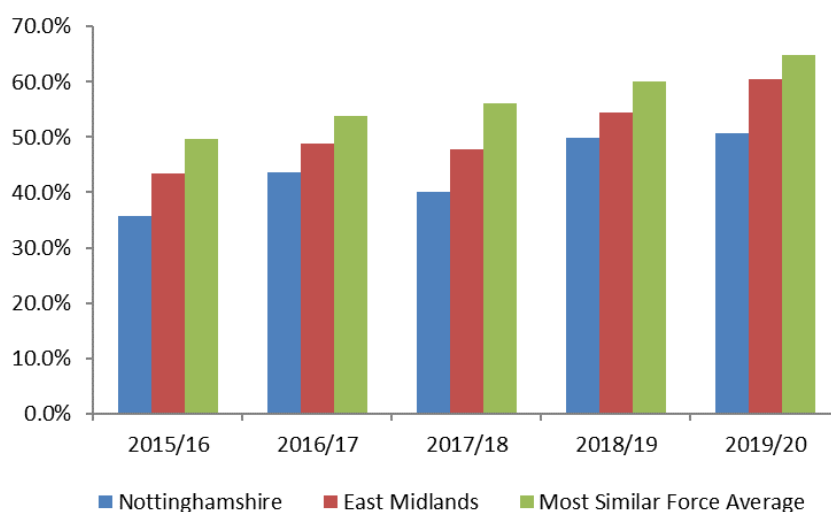
³⁶ The 'Identification rate' is an experimental indicator which does not take into account levels of repeat victimisation. The identification rate, based on both crimes and incidents, increased from 35.8% to 50.9% between 2015/16 and 2019/20

³⁷ Bedfordshire, Essex, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, South Yorkshire

³⁸ Overall police recorded domestic abuse crimes fell by 5.2% in 2020, largely affected by the Coronavirus Restrictions in place. This is discussed further in section 10.

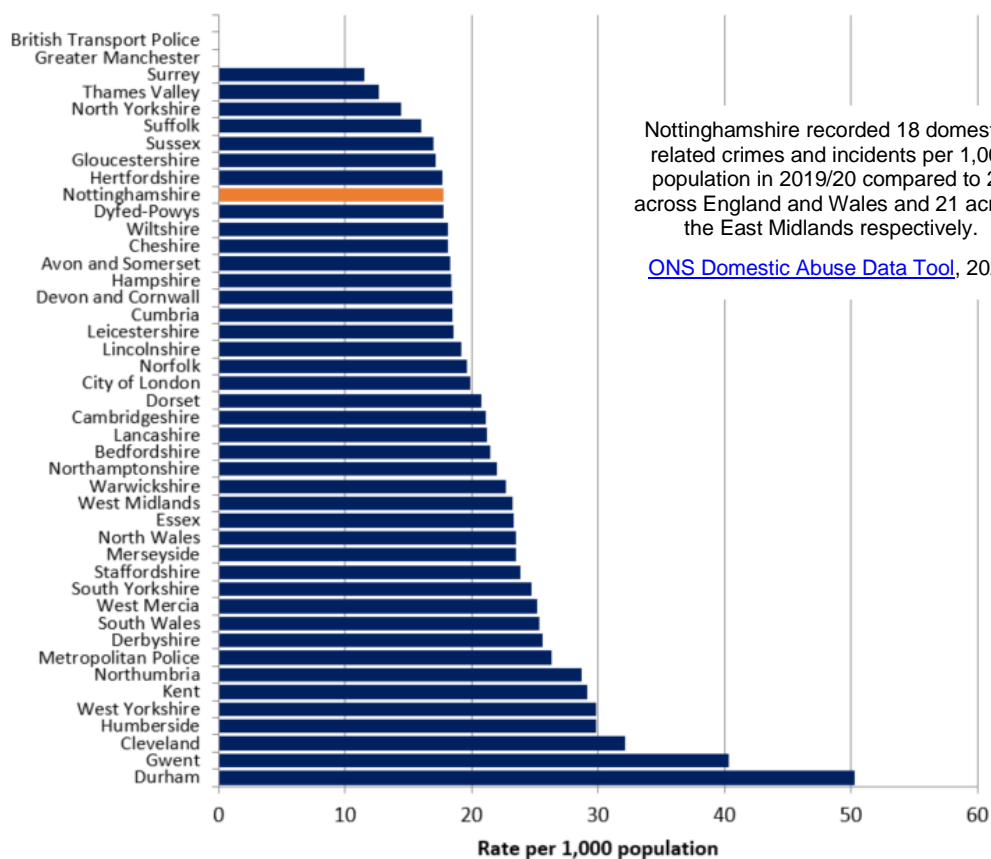
Local public sector agencies have maintained a strong focus on increasing reporting, alongside PCC and City Council funding for campaigns and additional resources.

Fig 7. Domestic Abuse Identification Rate
Experimental estimates based on police recorded crimes and incidents



Domestic Abuse Crimes & Incidents	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Nottinghamshire	35.8%	43.6%	40.0%	49.8%	50.8%
East Midlands	43.4%	48.9%	47.7%	54.4%	60.5%
Most Similar Police force average	49.7%	53.9%	56.1%	60.1%	64.9%

Fig 8. Rate of domestic abuse-related combined incidents and crimes recorded by the police by police force area 2019/20



Improvements in Crime Recording Standards: HMICFRS reported substantial and significant improvements in police recording and identification of domestic abuse since 2013. The inspectorate notes, however, that service capacity remains stretched. Levels of domestic violence and abuse recorded by police have increased by over 90% since 2013, largely driven by improvements in the accuracy of crime recording that have led to more lower-severity offences being captured:

“Up to 40% of that 90% increase could be because we have got much better at identifying things that might have been recorded in the past as a non-crime incident that involved a verbal argument. There is now better identification of things such as common assault and harassment within those incidents”.

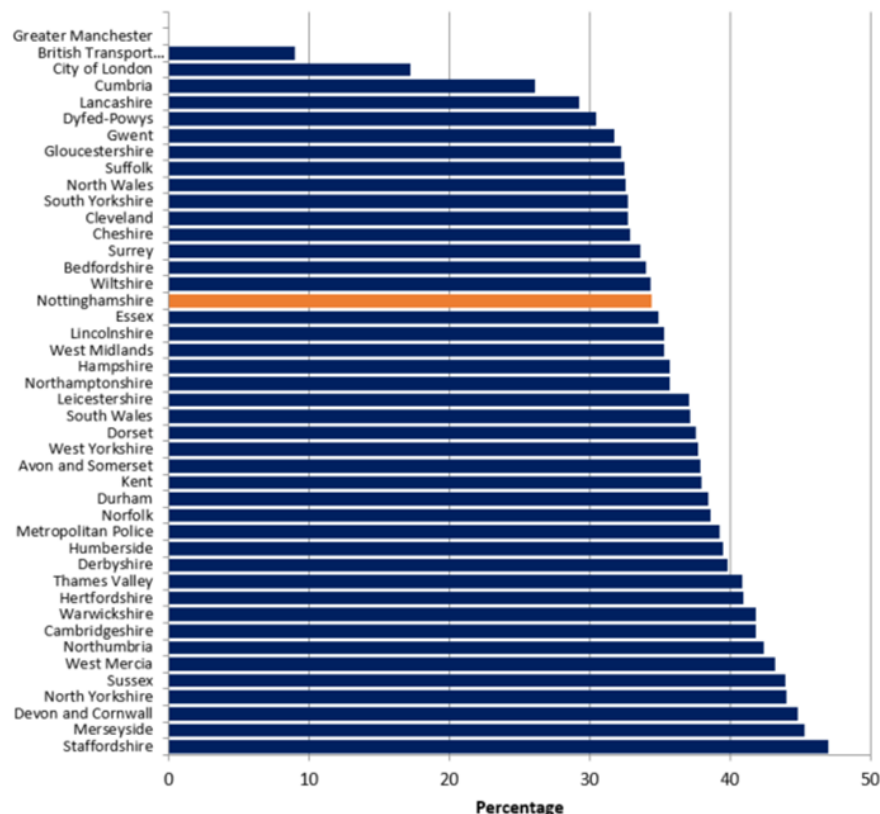
“In the past, many verbal arguments were recorded as an incident and not a crime, yet technically these can be a common assault, a harassment or threat of violence. These may have little prospect of a prosecution but recording them allows dedicated domestic abuse officers to safeguard victims, build evidence and recognise patterns”.

[DCC Louisa Rolfe](#), NPCC Lead for Domestic Abuse, 2019

As a consequence of more lower severity crimes being captured, the average ‘crime harm’ associated with police recorded domestic violence offences in Nottinghamshire reduced by 28% between 2017/18 and 2019/20 (from 171.5 to 122.6).

Recognition of Coercive Control and Stalking: The NPCC has worked extensively with Cardiff University women’s safety unit and the College of Policing to develop authorised professional practice and other products to help first responders to better identify coercion and control.

Fig 9. Domestic abuse-related stalking and harassment offences recorded by the police as a percentage of all recorded stalking and harassment offences, 2019/20



Nottinghamshire Police delivered 'Domestic Abuse Matters' training in 2019 to all front line staff who encounter domestic abuse during the course of their work. 3,457 domestic abuse-related stalking and harassment offences were recorded in Nottinghamshire in 2019/20, accounting for 34% of all stalking and harassment offences. This compares to 37% in both the East Midlands and England and Wales.

Proactive Identification of Abuse: So called 'honour' based violence crimes (73) and non-crime referrals (62) recorded by police increased by 5% in 2019/20 continuing the upward trend seen over recent years. Increases have been largely driven by greater proactivity in engaging with communities and identifying risk³⁹. Nottinghamshire Police also received 37 forced marriage referrals in 2019/20 marking a marginal increase on the previous year (34). Of the referrals received, 18 were Home Office notifiable crimes and 15 related to concerns involving children. The number of new cases reported to the national public helpline and email inbox⁴⁰ in 2019 was broadly in line with levels seen over the previous three years. Where known, the victims identified are predominantly from Pakistan (41%) and aged between 18 and 21 (25%). Police officers work closely with the specialist BMER refuge in Nottingham and the Women's Aid staff trained on Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

The number of newly identified FGM cases recorded by GP practices, hospitals and healthcare providers in Nottinghamshire⁴¹ averages around 80 each year, with the majority (81%) being recorded in the city. A total of 95 victims of FGM were in contact with these services during 2018/19, the majority (85) of which were identified via midwifery services during their pregnancy. In most cases, the procedures were undertaken to victims in their home country when they were under the age of 10. Internationally, the countries of Indonesia, Egypt and Ethiopia are estimated to be responsible for over half of the world's population of FGM affected females. In Nottinghamshire, the majority of victims are identified in the city (81%), with victims being predominantly from Northern Africa (35), Eastern Africa (25) and Western Africa (25). Nottinghamshire Police recorded 31 FGM cases in 2019/20, of which 6 were Home Office notifiable FGM offences and 25 were crime-related referrals recorded as safeguarding occurrences⁴². While still low, these represent the highest levels recorded by police in a single year and partly reflect improvements in understanding, awareness and referral.

Increased confidence to report victimisation: Findings from the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Survey indicate that the likelihood of survivors reporting their experience of domestic abuse to the police has increased from 71.5% in 2018 to 73.8% in 2019 and 78.7% in 2020. It is also likely that education in positive relationships and a growing awareness of the nature of 'gaslighting' and coercive control are leading to greater recognition and self-identification of abuse, both a locally and nationally.

³⁹ Nottinghamshire Police have employed two dedicated Honour-Based Abuse Police Officers since June 2018 responsible for engaging with communities and improving reporting and safeguarding opportunities through the use of tools such as HBA Orders

⁴⁰ [Forced Marriage Unit Statistics 2018](#), Home Office, May 2019

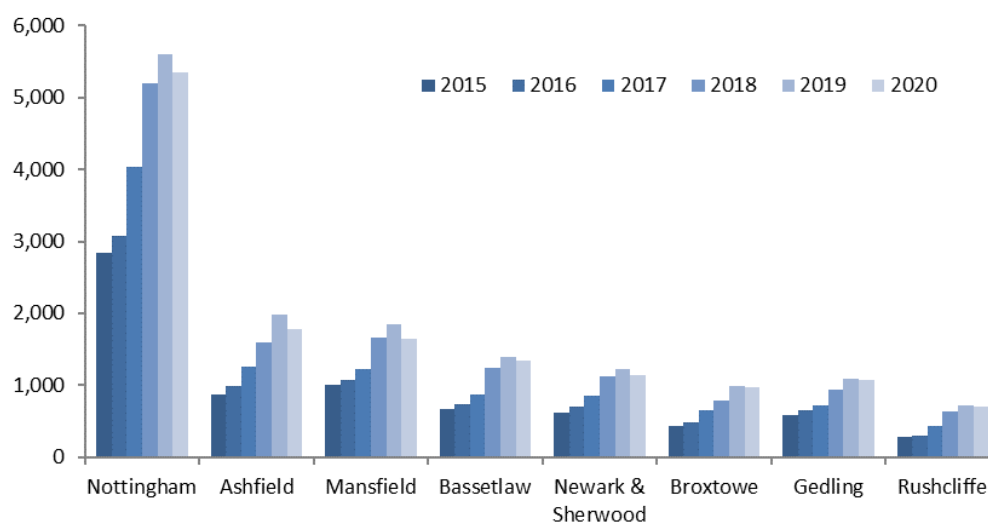
⁴¹ [The Female Genital Mutilation \(FGM\) Enhanced Dataset](#) – NHS Digital, July 2019

⁴² Safeguarding occurrences ensure that all suspected cases of FGM are captured by relevant agencies to enable the best possible support and service to victims and their families.

5.2 Concentrations and Repeat Victimization

Police recorded domestic crimes remain most heavily concentrated in the city (38%) and increased by more than 84% across all local authority areas between 2015 and 2019. The most significant increases during this period were seen in Rushcliffe (+155%), Ashfield (+131%), and Broxtowe (+125%).

Fig 10. Police recorded domestic abuse crimes by Local Authority 2015 to 2020



Domestic Abuse Crimes	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2019	Per 1,000 pop (2020)
Nottingham	2,843	3,083	4,041	5,190	5,601	5,345	16.1
Ashfield	863	993	1,262	1,596	1,990	1,775	14.0
Mansfield	1,004	1,072	1,232	1,665	1,854	1,644	15.1
Bassetlaw	673	736	879	1,243	1,399	1,342	11.5
Newark & Sherwood	622	696	853	1,132	1,220	1,146	9.4
Broxtowe	442	488	655	779	996	980	8.7
Gedling	580	658	719	941	1,089	1,079	9.2
Rushcliffe	279	292	427	632	712	696	5.9

Some groups remain significantly under-represented within the police recorded domestic crime profile when compared to estimated prevalence rates. They include male victims who are estimated to account for 25% of those presenting to police but around 33.6% of all estimated domestic abuse victims.

While the volume of recorded domestic crimes and incidents continues to rise, the proportion of crimes involving repeat victims⁴³ (34.4%) has remained relatively stable over recent years. Repeat victimisation presenting to the police is heavily concentrated, with 5% of survivors being linked to almost a fifth (19.4%) of all recorded domestic violence-related crimes.

This small cohort of high-repeat survivors were also more likely to exhibit complex needs and report experience of a further 35% of crimes that were either not domestic abuse related or had not been flagged as such.

⁴³ A repeat victim is any person that is named as a victim of one or more offences of the same offence type in both the most recent period and the 12 months previous. In considering repeat victimisation, it should be noted that domestic abuse often forms part of a pattern of behaviour

5.3 Local service provision and activity

Specific initiatives include:

- The PCC, City and County Council co-commission the production and provision of a suite of information cards on domestic and sexual violence and abuse and how to access support services. The cards are developed by Equation, based on survivor feedback, and are widely promoted across the city and county to help improve access to services. Cards are tailored for specific audiences, for example women, men, LGBT. A total of 114,720 awareness raising cards were produced in 2019/0. In addition, over 320,000 people were reached as part of social media campaigns.
- The PCC, City and County Councils co-commission Nottinghamshire's domestic and sexual violence helpline. The helpline, which is also supported financially by its provider Juno Women's Aid, is open 24/7 and provides crisis support for survivors as well as access to support services including refuge. The helpline also provides a high level of support for professionals, advising on how best to work with survivors.
- PCC, City and County Council co-commission provision of a comprehensive suite of workforce development seminars and training workshops for frontline professionals delivered by Equation on topics such as understanding and responding to domestic abuse, working with perpetrators, MARAC briefings, coercive control, economic abuse. The training enables professionals to understand more about domestic abuse, spot the signs of abuse, signpost to advice and local services and improve the way in which they and their organisations respond. In 2019/0 more than 165 training events were delivered to over 2,700 delegates.
- J9 Campaign (Department for Work and Pensions) provides training to professionals in recognising signs of domestic abuse signs and how to help support survivors. J9 is a brand designed to be recognised by survivors as being a safe place in which they feel able to disclose abuse and seek the support they need. The brand was piloted for 3 months in Nottingham between June and August 2019 and led to 127 contacts of which 57 required benefit advice, 47 asked for information on fleeing domestic abuse and 36 required general information relating to domestic abuse. The pilot was rolled out to Bulwell in January 2020.
- Nottinghamshire is also participating in the [Change that Lasts](#) pilot led by Women's Aid England. The aim is to move the focus from a risk to a needs led approach to providing resources and support for victims. The project is based around 3 themes:
 - 'Ask Me' which aims to raise community awareness about domestic violence and encourage victims to disclose
 - Trusted Professionals i.e. those who refer people to specialist services
 - Expert Support ("Voices"), working with Women's Aid services across the county
- The Nottinghamshire Community FGM Steering Group works closely with registered charity Mojatu to provide support for adult survivors and works with African and Caribbean communities focusing on the empowerment of girls, women and young people through community engagement, media, education and health. Mojatu's FGM work has been funded by the PCC for a number of years. Nottingham was the first city in the UK to pledge Zero Tolerance to FGM.

6. Safeguarding and Crisis Care

6.1 Public Protection in Context

A centralised independent command of Public Protection oversees safeguarding processes in Nottinghamshire which includes a Domestic Abuse Support Unit (DASU) and working links across the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs).

The principal role of the police is to protect survivors by responding to incidents of domestic abuse, investigating incidents and crimes and using their powers to prevent and disrupt abuse. High risk domestic abuse victims are referred into PCC, City and County Council co-commissioned Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) services, regardless of consent. Medium risk survivors are referred with consent into specialist commissioned domestic abuse support services. Standard risk female survivors are signposted to the commissioned 24/7 free domestic abuse helpline, from which they can access further help. Male survivors are signposted to the male helpline.

A range of tools and powers are available to protect survivors of abuse, which include:

- Domestic Violence Protection Orders – a police civil power to remove an alleged perpetrator from a survivor's home. 45 out of 49 DVPO applications were granted in Nottinghamshire in 2019/20, with this proportion (92%) having remained broadly stable over the last two years and in line with the England and Wales average (90.6%). 23 out of 24 Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) applications were granted in 2019/20.
- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) – which allows the Police to disclose historical abuse to current partners in certain circumstances. In Nottinghamshire, 140 'right to know' applications were applied for under the scheme in 2019/20 of which 76 were given disclosure. This marks a significant increase on the number of disclosures under the scheme granted in 2018/19 (39). Nottinghamshire's disclosure rate (54.3%) is broadly in line with the England and Wales profile (52.1%).
- Forced Marriage Protection Orders – to protect potential victims from being harassed or taken out of the country. 18 Forced Marriage Protection Orders were issued in Nottinghamshire in 2019.
- Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) came into force on 20 January 2020 as part of the Stalking Protection Act 2019. Police can apply to a Magistrates' Court for an order which can impose both prohibitions and requirements on a perpetrator. Breaching the SPO would be criminal offence resulting in up to five years' imprisonment. Courts can also impose interim SPOs to provide immediate protection for victims whilst a decision on a full order is being made. Orders will usually last for a minimum of 2 years.
- Restraining orders used by a court to protect individuals in situations involving alleged domestic violence, child abuse, assault, harassment, stalking, or sexual assault.

- Non-Molestation Orders – injunctions which aim to prevent known perpetrators from harassing or abusing survivors
- FGM Protection Orders – granted by the courts to protect and safeguard victims and potential victims of FGM through conditions such as surrendering a passport to prevent someone at risk from being taken abroad for FGM or requirements that no one arranges for FGM to be performed on the person being protected. 23 FGM Protection Orders were issued in Nottinghamshire in 2019.

Nottinghamshire Police also use Operation Encompass, which is a national police and education early information sharing protocol to allow police to share information with schools the day after officers attended a domestic abuse incident. This enables appropriate support for children and young people within the school.

6.2 What Works – support for survivors

Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) - IDVAs are included in NICE GUIDELINE 116. They are specialist case workers who work with survivors who have been assessed as high risk i.e. those at most risk of harm and or homicide. IDVAs work in partnership with other agencies to secure the safety of the survivor and their children, providing emotional and practical support to reduce further risk. In 2009, a large scale multi-site evaluation⁴⁴ of the IDVA Services across England and Wales reported that of the 2,500 women studied over a 2 year period domestic abuse stopped completely in over two thirds of cases where there was intensive support from an IDVA and for those where abuse continued levels were considerably reduced. The report recommends that the number of IDVAs needs to double to achieve national coverage and that the cost of providing an IDVA to a high risk survivor per successful outcome is cost effective. SafeLives recommends a ratio of 4 IDVAs per 100,000 adult female population⁴⁵.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) - following disclosure of domestic abuse a risk assessment (DASH RIC form) is undertaken and all those who are assessed as high risk are referred to MARAC. A 2011 review⁴⁶ of existing literature on the effectiveness of MARACs found emerging evidence that MARACs have the potential to improve survivor safety and reduce re-victimisation and therefore may be a highly cost-effective measure. The three areas perceived as core to MARACs effectiveness are: enhanced information sharing; appropriate agency representation; and the role of the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) in representing and engaging the survivor in the process. Factors which were seen as supporting effective practice included: strong partnership links (including a commitment from agencies to tackle domestic abuse in general); strong leadership (through the MARAC chair); good co-ordination (through a MARAC co-ordinator); and the availability of training and induction to the MARAC process. MARACs are included in NICE GUIDELINE 116.

⁴⁴ Howarth E, Stimpson L, Barran, D and Robinson A (2010) Safety in Numbers: A multi-site evaluation of Independent Domestic Violence Adviser Services. London Henry Smith Charity

⁴⁵ CAADA 2012 A Place of Greater Safety Insight into Domestic Abuse Report 1

⁴⁶ Steel N, Blakeborough L and Nicholas S (2011) Research Report 55 Supporting high-risk survivors of domestic violence: a review of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) Home Office. London

6.3 Local service provision and activity – survivors

The PCC, City and County Councils work together to pool budgets and co-commission integrated specialist survivor-centred support services. A summary of the number of survivors supported and the outcomes achieved is in section 7.2. The co-commissioned support services include the following crisis support functions:

- **24/7 DSVa Helpline**, provided by Juno Women's Aid, provides an access point to crisis services such as refuge as well as all other support services, whilst also delivering advice, support and information to survivors and to professionals. The helpline took 11,223 effective calls in 2019/0, which was a significant increase on previous years, following increased awareness raising activity. Typically calls are split approximately 50:50 between survivors calling for help and professionals calling for advice. The proportion of survivors calling has grown over recent years. The number of calls to the helpline has risen significantly during Covid – see 10.2 for further details.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21 Forecast
Total number of effective calls to DSVa Helpline	10,370	9,936	9,053	11,223	13,619

- **Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs)** provided by Juno and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid and male IDVAs provided by Equation, are available to support victims of Domestic Abuse throughout the investigative process and Specialist Domestic Violence Courts run at Mansfield and Nottingham Magistrates Court. Juno and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid also provide specialist teen IDVA support for teenagers who are experiencing abuse in their own intimate relationships. The commissioned IDVA services have Leading Lights status (Safelives' IDVA quality standard). Nottinghamshire Women's Aid also has a trust funded maternity IDVA in place.
- **Hospital based IDVA** provision is in place. Nottingham City Council and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust co-commission an IDVA service based in the Emergency Department. In addition, the Trust funds a hospital based Domestic Abuse nurse who sits in the safeguarding team. Sherwood Forest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust also commissions a hospital based IDVA. Both the hospital IDVA services are delivered by local authority and PCC co-commissioned providers, enabling seamless provision of support.
- **Refuge** provision in Nottinghamshire is under pressure. There are 77 refuge "units" in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire funded by a combination of the City and Council Councils and MHCLG and provided by Central, Juno, Midlands, Newark and Nottinghamshire Women's Aids and Nottingham Community Housing Association. There are complex needs refuges in place in the city and county and a specialist BAME refuge in the city. MHCLG funding, which is short term, currently supports 42% of the refuge provision in the city and county.

6.4 IDVAs in context

Safelives has developed a methodology⁴⁷ for estimating the number of IDVAs required in local areas to support high risk victims of domestic abuse. The formula takes account of both the resident adult female population and the level of high risk demand presenting to MARACs and sets a minimum IDVA requirement based on whichever value is higher. Using this methodology, it can be estimated that Nottinghamshire requires a minimum of 21.6 FTE IDVAs to effectively meet demand, compared to the current level of 18.7.

Estimated IDVA Requirement (FTE)	Estimated Requirement	Actual FTE	Resource V's demand (est.)
Nottinghamshire Force area	21.6	18.7	87%
- Nottingham City	8.8	8.3	94%
- Nottinghamshire County	12.8	10.4	81%

The IDVA requirement in the City (8.8) is based on demand presenting to the MARAC which is significantly higher than the requirement based solely on a population-based measure (5.3). The IDVA requirement in the County (12.8) is population-based as this higher than the requirement based on presenting demand (11.2).

The number of IDVAs in Nottinghamshire has increased significantly in recent years, with provision now well above East Midlands (78%) and England and Wales averages (74%)⁴⁸.

6.5 MARACs in context

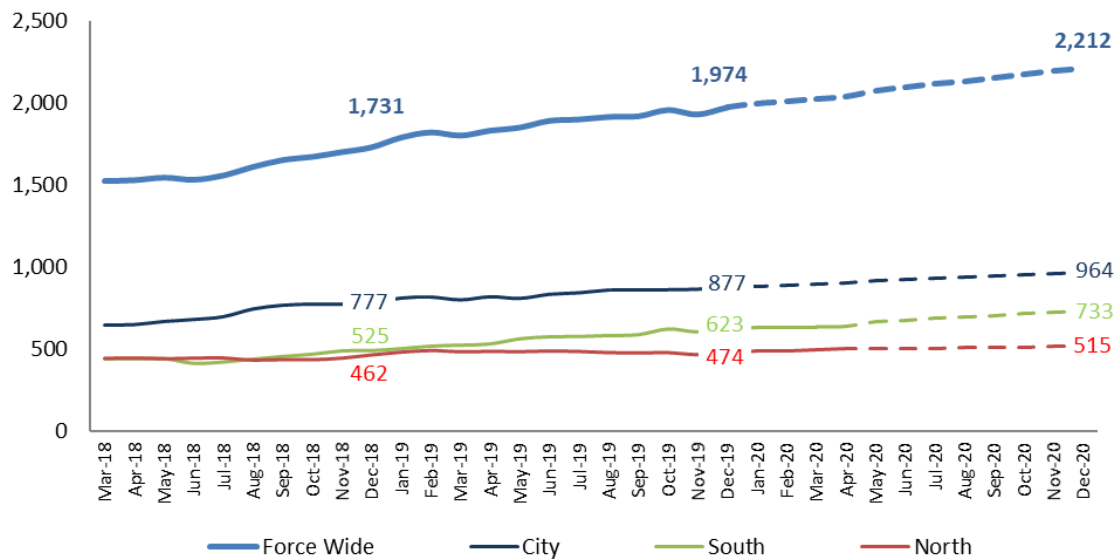
Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meetings are co-ordinated by Juno and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid as part of their PCC/City/County co-commissioned services. They are attended by a range of core participants including Nottinghamshire Police, social care and health agencies. One MARAC in Nottingham, south Nottinghamshire and north Nottinghamshire is held each fortnight. Every second city MARAC is a double (2 day) MARAC. Each meeting discusses 25 cases (50 cases for the 2 day MARAC meeting). It was agreed by the MARAC Steering Group to cap the meeting at 25 cases, as this was the maximum cases that could be discussed in a day whilst ensuring the same level of attention is given to the last case discussed as the first.

Demand on MARACs across Nottinghamshire has been increasing steadily over the last three years, with caseloads expected to increase by a further 12.1% during 2020. Nottinghamshire South, in particular, is expected to see an increase in referrals of around 17.7%, while Nottinghamshire North and the City are expected to see increases of around 9.9% and 8.6% respectively. Anecdotal evidence suggests that overall MARAC caseloads are not only increasing, but increasing in terms of their complexity.

⁴⁷ [SafeLives' 2019 survey of domestic abuse practitioners](#): Estimates based on both the number of MARAC cases heard each year and an assumption that there will be around 40 victims per 10,000 adult women in the local population - with each IDVA being expected to cover no more than 100 cases per year. The final estimate for the required number of IDVAs uses whichever of these figures is higher for each MARAC area. This means that the recommended IDVA coverage may change from year to year.

⁴⁸ *ibid*

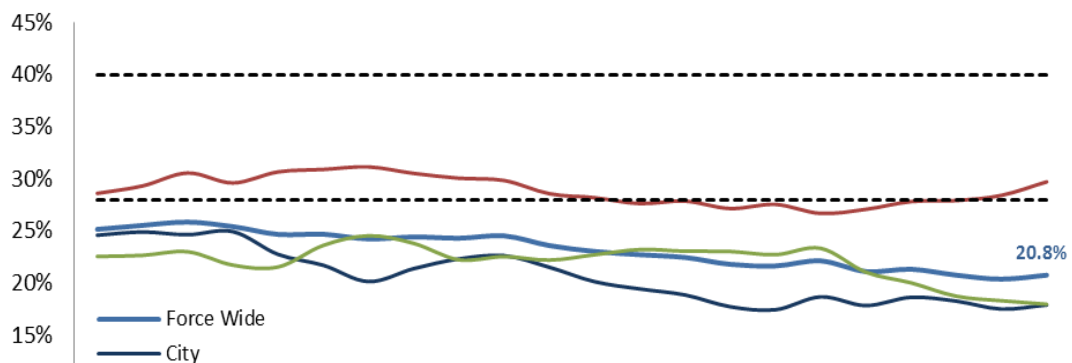
Fig 11. High risk domestic violence cases discussed at MARACs in Nottinghamshire - Rolling 12 month trend and forecast



Nottinghamshire MARACs discussed 44 cases per 10,000 adult females 2019/20, which was broadly similar to the England and Wales average (43)⁴⁹. Nottinghamshire MARACs did, however, record a lower proportion of repeat referral cases (25%) than the England and Wales (31%) average.

The proportion of Nottinghamshire MARAC cases involving repeat referrals has been in steady decline since 2019 alongside increases in the absolute number of individuals referred. This has largely been driven by trends in the City and South Nottinghamshire, where the proportion of repeat cases remains below the level expected of a well-established MARAC (28% to 40%) according to SafeLives guidance⁵⁰. Repeat referral rates in the north of the county have been increasing since July 2019 and currently fall within the expected parameters outlined by SafeLives.

Fig 12. Repeat referrals to the MARAC - Nottinghamshire



⁴⁹ Home Office Domestic Abuse Data Tool, 2020

⁵⁰ <http://www.safelives.org.uk/node/521>

Fig 13. Cases discussed at MARACs per 10,000 adult females, 2019/20

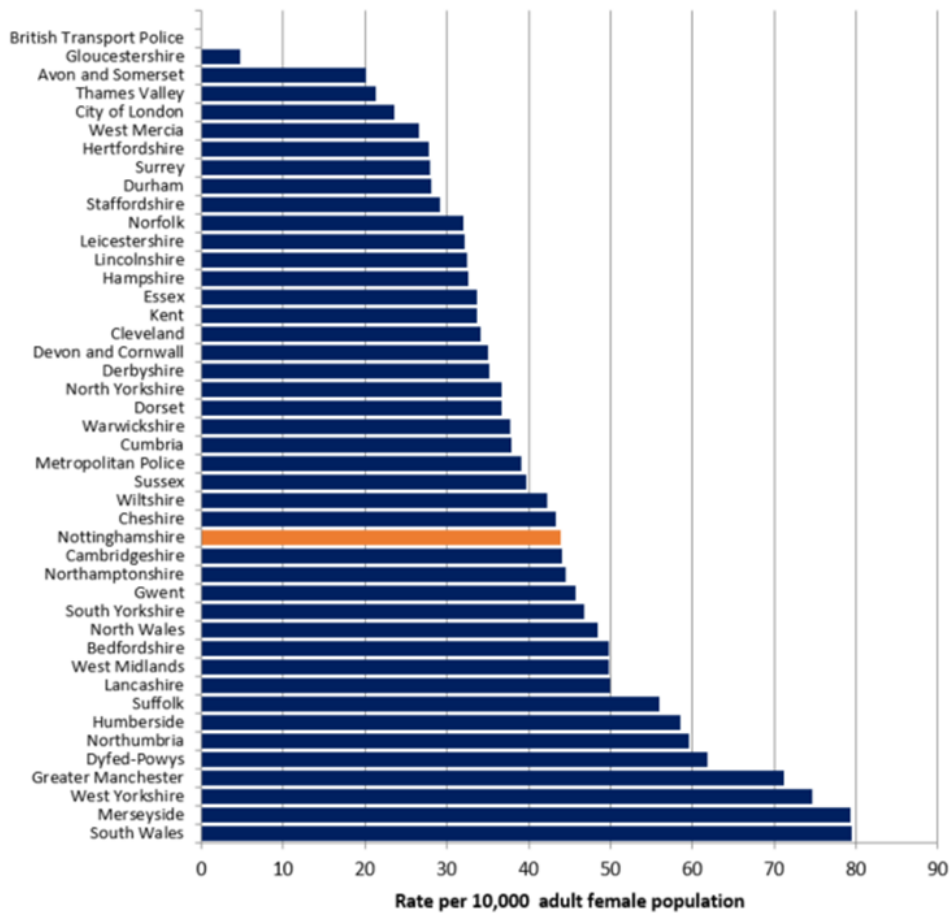
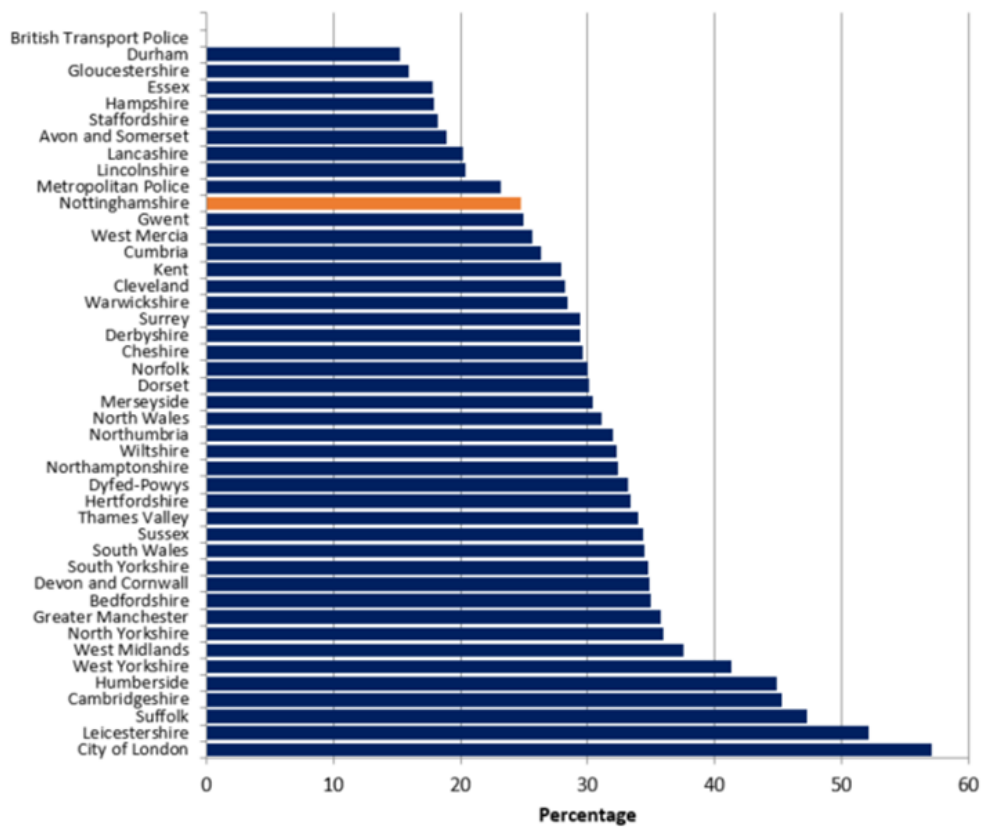


Fig 14. Percentage of cases discussed at MARACs that were repeat cases, 2019/20



Around 5% of MARAC cases involve a male victim, which is consistent with the national average. Around 40% of all referrals to MARAC are made by the police which, while significantly lower than the England average, may be an indicator of strong partnership referral pathways within the area, with other agencies such as the hospital trusts also making high numbers of referrals. The MARACs in Nottingham are piloting the use of ECINs, a secure, encrypted, multi-agency case management system to assist with the increase in cases. The MARAC Steering Group is currently reviewing the whole MARAC process to see what else can be done to manage the increase in referrals within limited resources to ensure support is maintained to increase safety and reduce risk survivors, their children and other vulnerable adults.

6.6 Refuge in context

National pressures on refuge provision are similarly reflected in Nottinghamshire. In October 2019, the Independent Domestic Violence Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs⁵¹, reported that:

“My colleagues at Women’s Aid, whom I trust, would say that we are turning away one in three people who seek a refuge. I have many years’ experience in frontline services and I have been at the end of the phone on a Friday night trying to find a place for someone sitting in front of me who has nowhere to go. I welcome the establishment of a solid fundamental duty to ensure that that provision is in place”.

The Homeless Watch survey undertaken between 2009 and 2015 consistently highlighted domestic abuse as the most common need among around 25% of homeless women. Following Government consultation during the summer of 2019, it announced plans⁵² to place a statutory duty on tier 1 local authorities to commission services to ensure that all victims of domestic abuse and their children, including those with protected characteristics, can access support in safe accommodation.

Legislation via the Domestic Abuse Bill will also require the establishment of domestic abuse Local Partnership Boards with responsibility for assessing the need for support within safe accommodation, develop and publish local strategies, decide which support services are required and commission these accordingly. Final decisions on funding to support the new requirements will be made as part of the Spending Review in 2020 ahead of the new duty coming into force.

Methodologies to determine the recommended number of refuge spaces required per local authority area have been developed by the 1976 Parliament Select Committee and subsequently updated by the EU in 1997. These propose that one refuge unit should be available for every 10,000 – 7,500 members of the adult population. Applying this methodology to Nottinghamshire’s resident adult population⁵³, it can be estimated that current combined temporary and permanent provision accounts for around 81% of the

⁵¹ [Commons debate on the Domestic Abuse Bill \(First Sitting\)](#), 29 October 2019

⁵² [Future delivery of support to victims and their children in accommodation-based domestic abuse services](#), Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, October 2019

⁵³ Based on total adult population aged 16 and over (2019 ONS Mid-year estimates) in both Nottingham city (252,753) and Nottinghamshire county (598,929)

minimum required across Nottinghamshire. The most notable capacity constraints are in the city (63%), where financial pressures remain particularly acute.

Fig 15. Proposed Refuge Unit Requirement: Estimated versus actual

	Estimated Requirement	Actual Provision	Min requirement V's provision
Nottinghamshire Force area	95 - 126	77	81.0%
- Nottingham City	27 - 36	17	63.0%
- Nottinghamshire County	68 - 90	60*	88.2%

*20 of the places in Nottinghamshire County are temporary emergency spaces in relation to Covid-19. They will not be available in 2021. This widens the gap between the estimate requirement and current provision.

Identified demand for community-based services, refuge and other domestic abuse safe accommodation⁵⁴, move-on and second stage accommodation is likely to increase markedly over the coming year as a result of the legislative and policy changes outlined. Work is ongoing with Nottinghamshire Police to explore how a new pathway to remove perpetrators might work in conjunction with Sanctuary to protect survivors when refuge provision is not available.

6.6 Sanctuary

A Sanctuary Scheme is a multi-agency victim centred initiative aiming to enabling households at risk of violence to remain safely in their own homes by installing enhanced security measures. Local authority led Sanctuary schemes are in place in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, although capacity varies from scheme to scheme. Sanctuary has been paused in two districts, one of which is putting measures in place to ensure that appropriate staff are qualified to make Sanctuary inspections.

⁵⁴ Including dispersed accommodation, Sanctuary Schemes (multi-agency victim-centred initiatives which enable households at risk of violence to remain safely in their own homes)

7. Longer-term Support and Recovery

7.1 What Works - Longer-term Survivor Support and Recovery

Advocacy and Liaison Services - involves the provision of information, practical advice, safety planning, support, information and liaison between survivors and organisations to negotiate access to and the use of community resources (such as police, health, social care, criminal justice, housing and legal Services). Evidence from a review⁵⁵ of randomised controlled trials concluded that intensive advocacy (12 hours or more duration) can help reduce physical abuse one to two years after the intervention and that brief advocacy (less than 12 hours duration) increased the use of safety behaviours both up to and beyond one year after the intervention. NICE Guideline 116 recommends advocacy is provided tailored to the level of risk and specific needs of the individual.

Support for children and young people – NICE Guideline 116 states that emotional, psychological and physical harms arise from a child or young person being affected by domestic violence and abuse, as well as their safety. NICE recommends a coordinated package of care and support that takes individual preferences and needs into account which should be aligned to the child's developmental stage (infant, preadolescent or adolescent). Interventions should be timely and should continue over a long enough period to achieve lasting effects recognising that longer-term interventions are likely to be more effective. Interventions that aim to strengthen the relationship between the child or young person and their non-abusive parent or carer may be provided on an individual or group basis, or both. Support should address the impact domestic abuse has on the child. Sessions should be delivered to children and their non-abusive parent or carer in parallel, or together. Support and Services should be provided for young people experiencing domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships.

Accredited therapeutic programmes and group support - A US⁵⁶ based 12-week, 90-minute community-based psycho-educational and support group session for children and caregivers found that children and mothers who completed the group were rated as more improved on coping skills, and there were significant improvements in children's internalizing and externalizing behaviours and mental health. Mothers also reported significant improvements in parenting skills. A US based RCT⁵⁷ evaluated a strengths based intervention for children and caregivers in a community setting. Mothers experienced decrease in depression, increased self-esteem and self-reported quality of life. Children reported increased self-confidence and physical abilities.

⁵⁵ Ramsay J, Carter Y, Davidson L, Dunne D, Eldridge S, Hegarty K, Rivas C, Taft A, Warburton A, Feder G. Advocacy interventions to reduce or eliminate violence and promote the physical and psychosocial well-being of women who experience intimate partner abuse. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2009, Issue 3. Art.No.: CD005043. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD005043.pub2.

⁵⁶ Becker, K. D., Mathis, G., Mueller, C. W., Issari, K., & Atta, S. S. (2008). Community-based treatment outcomes for parents and children exposed to domestic violence. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 8(1-2), 187-204.

⁵⁷ Sullivan, C. M., Bybee, D. I., & Allen, N. E. (2002). Findings from a community-based programme for battered women and their children. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17(9), 915-936.

Findings from evaluations⁵⁸ of the Freedom Programme, a 12 week community-based group education and support programme, show:

- a positive impact on women e.g. empowerment and goal setting
- improved confidence among participants
- increased awareness of controlling behaviours / signs of abuse
- a more positive outlook for the future

NICE Guideline 116 recommends the development of community based prevention programmes that aim to improve parents' understanding of how domestic violence and abuse affects children and how to protect them stating that most of the interventions found to be effective focus on non-abusive mothers and on strengthening the mother–child bond.

Support for men

Although women experience more domestic abuse than men and substantially more severe abuse, men in heterosexual relationships and gay men can also suffer abuse from a partner, ex-partner or adult family member. The evidence base is emerging and best practice should be sought and followed. It is recognised that men require a different approach to risk assess and provide services that are safe and appropriate to their needs. Leading national men's support organisation Respect's research into help seeking by male victims in 2018⁵⁹ found that fear of disclosure, challenge to masculinity and commitment to relationship, diminished confidence/despondency, and the perceived invisibility of Services can affect a man's ability to seek help.

7.2 Local service provision and activity

The PCC and City and County Council have co-commissioned specialist services, in which in addition to IDVA and MARAC services also provide the following evidence based support:

- one to one support for women, men and teens (in separate services) including practical and emotional support, safety planning and advocacy;
- Freedom programmes;
- evidence-based therapeutic support programmes for survivors and their children;

Support is often colocated, including with the Ashfield and Mansfield Integrated Services Hubs, HM Courts, Social Care and Nottinghamshire Police

In addition the County Council is funding support at Family Courts in the county. This is through short term funding which will finish in March 2021.

Demand for support is very high and pre Covid-19 there were waiting lists of up to 2 months for some lower risk services, depending on location. Since Covid-19 waiting lists for group support have grown significantly.

⁵⁸ <http://www.freedomprogramme.co.uk/evaluations.php> accessed 17.12.14

⁵⁹ <https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/respect/attachment/file/35/e021960.full.pdf>

The male support service is very small compared to the women's service (see figures below).

Specialist trauma focussed counselling for domestic abuse survivors is provided in some parts of the city and county – there is a MHCLG funded pilot delivered by the Women's Centre in Nottingham. In addition We R Here and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid deliver therapeutic support, although this is not public sector funded. Nottinghamshire Women's Aid has trained a number of staff to deliver Rockpool's trauma informed recovery approach.

In 2018/19 domestic abuse services funded or part funded by the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner helped to support around 3,460 survivors, of which 73% were women, 8% were men and 19% were children and young people.

Fig 16. Domestic Abuse Survivors Supported via PCC funded projects in 2018/19

	Nottm City*	Bass'law New & Sher	Mansfield & Ashfield	South Notts	Total
Women accessing support	861	506	692	466	2,525
Men accessing support	60	53	96	69	278
Teens accessing support	38	94	88	31	251
CYP accessing support	-	95	189	121	405
Total	959	748	1,065	687	3,459

*in the city the figures reported are for MARAC IDVA, court or teen support only.

These services maintained strong performance outcomes in 2018/19. In the county 88%-89% of survivors reported improvements in their confidence and emotional health and wellbeing, 87% reported increased feelings of safety and 80% reported improvements in their ability to cope on a day to day basis.

8. Rehabilitation and Behavioural Change

8.1 Tackling perpetrators

The College of Policing estimates that nationally less than 1% of perpetrators currently receive a specialist intervention to challenge or change their behaviour. There has been growing pressure from charities and campaigners nationally to adopt a clearer strategic approach to perpetrators of abuse.

Domestic violence perpetrator programmes (DVPPs) are characterised by a wide range of approaches subscribing primarily to a cognitive behavioural or psycho-educational model or a combination of approaches, influenced by the Duluth Model. This model was one of the first to operationalise work with perpetrators advocating a victim-safety centred and co-ordinated community approach, holding perpetrators to account while offering them an opportunity to change. Anger management programmes, educational programmes for men, awareness raising short courses and couples' counselling services are not classed as domestic violence perpetrator programmes as they do not include the full range of service necessary to provide a safe and meaningful opportunity for domestic violence perpetrators to stop being violent⁶⁰.

Until recently, services offered to DVA perpetrators tended only to be court mandated, with less provision on a voluntary basis for those outside the criminal justice system. These programmes aim to deter high risk perpetrator behaviour through intensive case management to create change. This approach relies on effective local multi-agency working, such as a solid MARAC process and coherent, quality care pathways.

Building Better Relationships (BBR) is a mandated course of 28x2-3 hour sessions delivered to statutory offenders under Community Rehabilitation Companies ("CRCs") if deemed suitable and is a licence condition. Survivors are supported by the CRC link worker provision.

Safer Choices is a series of group of 1:1 sessions between offenders and CRC workers that do not hit the threshold for BBR. This is a CRC self-designed programme and is flexible and worker led.

Respect is a national domestic abuse organisation which works with male victims and perpetrators. It has developed quality standards⁶¹ for work with both groups, with the perpetrator standards aiming to ensure that perpetrator interventions are delivered competently and do no further harm. The perpetrator quality standards are safety focussed and evidence based.

⁶⁰ <https://www.nottinghamshireinsight.org.uk/research-areas/jsna/adults-and-vulnerable-adults/domestic-abuse-2019/>

⁶¹ <http://respect.uk.net/what-we-do/accreditation/>

8.2 What Works – perpetrators

NICE Guideline 116 recommends that tailored interventions for people who perpetrate domestic violence and abuse are commissioned. However, evidence on what works remains limited.

Nottinghamshire's Domestic Abuse JSNA found that there is continued debate about the type of intervention which is effective in changing domestic abuse perpetrators. Measurement of outcomes ranges from reducing or eliminating violence and abuse, attitudinal and behavioural changes, decreased isolation, enhanced parenting and partner's increased understanding of the impact of violence and abuse⁶².

Recent research suggests that interventions are often inconclusive in terms of effectiveness of any one type of domestic violence perpetrator programme in reducing further abuse; or any one model being more effective than another. One systematic review found that perpetrator drop-out rates were high and programme non-completers had consistently higher reoffending rates than programme completers⁶³.

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Unit commissioned a rapid evidence review of what works in perpetrator programmes⁶⁴ during 2020. In line with earlier research, the review found that evaluations of domestic abuse perpetrator interventions are inconsistent and the 'what works' evidence base is inconclusive. Although some statistically significant impacts were found, the positive effects were moderate. The review recommends that a holistic approach is taken, which considers the needs of victims, offenders and offender close contacts.

The approach should also be dictated by local context, available support mechanisms and resources. Within this approach multi-agency and multi-stranded interventions should be delivered by experienced dedicated staff working within Respect Guidelines.

It is therefore unlikely that a universal, one-size fits all programme will be found that meets the needs of survivors, perpetrators, commissioners and police. In addition, care should be taken to ensure that programmes are safe and as a minimum do no harm.

There are a range of initiatives in different parts of the UK aiming to tackle perpetrators. However, most are not independently evaluated or Respect accredited. Findings from academic research on Respect accredited programmes include:

[The Drive Project](#) – a national project which aimed to reduce the number of child and adult victims of domestic abuse by deterring perpetrator behaviour. Drive combined intensive case management with perpetrators and local multi-agency work to create change (Drive One Year On). The programme ran to April 2020. Evidence from an independent evaluation⁶⁵ suggests that the programme can reduce risk of abuse by up to 30%.

⁶² <http://dro.dur.ac.uk/11515/>

⁶³ <https://iris.ucl.ac.uk/iris/publication/1283489/1>

⁶⁴ Newton A, Mackay J, Ikhile D, Wallace L. Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Interventions, Extended Rapid Evidence Assessment, September 2020
<https://www.nottsvru.co.uk/>

⁶⁵ <http://driveproject.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Drive-Evaluation-Report-Final.pdf>

[Project Mirabal](#) – a 2015 research project⁶⁶ which investigated a range of Respect accredited community-based perpetrator programmes to identify what works. The study presented findings on 6 measures of success. It concluded that the men who changed did so by: ‘developing different ways of being men in relationships with women and children’. The project concludes that: group work is effective; programmes must be long enough and well-run to deliver change; most men did change to a greater or lesser degree and; ending physical and sexual violence is not enough for women to feel ‘at ease’.

[Domestic Abuse: A Whole System Approach](#): The former Northumbria PCC led Police Transformation Fund initiative called works within the CJS, civil courts, victim support organisations and offender management. Perpetrator work included Multi Agency Tasking And Co-ordination (MATAC) and Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes (DAPPs). An independent evaluation found that domestic abuse offending reduced by 63% on average across the 7 forces which took part, and all offending reduced by 59% on average. In addition a social return on investment calculated a return of £14.51 for every £1 invested in the project. It should be noted that both reports were produced early into the process, so later research may have other findings.

In addition to the above Lincolnshire has implemented the ‘Make a Change’ model⁶⁷ – a whole system approach to the perpetration of domestic abuse, developed by Respect and based on Women’s Aid England’s Change that Last model.

8.3 Local service provision and activity – perpetrators

Primary and secondary prevention activity is funded by the PCC and takes place in schools, as detailed in 4.3. Local tertiary service provision tackling perpetrators includes the initiatives below, which are relatively recent additions to police and partner agency activity. PCC funding for the victim/survivor support part of the initiatives enable them to operate safely and effectively.

- **Nottinghamshire’s DVA Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Scheme** was developed in October 2017 as a partnership between Nottinghamshire Police, CRC, local authorities and commissioned specialist services. It was informed by learning from the national DRIVE pilot and PPIT Cardiff Model. The scheme works closely with the Multi Agency Intelligence Team (MAIT) and partner agencies to target the 40 highest risk perpetrators of domestic abuse in the city and county. The PCC funds IOM Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), who are based within commissioned domestic abuse services to ensure that the needs of survivors are recognised and supported alongside tactics used to manage the high risk and serial perpetrators. Results from the scheme have been highly positive, with those being removed from the DVIOM cohort displaying a reduction in risk⁶⁸ of 42%. IDVAs working with survivors reported cessation/significant reductions in Emotional Abuse (-67%) and physical abuse (-57%) among those exiting the scheme.

⁶⁶ <https://www.dur.ac.uk/criva/projectmirabal/>

⁶⁷ <https://www.makeachange.uk.net/professionals>

⁶⁸ Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool (PPIT)

- **Stalking Clinic:** In 2018 Police Public Protection launched a monthly multi-agency stalking clinic which hears a maximum of 5 domestic abuse and non-domestic abuse cases monthly. The clinic reduces the risk of stalking by putting strategies in place to manage stalking perpetrators and safeguard victims and survivors. It has heard 92 cases to date, the majority of which have been related to domestic abuse. Police select cases for the clinic based on the perpetrator being high risk and having had a police interview. Members of the clinic include Police, MAPPA, Stalking Advocates from Juno Women's Aid and Nottinghamshire Women's Aid (NWA), Equation Men's Service, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company and forensic psychologists. Perpetrators are assessed by clinical psychologists using the stalking risk profile tool for type, level of risk of violence, recurrence and persistence.

During 2020 the PCC is piloting a Stalking Advocacy Service to support victims, which will be reviewed in late 2020 to inform future commissioning intentions.

- In November 2020 the PCC successfully secured new Home Office funding to deliver and evaluate a new Respect accredited perpetrator programme. The programme will be delivered by Freeva in partnership with Equation.

Outside of the Criminal Justice System, other local resources to tackle perpetrators which are either in place or in development in Nottinghamshire include:

- **STRIDE** - in depth training and seminars for Children's Services delivered by Equation in partnership with Juno Women's Aid aimed at professionals working with families (including perpetrators) in the city.
- **Small Steps Big Changes** - Lottery Funded project working across four wards in Nottingham managed by City Care. The project supports young dads identified as perpetrators or at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse
- **Make a Change Programme** – Respect accredited programme (see above).

Alongside the limited availability of perpetrator programmes within the criminal justice system, there remains a recognised gap in available programmes for those that do not meet the threshold for prosecution; and where opportunities to change beliefs and behaviour may be greater.

8.4 Local views on activity to tackle perpetrators

The Nottinghamshire's DSA Executive⁶⁹ led a discussion with representatives from criminal justice agencies and DVA support services about perpetrator initiatives. Participants recognised the gap in programmes for perpetrators who do not meet the threshold for prosecution. Recommendations were that:

- the development of any local perpetrator programmes must be Respect standard accredited;
- programmes delivered locally should be academically evaluated and based on best practice identified in previous academic evaluations of programmes that fit with the Nottinghamshire strategic DSVa approach;
- any approach to perpetrator programmes should recognise that there are different drivers for perpetrators to engage in change (including access to children and life crisis) and that changing beliefs and behaviour may be more successful with standard and medium risk, non-serial perpetrators who have less entrenched beliefs;
- local programmes should be aimed at long term individual and community cultural and behavioural change;
- supporting professionals with tools to identify and deal with perpetrators safely will ensure that perpetrators are given a consistent approach across the partnership and improve the confidence of professionals working with perpetrators to reduce the impact of the work on survivors and children and to support perpetrators to recognise benefits to long term change;
- schools should aim to ensure all children have access to universal healthy relationship programmes delivered by an agency with a detailed specialist understanding of domestic abuse;
- schools should aim to ensure all children at risk of harm or harmful behaviours should have access to healthy relationship programmes delivered by an agency with a detailed specialist understanding of domestic abuse;

Partners also requested that there is no disinvestment of DVA support services to pay for perpetrator programmes.

8.5 Ways forward on perpetrator programmes

Nottinghamshire has primary, secondary and tertiary prevention activity in place to tackle perpetrators, mostly funded by the PCC. However, there is a need to address perpetrator behaviour and there are gaps and opportunities for the PCC and partners to do more. The PCC successfully secured national funding for limited roll out of a perpetrator programme in 2021, however the funding is very short term.

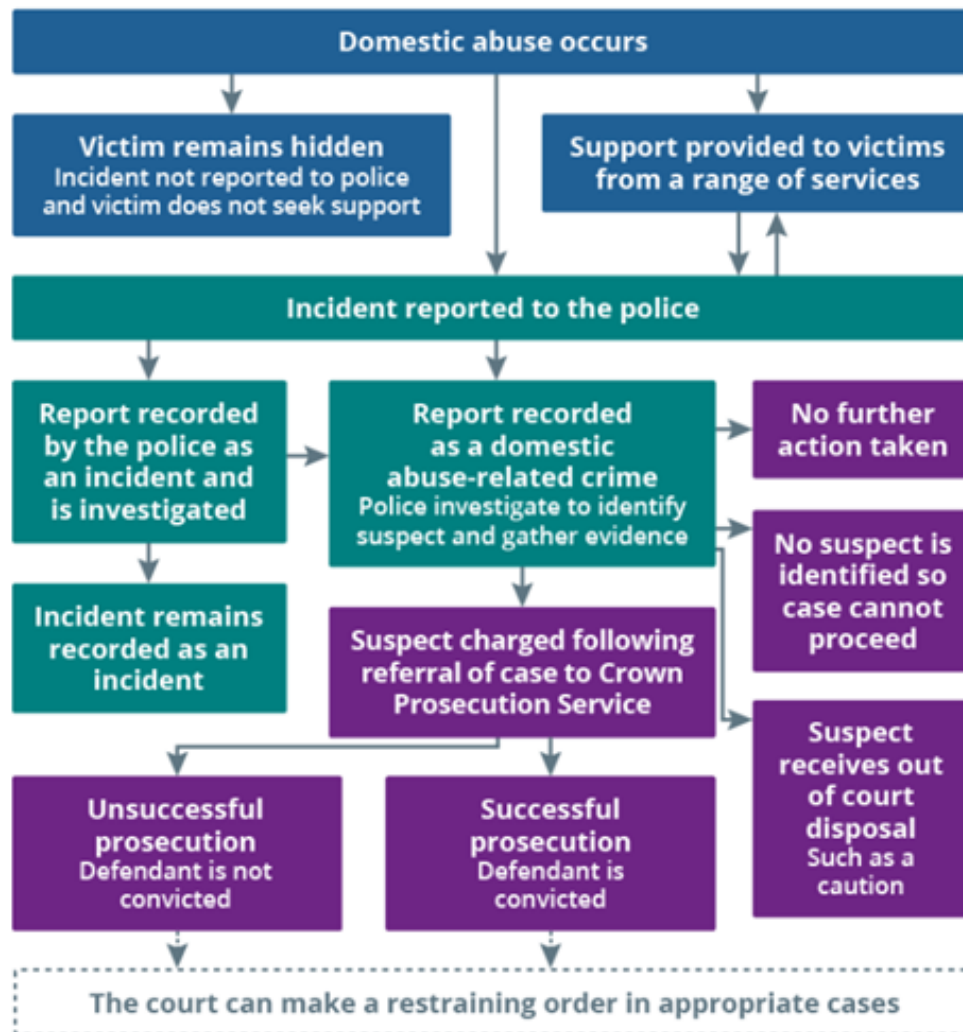
⁶⁹ DCI Rob Severn and Jane Lewis, Nottinghamshire DSA Executive perpetrator task and finish group, August 2019

9. Criminal Justice

9.1 Domestic Abuse and Criminal Justice

This section considers criminal justice outcomes for domestic abuse-related crimes recorded in Nottinghamshire. It should be noted that many domestic abuse survivors do not report to the police or seek a criminal justice outcome.

Fig 17. Domestic Abuse and the Criminal Justice System



Source: Office for National Statistics

9.2 First Response

The first response to domestic abuse is a critical period in terms of safety planning, protecting victims, preventing future harm and maximising opportunities for securing material that will be admissible in court. College of Policing guidance⁷⁰ Authorised Professional Practice states that officers should apply a [positive approach](#) to resolving such domestic abuse call-outs, which may range from an arrest to other forms of action such as removal to prevent breach of the peace or Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders.

In Nottinghamshire, 774 high-risk domestic abuse crimes were recorded in 2019 of which, around 85% resulted in an arrest, compared to an average of 44.3% among all domestic abuse crimes. Nottinghamshire Police's arrest rate for non-high risk domestic abuse cases stands at around 45%. Nottinghamshire Police made 44.6 arrests per 100 domestic abuse-related crimes in 2019/20, marking a significant increase on the rate recorded in 2018/19 (29.7). Arrest rates in Nottinghamshire considerably exceeded the England and Wales average in 2019/20 (34.1) and that of most other comparable police force areas.

**Fig 18. Number of arrests per 100 domestic abuse-related crimes
Year ending March 2020**

Nottinghamshire	44.6
Essex	32.0
Bedfordshire	27.2
South Yorkshire	44.9
Lincolnshire	20.8
Leicestershire	27.7
England and Wales	34.1

Police use of 'release under investigation' (RUI), both locally and nationally has increased significantly since the Policing and Crime Act 2017 set an initial limit of 28 days for police bail. Use of pre-charge bail meanwhile, has fallen by around 80%. A review by the Law Society highlighted how the lack of conditions associated with RUI and the longer length of investigation (averaging 139 days compared to 90 for bail)⁷¹ can cause considerable anxiety for some victims and on occasion result in an increased risk of harm among vulnerable people.

The report recommends that local forces ensure decisions on placing someone under bail or RUI are necessary and proportionate and that better methods for contacting the accused (e.g. text) are explored in the event of individuals being away from home. The Government is currently undertaking a review of use of pre-charge bail to ensure that the safety of victims is prioritised.

⁷⁰ [Authorised Professional Practice on Domestic Abuse](#), College of Policing

⁷¹ [Release under investigation](#), Law Society, October 2019 – Use of RUI fell from 216,200 to 44,000 between 2016/17 and 2017/18. Timeliness estimates based on data from 10 police forces

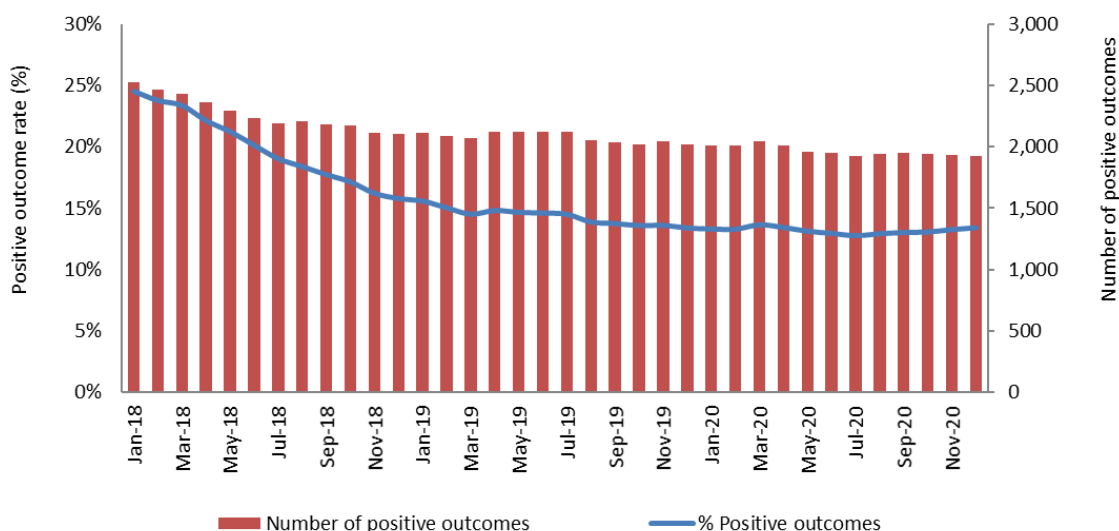
9.3 Police Outcomes

The proportion of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by Nottinghamshire Police that result in a positive outcome fell from 15.8% in 2018 to 13.4% in 2020. The volume of positive outcomes, however, saw a less pronounced reduction over this period, falling from 2,103 per year to 1,923. The proportion of domestic abuse-related crimes that result in a charge or summons in Nottinghamshire remains relatively strong in comparison to the average for England and Wales and among other similar police force areas.

**Fig 19. Percentage of domestic abuse-related crimes which resulted in a charge or summons
Year ending March 2019**

	Percentage
Nottinghamshire	13.0
Derbyshire	18.9
Leicestershire	10.0
Lincolnshire	11.9
Northamptonshire	10.3
East Midlands	12.8
England and Wales	11.2

Fig 20. Positive outcomes for domestic crimes in Nottinghamshire - Rolling 12 month profile



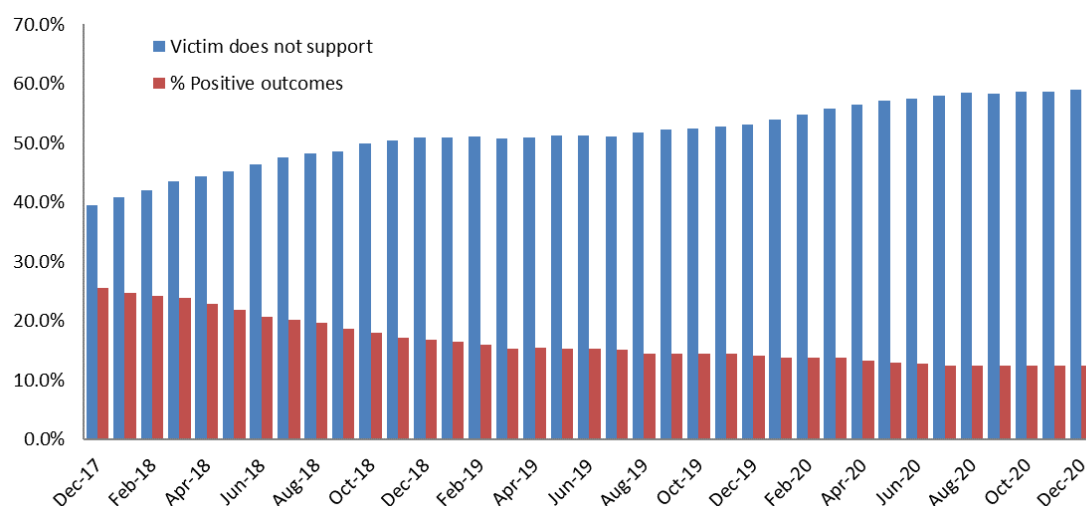
The proportion of domestic abuse related crimes which could not be progressed due to evidential difficulties has risen steadily from 69.7% in 2018, to 71.0% in 2019 and 73.9% in 2020. This increase has been largely affected by a rise in cases in which victims did not support further police action.

Nottinghamshire police and the CPS continue to work together in scrutinising cases which result in no further action and identify learning points and areas for improvement as part of a monthly review process.

Fig 21. Domestic abuse-related crimes that result in evidential difficulties
Year ending March 2019

	Suspect identified; victim supports action	Victim does not support action
	Percentage	
Nottinghamshire	18.0	51.2
Derbyshire	22.5	32.8
Leicestershire	23.0	59.5
Lincolnshire	27.4	47.6
Northamptonshire	22.9	55.1
East Midlands	22.8	49.2
England and Wales	22.3	52.5

Fig 22. Percentage of domestic crimes in Nottinghamshire in which victims withdraw support for further police action Versus Positive crime outcome rate for domestic crimes



HMICFRS and HMCPSI's thematic inspection⁷² of the extent to which police and CPS seek to build viable evidence led prosecutions where appropriate (January 2020) concluded that more should be done by officers and prosecutors from the outset to consider how a case would progress if the victim were to withdraw support. In 15 of the 78 domestic abuse cases reviewed, investigators had missed the opportunity to explore reasonable lines of enquiry before the investigation was concluded and there was a lack of quality assurance of the decision to take no further action.

The report recommends that forces take reasonable steps to ensure sufficient evidence is captured (e.g. body-worn video, witness statements, forensic and photographic evidence and CCTV) to support evidence-led prosecutions where in the public interest.

It is recognised, however, that there remains no systematic process at a local or regional level for flagging evidence-led policing cases within police or CPS systems.

⁷² [Evidence led domestic abuse prosecutions](#), HMCPSI and HMICFRS, January 2020

9.4 Court and CPS Outcomes

The Government's Domestic Abuse Bill is set to introduce a range of new measures to improve the effectiveness of the justice system in providing protection for victims. This includes measures to prevent perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in the family courts and creating a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse will be eligible for special measures in the criminal courts, such as giving evidence via a video link and having access to separate building entrances and waiting rooms to their alleged abuser.

The Ministry of Justice's expert panel on harm⁷³ in the family courts has also made recommendations in 2020 to better protect domestic abuse victims the family courts by making it easier for judges to issue barring orders which prevent abusive ex-partners from repeatedly bringing their victims back to court; trialling a new investigative approach that considers family and criminal matters in parallel as part of the Integrated Domestic Abuse Courts pilot.

In Nottinghamshire, the CPS reported 1,790 domestic abuse-related legal decisions in 2019/20, marking a marginal reduction on levels in 2018/19 (1,842). Of these, the proportion resulting in a charge fell from 76.7% to 72.6%, reflecting a downturn seen nationally over the last year. The charge rate in Nottinghamshire remains in line with that of other most similar police force areas, but 2.8% points lower than the East Midlands average.

Fig 23. Number and Percentage of domestic abuse related legal decisions and charges 2019/20

	Legal Decisions	Charges	% Charged	Timeliness of charged decision
Nottinghamshire	1,790	1,300	72.6%	12.20
East Midlands	6,296	4,747	75.4%	12.55
7 Most Similar Forces	12,131	8,803	72.6%	15.90
England and Wales	76,004	55,564	73.1%	14.96

There were also 1,331 domestic abuse-related prosecutions and 1,038 domestic abuse related convictions in 2019/20, marking reductions on 2018/19 of 12.0% and 13.6% respectively. While the overall conviction rate (78%) remained broadly stable and in line with the England and Wales (78%) average in 2019/20, Nottinghamshire's overall national position fell from 24th lowest out of 43 forces to 16th lowest.

Fig 24. Number and Percentage of domestic abuse related prosecutions and convictions 2019/20

	Prosecutions	Convictions	% Conviction Rate	Timeliness of prosecution
Nottinghamshire	1,331	1,038	78.0%	91.90
East Midlands	4,935	3,970	80.4%	86.30
7 Most Similar Forces	7,005	5,643	80.6%	86.40
England and Wales	61,166	47,531	77.7%	91.15

⁷³ [Domestic Abuse: Expert Panel on Harm in the Family Courts](#), Ministry of Justice, June 2020

Fig 25. Percentage of domestic abuse related legal decisions that resulted in a charge 2019/20

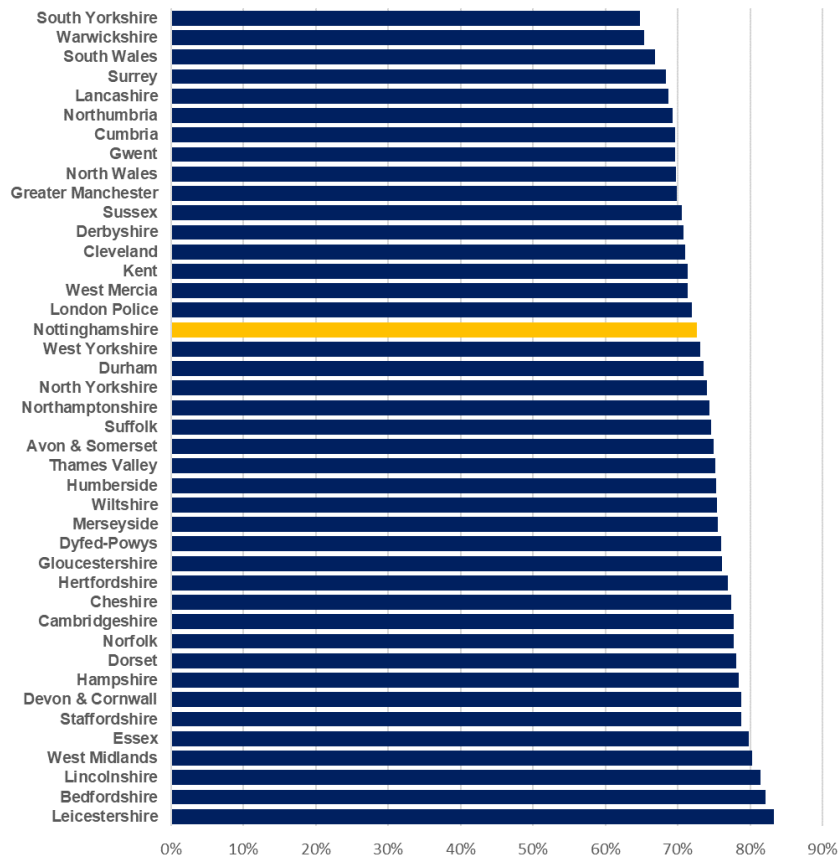


Fig 26. Percentage of domestic abuse flagged prosecutions that result in a conviction 2019/20

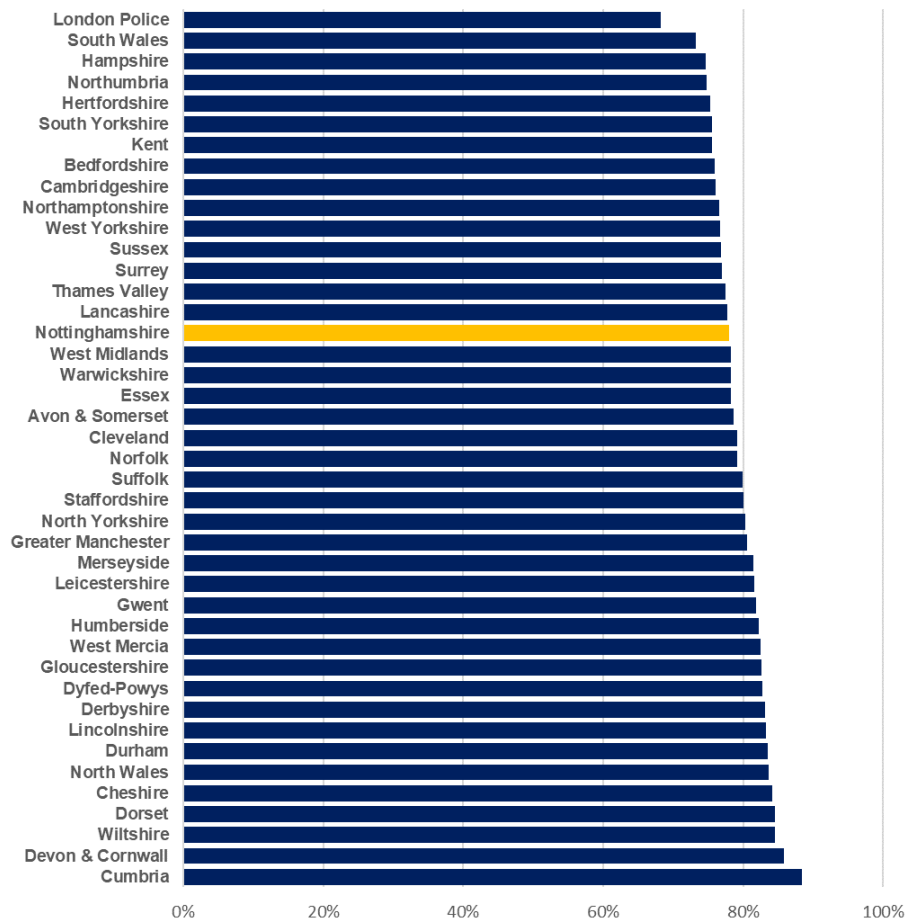
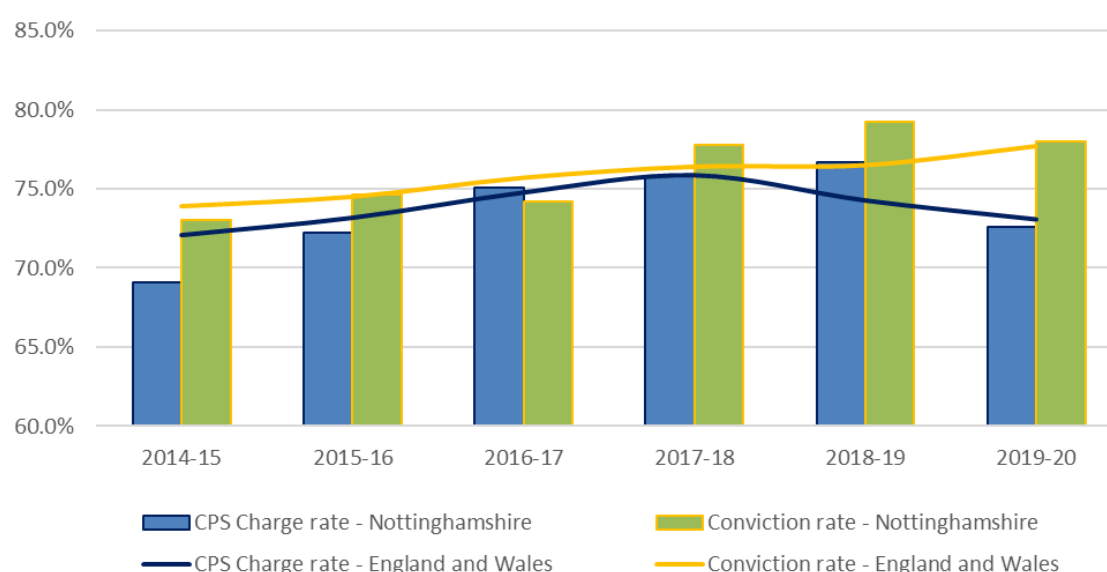


Fig 27. Nottinghamshire Domestic abuse charge and conviction rates 2014/15 to 2019/20 (CPS)



The challenges faced by the wider criminal justice system in responding to the growing volume of recorded domestic abuse cases was well articulated by the NPCC lead for domestic abuse, DCC Louisa Rolfe⁷⁴ in October 2019:

"We are at a challenging time for prosecutions, and a number of things are driving that...This is about demand and pressures on the police service and the Crown Prosecution Service [but] also about the higher thresholds required for charging, the standards expected of digital evidence, medical evidence, and disclosure. Attrition in cases, post-charge, has reduced dramatically, but the number of cases hitting the threshold for charge has also reduced. I think that has gone too far, and we are working hard with forces nationally to improve the number of cases that achieve a prosecution and get justice for victims"

"The fall in the proportion of domestic abuse crimes being referred for a charging decision is concerning and we are working with the CPS to understand the complex reasons for this. The large increases in reporting come alongside more complex and demanding investigations and the pressure on police resources"

In Nottinghamshire, the courts and CPS have been working to prioritise the response to domestic abuse in addressing the backlog in court sittings which have been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020. A Courts Recovery Plan was initiated in August 2020 to help address Nottinghamshire's backlog of 178 cases Domestic Abuse cases. It is estimated that with an additional 23 court sittings, the domestic Abuse backlog will be cleared by 9 October 2020 and new cases will be introduced with block listing from 7 September 2020.

Case adjournments remain a blocker to listing new backlog cases, which in turn is dependent to some degree on the capacity of the National Probation Service to complete reports at first hearing and prepare relevant parties. Furthermore, any changes to social distancing requirements, further waves of lockdown or the availability of legal advisers and court users can also impact upon estimated clearance dates.

⁷⁴ [DCC Louisa Rolfe: Commons debate on the Domestic Abuse Bill \(First Sitting\)](#), 29 October 2019

9.5 Local service provision and activity

The national Domestic Abuse Best Practice Framework was launched in December 2018 as a joint initiative between police, HMCTS and CPS to improve the quality of service given to domestic abuse survivors, prevent victim attrition and improve conviction rates after trial. In Nottinghamshire monthly meetings have been held to develop an implementation plan and embedded a network of contacts across the county, dedicated to improving the quality of service for domestic abuse victims within the criminal justice system. The meetings are attended by a variety of professionals including IDVAs, the NPS and Police Legal Services.

Specialist domestic abuse courts have been in operation since 2008 to tackle the problem of low levels of prosecutions for domestic abuse cases. An important role for the IDVAs is to support survivors through this process. The specialist domestic abuse courts aim to increase prosecutions, reduce the numbers of victims withdrawing from the criminal justice system and improve victim satisfaction.

Nottinghamshire's courts are based at Mansfield and Nottingham. Survivors are supported through the process by a court IDVA and this has been recognised as good practice across the Criminal Justice System by the National Deep Dive project. Court IDVA Services are working to ensure survivors feel heard, understood and supported through the criminal justice process by increase awareness of domestic abuse, challenging misconceptions, ensuring survivors are aware of their rights, options and support, providing support and safety interventions, safeguarding children.

Court IDVA Service Feedback:

"I feel that the support I received from this service validated my experience. I have questioned whether I am partly to blame for what happened and through discussions with the court IDVA I now know that I am not to blame."

"I felt listened to and believed when I had previously thought nobody would believe me and I was not pressured to attend court."

"I was supported from the outset even though I said all along that I didn't support the case going ahead. I was listened to by the IDVA"

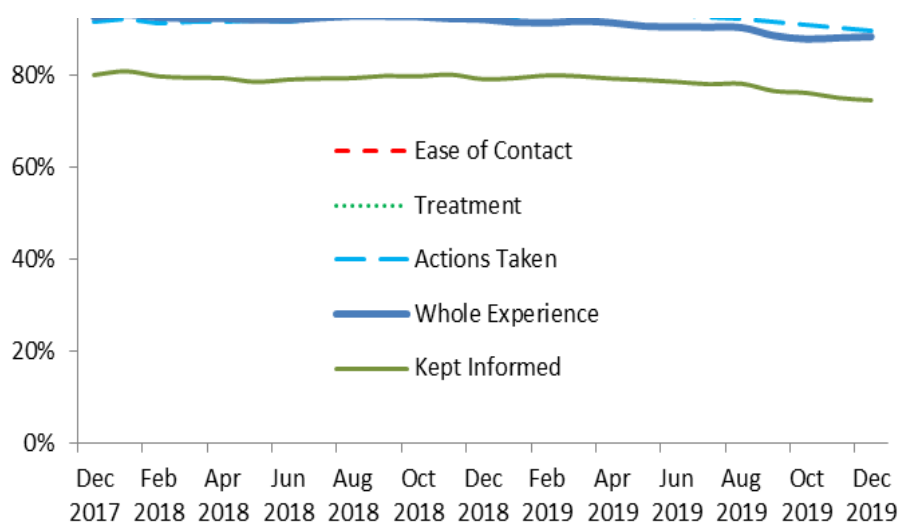
"[Without the service] I would have no restraining order, the police would still be saying that my property belongs to cash converters and it would all still be a mess. I am very grateful to you for sorting everything out, Thank you."

"[Without the service] I would not be feeling as empowered as I am at standing up to him and attending court. I have showed my ex-partner that I will stand up to him and I will not stand for his abuse any longer, I don't feel as vulnerable now"

Service satisfaction among domestic abuse victims dealt with by the police remains relatively strong, but saw an incremental decline from around 92% to 88% during 2019. This was largely driven by reductions in satisfaction with 'being kept informed'. The Force has devised an audit to monitor staff compliance with the Victim's Code of Practice (VCOP), with non-compliance triggering e-mails to staff and subsequent management interventions where performance has not improved. The Public Protection department is monitoring the impact of this approach.

The police service has also worked with the College of Policing to develop the domestic abuse risk assessment and the Domestic Abuse Matters training programme, which has been academically proven to increase the empathy of officers with victims and their understanding of abuse.

Fig 28. Domestic abuse survivor satisfaction with police, 2017 to 2019



10. Response to COVID-19

10.1 National picture

The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures taken to slow its spread in 2020 have presented a variety of complex challenges for the delivery of all public sector services, including domestic abuse as a cross cutting issue affecting the criminal and civil justice system, housing and safeguarding.

On 23 March 2020, the UK Government announced strict 'lockdown' measures requiring people to stay at home in order to reduce the spread of Covid-19. While a necessary intervention, these measures are widely regarded to have exacerbated and escalated the risk of domestic abuse⁷⁵ in some situations. This was compounded by increased isolation, a higher likelihood of perpetrators being at home with their victim, and traditional routes to support such as schools, GPs and workplaces being closed.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline provider, Refuge, reported a 66% increase in calls to its helpline over the three weeks to 27 May 2020, and a 957% increase in web traffic over a two week period. The Charity also reported a 16.6% increase in calls to the Men's Advice Line for male victims of domestic abuse in the week of 30 March 2020 and a 42% increase in traffic to its website. Evidence from the organisation Counting Dead Women also indicates that the number of domestic homicides recorded nationally increased during lockdown to one of the highest rates in 11 years. Charities also reported rises in the number of calls relating to honour-based violence and elder abuse, alongside anecdotal reports of an increase in incidents of child on parent violence⁷⁶.

In April 2020, the Government published guidance on support for victims of domestic abuse during the Covid-19 pandemic which confirmed that the instruction to stay at home does not apply to anyone that needs to leave their home in order to escape abuse. The Government also provided information on support services available to those in fear of abuse or committing abuse and launched a new domestic abuse awareness raising campaign - [#YouAreNotAlone](#).

In April and May 2020, the Government provided an additional £2m to enhance domestic abuse helplines and online support services for victims of domestic abuse and a further £28 million to provide safe spaces, accommodation and access to support services for survivors of domestic abuse and their children. On 27 April 2020, a Home Affairs Committee inquiry⁷⁷ commended the actions taken by the Home Office during lockdown but made recommendations for:

- Development of a cross-Government strategy on domestic abuse covering the period of lockdown and the period immediately after lockdown. This should be underpinned by action plans produced by all local authorities as part of emergency planning

⁷⁵ The charity Refuge notes that although the lockdown itself "does not cause domestic abuse", the measures can "aggravate pre-existing behaviours in an abusive partner". The charity Women's Aid also warned that perpetrators may use self-isolation and social distancing "as a tool of coercive and controlling behaviour"

⁷⁶ [Annual Report of the Victims' Commissioner 2019/20](#), July 2020

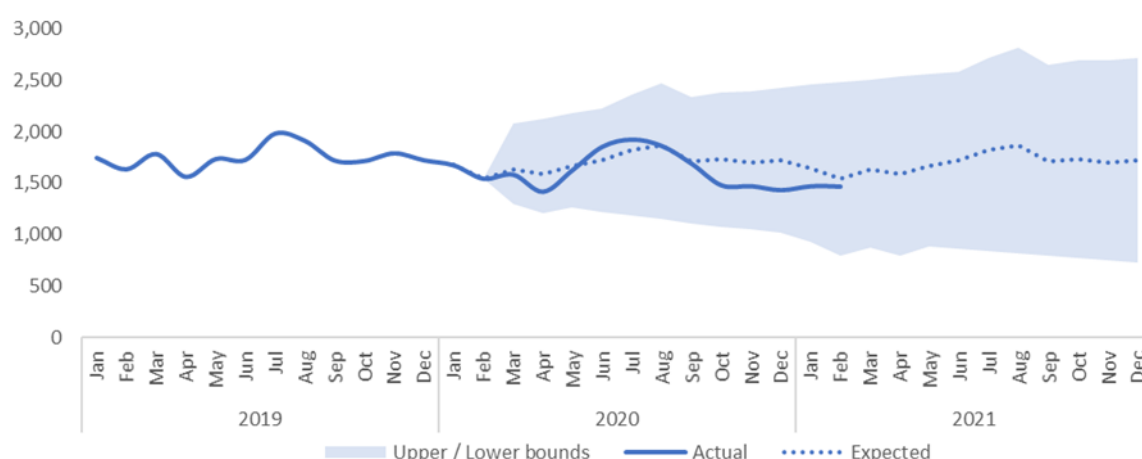
⁷⁷ [Home Office preparedness for Covid-19: Domestic abuse and risks within the home](#), Home Affairs Select Committee, April 2020

- Developing new strategies to ensure victims can access forms of urgent help and support, including better links between helplines and services and the Government sponsored scheme enabling victims to contact support services through retailers
- Ensure Domestic Violence Protection Order cases are heard swiftly and extend the time limit for proceedings on summary offences following lockdown. Legal aid should be automatically granted to victims regarding applications for protection in lockdown
- Prioritise increasing the availability of refuge / move-on accommodation, ensure the existing network of refuges remains sustainable and ensure local authority domestic abuse action plans include provision for temporary accommodation for perpetrators
- Government funding for support services must include specialist provision and ensure that BME services can meet any increased need. Any individual with No Recourse to Public Funds status should also be entitled to support during the coronavirus crisis
- Children's support services should be maintained during the Covid-19 crisis particularly face to face contact. The Government should also provide an emergency funding package that is accessible to generic and smaller specialist services

10.2 Local picture

In Nottinghamshire, the number of domestic abuse-related offences reported to the police fell to a level 11% lower than expected⁷⁸ during the period of strict lockdown restrictions in April 2020. As lockdown restrictions eased (15 June to 1 August 2020), reported levels of domestic abuse rose to a level 8% higher than expected before plateauing at a below average rate. This pattern indicates the potential for a marked increases in levels of reported domestic abuse as lockdown restrictions are eased in 2021.

Fig 29. Police recorded domestic abuse in Nottinghamshire: Actual versus expected level by month

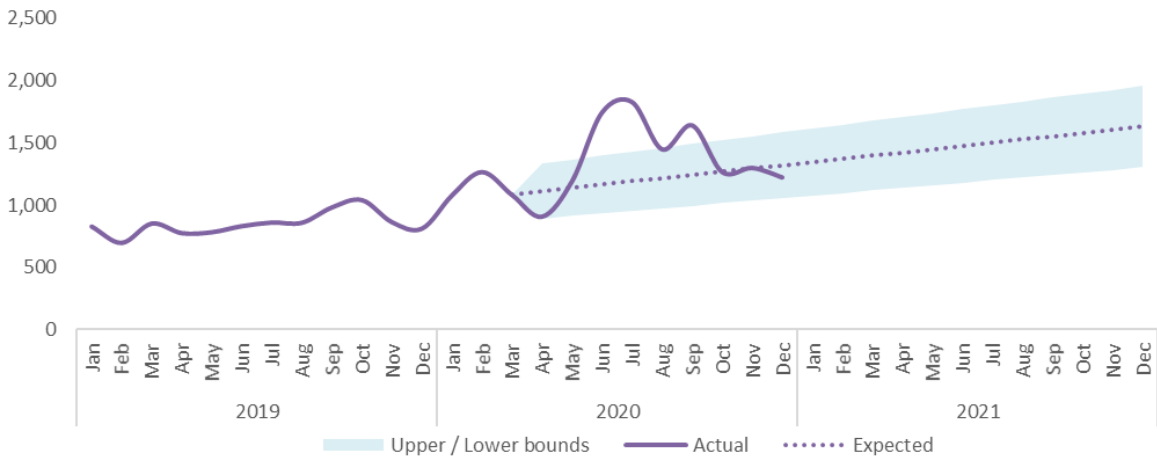


Similarly, calls made to the Nottinghamshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse 24 hour helpline fell to a level 18% below expected in April 2020 before rising to a level 50 % to 53% higher than expected in June and July 2020 as lockdown restrictions were eased. Overall call volumes increased by 22% during April to December 2020 when compared to the same period in the previous year.

⁷⁸ Nottinghamshire Police CREST demand forecast analysis, 2021

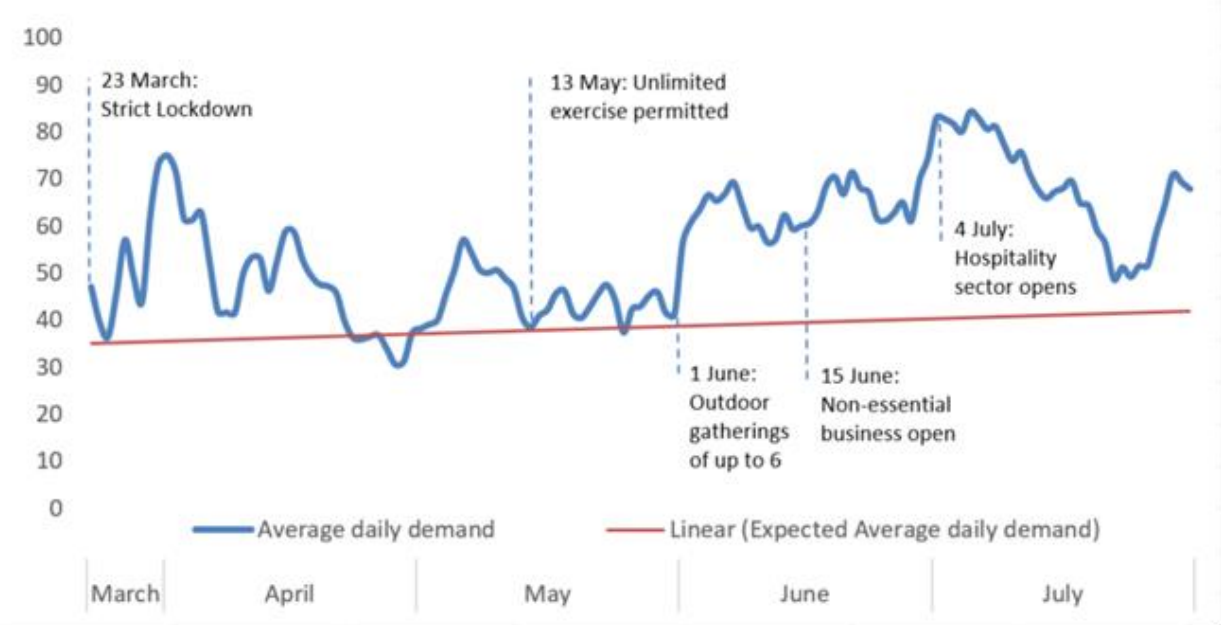
This was largely driven by increases in calls from professionals (+36%) reporting concerns relating to domestic abuse, particularly among professionals working in Children’s Social Care (+100%) and Local Authority Housing (+106%). The number of unique/individual survivors directly contacting the helpline during this period increased by 12%.

Fig 30. Calls to the Nottinghamshire 24 hour DSVa Helpline: Actual versus expected level by month



Marked increases in call demand coincided with the key phases of lockdown easing, most notably, 1 June, when outdoor gatherings of up to 6 people were permitted and between 30 June and 4 July as the hospitality sector opened.

Fig 31. Nottinghamshire DSVa Helpline – Average Daily Calls (rolling weekly profile)



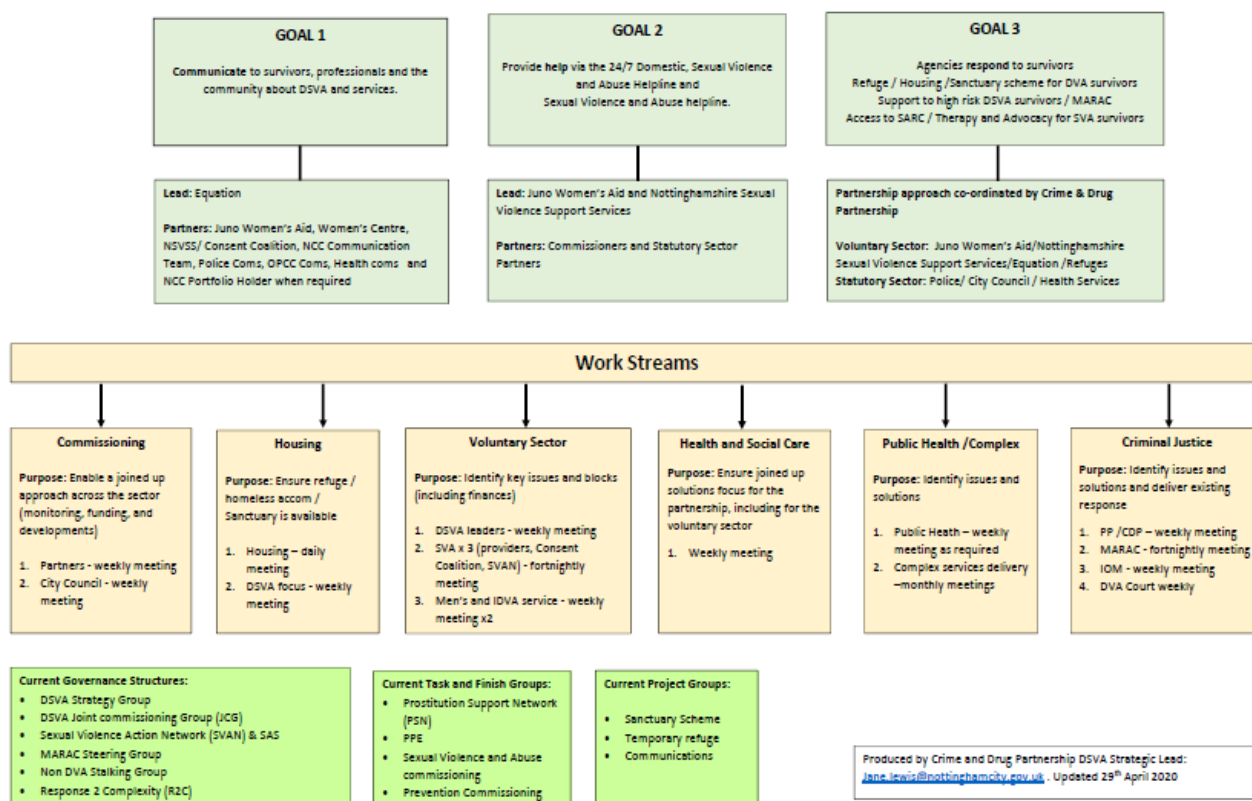
Levels of repeat call demand (19.1%) saw a marginal increase on levels recorded in 2019 (17.6%), while the profile of support required saw little change, with housing and refuge, mental health and emotional support being the most commonly recorded issues and concerns.

10.3 Public sector response

Nottingham City Council has implemented a “twin pillar” approach to co-ordinate the response to domestic abuse, with community protection and children and adults directorates working together informed by weekly updates from the strategic lead on domestic abuse.

Fig 32. Nottingham DSVa COVID-19 Strategy 2020

The diagram below shows Nottingham City's COVID 19 DSVa goals and its work streams. This is in addition to the current DSVa governance structure within the Crime and Drug Partnership Team Structures.



In the county the response is managed within public health, which has identified domestic abuse support services as critical. Weekly reports are summarised to the County's Operational Pressures Escalation Levels (OPEL) system and reported to the relevant Covid cells.

OPEL level	Definition
Level 1 - Planned Operational Working*	Demand for service within normal parameters. There is capacity available for additional expected demand. Staffing issues being managed
Level 2 - Moderate Pressure	Moderate increase in service demand or unexpected reduced staffing numbers. Service delivery impact minimal through mitigating action.
Level 3 - Severe Pressure	Severe increase in service demand or unexpected reduced staffing numbers causing service disruption.
Level 4 - Extreme Pressure	Extreme increase in service demand or unexpected reduced staffing numbers causing major service disruption.

The OPCC has met weekly/fortnightly with the city and county strategic leads for domestic abuse during the pandemic, to ensure that all commissioners are co-ordinating activity and to be able to escalate issues to the PCC as appropriate.

Nottinghamshire Police initiated and maintained a strategic command Gold Group to direct, support and co-ordinate the policing response to COVID-19 (Operation Bion) and assess and manage emerging risks. The force made changes to the procedure for responding to medium risk victims of domestic abuse in April 2020 in recognition of the heightened risk of harm faced by those living with their perpetrator during the COVID-19 lockdown. As a result of the changes, the force took steps to ensure that all medium and low risk victims were contacted by the force's telephone-based quality assurance team for welfare checks and signposting to specialist support services.

The pandemic has had a negative impact on courts, resulting in delays for the majority of criminal justice cases. HM Courts has worked hard with partners to prioritise domestic abuse cases and to minimise disruption. However, delays remain, impacting on survivors, who may withdraw from the criminal justice process and on providers as survivors remain in court support services for longer and require more support.

Healthcare organisations have been significantly affected by Covid, having prioritise their Covid response above all other activity. This has meant that healthcare professionals have had more limited capacity to response to domestic abuse than would usually be the case.

10.4 Domestic abuse support services response

Below is a summary of the main challenges presented by Covid-19 and how the PCC/local authority co-commissioned services have responded. Although the PCC does not fund refuge, refuge has been included as an essential part of the domestic abuse support system.

The partnership response was shared amongst the City and County Councils and OPCC, co-ordinated through weekly meetings.

No	Challenge/need	Partnership response implemented
1.	Service delivery to comply to lockdown rules and protect staff and survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All commissioned providers arranged for staff to work at home and provide support to survivors remotely, including IDVA support Staff continued to attend refuge Group work (for example the Freedom Programme and children's programmes were postponed initially and have now been adapted by providers and rolled out virtually) Specialist DSVa training sessions have been developed for frontline staff to view remotely.
2.	Nottinghamshire DSVa helpline receiving significantly increased calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational pressures in the move to remote working created a temporary reduction in capacity, just as the helpline was facing a significant increase in volume of calls Various options were quickly explored to increase capacity The PCC underwrote funding for new remote working equipment and the move to a cloud based system, plus additional staffing – to allow the helpline to increase the number of lines available from 3 to 10, as required. The PCC sought funding from MoJ for the helpline, but agreed early on in April to underwrite the funding until this was available.

3.	Need for an increase in channels for survivors to seek help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nottinghamshire Police implemented an existing silent calls protocol very swiftly after lockdown The email address for Nottinghamshire DSVa helpline was widely promoted by all public sector and voluntary sector partners for professionals to use to refer in, to reduce pressure on the phone lines The PCC underwrote funding to increase the helpline's capacity All commissioned providers are developing plans to put safe web chat functions in place with additional PCC funding secured from MoJ The PCC and partners contributed to a national discussion about anonymous ways to access help (subsequently agreed as through pharmacies) With support from the City and County, Equation made large numbers of resources (posters and cards) available to pharmacies
4.	All services facing increased demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative and qualitative data has been gathered through weekly OPEL reports and weekly then monthly MoJ reporting to monitor increased demand. OPEL reporting women's services remained at Level 2 until August, when one commissioned provider rose to Level 3 because of increased demand on the DSVa helpline and impact on staffing. The provider has since then fluctuated between Levels 2 and 3. Male support has been Level 1 and 2. The OPCC and City and County Councils are working with the providers to monitor and manage demand. Group work was initially paused during lockdown and this had a significant negative impact on waiting lists, with over 600 survivors waiting for the Freedom programme at the end of December. Providers have adapted the programme and are now rolling out online delivery where possible.
5.	Real time data to monitor situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The OPCC initially collated granular city/county information on reported crime weekly The OPCC, City and County Councils have worked together to try to ensure that relevant data is gathered without overwhelming providers with requests for information at a busy time The County has implemented the OPEL reporting system for commissioned DVA providers – this provides a narrative update including on activity relating to Nottinghamshire Police The OPCC gathers fortnightly (now monthly) updates on referral figures, numbers supported and waiting lists (data also submitted to MoJ) DSVa helpline figures have been reported and monitored weekly throughout the pandemic
6.	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A cross sector comms working group was quickly set up with representation from the City and County Councils and OPCC, led by commissioned provider Equation. The group collates service access information and quickly cascades it via a regular blog and mailing list of over 1,000 professionals in Nottinghamshire. It also co-ordinates media messages. Equation also hosts regularly updated Covid and domestic abuse and sexual violence service information on its website and sends weekly updates out to over 1,000 professionals with an interest in domestic abuse. Further media campaigns, including social media advertising are planned with the MoJ funding that the PCC has secured (see below).
7.	Lack of accommodation for survivors to flee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County Council led work to set up additional emergency refuge provision and underwrote the costs of 20 additional units during the pandemic. In June commissioned providers in Nottinghamshire secured just under £250k to cover additional Covid-19 costs and develop additional accommodation from MHCLG funding Work is ongoing in the City to improve access to Sanctuary – 17 Sanctuaries were installed in the city in the 3 months following the first lockdown, compared to 11 in all of 2019 In the city and county DVA accommodation sub groups have been set up to manage the services and new developments City Council work to increase refuge space has been challenging because of financial pressures

8.	Potential early release of DVA offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early concerns that prisoner releases would create higher risk for domestic abuse survivors were managed through partnership working with the CRC.
9.	Managing exit from lockdown and longer term response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City and County Councils, as the lead commissioners, requested recovery plans from all commissioned providers. The plans identify a need for increased funding, not all of which will be able to be met through the emergency MoJ Covid funding. • Likely areas where additional capacity will be required are: helpline/web chat (supported by MoJ until 31 March); supporting delivery of socially distanced group programmes, including the backlog, supporting survivors through the CJS, supporting increased number of survivors coming forward; staff support during a prolonged period of remote and intensive working; reducing waiting lists for paused service components. • Reporting structure capture risks weekly – for example potential risks about inadvertent sharing of location as part of the Track and Trace scheme
10.	Prolonged strain on domestic abuse staff and a more challenging recruitment environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff in specialist domestic abuse providers have had to respond to increased demand and growing complexity whilst working remotely. Providers have put additional measures in place to support staff, including provision of greater peer support opportunities and extra clinical supervision when required. • Recruitment of additional experienced domestic abuse staff has also been challenging during 2020.

10.6 Additional funding

In addition to the above, it was clear very early on that providers had incurred additional costs as a result of Covid, in terms of equipment needs and additional staff time. The PCC led work to identify funding needs and underwrote funding for the DSVA helpline. In June 2020 he secured the following Covid DSVA funding from Ministry of Justice:

- £220,661 for PCC commissioned domestic abuse support services
- £95,483 for non PCC commissioned domestic abuse support services
- £154,728 for both PCC commissioned and non-commissioned sexual violence support services
- £113,596 for PCC commissioned rape support services

The funding reimbursed providers for additional Covid costs already incurred as well as additional staffing to cope with demand and new ways of working such as web chat functions. The PCC then secured further Covid funding from MoJ in November 2020 of:

- £110,029.02 for PCC commissioned domestic abuse support services
- £82,097.60 for non PCC commissioned domestic abuse support services
- £177,833.66 for both PCC commissioned and non-commissioned sexual violence support services

10.7 Learning from Covid-19

Learning from Covid-19 is ongoing and will be properly captured by the PCC, Nottinghamshire Police and local authorities at a later date. Some early lessons learnt are below. These are relevant at the time of writing. However, they must be read in the context of domestic abuse services being presented with new challenges each week.

- **Strong partnerships and a high level of trust between commissioned services, commissioners and Nottinghamshire Police provided an excellent foundation for services to continue to provide almost seamless support during lockdown.** This was due to the pre-pandemic environment in which: partnership working was specified in domestic abuse commissioned support services; regular service reviews with providers were held by commissioners; and formal cross sector governance arrangements were already in place and properly used.
- **Having a ready-made silent solution for 999 calls which could be quickly implemented by Nottinghamshire Police** helped to mitigate the risk of harm to survivors during the initial phase of the first lockdown.
- **The PCC's ability and willingness to underwrite the costs of moving the Nottinghamshire DSVA helpline to a cloud based solution** was critical in ensuring the swift response of the helpline to significantly increased demand.
- **A shared commitment to tackling domestic abuse during the pandemic by the PCC, Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottinghamshire Police** meant that agencies could work together towards common goals and avoid duplication of effort.
- **Survivors presenting for support during the pandemic have a higher level of need**, with perpetrators often using the lockdown and Government guidance (e.g. children's movement between parents) as a way to perpetrate further abuse.
- **Additional team and management and clinical supervision has been essential to support staff** during the pandemic, who have had to provide support remotely and without the physical presence of colleagues. This has been at a financial cost, which MoJ funding has helped to meet. It is likely that prolonged remote working may have a further impact on physical and mental health and the cost of services. Further costs are likely to be incurred in future years.
- **Having an existing service commissioned to lead on campaigns and communications (Equation in the city)** meant the wider DVA partnership could immediately start cascading key messages about service availability and build on national campaigns such as accessing support through pharmacies.
- **Huge pressure on refuge, homelessness and lack of space locally, regionally and nationally has created increased pressure on our local and national DSVA helplines as well as on local housing services**, who are also seeking spaces for homeless people to meet wider Covid guidance around homelessness. The lack of housing options to enable women to flee may result in increased future homicides and suicide attempts.
- **Remote working has put a spotlight on employers' roles** in protecting survivors from domestic abuse. There may be a need for work to support employers to develop and implement robust policies.

10.8 Future Covid-19 challenges for DSVAs in Nottinghamshire

The PCC and Nottinghamshire public and voluntary sector authorities have put robust arrangements in place to tackle domestic abuse during the pandemic. At the time of writing the following are possible challenges that must be addressed in 2021:

- Emergency MoJ Covid-19 funding has been extremely helpful, however the lockdown and pandemic will not be over by 31 March 2021 (when the funding expires). The PCC will need to work with partners, and seek further funding to ensure that critical support services can manage demand, particularly when Covid restrictions end and it is likely that demand will increase again.
- Digitisation and remote working has enabled many support services to continue, with adjustment. It will be critical to ensure that digitally excluded children and young people and survivors with multiple and complex needs are properly supported.
- The impact of a likely future recession may have an incremental impact on domestic abuse which will need to be monitored and an appropriate response put in place.
- The ongoing pressure on domestic abuse staff is likely to have an impact on health and wellbeing, leading to an increase in sickness levels and further strain on service delivery. This is to be expected and needs to be monitored, with clear considerations of the long term impact of working in a high pressure environment.
- The pandemic has had a significant negative impact on courts, resulting in delays for the majority of criminal justice cases. HM Courts has worked hard with partners to prioritise domestic abuse cases and to minimise disruption. However, delays remain, impacting on survivors, who may withdraw from the criminal justice process and impacting on providers as survivors are with court support services for longer and require more support.

11. Conclusions and Recommendations

11.1 Conclusions

Domestic violence and abuse remains a critical shared priority for partner agencies across Nottinghamshire on account of the high level of individual harm it can cause, the prevalence and likelihood of abuse occurring in local communities and the extent to which presenting demand continues to exceed available service capacity. Despite this profile, the service response to domestic abuse in Nottinghamshire maintains a highly positive trajectory.

Nottinghamshire's response to domestic abuse is overseen by mature multi-agency governance arrangements, with the PCC, local authorities, clinical commissioning groups ("CCGs"), NHS Trusts and providers all recognising the need for and prioritising domestic abuse support. Domestic abuse is also a priority for Nottinghamshire Police and other criminal justice agencies.

The County's Domestic and Sexual Abuse Framework is due to expire in 2020 and the City's Violence Against Women and Girls ("VAWG") strategy is still in development. There is a gap for a city/county wide domestic abuse strategy which sets out clear measures of success. Given the link between domestic abuse, sexual violence, honour based abuse, female genital mutilation ("FGM") and stalking, and the need for any strategy to address all aspects of domestic abuse, including prevention activity as well as supporting survivors, a PCC led VAWG Strategy for Nottinghamshire would enable all strands to be brought together under one overarching plan with clear success measures.

Evidence suggests that both the prevalence and severity of domestic abuse occurring within our communities has been in steady decline over the last decade. However, our growing understanding of non-physical aspects of abuse, the use of technology to exercise power and control, the growing numbers of survivors presenting to support services with multiple and complex needs and increasing demand for support continue to present new challenges for victim service providers and the criminal justice system. Other emerging trends reported by specialist providers such as adolescent to parent violence may require the development of new approaches.

A good range of specialist primary prevention initiatives are in place across the force area. Healthy relationship provision in schools specifically covering domestic abuse has been consistently funded in the city for many years and is almost universal. Healthy relationship provision specifically covering domestic abuse has been more ad hoc across county schools, but has been growing year on year. Further work is required to secure a more stable and consistent strategic approach across Nottinghamshire.

Domestic abuse services across Nottinghamshire are generally, strong, resilient, well-embedded and mostly compliant with Public Health Guidance 116 and the Home Office's National Statement of Expectations for domestic abuse support in local areas, with some gaps in some areas which require further development, such as perpetrators - see below. Despite reductions in the overall budget for policing since 2010, the force has also maintained and invested in its response to domestic abuse over this period with dedicated investigators and specialists.

The proportion of domestic abuse coming to the attention of the police and other agencies is growing markedly, driven in part by better recording, greater recognition of coercive control and stalking, more police proactivity in identifying hidden harm and increases in victim disclosure. This positive trend is likely to continue to do so over the next three years given the increasing multi-agency focus on trauma-informed practice and routine enquiry.

Despite this, however, the number of domestic incidents recorded by police remains lower than that of other comparable police force areas and some groups, such as male victims, remain under-represented within the police recorded crime profile. This indicates opportunities for further partnership engagement, outreach and awareness raising activity. The number of domestic crimes remains broadly similar to that of other comparable areas.

The growth of domestic abuse-related demand and the complexity of that demand continues to grow in Nottinghamshire, placing increasing pressures on investigation, public protection caseloads, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences ("MARACs"), criminal justice and victim support services. Analysis of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers ("IDVAs") supporting survivors at high risk of harm demonstrates that there is a good level of local resourcing which is just under nationally recommended levels but well above East Midlands and national averages.

The first response to domestic abuse is a critical period in terms of safety planning, protecting victims and preventing future harm. Arrest rates for domestic abuse are marginally lower than average in Nottinghamshire, however arrest rates vary significantly and proportionately on the basis of the risk presented.

Further work should be undertaken to explore the reasons for variance in successful application rate for Domestic Violence Protection Orders ("DVPOs") and 'right to know' applications when compared to the national picture and ensure the police and other relevant agencies involved in the management of perpetrators are aware of new relationships and proactively engage with potential victims.

While positive outcome rates for domestic-related crime have been falling over recent years, Nottinghamshire Police maintains a stronger position than the East Midlands and England and Wales average. Reductions in positive outcomes rates are being driven in part by cases in which the survivor does not support further action.

Similarly, while CPS charging rates and conviction for domestic abuse related crimes have been increasing since 2014/15 and are in line with the England and Wales and East Midlands picture, the volume of legal decisions, charges and prosecutions has been falling. This has been driven in part by demand pressures on the police, clarification of charging expectations as a result of revisions to the Code for Crown Prosecutors and standards expected of digital and medical evidence and disclosure.

Consequently, while police recorded domestic abuse is rising, levels of charging, prosecution and conviction have been falling over recent years. Only around 8.4% of domestic abuse-related crimes reported to the police currently result in conviction. This local and national concern has led to an increasing focus on evidence-led prosecution.

The PCC, City and County Councils work together closely to co-commission evidence based support services which help survivors. The co-commissioned support services meet national Women's Aid, Respect and SafeLives quality standards as well as deliver much of the activity set out in the Home Office's VAWG National Statement of Expectations. They consistently deliver high rates of positive outcomes, for example in feelings of safety and greater confidence. They are well linked into and supported by health agencies including local NHS hospitals and healthcare trusts. They have made good progress in identifying and reaching out to survivors from groups which are under-represented in service, particularly focussing on honour based violence, forced marriage and FGM. However, there is more to do to meet unmet needs from other BAME survivors and further work to be done to understand and respond to the needs of migrant workers, which is an issue identified nationally. There is also a need to ensure that survivors living in rural areas can access support in the context of poor transport and fewer services in rural districts.

In terms of crisis intervention, there are capacity constraints relating to agencies attending increasing MARAC presentations and constraints on the availability of refuge places, with new statutory responsibilities for local authorities under the Domestic Abuse Bill likely to increase demand for community-based services and refuge. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire do not currently have sufficient refuge provision and a substantial proportion of existing refuge space in Nottinghamshire is funded nationally, with Ministry of Housing, Local Government and Communities (MHCLG) funding currently supporting over 40% of the refuge units across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Temporary MHCLG funding has recently been re-awarded until the new statutory duties are in force. If insufficient national funding is available to pay for current and additional refuge provision and other accommodation based support, the new Domestic Abuse Bill may have unintended consequences by diverting local funding from wider domestic abuse support services to refuge. Local partnership working will be required to ensure no negative impact on domestic abuse provision.

Despite national expectations and NICE recommendations for local areas to commission tailored interventions for people who perpetrate domestic violence, work in this area remains under-developed both nationally and locally. In Nottinghamshire there is already some primary, secondary and tertiary prevention activity in place to tackle perpetrators, often funded by the PCC. Nottinghamshire's DVA Integrated Offender Management (IOM) pilot has demonstrated a reduction in risk from high risk serial perpetrators and increasing the sense of safety of the survivors associated with them. In late 2020 the PCC secured national funding to roll out a new perpetrator programme in 2021.

However, the funding for the perpetrator programme is limited and there is a need to do more to address perpetrator behaviour. There are opportunities for further activity. Evidence suggests that it is unlikely that a universal, one-size fits all programme will be found that meets the needs of survivors, perpetrators, commissioners and police. Given this, a strategic long term local approach to prevention work is needed, based on best available evidence and considering where resources are best targeted (for example at emerging low risk perpetrators or high risk offenders). Any work funded should meet national Respect guidelines and complement Nottinghamshire's mature domestic abuse landscape. Great care must be taken to ensure that programmes are safe and do no further harm.

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions have presented challenges for domestic abuse services, with lockdown measures widely perceived to have exacerbated and escalated the risk of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse demand on Nottinghamshire Police dipped during lockdown then rose as restrictions were eased. Demand in the county continues to be higher than expected. Nottinghamshire's DSVa Helpline has experienced very high demand and co-commissioned support services have been under moderate pressure during the pandemic, rising to severe pressure at times. Mitigation has been in place since April 2020 to help manage operational pressures.

Strong existing partnership structures helped to ensure a swift response to changes to domestic abuse provision during the lockdown. In addition, the PCC used emergency MoJ funding to bolster support services, however, more financial help may be needed when the national funding expires. There is a need to identify and implement the domestic abuse specific lessons learnt from the pandemic and an opportunity for public sector partners to work together strategically to ensure that employers in Nottinghamshire have the capacity to respond to domestic abuse experienced by employees.

Learning from domestic homicide reviews across Nottinghamshire since 2015 have reiterated many of the key messages set out in this paper, most notably the importance of an effective response to people with complex needs, rigorous and robust information sharing, comprehensive training across agencies and the value of a whole family approach.

This paper draws largely on information collected by the police, criminal justice bodies and locally commissioned survivor support services. It should be recognised that arrests, prosecutions and survivor support only hold part of the solution. Further work may be required to better understand the individual and family level impact of domestic abuse from a public health perspective as part of a sustainable long term approach.

The analysis in this paper offers only a point in time snapshot of what is a rapidly changing picture. Further policy and legislative changes are likely to impact upon the profile of domestic abuse over the coming year, including the Government's review of pre-charge bail and new duties and responsibilities under the Homelessness Reduction and Domestic Abuse Acts. In addition, Covid-19 measures will continue to have an impact on domestic abuse.

The momentum brought about by the Government's landmark Domestic Abuse Bill, combined with the focus on domestic abuse during Covid-19, provides a timely opportunity to drive further improvements in Nottinghamshire's approach to tackling and reducing domestic abuse, underpinned by dedicated funding and new duties and responsibilities. These developments, and the recommendations below, should be taken forward as part of an integrated multi-agency whole-systems approach across the Nottinghamshire Police force area.

11.2 Recommendations

Recommendation	Lead agencies
Policy context	
1. The PCC to work with key stakeholders across the violence against women and girls sector to develop a whole systems Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and Action plan for 2020-2025 by March 2021. This should include indicators of success against which performance will be tracked.	PCC City Council County Council VRU CCGs
Nature and prevalence of domestic abuse	
2. The PCC to continue to work with local authority partners to co-commission professional development activity to embed coercive control, emotional abuse, economic abuse, parental abuse and technologically-assisted abuse through local training	PCC City Council County Council
3. As part of the VAWG strategy and action plan, the PCC to work with partners to take forward work to address the particular issues faced by migrants and children affected by domestic abuse, bidding for national funding if available.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
Prevention	
4. The PCC and local authority partners to continue to invest in universal and targeted education, prevention and awareness raising activities and campaigns across the city and county where there is clear evidence of impact, involving health agencies as delivery partners. Where possible, the PCC and partners to increase funding to ensure consistent city/county wide coverage.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
5. The PCC to work with the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Violence Reduction Unit to continue to fund and then evaluate initiatives to respond to children and young people who have witnessed violence with knives.	PCC Violence Reduction Unit
Identification	
6. Nottinghamshire Police to drive further improvements in the domestic crime and incident identification rate, with a focus on spotting the signs of abuse and ensuring routine enquiry as part of interactions with potentially vulnerable groups.	Nottinghamshire Police
7. The PCC and City and County Councils to review front line capacity of the co-commissioned specialist domestic abuse support services in view of any increasing identification rate. Further resource may be required.	PCC City Council County Council

Recommendation	Lead agencies
8. The PCC to work with the City and County Council and clinical commissioning groups to review the access to support services across all of Nottinghamshire's communities and develop an action plan to improve take up from under-represented groups, including hidden harm in BAME and rural communities and amongst elderly, LGBT and male survivors.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
Safeguarding	
9. Nottinghamshire Police to lead work to improve the use of domestic violence protection orders.	Nottinghamshire Police
10. Nottinghamshire Police to work with co-commissioned support services to improve the rate of take up of Clare's law.	Nottinghamshire Police
11. The PCC to work with the City and County Councils to continue to co-commission high quality evidence based support services and monitor their capacity to provide high quality helpline, MARAC and IDVA support, reviewing the level of IDVA provision as necessary. To include work with CCGs to learn from hospital based IDVA provision.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
12. The PCC and partners to work together to ensure that the forthcoming statutory duty for domestic abuse accommodation is properly funded and does not have a negative impact on other specialist services.	PCC City Council County Council
Longer term support and recovery	
13. The clinical commissioning groups to review their responsibilities for domestic abuse services through their partnership arrangements with the PCC, and City and County Councils.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
14. The PCC and partners to improve understanding of the needs, experiences and service response to male survivors of domestic abuse, working with the existing male support service.	PCC City Council County Council CCGs
Rehabilitation and behaviour change	
15. The PCC to work with partners to put a long term DVA prevention strategy in place, as part of the Violence Against Girls Strategy and Action Plan and informed by the VRU's literature review.	PCC, Police, Probation, VRU, Local authorities CCGs

Recommendation	Lead agencies
16. The PCC to ensure the successful roll out and evaluation of Nottinghamshire's Respect accredited DV perpetrator programme	PCC
17. The PCC, Nottinghamshire Police, CRC and commissioned support services to consider expansion to build on the success of the DVA IOM Scheme.	PCC Nottinghamshire Police
The Criminal Justice System	
18. Improve oversight and scrutiny of the appropriate use of 'release under investigation' and pre-charge bail pending legislative/ guidance changes.	PCC Nottinghamshire Police
19. Ensure ongoing monitoring of domestic abuse satisfaction rates and support action to maintain strong levels of survivor satisfaction with police, particularly via improvements in follow up and feedback.	PCC Nottinghamshire Police
20. Work with HM Courts and criminal justice partners to ensure access to justice and sufficient specialist DV provision across the city and county.	PCC Crown Prosecution Service HM Courts
21. Police and CPS to explore opportunities to improve use and understanding of evidence-led prosecutions alongside appropriate training, messaging and sharing of best practice.	Nottinghamshire Police Crown Prosecution Service
Covid-19	
22. The PCC work with local authorities and Nottinghamshire Police to ensure that critical specialist support services can continue safely throughout and after the pandemic.	PCC City Council County Council
23. The PCC to work with Nottinghamshire Police, local authorities, CCGs and commissioned support services to identify and implement specific domestic abuse related lessons learnt from Covid-19.	PCC Police Local Authorities CCGs

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13. Appendices

Appendix 1: Additional Local Tables and Statistics

Experience of Domestic Abuse in Nottingham City, 2020 – experimental estimates

	Since the age of 16			In the last year		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Partner abuse (non-sexual)	12,020	25,620	37,640	2,700	6,070	8,770
Family abuse (non-sexual)	6,670	9,120	15,790	1,680	2,520	4,200
Sexual assault by a partner	790	7,830	8,620	100	660	760
Sexual assault by a family member	240	2,530	2,770	30	80	110
Stalking by a partner	3,460	10,120	13,580	660	1,190	1,850
Stalking by a family member	1,390	3,550	4,940	350	550	900
Any partner abuse	13,580	29,330	42,910	3,160	6,900	10,060
Any family abuse	7,590	12,570	20,160	1,950	2,930	4,880
Any domestic abuse	17,930	34,000	51,930	4,670	9,010	13,680

Experience of Domestic Abuse in Nottinghamshire County, 2020 – experimental estimates

	Since the age of 16			In the last year		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Partner abuse (non-sexual)	27,530	62,850	90,380	6,190	14,890	21,090
Family abuse (non-sexual)	15,270	22,380	37,650	3,850	6,180	10,040
Sexual assault by a partner	1,810	19,210	21,020	220	1,630	1,850
Sexual assault by a family member	540	6,200	6,740	70	200	270
Stalking by a partner	7,930	24,830	32,760	1,510	2,930	4,440
Stalking by a family member	3,170	8,700	11,870	780	1,340	2,140
Any partner abuse	31,090	71,970	103,060	7,240	16,930	24,170
Any family abuse	17,385	30,837	48,210	4,470	7,180	11,650
Any domestic abuse	41,060	83,410	124,470	10,690	22,110	32,790

Extrapolated estimates based on findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales to March 2020
Survey of population aged 16 to 74.

14. Glossary

Black, Asian and Other Minority Ethnic (BAME): Non-white British communities

Body worn video (BWV): A wearable audio, video, or photographic recording system used to record events in which police officers or other law enforcers are involved.

Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) – clinically led organisations responsible for the planning of local healthcare services.

Criminal Justice System or Criminal Justice Services (CJS) - incorporates the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, courts, prisons, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company, youth offending teams and Victim Support and other organisations and multi-agency partnerships.

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) - The Crime Survey for England and Wales (formerly British Crime Survey) provides the most robust indicator of long term trends in overall crime victimisation rates at a local and national level. It should be noted, however, that the survey does not provide estimates for sexual offences, homicide, crimes against businesses and crimes that have no victim.

Coercive Control: Coercive or controlling behaviour in an intimate or family relationship became a new criminal offence in December 2015 under the Serious Crime Act 2015.

College of Policing: The professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales, established in 2012. The purpose of the College is to provide those working in policing with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public, and secure public trust.

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs): A local authority level statutory partnership established by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to co-ordinate action on crime and disorder. Community safety is not just about tackling crime but about improving quality of life and reducing the fear of crime in communities.

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS): The main public agency for conducting criminal cases in England and Wales, responsible for: prosecuting criminal cases investigated by the police and other investigating bodies; advising the police on cases for possible prosecution and reviewing cases submitted by the police

DASH RIC: Domestic Abuse Stalking and Honour Based Abuse Risk Identification Checklist - the standard risk assessment for domestic abuse used by police and other agencies.

Domestic abuse: Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; emotional

Domestic Abuse Investigation Support Unit (DAISU): Specialist teams of police officers or staff with responsibility for domestic abuse investigations.

DVPO: a Domestic Violence Protection Notice can be issued by police and if approved by the courts can become a Domestic Violence Protection Order, which is a civil order for non molestation and eviction. Any breach by the perpetrator is a criminal offence.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS): Statutory body responsible to the Home Office for inspecting police and fire and rescue services in England and Wales

Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA): Specialist support to high risk victims/survivors of domestic violence to provide advice and develop and put in place safety plans

Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA): Specialist support to victims of sexual violence helping to pursue justice and find closure through the courts

Integrated Offender Management (IOM): Multi-agency management of the most serious offenders aiming to support and rebuild lives and provide swift intervention and enforcement should they continue to offend. Key partners include Police, Prison, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company, Drugs workers, Youth Offending Teams, Local Authority and Private Sector

Malicious Communications: Threats and verbal abuse usually made on social media, most notably Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

Most Similar Police Force Areas: Home Office comparator group of most similar police force areas comprising Bedfordshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Lancashire, Leicestershire and South Yorkshire

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC): are part of a co-ordinated community response team that deal with severe domestic violence and child abuse cases

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH): Provides a single point of contact for all professionals to report safeguarding concerns

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) - arrangements in England and Wales for 'responsible authorities' tasked with the management of registered sex offenders, violent and other dangerous offenders who pose a serious risk of harm to the public. "Responsible authorities" include the Probation Trust, National Offender Management Service, HM Prison Service and England and Wales Police Forces

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC, Commissioner): Elected individual with responsibility for identifying local policing needs, setting priorities that meet those needs, agreeing a local strategic plan, holding the Chief Constable to account, setting the force budget and precept and hiring / dismissing the Chief Constable

Public Protection Unit (PPU): A team of investigators and police staff dealing with allegations of abuse towards some of the most vulnerable groups, including children, vulnerable adults, and victims of serious domestic abuse.

THRIVE: Police [prioritisation model](#) for response which considers Threat, Harm, Risk, Intelligence, Vulnerability (of the victim) and Engagement (level required to resolve the issue)

Violence against women and girls (VAWG): The umbrella under which domestic abuse sits for work undertaken internationally, across Government, across the agencies and within the CPS.

Youth Justice Service (YJS): Multi-agency statutory bodies under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act