



Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board

Mid-Year Report September 2024



Sefton
Domestic Abuse
Partnership Board

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Our partners



About the Board

The Domestic Abuse Act was signed into law on 29 April 2021. The Act is designed to raise awareness of domestic abuse and provide a range of further protections for victims of domestic abuse as well as strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators.

Part 4 of the Act places a statutory duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.

The Government has provided a statutory framework which outlines how local authorities are expected to meet the needs of this duty, which includes:

- The appointment a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board
- Assessment of the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support
- Development and publication of a strategy

The Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board was established in September 2021, taking over the responsibilities of the previous Sefton Domestic Abuse steering group.

To ensure a comprehensive approach to tackling domestic abuse in Sefton, the Board is responsible for overseeing all areas of domestic abuse and not just safe accommodation.

There is a legal requirement to have the following representatives on the Board:

- Local authority
- Representative of victims of domestic abuse
- Representative of children of victims of domestic abuse
- Other VCF organisations working with domestic abuse victims
- Health representative
- Criminal justice representative.

Sefton's Domestic Abuse Partnership Board also includes a number of other agency representatives so there is a wide range of involvement and partnership working. Details of the Board's membership can be found in Appendix B ([hyperlink](#)).

The Board's Vision is set out in the Sefton Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2023-28

- That domestic and sexual abuse is viewed and challenged as an unacceptable form of behaviour by all our communities.

- That victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and their families in Sefton feel safer in their communities, are protected from harm, and are able to move forward positively with their lives as a result of receiving the support and interventions they need.
- That the behaviour of perpetrators is effectively challenged, and perpetrators are fully held to account.

Board Governance

Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board is responsible for overseeing the delivery of Sefton’s Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy and meets on a bi-monthly basis.

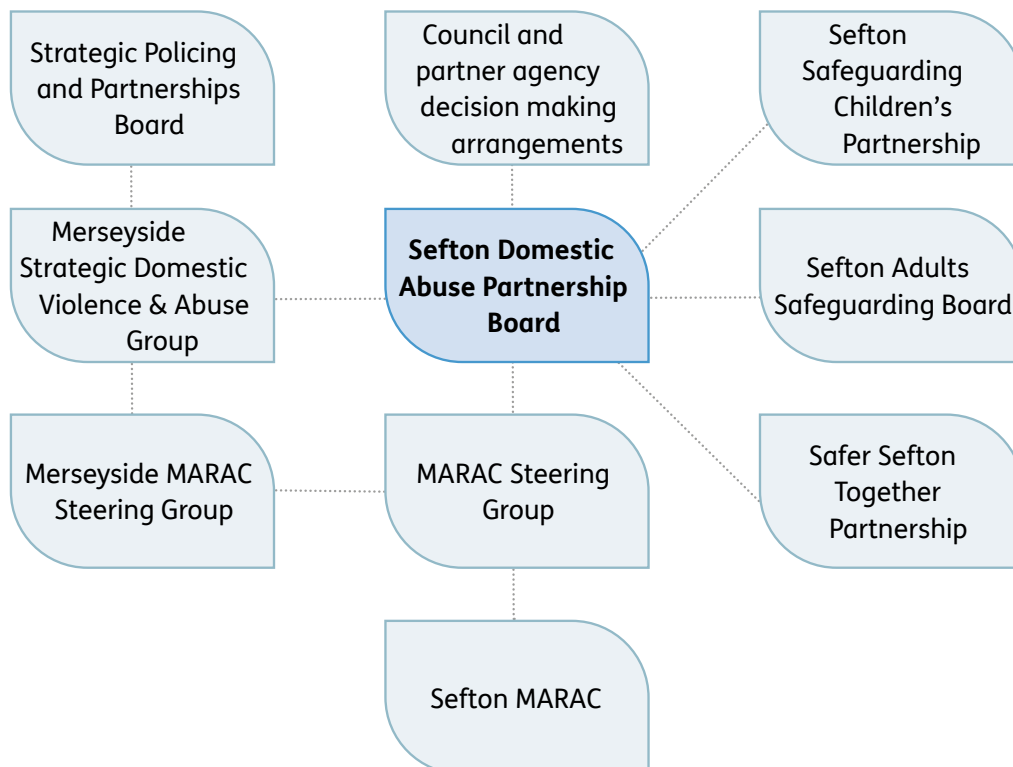
There are 3 sub-groups of the Board which are responsible for taking forward the Strategy Action Plan. They are based on the Strategic Themes outlined in the Strategy and meet on a monthly basis.

Sub-Group 1 Leadership & Governance and Prevent

Sub-Group 2 Protect and Repair

Sub-Group 3 Children and Young People

The Board is also closely linked with a number of other multi-agency partnerships in recognition of how domestic abuse cuts across a range of work areas.



Learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) were introduced in April 2011 under section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. The purpose of these reviews is to understand what lessons can be learned and to implement changes to help stop them happening again and to help prevent future deaths.

A DHR is a locally conducted multi-agency review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by:

- a person to whom he or she was related, or with whom he or she was or had been in an intimate personal relationship or
- member of the same household.

This includes considering deaths by suicide whereby a history of domestic abuse with coercive and controlling behaviour was present or suspected.

DHRs are a statutory responsibility for Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). In Sefton, they are managed via the Safer Sefton Together (SST) partnership. To date, 16 DHRs have been completed in Sefton on behalf of Safer Sefton Together.

The learning and recommendations from these reviews is linked closely to the work of the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board to ensure they are being enacted on and are directly built into the Strategy Action Plan. In February 2023 an Analysis Report on DHR1-14 was produced on behalf of the Board to identify key themes to help support the prioritisation of key activities within the Strategy.

Understanding and awareness of domestic abuse

- Lack of consistency amongst professionals of what domestic abuse can consist of.
- Lack of knowledge of family violence and abuse.
- Lack of understanding of the barriers victims can face in making a disclosure, particularly for older people.
- Lack of understanding of the law in relation to domestic abuse in the context of GDPR and consent, and when to override this.

Providing an appropriate response

- Lack of risk recognition /use of risk assessment to identify risk.
- Lack of understanding of what support services are available and the referral processes.

- A need for more accessible advice and resources for family and friends.
- Practitioners not following organisational policies and procedures.
- Lack of management oversight/quality assurance on cases involving domestic abuse.

Complex needs

- Victims of domestic abuse with substance misuse and/or mental health issues face additional vulnerabilities and barriers to accessing support meaning standard referral/support routes and services may not be sufficient.
- The risk of suicide for victims of domestic abuse is increased but often not properly considered or understood.
- Consider how domestic abuse victims with complex needs can be best supported by services and multi-agency safeguarding partnerships.

Professional curiosity

- Lack of further querying by practitioners of issues presented – both in terms of issues faced by victims and what is presented by perpetrators.
- A need for more routine enquiry of domestic abuse indicators.

Impact of trauma

- Lack of consistent understanding of the additional trauma impact on victims of domestic abuse who have children removed from their care.
- Victims with complex needs often have a significant history of trauma.
- A need for a greater understanding of the impact experiencing domestic abuse as a child can have on an individual.

Additional learning from further current DHRs will be incorporated into the work of the Board as it becomes available.

This work also continues to feed into the Merseyside strategic domestic abuse partnership arrangements to support pan Merseyside priorities.

The Board also continues to develop involvement and sharing of information with other local partnerships with responsibility for learning reviews – such as Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews – to support collaborative working on similar themes.

Experts by experience - survivor voice

The Partnership recognises that while this is still an underdeveloped area which must be prioritised in the next year. Currently survivor voice is represented at the Board via specialised domestic abuse support services and early mechanisms are now established to gather feedback and survivor voice from clients who have utilised local domestic and sexual abuse support services, such as those below:

“Talking has allowed me to put the past behind me and cope better with what happened to me.”

“The services have helped me be more mindful to put myself first.”

“I was lucky enough to find the Freedom Programme after 20 years of domestic abuse. Following the Freedom Programme I was invited to complete the Freedom Forever programme. At first I wasn't sure I was ready to think about relationships and moving forward, but I am so glad I did. The 9 weeks are intensive, but it has allowed us as a group to grow and share experiences on ensuring we move forward with housing, finances, parenting and new relationships in a safe and healthy way. I have come away with some great tools to be able to move on from domestic violence. Thank you for having me and supporting me grow. I will forever be thankful to Jemma and her team as without them I know I wouldn't be here today.”

“I think the best thing to say is how important exercise is, it can boost your confidence and make you feel powerful again after feeling so powerless due to DV.”

“I valued the care, compassion and understanding.”



“The place was very comfortable and welcoming. Everything was well explained in sessions, I learn a lot. I felt at ease and validated which was really helpful.”

“AW was amazing, she didn't judge me and I felt that she really understood what I had gone through. She helped me to see that I am strong, despite what he (ex-partner) did and said about me. I have a long way to go, but in the future, I feel that I could maybe help other women who have experienced what I have gone through. I just want to say thank you to AW.”

“You have all been amazing. I don’t know how I would have survived these last 7 weeks without you. You’ve been a family when I have been isolated and away from mine and part of my team. My boys cried when I told them we had to leave, and I will cry too. The work you do here is amazing and you all do a fantastic job.”

“Thank you again Victoria for your ongoing support especially during this difficult time in my life. The situation would have been very different if it hadn’t of been for your help and support.”



“I find it so easy to talk to you - it’s difficult with family because they are emotionally invested and affected.”

“You were the only one there throughout such a negative experience with every other agency that got it and I felt I trusted. I can honestly say you were the only one who seemed to fully understand every emotion I felt, even when my friends and family have been so supportive. Thank you so much for being there.”

“I didn’t know what support was available in this country for abuse and feel reassured to know that there are services who will help you and not judge. I feel a lot better now.”

“I just wish everything was under one person, it was a bit confusing having so many people involved at once at the beginning of things.”

The Partnership will develop a range of mechanisms to enable victims and survivors to have their voices heard across all elements of Sefton’s Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy. This includes gathering qualitative and quantitative data on the impact of support services.



Strategy progress and achievements so far

Sefton's Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy contains a range of priorities under 3 Strategic Themes to be delivered over the next 5 years.

- 1. Prevent** - Early intervention provision, including improving public knowledge on domestic and sexual abuse to drive a cultural shift, intervening earlier to prevent and reduce the impact of longer term poor outcomes, and breaking the cycle of abuse across generations.
- 2. Protect** - Keeping victims/survivors of domestic and sexual abuse and their children safe in a consistent and coordinated way, providing safe and quality assured support services, and challenging the behaviour of perpetrators whilst also offering opportunities to change
- 3. Repair** - Supporting the development of resilience for families and individuals to move on and deal with future life challenges, providing ongoing support beyond crisis intervention.

In addition to this, 2 additional cross cutting priorities have been created as part of the Sub-Group remits:

Leadership & Governance – to ensure the board has an effective structure and ensure delivery of the strategy.

Children and Young People – to ensure there is sufficient focus on supporting our children and young people.

On 15 May 2024 the Board held a half day workshop session to review the Strategy Themes and Objectives, and to reflect on what has been achieved so far in the past 12 months and understand what needs to be refreshed and prioritised going forward. Highlights on new areas of work that have been progressed towards the achievement of the Strategy Objectives are outlined below:

Objective 1 - To prioritise a strategic partnership approach to the reduction of domestic and sexual abuse in our communities.

- Joint partnership approach with Safer Sefton Together for the 2023 White Ribbon and 16 days of Action campaign, which included the following:
 - Promotion of 16 days of action themes and new SDAS Helpline across partner social media channels
 - White Ribbon Schools resources 'Building Gender Equality' shared and promoted across all Sefton schools as part of healthy relationships mapping work

- Opportunities to support the campaign and make the White Ribbon promise
 - ◇ Sefton Health & Social Care Forum hosted by Sefton CVS as part of National Safeguarding Week
 - ◇ Sefton CVS Annual Conference
 - ◇ Sefton Council Full Council meeting
 - ◇ Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and Safer Sefton Together meetings
- Display stands and information across public Council buildings (libraries, leisure centres, Family Wellbeing Centres and Town Halls) and Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust sites in Southport and Ormskirk.
- A range of community based activities hosted by RASA Merseyside
- Sefton has been successful in securing 12 months funding from the Standing Together national Whole Health project to trial the IRIS programme. Sefton Council and Merseyside ICB (Sefton Place) Safeguarding Team helped prioritise this as an area for focus by providing information on the need for this type of programme in Sefton as part of the Whole Health mapping phase. SWACA was successful in becoming the local provider to deliver IRIS and have employed the Advocate Educator. The programme started in January 2024 and at September 2024 22 GP practices in Sefton are signed up for the IRIS domestic abuse training, with 6 practices having been trained in full. In addition to this, there have been 32 referrals from GPs for domestic abuse support since the programme started.
- Partnership mapping around current domestic abuse provision to build on the outcomes of the Domestic Abuse Assessment which has informed the development of the Healthy Relationships programme and multi-agency training on domestic abuse.

Objective 2 - To improve the prevention, early identification and response to domestic and sexual abuse.

- Introduction of the new Healthy Relationships offer for children and young people. The Women's Aid's 'Expect Respect' programme is delivered in Sefton schools by SWACA as part of Sefton Domestic Abuse Service. 4,128 children and young people have attended sessions between January and June 2024.
- An increase in opportunities for professionals working in Sefton to access free multi-agency training on domestic abuse. This has included the following in 2023/24 which provides a snap shot of what has been promoted and shared across Sefton partnerships.

Name of training	Provider	Format	Date
Domestic Abuse Awareness	Sefton CSC- Safer Families Practice Team, Sefton Council	In person	March 2023
Domestic Abuse Awareness	SWACA via Sefton Safeguarding Children's Partnership	In person	June 2023, April 2024
Sefton MARAC Briefing	Community Safety & Engagement, Sefton Council	Virtual	5 sessions June 2024
Coercive Control	Sefton CSC - Safer Families Practice Team, Sefton Council	Briefing	Sept 2023
Supporting Survivors of Domestic Abuse and Harmful Practices from Marginalized Communities	Wirral Change	Virtual	February and March 2024
Minority Ethnic Women's Advocate training	Wirral Change	2 & Half days	March 2024
Children & Domestic Abuse	Sefton Domestic Abuse Service	Virtual	March, April, May & June 2024
An Introduction to Domestic Abuse	Sefton Domestic Abuse Service	Virtual and in person	March, April, May & June 2024
Coercive and controlling behaviour	Sefton Domestic Abuse Service	Virtual	May and June 2024
Trauma Informed Practice	Merseyside Violence Reduction Partnership	4x in person sessions	Various dates in 2023/24
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	Mersey Care	Virtual	May 2024
Honour Based Abuse	Karma Nirvana via Sefton Safeguarding Children's Partnership	Virtual	July 2024

Objective 3 - To increase the reporting of domestic and sexual abuse through awareness raising and access to support services.

- Launch of a new borough wide Domestic Abuse Helpline 0151 394 1400 as part of the integrated Sefton Domestic Abuse Service (SDAS) open 8am-6pm Monday – Friday3
Between November 2023 – June 2024 the Helpline has received 3,173 calls.



- Introduction of new community based drop-in sessions as part of the integrated Sefton Domestic Abuse Service offer. Locations for sessions are currently being reviewed to consider additional community venues.
- Creation of a new Health IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) post in January 2023 seconded to Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Mersey following a successful bid for funding from the Ministry of Justice via the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner Merseyside. In 2023/24 144 victims/survivors were supported by the Health IDVA.

- Development and launch of a new domestic abuse microsite which includes a range of information and guidance as well as links to support services. www.sefton.gov.uk/domesticabuse

Objective 4 - To work with commissioners to ensure a wide range of services are in place to support and protect victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse, including children.

- New Domestic Abuse Housing Advisor post created within Sefton Council's Housing Options Team who is able to offer specialist advice and guidance and is linked closely to local specialist domestic abuse support services.
- Opening of Sefton's new 24 hour refuge provision for female victims of domestic abuse and their children. This consists of a total of 19 bed spaces – for up to 5 adults and 14 children. Between December 2023 and June 2024, 8 women and 14 children have been supported.
- Ongoing co-production of the new Sefton Domestic Abuse Service between Sefton Council Community Safety and Engagement team, Children's Services and Integrated Care Board Sefton Place commissioning team, utilising learning from the Proof of Concept model currently being delivered.
- Development and procurement of a new Complex Lives Accommodation service for female victims of domestic abuse by Sefton Council. This service will be delivered as a partnership approach between Excel Housing and Venus and will be operational by September 2024. It will offer 12 beds with a mix of crisis, short, and long-term accommodation and will include 24/7 support with a therapeutic and trauma informed approach.

Objective 5 - To hold perpetrators to account through appropriate criminal justice sanctions and effective interventions that promote long term behaviour change.

- Development and introduction of a new pilot multi-agency approach to tackling serial/ high risk of harm perpetrators of domestic abuse in Sefton which started in February 2024.
- Introduction of the Caring Dads programme within the Safer Families Practice Team in Children's Social Care, Sefton Council in May 2023. This is a group behaviour change programme for fathers who have been abusive, neglectful or violent in their families and is run by trained facilitators.

Objective 6 - To safeguard children and vulnerable adults from the impacts of living within a household experiencing domestic and sexual abuse.

- Creation of the Sefton Safer Families Practice team in Sefton Children's Social Care, with a focus on improving practice in social care, the implementation and delivery of a new Caring Dad's programme to offer behaviour change opportunities to perpetrators of domestic abuse, and supporting the multi-agency training offer.
- Additional domestic abuse staffing resource provided by SWACA to Sefton Children's Social Care- at the Integrated Front Door and in the Sefton Safer Families Practice Team.



Looking ahead – 2024/25 Priorities and Actions

The Board feels progress has been made but is fully aware there is still lots to do. The Strategy is a 5-year plan with a broad range of ambitions. As part of the workshop session on 15 May 2024, partners discussed and identified what needed to remain a priority and areas that needed to be progressed further.

The following provides an overview of the outcomes of this workshop, including the key themes identified by partners and suggested actions:

Objective 2 - To improve the prevention, early identification and response to domestic and sexual abuse.

Key themes identified:

- 1. Early Intervention:** All partners emphasised the importance of addressing domestic abuse at an early stage. This includes preventing escalation and providing support before risks increase.
- 2. Training and Consistency:** The need for quality training for front-line staff, considering the importance of consistent language and approaches across agencies.
- 3. Resource Management:** Resource allocation, understanding funds brought into the system, and working smarter with available resources.
- 4. Data-Driven Approach:** Thorough analysis of data, understanding case numbers and their needs, and tailoring interventions based on characteristics.
- 5. Awareness and Education:** Age-appropriate campaigns and training to raise awareness among less represented demographic areas, young people and older individuals.

Overall, these themes underscore the collaborative efforts required to effectively address domestic and sexual abuse, emphasising early action, consistency, and resource optimisation.

Action plan based on key themes –

- 1. Early Intervention and Consistency:**
 - Develop a clear pathway for lower-risk referrals/cases.
 - Provide a toolkit for practitioners with key messages and guidance.
 - Ensure consistent language and approach across agencies.
 - Train staff to deliver this approach effectively.

2. Resource Management:

- Identify funds brought into the system.
- Optimise resource deployment.
- Address recruitment challenges in the workforce.

3. Data-Driven Approach:

- Analyse case numbers and characteristics.
- Understand risk around resource deployment.

4. Awareness and Education:

- Tailor campaigns for different age groups.
- Include consent discussions and sexual violence awareness.
- Address barriers for specific groups (e.g., males, older people).

Objective 3 - To increase the reporting of domestic and sexual abuse through awareness raising and access to support services.

Key themes identified:

- 1. Emphasis on Reporting and Confidence:** All partners highlighted the importance of increasing reporting.
- 2. Collaboration and Consistency:** ensuring consistent messaging and training across agencies. All partners support peer reviews to gather evidence of practice and improvements as well as standardised approaches where possible.
- 3. Creative Solutions:** A multi-faceted approach to address fear of reporting. Utilisation of community safe spaces (e.g., libraries, family wellbeing hubs) for disclosure.

Overall, the themes emphasise collaboration, standardised approaches and creative solutions to enhance disclosures and support services.

Action plan based on key themes –

1. Enhance Reporting and Confidence:

- Develop targeted awareness campaigns to encourage reporting.
- Ensure consistent messaging across agencies.
- Promote protective orders and Claire’s Law.
- Establish clear pathways for friends and family to report concerns.

2. Resource Allocation and Training:

- Provide trauma-informed training for professionals.

- Address fear of reporting through multi-faceted approaches.
- Collaborate with private sector/businesses for wider engagement.

3. Data Collection and Safe Spaces:

- Collect data beyond police records (e.g., support service uptake).
- Create safe spaces (e.g., libraries, family hubs) for disclosure.
- Implement routine questioning and peer review within agencies.

Objective 4 - To work with commissioners to ensure a wide range of services are in place to support and protect victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse, including children.

Key themes identified:

1. Collaboration and Cohesive Approach:

- All partners emphasised collaboration between services and agencies.
- They highlight the importance of a cohesive offer and strong collaboration.

2. Resource Optimisation and Funding:

- The majority discussed sustainable funding, co-commissioning, and shared resources.
- The importance of robust contract monitoring and value for money.

3. Data-Driven Decision-Making:

- Focus on data collection, overlaying information, and understanding resources.
- Importance of capturing victims' experiences and measuring engagement.

4. Creative Strategies:

- Suggestions for lobbying for longer-term funding and using procurement rule changes.
- Community events and independent evaluators.

Overall, these themes underscore the need for collaboration, resource optimisation, evidence-based approaches, and creative solutions in supporting abuse victims and survivors.

Action plan based on key themes –

1. Collaboration and Cohesive Approach:

- **Objective:** Strengthen collaboration between services.
- **Actions:**

- ◇ Facilitate joint meetings to align understanding of needs.
- ◇ Review commissioned services based on current needs.
- ◇ Encourage services to evolve as requirements change.
- ◇ Implement robust contract monitoring.

2. Resource Optimization and Funding:

- **Objective:** Ensure sustainable funding and resource utilization.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Co-commission services across partnerships.
 - ◇ Explore shared resources and funding transfers.
 - ◇ Advocate for long-term funding at the national level.
 - ◇ Leverage procurement rule changes.

3. Data-Driven Decision-Making:

- **Objective:** Use evidence to inform decisions.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Overlay information across partnerships to identify gaps.
 - ◇ Collect data on engagement and quality of work.
 - ◇ Regularly report to the Board on progress.

4. Creative Strategies:

- **Objective:** Innovate and engage.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Piggyback on community events for awareness campaigns.
 - ◇ Involve non-threatening teams (e.g., money management, fire service).
 - ◇ Collaborate with independent evaluators for effectiveness assessment.

Objective 5 - To hold perpetrators to account through appropriate criminal justice sanctions and effective interventions that promote long term behaviour change.

Key themes identified:

1. Accountability and Outcomes:

- All partners emphasised the importance of holding perpetrators accountable, including outcomes such as reduced crimes, prevention of reoffending, and increased prosecutions.

2. Measures and Evidence:

- Discussions around increased prosecution rates and engagement in multi-agency plans.
- Highlighted the need for better data collection and understanding of risk.

3. Creative Approaches:

- Mentions of the “Caring Dads” programme and volunteer services.
- Suggestion of a perpetrator framework and early intervention.
- Ensure that there is an offer for all perpetrators.

Overall, these themes underscore collaboration, evidence-based approaches, and innovative strategies in addressing domestic abuse perpetrators.

Action plan based on key themes –

1. Collaboration and Accountability:

- **Objective:** Strengthen collaboration among agencies.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Establish regular joint meetings focused on perpetrators.
 - ◇ Identify the most dangerous offenders based on intel from a variety of sources.
 - ◇ Develop a hub for men to access support.
 - ◇ Address barriers for men reporting abuse.

2. Evidence-Based Measures:

- **Objective:** Use data to inform decisions.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Monitor prosecution rates and breach incidents.
 - ◇ Collect service user feedback.
 - ◇ Assess programme effectiveness.
 - ◇ Record victim/survivor journeys.

3. Creative Approaches:

- **Objective:** Innovate and prevent reoffending.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Implement behaviour change programmes for all types of perpetrator.
 - ◇ Involve grassroots organisations.
 - ◇ Address child-on-parent violence through early intervention.

Objective 6 - To safeguard children and vulnerable adults from the impacts of living within a household experiencing domestic and sexual abuse.

Key themes identified:

1. Outcome Focus:

- All partners emphasise specific outcomes, such as reducing risk, increasing knowledge, and raising public confidence.
- They recognize the importance of early identification and prevention.

2. Measures and Evidence:

- Review of strategies, monitoring interventions, and tracking cases.
- Suggestions on capturing data on prevalence reduction and understanding risk.

3. Collaboration and Education:

- All recognised that collaboration among agencies is crucial.
- Educating children on healthy relationships is highlighted as a preventive measure.

4. Holistic Approach:

- Emphasis on considering the whole family, including both victims and perpetrators.
- Mentions of focusing on adults and older people.

Overall, these themes underscore the need for collaboration, evidence-based approaches, and a comprehensive strategy to protect vulnerable individuals from abuse .

Action plan based on key themes –

1. Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:

- **Objective:** Enhance collaboration among agencies.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Establish regular joint meetings to improve understanding of each agency's role.
 - ◇ Develop a trauma-informed approach to engage families.
 - ◇ Use established family links for creative interventions.
 - ◇ Review strategies and assess knowledge levels of front-line services.

2. Data Integration and Monitoring:

- **Objective:** Use evidence-based measures.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Create an outcomes framework to track progress.

- ◇ Integrate data systems (e.g., Oasis, Liquid Logic, Power BI).
- ◇ Collect service user feedback and track cases.

3. Prevention and Education:

- **Objective:** Educate children and prevent future abuse.
- **Actions:**
 - ◇ Provide healthy relationship training beyond schools.
 - ◇ Focus on adults, including older individuals.
 - ◇ Analyse data to identify trends and risks.

These themes and actions have been incorporated within the review of the current Strategy Action Plan which is in the process of being refreshed and updated.

Existing Priorities - Further continuing activity

In addition to the actions identified by partners at the Board workshop, there are a number of continuing activities that are either already underway or have been identified as priority pieces of work that need to be progressed.

- Development of an Experts by Experience framework which includes survivor forum(s) options for representation on the Board, involvement in the development of campaigns and resources, and involvement in future service commissioning.
- Development and implementation of a data dashboard which enables the Partnership to better understand the local picture of domestic and sexual abuse in Sefton and what impact the Strategy is having in making a positive difference. This will include qualitative information from victims and survivors gathered through the Experts by Experience framework.
- Continued development and roll out of domestic abuse multi-agency training:
 - new DA Awareness E learning programme in development with the aim to be launched by October 2024.
- Continued development of the Domestic Abuse microsite, to include a refreshed Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Protocol/Handbook and thematic resources for professionals.
- Development of a domestic abuse perpetrator framework for Sefton which provides a comprehensive and coordinated approach to tackling the behaviour of perpetrators.
- Developing and implementing a campaign around tackling sexual violence in the night time economy.

How to get help

Information, guidance and support is available at Sefton's Domestic Abuse Helpline on **0151 394 1400**. This is available to anyone in Sefton:

- if you are experiencing domestic abuse yourself
- you are a family member, friend or colleague
- you are a professional working with a victim/survivor

Further information, including advice and guidance and the latest news on domestic abuse can also be found at www.sefton.gov.uk/domesticabuse



Emergency situations and Safeguarding

If you or someone you are concerned about is in immediate danger call 999

If you are worried about the safety of a child, contact the Sefton Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) or Sefton Family Advice and Support Team (FAST). Visit **here** for more information Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT) (sefton.gov.uk) Family Advice and Support Team (sefton.gov.uk)

If you are worried an adult is at risk of, or is experiencing, abuse or neglect, consider making an Adult Safeguarding referral. Visit **here** for more information Worried about an adult (sefton.gov.uk)



Appendix A

Definition of domestic abuse and sexual abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provides a definition of domestic abuse which can be found **here** www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/statutory-definition-of-domestic-abuse-factsheet

In summary, it includes the following key points:

The behaviour of a person towards another person is defined as “domestic abuse” if:

- both people are aged 16 or over and are “personally connected” to each other
and
- the behaviour is abusive

Behaviour is defined as “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional or other abuse

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour.

Two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies:

- they are, or have been, married to each other
- they are, or have been, civil partners of each other
- they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other

- they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- they are relatives

It should be noted behaviour considered as abusive towards a victim can also include conduct directed at another person eg the victim's child/children

Children are also explicitly included within the Act as direct victims of domestic abuse. This includes circumstances where a child:

- sees or hears, or experiences the effect of, the abuse,
- and
- is related to either the victim or perpetrator of the abuse

There is no one set definition of sexual violence or abuse; however, it is widely accepted as being any unwanted sexual act or activity. There are many different kinds of sexual violence and abuse, including rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by a stranger or by someone known.

Appendix B

Sefton Domestic Abuse Partnership Board Membership

- Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council - Elected Member, Communities, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, Public Health and Housing and Investment Services.
- Sefton Women's and Children's Aid (SWACA)
- Rape and Sexual Assault Merseyside (RASA)
- Merseyside Police
- Probation Service
- Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board - Sefton Place
- Mersey Care Foundation Trust
- One Vision Housing
- Sefton Council for Voluntary Services (CVS)
- Venus
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue
- Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner Merseyside
- Sefton Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board



Sefton
Domestic Abuse
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