Devon has well developed support services for victims of domestic violence and abuse and we want these services to be available to all, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or gender. This leaflet aims to provide essential information that should help victims from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities to access existing services successfully.

We hope that it will also be of use to Devon's DVA practitioners in helping to identify and overcome some of the particular barriers that might exist for BME victims. We recognise that domestic violence is a universal problem that has an impact on all communities and that many problems faced by victims can be similar regardless of your colour, race or religion. However, it is also important to understand that it can be more difficult for BME victims to access support because of cultural barriers, problems with language and communication and racism.

Devon BME/DVA Action Group

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Section 1: Seeking Support
A: First steps. To get confidential advice and guidance on the phone, contact:
Interpreters are available on this helpline.
Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Broken Rainbow Domestic Violence Helpline 08452 60 44 60
LGB/T Support Service (Mon 2 – 8pm, Wed 10 – 1pm, Thursday 2 – 8pm) http://www.broken-rainbow.org.uk/

M.A.L.E (Men's Advice Line and Enquiries): 0808 8010327.
If you are a male victim of domestic violence, whether in a heterosexual, gay, bi- sexual or transgender relationship contact the national M.A.L.E. helpline. Opening times are: Monday to Friday 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. This line offers confidential support and can put you in contact with any local support services.

B: Contacting the Police: Domestic Abuse Officers
The police take domestic violence and abuse seriously. Call the police if you feel threatened in any way and do not be afraid to call 999.
Devon and Cornwall Police have specifically trained domestic abuse officers who can:
• advise about personal safety and prevent further offences happening
• provide support for any problems or worries
• co-ordinate help from other agencies if you choose
• ensure you are informed about criminal proceedings and any changes in bail conditions
• support you if you need to attend court
You can speak in confidence to the domestic abuse officer even if you do not wish for any official police involvement.
To contact your local domestic abuse officer call 08452 777 44

C: Getting specialist local support: adva
Devon has well developed support services which are coordinated through adva (Against Domestic Violence and Abuse), a partnership that was set up in November 2002 to bring together the statutory and voluntary agencies to tackle the problem of domestic violence in Devon. adva funds a range of services, including:
• Outreach support services in each district,
• A free phone helpline,
• Independent Domestic Violence Advisors
• Pattern Changing Courses for survivors of domestic violence.
• Multi-agency training courses.
• A comprehensive Service Directory
• REPAIR: a programme for perpetrators
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For more information or to book a course, please visit the website at www.adva.org.uk. To access the services that are funded through adva, phone the appropriate number listed below. It is important to note that most of these are not 24 hour, 7 day a week services. For immediate, emergency support phone the police.

**Women’s Support Services**

Exeter, East and Mid Devon: 0800 3283070 (24/7 free local calls)
North Devon and Torridge: 01271 370079 (Mon - Fri 9am – 5pm)
South Hams and Teignbridge 01364 644088 (Mon - Fri 9am – 5pm)
West Devon 01837 55228 (Mon - Fri 9am – 5pm)

**D: Refuges in Devon**

To contact refuges directly:
- Exeter Women’s Aid: 01392 667144 or free phone 0800 328 3070
- Plymouth Domestic Abuse Services (PDAS): 01752 252033 or refuge 01752 562286
- East Devon Safe House: 01404 44772
- North Devon Women’s Aid: 01271 321946

**E: Other Services:**
- Jewish women’s Aid helpline 0800 591203
  Jewish Women's Aid runs a free-phone national confidential helpline, available from 9am to 9pm Monday to Thursday. The organisation provides refuge and/or support to Jewish women and their children affected by domestic violence.
- Devon and Torbay PCT (Primary Care Trust) BME Mental Health and Well Being team

Chukumeka Maxwell- Senior CDW, Devon and Torbay
Chukameka_maxwell@nhs.net
07772061740

**Section 2: Key issues and barriers**

**A: Immigration status and domestic violence issues**

One major difficulty for some BME victims of domestic violence is having no recourse to public funds (NRPF). This affects anyone with insecure immigration status who therefore has no entitlement to welfare benefits, to Home Office asylum support or to public housing. This may be for example a person who has been refused asylum, a person who has entered the UK on a spouse visa or a migrant worker unable to gain employment. Unfortunately, as most refuges are reliant upon women receiving housing benefit to cover accommodation costs and they may be forced to turn away victims with no recourse to public funds. If having no recourse to public funds is a problem for you or someone you are supporting, here are some possible solutions:
Getting indefinite leave to remain
In 2002 the government introduced the ‘Domestic Violence Rule’ which states that if a person, married or living with a settled partner, can provide specific evidence to demonstrate that he/she is a victim of domestic violence and meet other conditions, she/he can remain in the UK indefinitely.

The National Asylum Support Service
If you are an asylum seeker facing domestic violence your accommodation provider should assist you to be transferred to alternative accommodation that is safe and secure. See contact details for the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) below.

Relevant legislation
If you are a victim of domestic violence and have no recourse to public funds there are some exceptions: local authorities do have a statutory power under the Children’s Act 1989 to ensure that children ‘in need’ or ‘at risk of significant harm’, are adequately fed, housed and cared for. Some local authorities may use this provision to pay for you to stay with your children but others may simply take the children into local authority care.

Local authorities also have power under section 21 of the National Assistance Act 1948 to assist victims of domestic violence, but - for those subject to immigration controls - only if they are particularly vulnerable, or have additional special needs. This is subject to local discretion.

For further information on this see the Survivors Handbook www.womensaid.org.uk

Women’s Aid Reserve Fund
Some refuges have limited funds to provide accommodation to women with no recourse to public funds. These places are usually very limited as they are covered from their own reserves. Contact individual refuges to find out what is available.

The Devon No Recourse to Public Funds Emergency Fund
The Devon BME/DV Action Group with the support of ADVA has set up an emergency fund to offer some interim support for victims from BME communities with no recourse to public funds. Small amounts can be claimed to cover costs such as: daily living costs, emergency accommodation and transport costs. To access this fund please contact one of the following:

- **Maja Lelandais**
  Email: maja.lelandais@nhs.net
  Telephone: 07966914718

- **Sevil Fertinger**
  Email: sevil.fertinger@nhs.net
  Telephone: 07826917600
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- **David Wright**
  
  Email: dave.wright@devon.gov.uk
  
  Telephone: 07971267502

**Victim Support Emergency Victim Fund (Exeter, East and Mid and North Devon)**

Apart from the support available from Victim Support volunteers, who have been specially trained to deal with domestic violence abuse victims, Victim Support can now provide small amounts of financial support for victims of crime. This can be used, for example, to help with travel costs to a refuge or to assist with paying for emergency accommodation on a short term basis etc. Certain criteria need to be met for eligibility.

Phone: 0845 676 10 20
Address: Victim Support, Sheila Robb House, Oak Place, Devon Square, Newton Abbot, TQ12 2EX.
E-mail: devoninfo@victimsupport.org.uk

**Nightstop** - Nightstop is a project of the Exeter Community Action Group. It provides emergency one night at a time accommodation to young people in Exeter between the ages of 16-25 who are in housing crisis.

Contact: 01392 274853.

**Asylum Aid**

Gives free legal advice to asylum seekers and runs the Women’s Resource Project.

Legal advice line 0207 3549264 (the line is open: Monday between 2 and 4:30 and Thursday between 10 and 12:30) or the main line 0207 3549631.

[www.asylumaid.org.uk](http://www.asylumaid.org.uk)

**Turkish Cypriot Women’s Project Tel: 02083403300**

Offers information and advices on benefit, and immigration.

**Chinese Information and Advice Centre**

For Chinese people on a low income, or who have difficulty communicating in English to access mainstream support services. [www.ciac.co.uk](http://www.ciac.co.uk)

Languages spoken: Mandarin, Wu, Shanghainese, Malay and Fujianese

**Domestic Violence Line: Legal Advice Line**

**The Refugee Council**

The Refugee Council provides advice and assistance to asylum seekers and refugees. They have a range of services for asylum seekers recently arrived in the UK, asylum seekers settled in the UK, and also offer advice to those who have received an asylum decision. Their offices can be
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visited in person or advice can be given by telephone, subject to the availability of interpreters.
Their website gives up to date information on legislation relating to asylum.
Contact: 02073466700,
www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Immigration Advisory Service
Free and confidential legal advice and representation on immigration issues.
Bristol Office: Unit 7, Hide Market, West Street (use Waterloo Street entrance), Bristol, BS2 0BH Tel: 0117 9557300
Cardiff Office: 30 Richmond Road, Roath, Cardiff, CF2 43AS Tel: 02920496662.
www.iasuk.org

National Asylum Support Service (NASS)
For housing and financial support if you have made an application for asylum or on human rights grounds.
NASS main switchboard: 0845 602 1739
To obtain NASS support, you will need to contact: Refugee Action,
Prideaux Court, Palace Street, Plymouth, PL1 2AY.
Tel: 01752 235030.

B: Getting specialist BME advice and guidance

1. Language:

Language can be a huge barrier to BME victims accessing services. Victims may well be unable to access written information about services and will often need the services of an interpreter at different stages of accessing support. Even when a victim has good English language skills, it is important to remember that English will be a second (or third, or fourth) language and that it is easier to discuss sensitive and complex issues in a first language.

Many victims will be reluctant to approach support services because of nervousness about having to explain in a foreign language so it is important to ensure good access to trained and experienced interpreters. Using family members, including children, as interpreters is bad practice and best avoided.

How to access interpreters

With initial contacts it may be necessary to use a telephone interpreting service; Police and Social Services will both be able to access Language Line services (www.languageline.co.uk/). In some cases victims may prefer to use a telephone interpreter as they may fear that a local community
interpreter might be someone they know and they would feel embarrassed to talk openly.

In many cases though, a local community interpreter can provide the professional and sensitive support that will give a victim the confidence to get the support they need. In Devon there is a Community Interpreting Agency, Multilingua, that can offer trained and experienced interpreters in over 40 languages. **Phone Multilingua on 01392 435385**

Multi-lingua can also provide advice to service providers on how to work with interpreters. For example, when using interpreters it is always important to address the client directly rather than the interpreter.

**Communication**

Understandably, many front-line workers in Devon don’t have much experience of working with people whose first language is not English. Certainly, access to interpreters should be provided but to build victims’ confidence in local service provision it is important that practitioners do not assume that they will not be able to communicate at all. Most second language learners understand more than they can say and showing patience and making continued efforts to communicate will start to give victims confidence to make the best use of any English they do have and to start acquiring more language skills. Sympathy and patience can be expressed as much through body language and facial expression as by words.

2. **Culture, religion and racism**

Research has shown that sensitivity to cultural and religious practices has a considerable influence on whether victims’ experiences of local support services are positive or negative. These experiences can help to dictate whether victims return to violence or not.

Expectations of encountering racism and lack of sensitivity will make many BME victims reluctant to seek shelter in refuges. Ongoing efforts are needed to make sure that these perceptions are changed.

Refuges and other services should ensure that staff and volunteers have access to appropriate Equality and Diversity Training and that this is regularly reviewed. It is not possible for all staff to become experts on different cultures and religions but it is always possible to make the effort to find out. You can get particular information advice and guidance on different cultural and religious issues by contacting one of the specialist national organisations that are listed in Section 3 of this leaflet or by contacting a local BME support group. Details of the latter can be found in the Devon BME Service Directory which is available online at [www.devon.gov.uk/bmedirectory](http://www.devon.gov.uk/bmedirectory) or by contacting dave.wright@devon.gov.uk
3. FGM

Female Genital Mutilation is a form of violence against women and young girls and considered child abuse in the UK. It is a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women to life and their right to health.
The UK Government has signed a number of international human rights laws against FGM, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**Legislation on Female Genital Mutilation**
The law relating to female genital mutilation was amended by the introduction of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, which came into effect in March 2004. This repealed and replaced the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985.
The 2003 Act:
- Makes it illegal to practice FGM in the UK;
- Makes it illegal to take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country;
- Makes it illegal to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad;
- Has a penalty of up to 14 years in prison and/or a fine.

**Metropolitan Police:** (The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has revised its practice guidance on investigating domestic abuse to include FGM).

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) Childline: 08088005000

**Child Abuse Investigation Command/Project Azure**
Telephone: 0207 161 2888

**London Safeguarding Children Board**
London Safeguarding Children Board,
59½ Southwark Street,
London SE1 0AL
http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/fgm_resources/

**Birmingham Against FGM**
Email: cypfcomms@birmingham.gov.uk
Birmingham City Council Health Education Service
Telephone: 0121 3038200

**Bristol FGM Network**
http://www.bristol.nhs.uk/Patients/BCH/default.asp

**Child Protection Helpline:**
0808 800 5000 (advice for adults worried about a child)

**Hospitals and Clinics in the UK offering Specialist FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) Services:**

**African Well Women's Clinic**
Guy's & St Thomas's Hospital
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8th FLoor - c/o Antenatal Clinic
Lambeth Palace Rd
London SE1 7EH
Tel: 020 7188 6872
Mobile: 07956 542 576
Open: Mon-Fri 9am - 4pm
Contact: Ms. Comfort Momoh MBE comfort.momoh@gstt.nhs.uk

African Well Women's Clinic - Antenatal Clinic
Central Middlesex Hospital
Acton Lane
Park Royal
London NW10 7NS
Tel: 020 8965 5733 or 020 8963 7177
Open: Friday 9am - 12pm
Contact: Kamal Shehata Iskander kamal.shehataiskander@mwlh.nhs.uk

African Well Women's Clinic - Antenatal Clinic
Northwick Park & St Mark's Hospitals
Watford Road
Harrow
Middlesex HA1 3UJ
Tel: 020 8869 2870
Open: Friday 9am-5pm
Contact: Jeanette Carlsson

African Women's Health Clinic
Whittington Hospital
Level 5, Highgate Hill
London N19 5NF
Tel: 020 7288 3482 ext. 5954
Mobile: 0795 625 7992
Open: Last Wednesday of each month, 9am-5pm
Home visits or you can attend the hospital
Contacts: Joy Clarke joy.clarke@whittington.nhs.uk or Shamsa Ahmed

Women's and Young People’s Service
Sylvia Parkhurst Health Centre - Mile End Hospital
Bancroft Road, London E1 4DG
Tel: 020 7377 7898 or 020 7377 7870
Open: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
Contact: Dr. Geetha Subramanian geetha.subramanian@thpct.nhs.uk

African Women's Clinic
University College Hospital
Huntley Street, London, WC1E 6DH
Tel 020 7387 9300 ext. 2531
Open: Monday afternoon
Contact: Maligaye Bikoo maligaye.bikoo@uclh.nhs.uk

Multi-Cultural Antenatal Clinic
Liverpool Women's Hospital
Crown Street
Liverpool L8 7SS
Tel: 0151 702 4085 or 0771 751 6134
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Open: Monday-Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm
Contact: Dorcas Akeju dorcas.akeju@lwh.nhs.uk

Chelsea and Westminster
Gynaecology & Midwifery Departments
3rd Floor, 369 Fulham Road
London SW10 9NH
Tel: 020 7751 4488
Open: Tuesday, 10am-6.30pm; second Thursday of every month (by appointment only) 3.30pm-6.30pm
Contact: Gubby Ayida gubby.ayida@chelwest.nhs.uk

Waltham Forest African Well Women's Services - Oliver Road Polyclinics
Upper Ground Floor, 75 Oliver Road
Leyton, London, E10 5LG
Open: Drop-in Thursday 10am-3pm
Te: 020 8430 7381
Contact: Jennifer Bourne (Specialist nurse) jennifer.bourne@wf-pct.nhs.uk;
Dr Faduma Hussein (Community Health Advisor) faduma.hussein@wf-pct.nhs.uk;
Leyla Hussein (Youth Outreach Worker) leyla.hussein@wf-pct.nhs.uk
St Mary’s Hospital
Gynaecology & Midwifery Departments
Praed Street
London W1 1NY
Contacts: Judith Robbins or Sister Hany
Tel: 020 7886 6691 / 020 7886 1443 / 020 7886 6763

Birmingham Heartlands Hospital
Princess of Wales Women’s Unit - Labour Ward
Bordesley Green East
Birmingham, B9 5SS
Tel: 0121 424 0730 / 0798 981 4207
Contact: Alison Hughes allison.hughes@heartofengland.nhs.uk or Teresa Ball

African Women’s Clinic
Women and Health
4 Carol Street
Camden, London NW1 OHU
Tel: 020 7482 2786
Women can self refer for services
Contact: Maligaye Bikoo (CNS) maligaye.bikoo@uclh.nhs.uk

Acton African Well Woman Centre
Mill Hill Surgery
111 Avenue Road
Acton W3 8QH
Tel: 0208 383 8761 or 0795 600 1065
Open: Tues: 2pm-5pm
Contact: Julia Albert or Hayat Arteh
No appointment necessary and women can self refer

Charlotte Keel Health Centre
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Minority Ethnic Women's and Girls' Clinic
Seymour Road
Easton
Bristol, BS5 0UA
0117 902 7100
Open: Drop-in - last Wednesday of every month, 9.30am-12pm
Contact: Dr Hilary Cooling

Labour Ward, City Campus
Nottingham University Hospitals
Hucknall Road
Nottingham, NG5 1PB
Tel: 0115 9691169 ext 55124 / 55127
Open: Monday, 13.30-17.00; Tuesday, 9-12
Contact: Carol McCormick (Consultant Midwife)
carol.mccormick@nuh.nhs.uk

Organisations and groups for FGM:
Foundation for Women’s Health Research & Development (FORWARD)
www.forwarduk.org.uk Tel:0208 960 4000 Fax: 0208 960 4014
FORWAD is a leader in the field of working and campaigning for the elimination of female genital mutilation, provides information, advice in relation to FGM and supports girls and women facing a personal crisis as a consequence of FGM, provides information about accessing specialist health care and counseling, advocates for remedial policies in countries where harmful traditional practices have a strongly negative or even fatal impact on the health of women and children, and offers advice in relation to asylum seeking to women and girls at risk of FGM.

ACCM(UK) www.accmuk.com Tel: 01234356910, 07712482568, Email: info@accauk.com
ACCA offers advice and guidance on FGM, as well as, running events, training, conferences, and activities targeting communities, and professionals who work directly with communities that practice FGM.

London Black Women’s Health and Family Support
www.bwhafs.com
Child helpline: www.childline.org.uk:
Tel: 0800 1111 (24 hr free helpline for children)

4. Honour based Violence and Forced Marriage
Honour means women(mainly) have to follow an unwritten code of conduct in which they are deprived of the right to choose their life and any control of their own body. women, are killed for actual or perceived immoral behavior, which is deemed to have breached the honor code of conduct. Cultures in which HBV exists sometimes also practice forced marriage, and do not accept that a woman can have a partner before marriage, or that she can choose her own spouse. It is fact that where there is a forced marriage, there is also likely to be “rape”.If you fear you may be forced into
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marriage overseas, or know someone else who may be, the Forced Marriage Unit may be able to help. You could call one of the following numbers: 020 7008 0135 or 020 7008 8706. You can also contact them at fmu@fco.gov.uk. All calls and emails are dealt with on a totally confidential basis by skilled caseworkers who are fully aware of the cultural, social and emotional issues surrounding this abuse. For more information see: http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/global-issues/human-rights/forced-marriage-unit/

For HBV and FM you can get help from any of the following:
Devon BME DVA Action Group - 07837467890
Karma Nirvana Honour Network Helpline 0800 5999 247
Phone for advice - Monday to Friday 9.30 – 5.00
Karma Nirvana is an Asian men and women’s project offering advice and support on forced marriage and honour based violence to men, women and couples. http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/
IKWRO http://www.ikwro.org.uk. Tel: 02079206460(9:30-5:00) 07862733511(24hrs)
Iranian and Kurdish Women’s Rights Organisation offering advice and support on forced marriage, honour based violence, domestic violence, divorce, counselling, translation, training, benefits, childcare, outreach. Languages offered: Arabic, Farsi and Kurdish
Henna Foundation www.hennafoundation.org
Tel:02920498600/496920. Emergency number: 07915212555. Email: info@hennafoundation.org
Henna offers Muslim families and women advice, support, advocacy, training, and policy research.

British Afghan Women’s Society www.britishafghanwomen.org
email: baws_uk@yahoo.com Tel: 07956471078
A NGO for Afghan women and families offers social activities and workshops.

Muslim Women's Helpline
A telephone counselling service for all Muslim women, regardless of ethnicity.
They provide information and refer to local services when appropriate.
Contact: 0208 904 8193/0208 908 6715
www.mwhl.org

Asian Women’s Helpline
Helpline 0121 303 0368 Monday –Thursday 8.45 a.m. – 5.15p.m; Fridays 9 a.m. – 4.15 p.m.
For Asian women experiencing domestic violence, as well as other issues.
Languages spoken: Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu

Newham Asian Women’s Project
Supports South Asian women experiencing domestic violence.
www.nawp.org
02084720528 For referral and advices, 02085199136 For Zindaagi(young girls mental health team)02085199136 For training and courses
Southall Black Sisters www.southallblacksisters.org.uk
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Provides advice and information on domestic violence, racial harassment, welfare and immigration, primarily for Asian, African and African-Caribbean women.
Contact: 02085719595

Other Women’s Organisations:
• The Kurdish women’s support project (02085706568)
• Kurdish information and advice (02072729499)
• Kurdish community centre, North London (02082117662)
• Iranian and Kurdish women’s rights org (02074900303)
• Middle East centre, London (www.mecwr.or) 02076391033
• Turkish Cypriot women’s project (www.cwp.org.uk) 0208303300
• Imece Turkish Speaking women’s group (02073541359)(www.imece@dial.pipex.com)

5. Gypsies and Travelers
There are several organisations that can offer specialist guidance and support for victims from Gipsy and Traveller communities

Solace Women’s Aid
Contact: Bernie O’Roarke, Irish Traveler Women’s’ Outreach worker
Email: irishwomen_outreach@yahoo.co.uk

Leeds Gypsy and Traveler Exchange.
Ground Floor, Crown Point House, 169 Cross Green Lane, Leeds LS9 0BD
Tel: 0113 240 2444
Contact: Kathleen Morrison
Email: (Kathleen@leedsgate.co.uk).
www.grtleeds.co.uk

Kent Irish Traveler Movement
Contact: Bridged Jones, MBE
Tel. 01227 379206
Email: kentitm@hotmail.com

One Voice for Travelers
PO Box 9635, Sudbury, Suffolk. CO10 8WW
Tel: 07790801422 or 07790803176
Contact: Janie Codona
Email: codona9@aol.com
www.onevoicefortravellers.org.uk

Penny Dane-CDW Devon, Gypsies and Travelers
C/O Devon REC, 15 York Road, Exeter, EX4 1AS
Penny.dane@nhs.net
01392422566&07979838138

Devon BME/DVA Action Group
This action group was established in 2008 as a direct outcome of a local conference held in April 2008 in Oakhampton. The conference brought together people and support groups from local BME communities, practitioners from adva and local refuges, and representatives from key public service agencies to
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discuss the needs of victims from BME communities and identify gaps in existing services. An outline action plan was agreed and, at the end of the conference, a multi-agency action group was tasked with developing the plan further and moving it forward.

The group is dependent on the goodwill of its members and the organisations they represent and does not generally have the capacity to handle cases itself, though the group does take responsibility for administering the Devon NRPF fund which it set up in 2008. The group operates by highlighting issues and referring individual cases to the appropriate agencies. It also helps to identify resources and create links to help address any gaps in services that are identified.

If you are interested in getting involved, or if you have an issue that you would like the task group to consider, please contact:

**Sahar Alnaas:**
Tel: 07837467890
Email: bmesahar@yahoo.co.uk