



Protecting Our Families and Safeguarding Our Future



**Our families
Our future**



**safe in...
warwickshire**



**Warwickshire
County Council**

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Violence Against Women and Girls

For the purposes of this report, although all harmful practices were discussed as part of this project, the focus and the main feedback relates to Domestic Violence (DV). We recognise that DV victims can affect male or females but within this report we will focus on women and girls.

Domestic Violence - Home Office Definition

In March 2013, the Home Office defined domestic violence and abuse as:

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

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour

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

Coercive behaviour

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

(House of Commons briefing paper number 6337, 21 November 2018)

Domestic Violence - United Nations Definition

The United Nations defines violence against women and girls as ***any act of gender based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women (or girls), including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty (United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence towards Women (1993, Article 1).***

Legal Remedies available for victims of Domestic Violence

There are two types of remedies available for women and girls:

1. Criminal Law
2. Civil Law

Criminal Law

There is no specific offence of domestic violence. However, perpetrators can be prosecuted for offences such as murder, rape, and assault and threatening behaviour.

The criminal offence of coercive or controlling behaviour against an intimate partner (or family member) came in to force in December 2015, under section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015. The maximum penalty for someone found guilty is five years' imprisonment or a fine, or both.

Civil Law

There are two main remedies under the Family Law Act 1996 (as amended by Part 1 of the Domestic Violence and Victims Act 2004). These are occupation orders and non-molestation Orders.

Occupation Orders

This can be used to temporarily exclude an abuser from the home and surrounding area and gives the victim the right to enter or remain. In some circumstances the Court may attach a power of arrest to the occupation order.

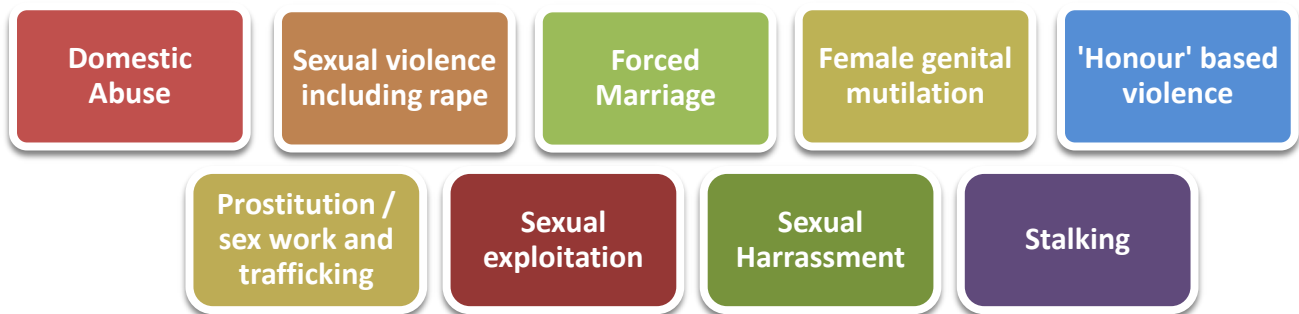
Non-molestation Order

A Court Order which prohibits an abuser from molesting another person they are associated with. There is no definition of molestation in the Act but it has been interpreted to include violence, harassment and threatening behaviour. The Order can last as long as the Court deems appropriate. Breach of the order is a criminal offence.

Violence against women and girls in Warwickshire

Warwickshire has adopted the United Nations definition in shaping their Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2015-2018. The strategy states that this does not mean that abuse directed towards men and boys is neglected, however the strategy recognises that women and girls are at a substantially greater risk of these crimes.

Forms of VAWG



Warwickshire's first VAWG Strategy addresses all forms of violence against women and girls.

The key objectives are as follows:

Prevention	Preventing violence against women and girls from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviour which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it
Provision	Providing high quality, joined-up support for victims where violence does occur
Protection	Taking action to reduce the risk of women and girls who are victims of violence and ensuring that perpetrators are brought to justice and provided with opportunities for change in a way that maximises safety
Partnership	Working in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families

Keys Facts

National Context



Each year around three million women and girls in the UK experience some form of violence, including domestic violence and abuse, rape, forced marriage, stalking, female genital mutilation, sexual exploitation, trafficking and crimes in the name of honour (Coy et al, 2008)



In England and Wales, **2 women a week are killed** by a partner or ex-partner (Women's Aid, 2014)

85,000 women are raped and 400,000 women are sexually assaulted every year in England and Wales (MoJ, 2013)

Each year **23,000 girls under 15** in England and Wales are at risk of **female genital mutilation**. A further **66,000** are living with its consequences (Dorkenoo et al, 2007)

The Forced Marriage Unit recorded **1,485 cases of forced marriage** across the UK in 2012



1,000-10,000 women and girls trafficked into the UK each year for **sexual exploitation** (Townsend, 2007)



An overwhelming majority of VAWG is perpetrated by **known men** – family members, friends, neighbours, colleagues – as well as strangers

VAWG remains **hugely under-reported** with only one in four of those experiencing domestic abuse, and **one in eight** of those experiencing sexual violence, making an official report (Walby and Allen, 2004)



Some communities are **less likely to report domestic abuse** than others including BME groups, LGBT groups, disabled women, rural and more affluent communities, and male victims

VAWG has **high rates** of repeat victimisation compared to other crimes, and even when reported, **conviction rates for perpetrators remain low**



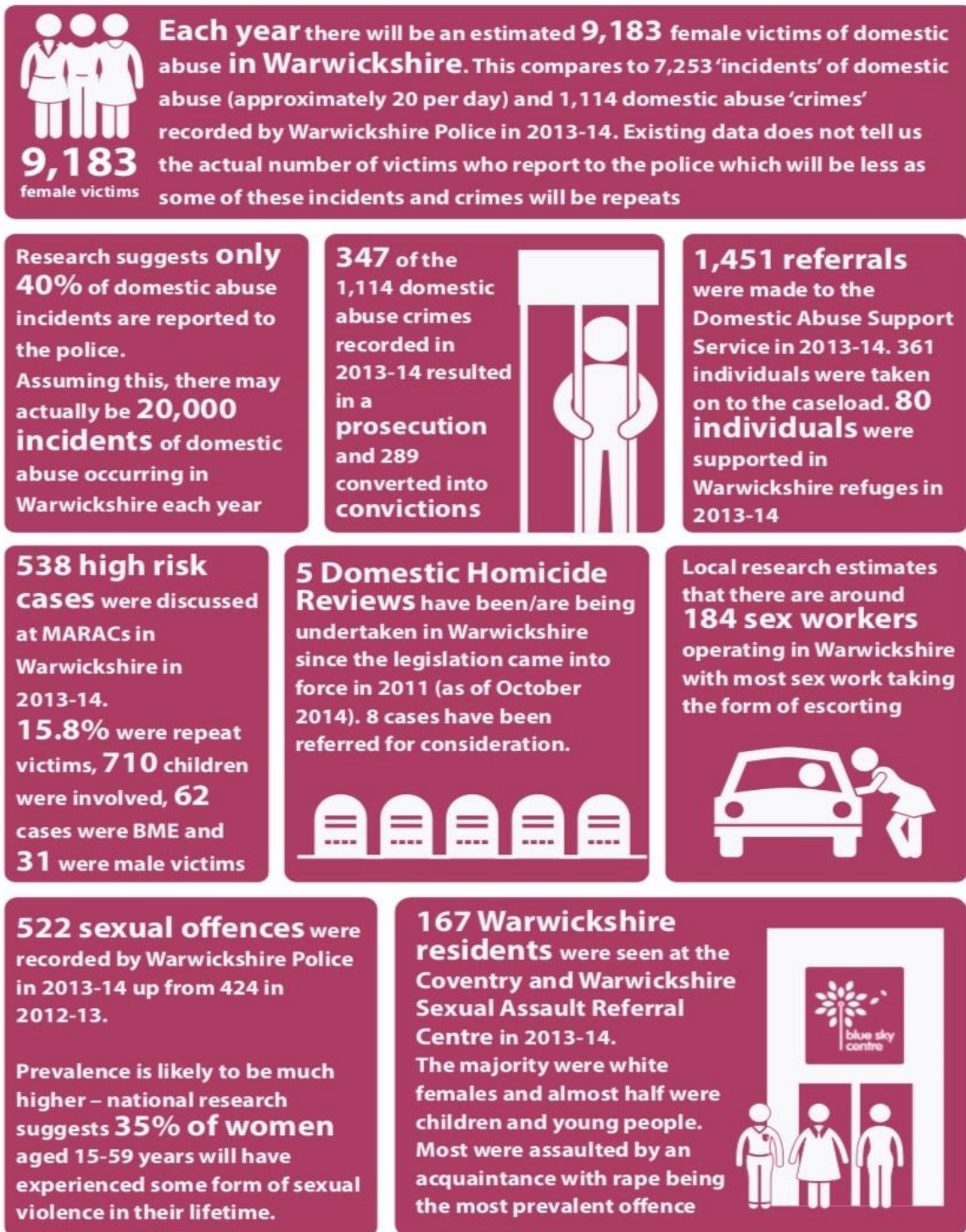
The societal cost of VAWG, in England and Wales, is estimated to be **over £40 billion** a year (including health, legal and social services).



The **long-term human and emotional cost** of VAWG to individuals is **immeasurable**

(Source – Warwickshire's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2015-2018)

Local Context



(Source – Warwickshire's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2015-2018)

The Cost of VAWG in Warwickshire



(Source – Warwickshire's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2015-2018)

Introduction

This work follows on from the Our Families Our Future project which was delivered by the Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership (WREP) in 2016 / 2017. Whilst engaging with the community it was identified that more awareness was needed within the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Communities around harmful practices.

This project was delivered under the banner of the 'Our Families, Our Future' (OFOF). This principle was devised as a method of engaging with community members on safeguarding issues. The Our Families, Our Future model has a focus on engagement through events primarily aimed at women and young people. These events cover a range of subject areas within the context of safeguarding, including, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Domestic Violence, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage. This model was used as a template however was opened to other groups and sections of the community, where appropriate.

The project aims to support Warwickshire County Council through their Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG) and will inform their Harmful Practices Action Plan. This project specifically supports the area of Prevention and challenging attitudes around VAWG. Services of the Equality and Inclusion Partnership (EQuIP) were sought to engage with community groups across Warwickshire to achieve the following objectives:

- Increase awareness of different types of harmful practices
- Ensure that communities are aware of Domestic Violence (DV) Services in Warwickshire
- Identify cultural, religious and accessibility barriers to DV services
- Ensure that communities know what to do and who to turn to if they had any concerns
- Provide communities with a mechanism to voice their views as to what the issues are in their communities
- Enable a mechanism where statutory agencies, service providers, front line workers and community members can communicate on concerns around VAWG

Methodology

EQuIP devised three methods to engage with communities to ascertain the awareness, the attitudes and the barriers around domestic violence.

1. Events
2. Closed Workshops in the community
3. In depth Case Studies

These events provided an open and safe platform for communities to discuss issues and concerns around domestic violence, to raise awareness of referral pathways and to openly discuss some of the barriers around of help and support.

Community members were engaged with from the outset to ensure that they were involved in planning these events. The topics, namely, domestic violence, honour based violence, forced marriage and child sexual exploitation, were chosen by community members. After this engagement the following keynote speakers were identified.

Refuge Warwickshire (Domestic Violence Support Services)

It was essential that EQuIP had a speaker from Refuge at each of the events. Community members needed to be aware of the services that Refuge provide, the confidential nature of the service and how to contact the service or make a referral.

Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence Specialist – Coventry Haven

Sarah Bhayatt's presentation challenged the perception that forced marriage was an issue for BME communities. One of her case studies highlighted that a White British woman fell victim of a forced marriage and how the service supported her.

Sarah also spoke about honour based violence and how the issue not only affects the woman or girl involved, but families and communities too.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Jayne Senior (MBE) gave a presentation around life after the Rotherham scandal. The scandal lifted the lid on organised child sexual abuse that occurred between the 1980s and 2010s. The abuse was first reported by Andrew Norfolk (journalist with The Times Newspaper) in 2012. Jayne's presentation had a specific focus on the rise in far right extremism following the abuse scandal and the work done to protect young people going forward.

There was also an emotional presentation from one of the survivors of Rotherham, Elizabeth. She not only gave a powerful and moving account of the exploitation and

trafficking she was subjected to, she challenged perceptions that the groomers were only men. Elizabeth had been groomed by a woman who was later made her guardian.

A total of four events took place throughout Warwickshire. There were open events in Atherstone, Leamington Spa and Rugby and there was a women's only event in Nuneaton.

*Please refer to **Appendix 1** for the agendas at each of the events.*

After the speaker sessions, participants were asked to work in group to answer the following:

- What do you think are some of the barriers around talking about Domestic Violence?
- Who would you turn to for support?
- What do you think are the barriers to seeking support?

In addition to the events, there were eight closed workshops within the community. Three of these workshops were in Nuneaton, three were in Leamington Spa, one in Rugby and a Countywide Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) group. Participants of these workshops were also asked to answer the questions above. This ensured consistent feedback

Key Findings



Attendance at Events
120



Attendance at Community Workshops
119

Total Number of people engaged with **239**

Awareness of Harmful Practices before and after the event / workshop

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good
Before	6%	66%	24%	4%
After	0%	1%	77%	22%



99% of participants would feel confident to make a referral to Domestic Violence Services

Community Feedback

Looking at the feedback from the events and the responses from the community workshops, it is evident that participants felt differently. For this reason, the feedback will be broken down into two sections, Events and Community Feedback.

Barriers around talking about domestic violence (Events)

Embarrassment

This was around a feeling of shame, particularly for the victim. The feeling that it was their fault and that 'they deserved it'. There was a sense of stigma attached, perhaps relating to the belief that 'she' had done something wrong to make him react that way.

Another stigma the participants mentioned was that domestic violence can be associated with low income families, again this could deter someone from seeking help.

Awareness

It was felt that there was a lack of awareness, both in terms of the individual recognising that abuse was taking place and if they did recognise the abuse, they may not know who to turn to for support.

The individual may not know that abuse is taking place. This could be understanding that financial and emotional abuse is domestic abuse and that it should not be tolerated.

The individual may be unsure as to who to report the abuse to. They may not be aware of services that are there to support them. Some participants felt that there was a lot of jargon around services and this needed to be addressed.

Who would believe me? Would it be safe to talk?

Participants felt that there was a strong fear that the victim may feel that she would not be believed. There was also the fear of taking the issue 'outside' and that the outsiders would not believe them. Trust in services and knowing that professional help was confidential was seen as a barrier.

Fear

It was felt that even when the victim was ready to disclose the abuse, they may still be unsure of who to trust. There was the fear that the criminal justice system is very open and it may get worse for the victim.

There was also a perceived fear of repercussions that it would get worse if the victim sought help. Seeking help could antagonise the perpetrator more.

Another fear was where the victim would go. The victim may have nowhere else to go and feel trapped.

Family Breakdown

The impact on children and the fear of losing the children was a barrier to seeking help. The notion that you had to protect your family and if you did not, others will think badly of you.

Barriers around talking about domestic violence (Community Workshops)

Shame

It was interesting that the feedback here was not around being embarrassed it was more the sense of shame or being ashamed. As in the feedback from events there was a feeling that the subject was still taboo and you would not talk about it.

The feedback was similar in that that it was felt that the victim blamed themselves and that it was their fault that this was happening.

Awareness

This did not feature highly in the community workshops. What was highlighted, similarly again to the events was that the victims do not know who to turn to for support and are not aware of services that exist to support them. The fact that this is not talked about might mean that the victim feels isolated in the belief that it only happens to them.

Fear

Again, there was fear that the victim might not feel that they would be believed. It was felt that they may be too frightened to speak up. There was also a fear of not having anywhere to go.

Family Honour

Unlike the feedback from the events, there was a real belief that speaking out would mean that your family's honour would be affected. One community group went as far as talking about that disclosure could even dishonour the community. There was a feeling that in the current climate, Asian communities in particular did not want to draw attention to themselves. By highlighting domestic abuse or victims speaking up, this would give the community a 'bad name'.

It was felt that it would look bad on the family as a whole and that the family would lose the respect in the community.

There was also a feeling that there would be a lack of understanding on the part of 'Western' service providers. In extended families, the perpetrator is not always a man. It can be your mother in law or sister in law. Also in some families, the elder is respected and in terms of any family issues, the family would turn to the elder for resolutions, which would mean an internal resolution rather than reporting to agencies.

Immigration Status / Discrimination

Women that are subject to immigration controls may have their immigration status used against them. More so if they wanted to report abuse. In one of the community workshops the participants spoke of local cases where young women from India had married British Asian men, and in their words 'they were being used as slaves'. Their immigration status was used a tool to exert oppression and control. These women would be too frightened to speak up as they feared deportation.

Discrimination was seen as a barrier for not only BME women but for victims from LGBT communities. BME women stated that they had experienced racism when trying to access services and this would deter them trying to seek help. The expectation that you are going to be treated differently because of your race would stop you seeking help.

LGBT participants felt the same in that services did not recognise them as individuals, they were either given a label or had their sexuality dismissed. Accessing services was extremely difficult in any circumstance but for something like domestic violence, LGBT participants would be very reluctant to seek help.

Financial Control

There was a feeling that victims could be financially controlled. Whether it was itemised calls, no personal mobile phone or no money for bus fares, this could be a barrier for the victim to talk about the abuse.

Who would you turn to for support? (Events)

Again, the feedback between the events and the community workshops was different so it has been listed separately.

- Voluntary services
- Police
- Faith leaders
- School / youth workers
- Friends
- Family
- Hospital
- Internet search
- Specialist DV services
- Refuge
- MIND
- MASH
- GP
- Children's Centres
- Colleagues

Who would you turn to for support? (Community Workshops)

- Social Services
- The Police
- A trusted member of the community
- Friends

- Family
- School / College

(Note a smaller circle of support networks)

What are the barriers to seeking support? (Events)

Awareness

Lack of awareness featured quite high as well as the victim not knowing that the abuse was taking place. Again, there was a feeling that victims did not know who to go to for support and indeed what support was available to them. There was also the perception that there were long waiting lists and that the victim would have to wait to get any support from the service.

There was also the fear that services may not understand the victim. They would not understand that the victim may not want to leave the relationship but want the violence to stop.

Culture

There was the perception that culture was seen as a barrier to seeking support but also a 'culture' where the victim may see the violent behavior as a norm due to being brought up in an environment where domestic violence regularly occurred.

Culture was seen as a reason why the victim would not speak up about abuse. Although culture featured as a barrier to seeking support in all events, participants did not elaborate on what they perceived culture to be and why 'culture' was such a barrier to seeking support. The language barrier however, was given as a reason why the victim may not be able to speak up against abuse.

Immigration status was again listed as a barrier. It was felt that the victim would not speak up for the fear that she may be deported.

Fear

Participants felt that the fear of the abuse getting worse when disclosure was made was a barrier. The repercussions and consequences were a deterrent for the victims.

There was also a fear that she would not be believed. He may be better known in the community and have a better standing than her. They would likely believe him that they would her.

Other Barriers

These included fear for the children. Victims did not want to uproot the children or disturb their education by having to leave.

Financial consequences. Victims may feel that they will lose financial security if they made disclosure or left the relationship. If the victim was being financially abused and controlled there may be a fear of this getting worse upon disclosure.

The Court process and the criminal justice system as a whole was seen as a barrier. This would especially be more stressful if you had the added language barriers or the lack of knowledge around how the Courts and Criminal Justice systems work.

What are the barriers to seeking support? (Community Workshops)

Family Respect / Honour

One of the biggest barriers talked about at the community workshops was around the perceived shame disclosure would bring on not only the victim but her family. There was also the fear of dishonour amongst the community. What people thought about you was really important and affected not only how the community perceived you but could affect how they perceive your siblings. This could affect their marriage prospects and therefore your disclosure not only affects you but your extended family could feel the consequences.

The fear of stigma and disgrace in the community was seen as a barrier. There was also the fear that she would be blamed, 'it was her fault' 'she must have done something to provoke him'.

One of the things talked about at the community events was the need to keep family 'problems' within the family. Word should not get out in the community. Many participants referred to a system where the elders in the family / community would act as mediators to resolve the issues. There would be a meeting of some sort where the victim and perpetrator would be called to explain what the issues were and the 'elders' would come up with resolutions.

This 'system' is a further deterrent for the victim as she has to make disclosure not only in front of family and community elders but also the perpetrator.

After this 'elders court' as one participant put it, the victim would be expected to go back and live with the perpetrator and maybe his family and face the consequences behind closed doors.

Lack of awareness

Again, it was felt that victims were not aware of who to approach and what services may be available to support them. It was also felt that the victim may not know that abuse was taking place.

Cultural / Religious Factors

It was felt that one of the barriers to seeking support was the fear that services would not understand the victim's culture. This may include the family environment where the victim lived within an extended family and there could be multiple perpetrators including women.

The understanding that when she makes that disclosure, this could affect her relationship with her own family and how she is perceived by the community. She could be isolated from her support network which would have a massive impact on her confidence, her recovery and her ability to stay away from him.

Some participants also felt that culture and religion were used to deter women from speaking up. The added guilt that what she was about to do would be against her religion is a huge deterrent in speaking up. Many participants felt that religion was not portrayed correctly. Religion itself teaches you to have the courage to speak up against any injustice, not to endure it.

Discrimination

Previous experiences of discrimination could be a real barrier for victims. For BME participants it was felt that the lack of awareness of individual cultural needs was a barrier to seeking support. Services sometimes blame the abuse on culture when it is that same culture that could be deterrent to seeking the support. Services need to understand this better to enable improved access into services.

LGBT participants felt that the lack of training professionals and service providers had on understanding LGBT issues, meant that they were more likely to be discriminated against. This is what would stop victims from this community seeking support from services.

Other factors

These included the fear of having nowhere to go and the fear of consequences following disclosure or seeking support.

Child Sexual Exploitation

The presentations from Jayne Senior and Elizabeth were received really well. It opened up a dialogue around child sexual exploitation and challenged some of the myths around the subject. For example, the media leads us to believe that perpetrators of child sexual

exploitation are predominantly male and from a specific racial background. Elizabeth's account of her abuse challenged this as her abuser was female.

The feedback from the events outlined that there is a need to train front line workers and community group organisers in identifying the early signs of when a child could be being exploited.

One of the attendees in North Warwickshire stated after the event that she suspected that a child she knows could be being exploited. As a result of attending the workshop and listening to Jayne and Elizabeth, she was going to raise concerns with the relevant authorities.

This indicates that there is demand and need for further CSE awareness sessions in the county.

Case Studies

These case studies became known to EQuIP whilst the events and workshops were taking place. Both case studies were referred to EQuIP by people attending the community workshops.

Case Study 1

This lady is from the Gypsy and Traveller community and fled domestic violence and moved to Warwickshire to get away from her violent husband. She did not seek support from a domestic violence agency, instead she approached the Local Authority to be re-housed.

The family were accepted as being homeless and were put up in temporary accommodation. The issues started to arise when this lady was expected to apply for all relevant benefits herself and keep up to date with all her rent and bills, despite not knowing how to read or write.

She struggled financially through no fault of her own, she had not been given the financial help and support that she needed. Both P3, a Housing support organisation and EQuIP supported this lady. She was helped with applying for housing benefit and other out of work benefits she was entitled to. Her bills are now colour coded and she understands who and where she needs to make payments.

Her tenancy was at risk due to her husband finding her and causing trouble. EQuIP referred her to Refuge to seek support and Brethertons Solicitors to seek a Non Molestation order with Legal Aid.

This lady is now safe, she knows who she can call for support and she is no longer struggling to make ends meet.

From a conversation with this survivor it became apparent that she had been a victim of domestic violence for a couple of years, despite being married for much longer. When questioned about how her family and her community supported her, she stated that she was encouraged to leave him. Her family offered her a place to stay and assured her that she does not need to be with him.

Observations

- Lack of awareness around domestic violence services and the support available. There should have been better signposting when she approached the Local Authority.
- Lack of awareness of her right to apply for a Non-Molestation order to be safe.
- Financially she was unaware of what she was entitled to which resulted in arrears. This could have resulted in homelessness for her and her family.
- The Local Authority not recognising that she needs support with reading and filling out forms
- Leaving the perpetrator was the easy part for this client as she had her family's full support.

Case Study 2

This lady approached EQuIP seeking support and signposting for culturally specific Dementia Services. She is from a South Asian background.

As trust developed between this lady and the EQuIP Officer, she disclosed that she was a victim of domestic violence and her son was the perpetrator. She had been a victim of physical, emotional and financial abuse for a number of years.

During the conversations with EQuIP she was encouraged to go to the Police and seek support, however she said that she felt embarrassed that this was happening to her and she did not want him to get into trouble, 'he was a good boy really'. She blamed herself for the beatings as she refused to give him any more money. However, she received a severe beating and her neighbours called the Police. This lady then decided that enough was enough, she did not have the energy to take any more abuse.

She contacted EQuIP to say that she had sought help from the Police and she was going to go to Court for a non-molestation order. She was frightened because English was not her first language and she did not understand the procedure and system. She stated that she had asked her social worker to put her in touch with an organisation that could help but it had been two weeks and she had not heard anything. EQuIP referred this

lady to Refuge and within two hours of making the referral, Refuge had contacted this lady to let her know that a support worker who spoke her language would be in touch.

This lady now has a non-molestation order and feels safe. The pressure she felt from her son and the emotional abuse made her anxious. However now she feels as though the weight has been lifted and she can live again. She was prevented from seeing her other children before but now she has re established relationships with her children and grandchildren.

When asked why she took so long to seek support and to report her son, she said that she did not want people to talk about them. She said that they were talking already because there was Dementia in the family, she did not want people to have something else to talk about. She also said that she felt ashamed and that she was to blame. She brought him up so she must have done something wrong for him to behave in this way.

A point to note is that the non-molestation order had to be paid for privately and cost this lady in excess of £7,000.

Observations

- The lack of signposting / referral by the social worker
- The feeling of shame, both as a mother and what the community might think
- Fear of the criminal justice system – not understanding how it works
- Language barriers

Conclusion

Awareness

From the feedback from both the events and the community workshops it is evident that more work needs to be done around raising an awareness of support services and the support that they provide. The awareness needs to incorporate the following:

- How and where victims can seek support
- The financial support available for women who want to escape a violent relationship
- The reassurance that the service is confidential (unless there is a serious safeguarding concern around her or the children)
- Information on stalking and harassment needs to be made available so that the victim is aware of all the support available post disclosure

Furthermore, work to address some of the community perceptions around harmful practices needs to take place. The involvement of faith and community leaders across Warwickshire would ensure that the information can be cascaded through communities, via a trusted person. Consideration needs to be given to culturally specific training for community and faith leaders. This would help tackle the issue of dishonour and shame.

Immigration Controls

There needs to be accessible information for women that are subject to immigration controls. Leaving a violent relationship is much harder as the perpetrator and or his family will use her immigration against her.

There needs to be further research into foreign spouses residing in the UK, under immigration controls and being subjected to modern slavery. The feedback received from communities raises the concern and the research done by Sisters for Change makes the link between domestic violence and slavery.

Discrimination

There is a genuine fear that services will not treat BME women or members from the LGBT community equally. Historic discrimination deters victims from seeking support. There is a feeling that they will not be treated as an individual. LGBT participants in particular said that there was a lack of awareness by professionals in understanding LGBT communities.

Cultural Awareness

There is a need for services providers to be more culturally aware. There needs to be a better understanding around harmful practices and cultural needs. The awareness

should include the influence of families and communities on an individual as well as general cultural awareness.

Lack of cultural awareness on the part of some local authorities and the police has been highlighted by the research undertaken by Sisters for Change. The findings indicate that the lack of language skills can heighten victims' fear and nervousness in dealing with public authorities. The research also states that experiences of racism can silence women and girls. "Survivors can be forced to balance their need for support against concerns about how their 'communities' are perceived. Narratives which portray BME communities as more dangerous, patriarchal, inclined towards extremism etc. have a direct impact on where survivors feel able to access support and how they engage with agencies.¹

This mirrors some of the feedback received as part of this project but also the feedback from communities in WREP's 'Prevent, Safeguarding and Creating Cohesive Communities.

There is a feeling that some communities are already portrayed in a negative light and a further disclosure of abuse, will impact on the community.

Seeking Support

When looking at the feedback from the events the participants stated a number of people and organisations that they would turn to. This differed with the community workshops who only listed three organisations they would turn to, namely the Police, Social Services or a school / college. They were also more likely to seek support from a trusted member of the community, friends or family.

Financial Hardship

There is a lack of awareness of financial support available to women leaving a violent relationship. A report by the House of Commons states that the payment of Universal Credit being made to one person in the household, makes it harder for women to speak out against domestic violence. If a woman wishes to leave a violent relationship, she has to request a split payment of the benefit, which can in some circumstance alert the perpetrator.

¹ Sisters for change; Unequal Protection – Public authority responses to violence against BME women in England 2017

(footnote continued)

The single payment can also lead to financial control, again a barrier for a woman to leave a violent relationship. ²

Access to Legal Support

Although remedies are available through criminal justice and the Civil Courts, access to these services are limited for some BME women. Knowing about what remedies are available and the costs attached can be a barrier.

For case study two, she had the means available to finance the legal cost, however going through the legal system was very daunting. She did not understand what was expected of her and she felt that she was at a disadvantage because of her limited understanding of English

² House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee: Universal Credit and domestic abuse. August 2018

Recommendations

1. Statutory and Third Sector services need to review their information and awareness materials to ensure that they are easy to read and jargon free

Thought needs to be given to the materials available and to whether they are accessible for women with limited literacy or for women who have English as a second language. A review of materials and leaflets available is recommended.

2. Work with group leaders and Faith groups to deliver culturally and religiously appropriate awareness around harmful practices. This would tackle the perceptions around honour and shame.

Further work is needed with group leaders and faith groups to tackle the stigma attached to domestic violence and other harmful practices. There needs to be trusted guidance and support for women when religion and or culture is used as a tool to prevent women from speaking out.

3. Cultural awareness training for all Statutory and Third Sector services that may come into contact with victims of domestic violence.

The training would allow professionals and practitioners to be aware of cultural barriers that women face. When clients are aware that professionals and practitioners have had this training, the fear that support services not understanding their needs, will be addressed.

4. A programme of awareness sessions and / or training to raise awareness of CSE in Warwickshire. This training is to be aimed at communities.

This was highlighted at all of the events. After hearing from Jayne Senior and Elizabeth, communities were very keen to find out more and to learn about some of the signs they needed to look out for to protect young people

5. Lobby MP's.

The issue around a single payment for Universal Credit is an issue for both disclosure of domestic violence and for being financially able to leave a violent relationship. The single payment also makes it easier for perpetrators to financially control the victim of domestic violence.

Voluntary and community groups are already writing in to their MP to raise this issue. It is recommended that Statutory and Third Sector services write in to their local MP to raise the issue that a single payment makes it harder for a woman to leave a violent relationship as the perpetrator will be alerted to her request for separate payments..

6. The VWAG Board to ensure that all Statutory and Third Sector services are aware of the changes following the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill.

The government has yet to publish the results following their consultation on the draft Bill. The changes to the law regarding domestic violence needs to be communicated and targeted towards Statutory and Third Sector services so that this information can be cascaded to their respected service users and wider networks.

Appendix 1



Together we can build a better community!

Come and hear inspirational speakers and have your say on issues that face your community

Thursday 1st November 2018

10am – 12 noon

Wood End Village Hall,
Tamworth Road,
Wood End
CV9 2QQ

Please log on to Eventbrite
(link can be found below)
to reserve a place

<https://van-nov-2018.eventbrite.co.uk>

AGENDA

9.30 Registration & Refreshments

10.00 Welcome and Introductions

10.05 Domestic Violence – A Warwickshire Perspective.

*Louise Moreton, Refuge, Warwickshire.
Refuge's specialist services include refuges,
independent advocacy, community outreach projects
and culturally specific services*

10.25 Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation – Keeping our children safe. Jayne Senior MBE

*Ms Senior worked closely with The Times
Newspaper to expose the failings of a minimum of
1400 children in Rotherham, South Yorkshire*

10.55 Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse

*Sarah Bhayat, Community Outreach, Coventry
Haven - a specialist in forced marriage and
honour based abuse.*

11.25 Have your say! Facilitated table discussions to address what safeguarding issues you may face within your community.

12.00 End of Event



Together we can build a better community!

LADIES ONLY EVENT

**Come and hear
inspirational speakers
and have your say on
issues that face your
community**

Thursday 8th November 2018

5pm – 7pm

Edward Street Day Centre,

120 Edward Street,

Nuneaton, CV11 5RD

Please log on to Eventbrite
(link can be found below)
to reserve a place

[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/
our-families-our-future-tickets-
51550158913](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/our-families-our-future-tickets-51550158913)

AGENDA

17.00 Welcome and Introductions

17.05 Domestic Violence – A Warwickshire Perspective.

*Haniya Chaudhary, Refuge, Warwickshire.
Refuge's specialist services include refuges,
independent advocacy, community outreach projects
and culturally specific services*

17.25 Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation – Keeping our children safe. Jayne Senior MBE

*Ms Senior worked closely with The Times
Newspaper to expose the failings of a minimum of
1400 children in Rotherham, South Yorkshire*

18.10 Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse

*Sarah Bhayat, Community Outreach, Coventry
Haven - a specialist in forced marriage and
honour based abuse.*

18.40 Have your say! Facilitated table discussions to
address what safeguarding issues you may face
within your community.

19.00 End of Event



Together we can build a better community!

**Come and hear
inspirational speakers
and have your say on
issues that face your
community**

Friday 9th November 2018

10am – 12.00

**Sydni Centre
24 Cottage Square
Leamington Spa
CV31 1PT**

**Please log on to Eventbrite
(link can be found below)
to reserve a place**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/our-families-our-future-tickets-51550453795>

AGENDA

9.30 Registration & Refreshments

10.00 Welcome and Introductions

10.05 Domestic Violence – A Warwickshire Perspective.

Kaylee Linton, Refuge, Warwickshire.

Refuge's specialist services include refuges, independent advocacy, community outreach projects and culturally specific services

10.25 Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation – Keeping our children safe. Jayne Senior MBE

Ms Senior worked closely with The Times

Newspaper to expose the failings of a minimum of 1400 children in Rotherham, South Yorkshire

11.10 Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse

Sarah Bhayat, Community Outreach, Coventry Haven - a specialist in forced marriage and honour based abuse.

11.40 Have your say! Facilitated table discussions to address what safeguarding issues you may face within your community.

12.00 End of Event



Together we can build a better community!

Come and hear inspirational speakers and have your say on issues that face your community

Wednesday 21st November 2018

10am – 12 noon

The Benn Hall, Newbold Road,
Rugby, CV21 2LN

Please log on to Eventbrite
(link can be found below)
to reserve a place

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/our-families-our-future-tickets-51550781776>

AGENDA

- 9.30 Registration & Refreshments**
- 10.00 Welcome and Introductions**
- 10.05 Domestic Violence – A Warwickshire Perspective.**
Pauline Smith, Refuge, Warwickshire.
Refuge's specialist services include refuges, independent advocacy, community outreach projects and culturally specific services
- 10.25 Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation – Keeping our children safe.** Jayne Senior MBE
Ms Senior worked closely with The Times Newspaper to expose the failings affecting a minimum of 1400 children in Rotherham, South Yorkshire
- 11.10 Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse**
Sarah Bhayat, Community Outreach, Coventry Haven - a specialist in forced marriage and honour based abuse.
- 11.40 Have your say!** Facilitated table discussions to address what safeguarding issues you may face within your community.
- 12.00 End of Event**

Contact details



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Warwickshire
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www.equipequality.org.uk



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