



Final Report

Domestic Violence Task Group

Devon Domestic Violence Strategy 2002-2005

October 2002

Devon Strategic Partnership

... Domestic Violence manifests itself in a variety of ways including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and financial abuse¹.

1 Aim

Domestic Violence is a crime, the impact of which cuts across all social, geographic and cultural groups. This strategy seeks to deal with the issues within Devon. Its vision by March 2005 is to:

- Reduce the level of domestic violence;
- Reduce repeat victimisation by 15%;
- Increase the level of reportage by 10% by improving early intervention services.

2 Background

The importance of the issue has been recognised by the Devon Strategic Partnership (DSP) which commissioned the development of this strategy as one of its first priorities. This has built on earlier work within the Devon Domestic Violence Network which sponsored the production of the "Devon Domestic Violence: Mapping Report"¹ launched in November 2001. This report highlighted the potential scale and cost of the issue in Devon and the key problems in the way agencies were dealing with domestic violence.

The work commissioned by DSP has been co-ordinated by the Devon Domestic Violence Task Group chaired by Councillor Jill Owen. This strategy, for the first time, sets out a cross-agency approach to domestic violence within Devon. Its implementation will pose challenges to existing roles and ways of working. But this is essential if we are to achieve the vision of reducing the costly consequences of domestic violence within the county.

This strategy was subject to a consultation period during July and August 2002 which received responses across voluntary and statutory agencies.

3 What does this mean for Devon?

To define the scale of the problem the Task Group has drawn on the Mapping Exercise, known evidence from the police and a survey of survivors living in Devon.

Estimating costs

The Mapping Exercise used research within Hackney² that is recognised by the Home Office which devised detailed formulae to work out an estimate of the prevalence of domestic violence and to calculate the costs of providing services to women and children living with domestic violence. It estimated that 1 in 9 women in Hackney had experienced domestic violence in the previous year and that the costs equated to approximately £60 per household per year. This figure was based on the selected costs of the key agencies involved, including the Police, the Civil Justice System, Housing, Refuges, Social Services and Health. These annual costs per agency in Hackney, estimated to the nearest £10,000, were:

¹ Sal Lodge, Janice Goodwin & Chris Pearson (2001) 'Domestic Violence in Devon; A Mapping Exercise'

² Stanko et al; (1998) *Counting the Costs: Estimating the Impact of Domestic Violence in the London Borough of Hackney*

...Domestic Violence is a crime, the impact of which cuts across all social, geographic and cultural groups.

Key Agency	Selected estimated costs of domestic violence
Police*	£540,000
Civil Justice	£1,000,000
Housing**	£240,000
Refuge	£410,000
Social Services Directorate	£2,360,000
Health***	£580,000
Total of selected costs of key agencies	£5,130,000

* Excludes the costs of investigating and prosecuting one domestic murder

** Excludes the costs of repairs to council property, preparation for new tenants, moving and furnishing flats; indirect costs

*** Excludes hospitalisation and medicines.

In line with other counties we have translated the Hackney research to approximate costs in Devon. As Devon has approximately 305,000 households at £60 per household the minimum cost of domestic violence to key agencies is £18,300,000 per annum.

Existing Data

Table 1 is drawn from police statistics of reported incidents. This is not a complete reflection of overall domestic violence incidents as on average a victim will be assaulted by their partner or ex-partner 35 times before reporting it to the police.³

The age profile of victims shows that 41% were aged under 30 years, 56% were aged between 30 and 60 and 3% were aged over 60. The gender profile shows that there were 4699 female and 1044 male survivors.

Table 1: Domestic Violence incidents by districts April 2001 – March 2002 (including children present in household)

District	Reported incidents	Repeat incidents	No Of Repeat Victims	Children Present
East Devon	1118	336	179	341
Exeter	1319	415	204	608
Mid Devon	622	206	103	306
North Devon	1059	367	190	437
South Hams	358	90	54	159
Teignbridge	628	164	94	283
Torridge	387	70	49	169
West Devon	252	60	38	109
Devon Total	5743	1708	911	2412

³ Yearshire S (1997) Analysis of Cohort, in Bewley S, Friend J and Mezey G (eds) Violence Against Women

Table 2: The Ethnic Group of victims by district (April 2001 – March 2002)

* These are the ethnic categories used by the Police

Ethnic Group*	West Devon	South Devon	Teignbridge	Exeter	East Devon	Mid Devon	North Devon	Torridge	Total
African Caribbean			1	11	1		6	1	20
Arab				1				1	2
Asian	1	1	1	3		1	2	1	10
Dark European	1	1		2	2	1	2	1	10
Oriental				5	2				7
Unknown	29	25	77	109	11	80	46	96	473
White European	221	331	549	1188	1102	540	1003	287	5221
Total	252	358	628	1319	1118	622	1059	387	5743

Local Consultation

Our local survey of survivors gave us the views of 85 women and 10 men. These responses showed that of the 95 responses 69% wanted counselling services, 65% support for children, 63% community based support groups and 57% more housing options. Both women and men identified these service preferences. Respondents would prefer to receive information about available services from health centres/GP, Citizens Advice Bureaux and the media. Survivors’ views on how domestic violence could be prevented or victims supported included awareness raising, education, support for victims, support for offenders, more housing options and more intervention by the police and courts.

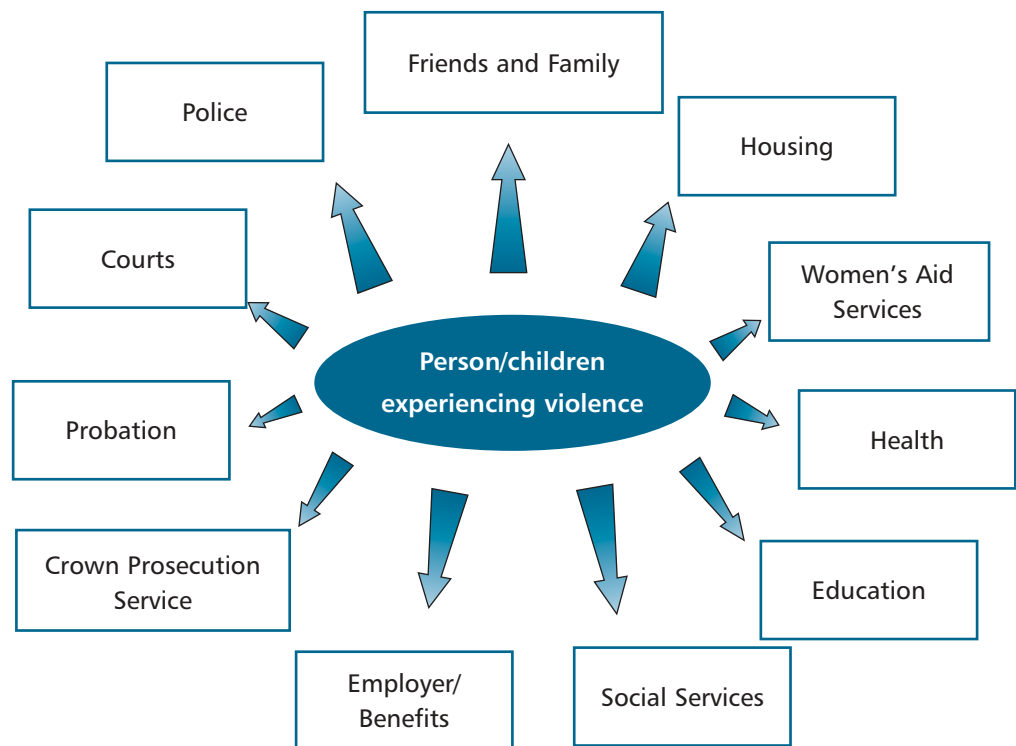


Figure 1: Domestic Violence impacts all agencies and aspects of people's lives.

4 Key Messages

This all adds up to the following key messages which this strategy seeks to address:

- There is no strategic or co-ordinated approach to provision or funding of services;
- Domestic violence is a significant crime in Devon;
- The cost of the impact of domestic violence on statutory and voluntary services is high;
- There is no multi-agency information sharing about the extent of the problem;
- There are gaps in service provision across the county for all survivors of domestic violence;
- There is little information on male victims of domestic violence;
- There is no firm evidence about victims of domestic violence from black and ethnic minority backgrounds;
- There is no firm evidence about victims of same sex relationships.

5 Recommendations

From the statistical data and consultation survey information the Task Group believes that the strategy should focus around the following areas:

- Training and Awareness raising;
- Information Sharing and Data Management;
- Services for Children and Survivors;
- Work with Perpetrators;
- Funding and Structures;
- Agency roles and policy.

In addressing these there are clear areas of cross agency activity and implications for mainstream work of each of the statutory agencies. Each of the following recommendations is interdependent and the strategy will not be fully achieved without action to implement them all. The range of potential activity for each agency is summarised at the end of the following recommendations.

5.1 Training

Why a priority?

Our analysis shows that domestic violence is an under recognised issue in agencies and amongst the general public. This leads to under reporting and under recording of the true extent of domestic violence. Added to this our survivor survey and other research shows that victims want recognition of the problem and earlier intervention to help reduce repeat victimisation. To improve this position we must:

- Raise awareness of domestic violence in Devon;
- Increase the number of trained professionals and volunteers;
- Introduce quality standards in the delivery of domestic violence training.

“Domestic violence is a crime generally committed in private, behind closed doors, without witnesses, and as such is grossly under-reported and widely under-recorded. For these reasons it is impossible to have accurate statistics about the true extent of domestic abuse.”⁴

⁴ Sal Lodge, Janice Goodwin & Chris Pearson (2001) 'Domestic Violence in Devon; A Mapping Exercise'

Approximately 1 in 4 women can expect to experience domestic abuse at some time in their lives, and a male partner or ex-partner commits 48% of female homicides.⁵

To do this we propose to develop a 3 tier training framework: tier 1 corresponding to basic awareness raising training; tier 2 corresponding to more specialist training (NVQ 2 and 3 equivalent) and tier 3 providing professional qualifications. The Task Group will work with participating statutory and voluntary agencies to identify funding sources and amounts to be committed to a rolling programme of training from 2002 to 2005.

Key Actions

- Quantify the numbers of staff in each participating statutory and voluntary organisation requiring training at levels 1, 2 and 3 by April 2003;
- Ensure domestic violence training links with agency training plans and staff development;
- Develop a three tier training programme by April 2003 with staged implementation from December 2002;
- Develop quality standards by April 2003;
- Identify quality assured training providers by March 2003;
- Quantify the costs of providing two year training programme by December 2002;
- Obtain agreement on the funding contribution from each organisation by February 2003.

5.2 Information sharing and data management

Why a priority?

Many agencies are working towards reducing domestic violence, supporting the victims of domestic violence and increasing the levels of prosecution. The opportunity exists for more joint working which will reduce duplication of effort, confusion over responsibility, and costs in terms of human and financial resources.

Other authorities, for example, Cheshire, Lincolnshire, and Leicestershire are at various stages in developing information sharing between key statutory agencies. We need to look at evidence of 'good practice' in the development of Devon's strategy.

For a more effective policy where more perpetrators can be brought to justice and more survivors appropriately supported it is vital that information is shared and a common database established.

To achieve this our objectives will be to:

- Draw on national and local good practice;
- Build on existing local processes for example Child Protection system;
- Reduce the duplication of services through streamlined communication;
- Develop organisationally appropriate processes for reporting incidents of domestic violence;
- Further develop effective and appropriate networks for information sharing.

⁵ Criminal Statistics (1992) London: Home Office

Key Actions

- Establish a multi-agency task group to scope and facilitate this work and ensure that developments are integrated with wider information and data collection protocols;
- Develop and agree a common process for monitoring of perpetrators which will include a common referral form and a data collection process across all agencies by December 2003;
- Ensure that all statutory and voluntary agencies have appropriate mechanisms for both the recording of survivor information, the facilitation of its analysis; and drawing on information from national helpline sources to enable strategic monitoring and evaluation by December 2003;
- Audit the training needs relevant for the implementation of these recommendations and produce a costed programme by April 2003.

5.3 Children and Survivors**Why a priority?**

The scale of the problem, both currently recorded and potential, highlights the need for a consistent, safe and accessible service in all parts of the county for all survivors of domestic violence. The evidence of the link between domestic violence and child abuse, the views of survivors about supporting children and the hidden implications for children's emotional, educational and social wellbeing point towards the need to develop more services to support them. To do this we propose to:

- Provide consistent high quality services to survivors across all districts in Devon recognising the needs of black and ethnic minority groups, same sex relationships, those with a disability and older people;
- Explore the effective ways of delivering services to children living with domestic violence and base future developments on evidence-based research;
- Develop partnership working across the support agencies and link domestic violence developments into wider existing and emerging children's services;
- Develop each agency's internal policies in relation to its role and function.

Key Actions

- Introduce quality standards that apply to all outreach provision across the county by April 2003;
- Pilot work to explore the needs of children by December 2002;
- Pilot work to explore the needs of male survivors by December 2002;
- Quantify the specialist support needs of other groups by April 2003;
- Establish a multi-agency implementation group to co-ordinate and develop services to support survivors and children by September 2002;
- Produce guidelines and good practice for the development of each agency's policy and role by April 2003.

... In 2001 of the 9 homicides committed in Devon 7 of these were domestic violence murders. Police estimate that every homicide costs agencies £1million.

... Victims may contact up to ten different agencies before they get the help they need

... Every minute in the UK police receive a call asking for help with domestic abuse. This represents over 570,000 calls a year. These are reported cases. It is impossible to estimate the number of unreported cases.⁶

5.4 Perpetrator Work

Why a priority?

To date the majority of funding spent on domestic violence has been used to support the victims of domestic abuse. To continue that focus means that the cause of domestic violence is not being tackled. To achieve a reduction in repeat victimisation significant focus must be on perpetrators. To achieve this means there must be greater co-ordination amongst the criminal justice agencies: Police, CPS, Courts and Probation. Those who want to voluntarily address their behaviour should have easier access to appropriate programmes. To achieve this we propose to:

- Create a systematic and agency co-ordinated approach to dealing with all perpetrators;
- Increase the effectiveness of agencies dealing with perpetrators;
- Improve the ways in which women are supported through the criminal justice system.

Key Actions

- To establish a criminal justice implementation group comprising Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Courts and Devon and Cornwall Probation Area, Health and the Voluntary Sector by September 2002;
- To investigate ways in which perpetrators should be assisted in changing their behaviour by April 2004;
- To introduce a systematic approach to deal with perpetrators based on the "Killingbeck model"⁷ by April 2003;
- CPS good practice in Plymouth to be 'spread' across Devon by September 2004;
- To implement nationally approved programmes of work with perpetrators;
- To ensure women are provided with parallel support services.

5.5 Funding and Structures

What we are seeking is to establish a strategic way of dealing with domestic violence at a county and local level. To make this an effective process requires the establishment of new ways of working and a structure to implement and monitor the action plan on behalf of the Devon Strategic Partnership. Additionally the implementation will be dependent on cross agency sign up and funding.

It is acknowledged that many agencies already expend some of their resources on domestic violence work (see Hackney research page 3). The Task Group has not sought, at this stage, to identify these costs in detail as this is a complex task given that most agencies do not budget for domestic violence work separately. Thus the strategy focuses on the resources needed to expand or develop new services.

The extent to which funding is obtained will obviously determine the extent of implementation and priorities will need to be agreed. The funding work will, wherever possible, link with new or emerging funding streams.

⁶ Stanko, E (2000) *The National Snapshot of Domestic Violence*. London: Enough is Enough Conference

⁷ This is a three stage intervention model developed by West Yorkshire Police which is directed at both perpetrators and victims. Home Office Police Research Paper 104 (1999) *Arresting Evidence: Domestic Violence and Repeat Victimisation*.

Key elements of the strategy will be to:

- Create a cross agency budget based on a detailed assessment of the resources required to implement the strategy. Preliminary work by the Task Group indicates the following scale of annual funding needed:

Services	Cost
Women’s Refuge	£384,000
Children’s support in Refuge	£107,000
Outreach support for Women	£249,000
Outreach support for Children	£48,000
Helpline Women	£12,000
Helpline/outreach men	£31,000
Support needs of other groups	£12,000
Training and Awareness	£80,000
Co-ordination	£50,000
Perpetrators	£31,000
Data development	£40,000
Total	£1,044,000

..In any one day nearly 7000 women and children are living in refuges in the UK to escape domestic violence.⁸

- Develop a structure for delivering the strategy based on the following model:



More work needs to be done on the detailed working arrangements for the structure, membership of groups and terms of reference. The aim will be to link to existing county and local structures wherever possible and develop a simple and effective system.

Key Aims

- Establish a multi-agency group to develop the terms of reference and operating relationships of the new structure and the budgetary needs to implement the strategy by September 2002. The purpose of this group is:
 - To produce an annual multi-agency work programme reflecting the recommendations of the strategy;

⁸Women’s Aid Federation England (2001) A Matter of Life and Death: Health & Domestic Violence Campaign. Bristol: Women’s Aid Federation England

- To agree performance monitoring processes within and across organisations for the work programme;
- To produce a business plan for the work programme;
- To produce a half-yearly report for the DSP on progress to implement the strategy objectives ;
- To produce an annual report on domestic violence highlighting good practice and progress towards targets;
- Develop pilot projects, initially funded through Devon County Council, to identify through research effective service delivery for the longer term;
- Develop an awareness-raising programme with agencies to promote the invest-to-save benefits in joint funding the strategy's implementation.

Nationally and in Devon it is recognised that there is under reporting of domestic violence in same sex relationships, within ethnic minority communities, those with a disability, and older people.

5.6 Agency Roles and Policy

The main thrust of the recommendations above is about agencies working together in partnership to achieve specific goals. Beyond this the work of the Task Group has identified the lack of policies internal to agencies which specify their role and function. It is critical to the success of an inter-agency policy that the statutory agencies in particular reflect the importance of domestic violence through their policies. This will also tie into the performance indicators that are set nationally or locally by the statutory agencies, which this strategy can help to deliver. The key elements of this part of the strategy are:

- For each agency to establish its domestic violence policy incorporating its role as an employer to staff who are victims or perpetrators which also makes reference to links with appropriate agencies;
- For each agency to agree a timetable, the support needed to develop its policy and the costs of implementing its policy;
- To ensure the development of agency/multi-agency policy fits within existing cross agency frameworks eg Child Protection Committee and Adult Protection Committee.

Recommendations specific to particular organisations or agencies

More agency focussed work is needed to identify the issues to be covered by the policy and to draw on good practice and model protocols from elsewhere. The following identifies some areas that each agency needs to address:

Education

1. The impact of domestic violence on educational attainment and behaviour.
2. Key individuals who are in a position to recognise domestic violence.
3. Preventative work opportunities in school.

Health Service

1. Health professionals as a source of early identification of domestic violence.
2. How domestic violence impacts the range of health services.

Social Services

1. The link between domestic violence and child protection and the level at which Social Services should instigate investigations.
2. Recognising the need for more emphasis on prevention and support for children in addition to the child protection route.

Housing

1. Homelessness and Housing Advice officers have an important role in giving survivors of domestic violence advice about their property rights and access to alternative accommodation.
2. The opportunity for the 8 District Councils to provide consistent services by agreeing common protocols and policies.
3. The opportunity for all 'social' landlords to adopt policies and procedures which ensure sympathetic treatment of their tenants who are survivors of domestic violence.

Probation

1. Consistent community based perpetrator programme.
2. An inter-agency approach, particularly between criminal justice agencies, to the detection, arrest, conviction and effective sentencing (including enforcement) of all perpetrators.
3. Co-ordination and development of services for victims.
4. Management of high risk offenders and protection of children within the Multi-agency Public Protection Panels and Area Child Protection Committees as appropriate.

CPS

1. To implement the content of the CPS 2001 Domestic Violence Strategy and Practice Guidelines throughout Devon.

Police

1. To develop a law enforcement role for domestic violence officers.
2. To create a consistent structured approach to the management of perpetrators.
3. To implement a consistent evidential enhancement procedure in the investigation of all cases of domestic violence.

Courts

1. Instituting and monitoring procedures to ensure the effective communication of changes in custody status and bail conditions to promote safety to the victims.
2. For Magistrates and Judges to actively engage in national debate about changes in the law to ensure the effective prosecution of domestic violence.

Voluntary Organisations

1. All voluntary agencies of Devon will need to consider how they should develop their policy and response to domestic violence.

Early Years Services:

1. To include links with domestic violence in their plan.
2. To work with all service providers for children 0-14 and parents to develop policies on domestic violence.

Connexions:

1. Develop the role of personal advisors in identifying children living with domestic violence and promote and provide support to them.
2. To identify the impact of domestic violence on educational achievement and routes into training and employment.

There are likely to be other agencies for whom this strategy will have policy and practice implications. This will become clearer as implementation moves forward.

This Report has been produced by the Devon Domestic Violence Task Group on behalf of the Devon Strategic Partnership.

A full report will be available from November 2002.

Membership of the Task Group

Crown Prosecution Service; Women's Aid; Devon Youth Association; Devon and Cornwall Housing Association; Devon County Council; Devon and Cornwall Care Trust; Health; Devon and Cornwall Probation Area; Devon and Cornwall Constabulary; Mankind; Victim Support; Prison Service; Courts; Supporting People; Devon Housing Officers Group; Adult Protection Committee; Devon and Exeter Race Equality Council.

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