



AGENCY REPORTS

Responding to the Survivor's Voice - September 2006

In November 2005 the ADVA Partnership held a groundbreaking conference that put the survivor of domestic violence at the centre of agencies' attention and highlighted the significant contribution that survivors' stories can make in the improvement of agency responses. The overall commitment to take the survivors' concerns seriously resulted in a list of concrete proposals for change. This commitment lies at the heart of Devon's future approach to domestic violence.

The follow-up event 'Responding to the Survivor's Voice' gives agencies the chance to report on any changes that have been implemented since November 2005. We see this event as the first step of an ongoing dialogue between survivors and agencies.

This document is the detailed report of how agencies have responded to the actions they committed to in November 2005.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE	2
HEALTH	4
HOUSING	5
POLICE	7
EDUCATION	9
SOCIAL SERVICES	10
WOMEN'S AID	12

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Responding to the Survivor's Voice - September 2006

ACTIONS AGREED TO IN NOVEMBER 2005

Agency representatives:

David Gentry Area Director HM Courts Service

Susan Bahman Plymouth District Magistrates Court

Mary Anne McFarlane Chief Officer Devon & Cornwall Probation Area

1. Want to hear more from survivors – would like a survivors panel to continue
2. Use new Witness Care Unit to capture information as each case is on-going
3. Build better links between civil and criminal courts, including CAFCASS
4. Review training scope for judiciary to include all prosecutors
5. Develop Witness Care Unit for single point of contact for criminal cases
6. Try to establish principle of 'one trauma interview'
7. Provide better feedback as information is gleaned, through police, witness care unit and court advocates

UPDATE ON ACTIONS

1. Want to hear more from Survivors- would like a Survivor panel to continue.

The Criminal Justice Agencies will have the opportunity to consult with the Survivors Reference Group 'SEEDS', subject to funding.

2. Use new Witness Care Unit (WCU) to capture information as each case is on going.

A new Witness Management System (WMS2) has been rolled out across the country, however, the system has not yet been implemented in Devon and Cornwall. This system will allow the WCU to capture information as each case is on going.

3. Build better links between Civil and Criminal Courts, including CAFCASS.

The LCJB domestic violence sub group identified that a criminal/civil mapping exercise was required in order to clarify the Court processes. The Peninsula Family Justice Forum agreed to produce this piece of work, this is currently on going.

4. Review training scope for Judiciary to include all Prosecutors.

The Magistrates receive domestic violence training on a regular basis, Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) aims to ensure that all Magistrates

attend the course, provided by the Judicial Studies Board. Senior CPS staff attended the training and took part in the discussions. HMCS is happy to consider CPS Prosecutors attending further HMCS training in the future, subject to funding.

5. Develop Witness Care Unit for single point of contact for Criminal Cases.

The WCU is the single point of contact for all Victims and Witnesses.

6. Try to establish principal of 'one trauma interview'.

In The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime Section 4 (4.9) it states that “The complainant in respect of a sexual offence or domestic abuse and the relatives of those who have died as a result of criminal conduct are eligible for an enhanced service under the Code unless the victim has informed the service provider of the victim’s wish not to be so”.

7. Provide better feedback as information is gleaned, through Police, Witness Care Unit and Court Advocates.

The WCU provides regular feedback to all Victims and Witnesses, as required by The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

HEALTH – GP'S, MIDWIFERY

Responding to the Survivor's Voice - September 2006

Action arising from workshop

Agency Representatives

Dr Michelle Jones GP Foxhayes Practice

Ian Tearle Joint Acting Director of Public Health East Devon PCT

1. Train professionals from infancy ie part of their qualifying package
2. Routine screening (asking the question) needs to be introduced across the board. It is there in part with midwives and health visitors but not with GPs. Also if the question is asked it needs to be followed up with advice, signposting, safety plan etc. One survivor commented she had answered yes on a Health Visitor questionnaire and it had never been followed up.
3. Survivors requested that a regular health forum is set up to give them a chance to express their views on a regular basis (GPs, Health Visitors and Midwifery representatives to meet on a quarterly basis).

UPDATE ON ACTIONS

1. Train professionals from infancy i.e. part of their qualifying package.

Peninsula Medical School train GP's on two sites –North Devon and Exeter. I have arranged with North Devon to incorporate an afternoons session on DV with their next intake in November. Exeter has already programmed their training this year but I have asked to be included next year.

2. Routine Screening.

Have developed pilot programme for GP surgeries (phase 2) with Sue Penna Associates. Currently working on a pilot with Barnfield Hill in Exeter with funding agreed for another 3 practices. Only available to practices that have already undertaken basic awareness training (phase 1) which is still continuing.

3. Regular health Forum.

Realistically it has not been possible to move forward with this but would be keen to work with Survivors reference group when fully trained and up and running.

H O U S I N G

Responding to the Survivor's Voice - September 2006

Action arising from workshops

Agency Representative:

Graham Davey Housing Needs & Enabling Manager Housing Services

Graham Davey, stated how amazed and appalled he was about the lack of consistency in the service delivery for survivors of domestic violence. He agreed to ensure that the following points will be addressed:

1. Achieving changes to make sure survivors are: believed; provided with the appropriate service and told the truth.
2. To provide county wide standards of service delivery and a 'Code of good Practice'.

UPDATE ON ACTIONS

1. Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedures Document – A 'Code of good Practice'

The Devon Homelessness Managers Group (DHMG) have developed a Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedures document. This document sets out what victims who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, and organisations working with victims, can expect from Local Authority homelessness services. The document represents a "code of good practice" for each of the housing departments in Devon and hopes to address the issues raised at last years conference.

Women's Aid, DV Co-ordinators, Housing Associations, Housing Departments have all been involved in the development of the document which has been widely circulated in draft form.

This document will mean that the Local Authority Homelessness Departments across Devon are working consistently and to the same set of principles. This will help avoid scenarios where victims are receiving different levels of service depending on where they approach for help.

Alongside the policy we hope to develop a smaller easy to read leaflet with a summary of the information in the policy. This will be widely distributed and

will help individuals understand what they can do to access help from housing departments and they can expect will be provided.

The policy is currently in final draft and will be launched during the Regional Awareness Week in November. It will be circulated to all organisations working with Domestic Violence in Devon and will be available for download on the DSHG website (www.dshg.org.uk).

2. Training for housing staff

The ADVA training team has developed a training module for housing staff. This is currently being piloted in 2 districts (Teignbridge, Torridge) and Signpost Housing and to be evaluated early in 2007. This training will be rolled out more widely from April 2007.

Currently this is being funded by ADVA, but the intention is for district funds to contribute toward the roll-out in 2007.

P O L I C E

Responding to the Survivor's Voice - September 2006

Action arising from workshops

Agency Representatives:

Richard Stowe Assistant Chief Constable Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

Sally Kingdon Domestic Violence Officer Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

Ian Fraser-Roe Community Support Unit Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

1. Found experience very positive / beneficial; acknowledged lots of work has happened but that there is more to do:

Audit Training that has to take place – what and who, and identify those who have not received training.

2. Firearms –rural access potential for increased danger to victims. They will do an audit of firearm and shotgun licenses and cross reference those with perpetrators on record, and remove their certificates

UPDATE ON ACTIONS

1. Training

Police Training has been delivered across the Constabulary using a modular training package developed by the National Centre for Policing Excellence.

The Force Command Team and Training Board have prioritised Domestic Violence Training using the modular programme with particular emphasis placed upon modules 1, 3, and 5. ADVA also offer training, however this report centres upon police training.

Module 1 is aimed at all staff with a professional connection with the subject. Module 3 offers enhanced training for the same audience following on from Module 1 and Module 5 is aimed at Specialist Domestic Violence Officers and co-ordinators.

Devon and Cornwall Constabulary employ in the region of 3500 Police Officers, not all fall into the category of having a 'professional connection' with the subject. The audit reveals that 82% of Police Officers have been trained in Module 1 and 70% in Module 3. Module 5 has just commenced and is being rolled out to all Specialist Domestic Violence Officers in both counties.

The Force will continue to work in partnership with ADVA to identify any further improvements. An area which appears to merit further examination is the potential correlation between awareness training and the survivor experience broken down geographically across the ADVA area of activity.

2. Firearms

The concerns raised by survivors regarding this subject was discussed at the Force Domestic Violence Officers meeting on 16th February 2006 with the Head of the Firearms Licensing Department and at the Force Domestic Violence Strategy Meetings.

The Force Command and Control System automatically notifies staff of the existence of firearms at given locations and the certificate holders details.

Control Room Staff have access to the Force Firearms Licensing Database containing the details of the 40,088 licensed certificate holders and are able to identify weapons held and notify first responders.

Information Communication Systems have been enhanced to automatically cross reference the Firearms Licensing Database with persons arrested and brought into custody. This means that the Force Firearms Licensing Department are now able to receive automatic daily updates and commence enquiries regarding whether weapons/certificates were seized and carry out suitability assessments with the view to revoke certificates in accordance with the provisions of the Firearms Act 1968.

A selection of cases have been examined by the Headquarters Community Support Unit and measures taken to further improve the awareness of officers conducting suitability interviews to retain firearms particularly in the field of risk assessment and the 'Power and Control Wheel'.

Firearms may only be seized in accordance with the law. If there is any delay between the reported incident and seizure then the police will require consent or a warrant. The importance of this has been circulated to staff force-wide to reinforce positive action at the scene.

E D U C A T I O N

Responding to the Survivor's Voice - September 2006

ACTIONS AGREED TO IN NOVEMBER 2005

Agency representative:

Phil Norrey Director of Education, Arts & Libraries, Devon County Council

Angie Mudge Educational Psychologist, Devon Educational Psychology Service

1. Letter from Phil Norrey to all Heads to report his experience of today 'personally shocked' and to urge schools to do risk assessment; have support numbers; do a 2 page synopsis of the conference report ; engage all staff in training. Will send a second, follow up letter, asking for actions.
2. Review risk assessment and make sure Domestic Violence is clearly stated. Establish a protocol re perpetrators/children and young people at risk.
3. Review travel and maintenance allowance red tape to make it easier for survivors to access support when it is needed.
4. Training – increase and follow up on its effectiveness.

UPDATE ON ACTIONS

Education now sits within the Children's and Young People's Service. Phil Norrey's report is covered under Social Services

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Responding to the Survivor's Voice - September 2006

Action arising from workshops

Agency Representatives:

*Anne Whiteley Director of Children's Services, Devon County Council
Clara Keegan Practice Manager Social Services Department*

1. Information – what SSD do and can't do. Need clarity, if SSD is unclear it leads to expectations which cannot be addressed.
2. Communications – now aware of the consequences of our letter, which might prevent a survivor contacting us further. Will look at letter sent out to survivors and review it and the information pack sent out.
3. Expectation – important to look at how SSD works alongside other agencies. Need to identify the skills and knowledge which might need to improve within SSD.
4. Contact- especially in civil arena. Not enough information or clear communication re perpetrator 'rights'
5. SSD and CAFCASS – staff to be better equipped on end of telephone – need to train all staff on telephone support to understand the impact of DV (inc level 2)

UPDATE ON ACTIONS

TRAINING/AWARENESS RAISING

37 Social Workers have attended level 2 (impact on children) course and additional provision has been made in the training budget to facilitate attendance. (i.e. funding). 143 sessions run, September – May 06 and 143 sessions run between Sept 06- May 06. Of the 1997 feedback forms 65% said it had definitely increased awareness of the role in safeguarding cyp and 64% said they now definitely knew what to do if they suspected child abuse. Several colleagues had already done training and therefore felt that it hadn't increased their awareness- they knew it already . The qualitative feedback has been excellent eg "very valuable and should be done regularly for teachers, NQTs and students training to be teachers" and "I have learned enough as a Governor to be very aware of the responsibilities that the school/staff have " .

INFORMATION

Significant work completed clarifying in Exeter what can and cannot be provided by Social Care Services. Emphasis on improved communication through EDASU, Outreach and Women's Aid.

COMMUNICATIONS

Standard letter referred to last year has been revised in line with the one sent by the DV unit.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The most significant development in relation to DV and its interface with children's services is the decision to establish the ADVA children's task group as a formal sub group of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and develop a specific action plan in relation to children's services development (copy attached)

This is a very ambitious plan to develop DV services across all relevant agencies in accordance with the standards and vision as laid out in the LGA guidance document. It will not be achieved in total immediately and so priorities need to be identified. These are

1. MARAC the successful role out of the MARAC process across the whole of the County with appropriate agency commitment. This has almost now been achieved, some delay in full role out in South and West Devon because of shortfall in police resources but should be resolved soon. Recent recognition of resource implications for all agencies in terms of attendance at meetings and speedy provision of services for most high risk cases. Formal review of service to be undertaken this autumn.
2. Training - adva has developed a very well regarded training programme providing various levels of training for a range of agencies. Long term funding arrangements need to be addressed, e.g. should it be brought into the CP training programme and funded via LSCB budget.
3. Programmes within schools, staff training and pupil awareness training. Has been very successful to date, see attached report.
4. Children's Support Workers, now have 3 across County one for each locality offering outreach support from refuges, again long term funding will be the issue.
5. County Wide perpetrator programme, Repair. Now available across whole County but again long term funding to be resolved across the agencies via Children's Trust.

EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA)

Capita (acting as Government Agents) pay EMA direct to young people. This money will only be paid into a bank account, the young person needs an address/identification to open an account. The Youth Service this year wrote

to all refuges giving contact numbers to the Refuge Manager and the offer has been made to identify a youth worker to accompany young people to the bank and stand as guarantor.

TRANSPORT POLICY

The other significant development is that we have developed a supportive transport policy between the transport team and all the refuges to try and maintain stability in school placements.

CAFCASS

Cafcass, now have national policy and procedure re when Cafcass should refer on DV concerns.

W O M E N ' S A I D

Responding to the Survivor's Voice - September 2006

Action arising from workshop

Agency representatives:

Chris Pearson Manager Exeter Women's Aid

1. Need for more support for children and parents – following on from Pattern Changing (as modelled in North Devon), potentially delivered through Women's Aid?
2. Better links with Education to improve understanding and awareness of the issues for children affected by domestic violence, this was both about more training and more liaison/ inter agency working with those undertaking any work with children and parents/carers.
3. Pattern Changing highly valued – need to provide it at optimum time for survivors
4. Post pattern changing follow up needed
5. Need more outreach, pattern changing , publicity
6. Need for more resources!

UPDATE ON ACTIONS

Actions have been answered separately by the 3 Women's Aid Organisations

EXETER WOMEN'S AID

- 1. Need for more support for children and parents – following on from Pattern Changing (as modelled in North Devon), potentially delivered through Women's Aid?**

Since the SEEDS conference last year, a new post for Children and Young Peoples Outreach worker managed by EWA has been created. The worker meets and supports Children and Young People who have witnessed/experienced Domestic Violence, working in a person centred approach, facilitating the child/young person to express and explore their experience of domestic violence. Outreach workers from EWA may refer children and young people to the CYP Outreach worker. The children and young Person's support worker is also currently working with JACAT to implement some group work for CYP aged between 11-13 years

Women who have completed the Pattern Changing course are able to continue to receive support through the outreach team, in a one to one capacity, use the drop in sessions and engage with the Repair Safety Workers where appropriate. The REPAIR Women's Safety Worker works with women whose partners are engaging with the Repair project, offering support, safety planning and advocacy.

There has been the introduction of 2 IDVAs (Independent Domestic Violence Adviser) including a Specialist Domestic Violence Court IDVA, who works with women who are at very high risk of a recurring incident. Creating safety plans, carrying out risk assessments, accessing appropriate civil and legal assistance in addition to liaising with DVOs, and accessing Refuge and Outreach support.

A third IDVA post is presently being recruited to work specifically with women in East and Mid Devon.

Options for further support for women and children are currently being explored

2. Better links with Education to improve understanding and awareness of the issues for Children affected by domestic violence, this was both about more training and more liaison / inter agency working with those undertaking any work with children and parents/carers.

All refuges now have a link Education Welfare Officer and an Educational Psychologist who both visit regularly. The Educational Psychologist and refuge children's teams are currently working on an appropriate welcome pack for children in refuges. We have also recently agreed a Devon-wide transport policy to help with the costs of school travel for children and young people in certain situations.

The Children and Young People's Outreach Worker meets with Children and Young People in schools and Children's Centres. The worker is in constant contact with teachers and other child care professionals, liaising with families to offer a greater insight into the emotional impact of Domestic Violence on Children and Young People. To encourage a better understanding of the resulting behaviours and facilitate a co-operative approach to meeting the needs of all children and young people affected by DV.

The Safe Project worker (working with young women aged 14-25) engages with schools, youth projects, young person's services, homelessness, housing and supported units to continue to develop awareness and support for young women across Devon.

3. Pattern Changing highly valued – need to provide it at optimum time for survivors.

The Outreach Project runs 6 groups of Pattern Changing through out the year, facilitating women from Exeter, East and Mid Devon either in or out of the relationship/s. The courses are scheduled around term holidays; both in the

daytime and evening and women can continue to receive support before, during and after the course is completed.

The Safe Project commenced a Pattern Changing group for women aged between 16-19 years, and is in the process of being amended to be more age specific.

The Pattern Changing Courses have proven to be very popular, so much so that there is now a prioritised waiting list of women keen to attend. Courses are run in conjunction with support from the outreach team, recognising the course content can be very emotive and difficult to work through.

4. Post pattern changing follow up needed.

Following the pattern changing groups, there was a gathering at Christmas for the women who attended to share their experiences, and mark their journey. Post Pattern Changing women are able to use drop in services when required.

Several of the women who completed the pattern changing courses are keen to volunteer, and become involved with supporting others at drop in sessions. The volunteer project is presently being re-evaluated and hopes to be able to facilitate this, and also assist women to continue to build on their skills and abilities. The outcome of this will be confirmed later in the year.

5. Need more outreach pattern changing, publicity.

We are in the process of implementing 2 Drop-in Groups in East Devon in addition to the existing drop in groups in Exeter and Mid Devon. Further drop-in sessions are being researched, to facilitate further access for women across Devon.

Two Pattern Changing groups are to commence in the next week, with a further 2 scheduled for the New Year. This will include an evening course to facilitate women who work and have other daytime commitments. We are also hoping to have the Children's group up and running in the imminent future, along with the amended Young Person's Pattern Changing group.

Awareness raising continues with talks, presentations and consultations with a vast array of different agencies, organisations, services and social groups. Information leaflets, posters and stickers are visible in GP surgeries, colleges, schools, welfare offices, local facilities and youth offices to enable women, young people and children to seek support and shelter. EWA offers support and crisis intervention 24 hours a day on the helpline.

Exeter Women's Aid will also be taking part in the Devon wide Domestic Violence Awareness week in November, offering support, advice, and drop in sessions and awareness rising in Exeter, East and Mid Devon, including a publicity campaign on a local radio station.

6. Need for more resources!

In addition to funding from ADVA, Supporting People, The Tudor Trust and Children in Need, fundraising continues to develop and explore further resources to be available to women experiencing domestic violence. With the increased awareness rising, comes an increase in women coming forward to be supported, this calls out for further resources and development of the projects already established.

S O U T H D E V O N W O M E N ' S A I D

1. Need for more support for children and parents – following on from Pattern Changing (as modelled in North Devon), potentially delivered through Women's Aid?

ADVA have provided the funding so that all women's Aids now have a child and Young person Worker working with children from outreach services. Children can access this service if their Dad is on the perpetrator programme or if Mum is using the services of Women's Aid. Of course one worker per area is never going to be enough but it's a start.

The Child and Young Person Worker for SDWA is Paula and she can be contacted through the helpline

2. Better links with Education to improve understanding and awareness of the issues for children affected by domestic violence, this was both about more training and more liaison/ inter agency working with those undertaking any work with children and parents/carers.

Better links with Education - Women's Aids have taken this on board and Chris Pearson the Manager of Exeter Women's Aid has been doing this and feeding back the achievements to the other Women's Aids.

3. Pattern Changing highly valued – need to provide it at optimum time for survivors

Pattern Changing has gone from strength to strength (as we all guessed it would) and all Women's Aids are looking for funding to be able to increase the amount of what they can provide. Within SDWA we have a waiting list for the next course each time we run one. ADVA have increased the funding for each Pattern Changing that they fund which makes them much more viable to run.

4. Post pattern changing follow up needed

Women's Aids across Devon along with the ADVA partnership have been looking at the possibility of doing some post Pattern Changing Work. North Devon piloted some very successful assertiveness and parenting classes which proved to be very successful our plan would be to roll these out across the county.

6. Need for more resources!

Women's Aid does need more resources but things have grown/improved over the last year or so and a lot of that has been as a result of the hard work of the ADVA partnership and those who were involved in last years conference.

N O R T H D E V O N W O M E N ' S A I D

1. NDWA offer a parenting course to women who have completed Pattern Changing. Plan to improve this course in 2007 with input from the London Ontario Parenting Programme.
2. NDWA has excellent links with both EWO's and EP's. Always striving to get domestic violence and the problems faced by mothers and Children and Young People on to the Education agenda.
3. NDWA offers Pattern Changing in a variety of venues and at a choice of times including evenings.
4. NDWA offers a post Pattern Changing assertiveness course, which builds on lessons already learned in Pattern Changing. Also, women have opportunity to access monthly Pattern Changing updates.
5. Doing our best !