Appendix 4

Directorate for People

Commissioning Centre of Excellence

Domestic Abuse

Needs Assessment Update

Purpose

To update Birmingham Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment 2013 and support the development of Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2017-20

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1. Executive Summary

The new Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2017 – 2020 is being developed. In order to better prevent and protect citizens of Birmingham against domestic abuse, we need to update our understanding of the needs of our population.

Intelligence from this Needs Assessment Update builds upon the work done in 2013 and will be used to inform the design of the new Strategy.

Key Domestic Abuse Prevention Findings for Birmingham

- Domestic abuse of women and children has been increasing since the economic downturn in 2009.
- There has been a 36% increase in the numbers of victims at high risk being referred to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)since 2014
- By the time they reach adulthood 1 in 5 children will have been exposed to domestic abuse.
- 77% children in need are exposed to domestic abuse.
- Since 2013, in Birmingham, there has been a 57% increase in reports to the police and a 19% increase in prosecutions.
- GPs are in a strong position to identify domestic abuse for groups of women who are traditionally under-represented in domestic abuse services such as older women and disabled women.
- The IRIS pilot, supporting early identification in Primary Care, has shown that an increase in early identification from statutory services will require more capacity in domestic abuse services to be able to respond.
- Unlike referrals to most other services, homeless applications from domestic abuse victims has been declining and a higher proportion of these are not eligible to apply due to immigration status.
- 32% of victims seeking refuge were able to gain refuge accommodation.
- Adolescent to parent abuse shares many of the features of domestic abuse but is significantly under-reported.
- Forced marriage reports may be up to 35 times higher than reports currently suggest.
- Black and minority ethnic women face additional barriers of multiple disadvantage and discrimination but there is no local evidence that they experience more domestic abuse than other women.
- Domestic homicide reviews have identified the need of cultural change in the way that agencies safeguard adults and children from domestic abuse, and particularly call for a greater understanding of how coercive control affects children and our engagement with parents.

2. Purpose

- Birmingham's Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment is an ongoing process to identify the current and future needs of Birmingham's population in respect of domestic violence and abuse (hereinafter domestic abuse). It should inform decisions about how we design, commission and deliver services to meet the protection, support and recovery of those experiencing domestic abuse, both adults and children and the prevention of abuse and harm thereafter.

- This needs assessment provides an update of the data and evidence that informed the previous needs assessment in 2013 and is part of the following suite of documents supporting the Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2017-2020 including:

    - Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy – Plan on a Page
    - Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment (2013)
    - Initial Equality Analysis (August 2016) to be supplemented by the full analysis which will be undertaken following public consultation (available February 2017).

3. Definition

- This evidence update applies the Government definition of domestic 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 is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent 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 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."

- The definition includes so called 'honour' based violence and forced marriage.

- Whilst female genital mutilation (FGM) is also included in the Government definition, addressing FGM within the city is not included in this needs analysis update nor the forthcoming domestic abuse prevention strategy as it requires particular targeted activity.

4. How the City is Changing

4.1 Changing population

- Birmingham is the largest Local Authority in Europe, and the UK's second City, with an estimated resident population of 1,101,360.

- Birmingham is growing faster than the UK average, increasing by 9.9% over the past 10 years. This is due to both natural population growth and the net effect of migration, including international moves.

- There is a young population with 25.6% under 18 compared to 21.3% nationally and 46% under the age of 30.

- Birmingham is an ethnically and culturally super diverse City. Around 42% of residents classify themselves within an ethnic group other than White British, compared to just 14% nationally. There is clear variation across the City, with 40.3% of Ladywood's population classifying themselves as having been born outside of the UK compared to 7.4% in Sutton Coldfield.

- School age children speak more than 100 languages in addition to English.

- More than 100,000 children, (37% of all children in the city) are living in poverty[1]. Almost 4 out of 5 children under 5 (79%) live in 40% of the most deprived areas.

- Birmingham is ranked the most deprived city for numbers of people who are income or employment deprived – this is largely influenced by the size of the authority compared to other major cities.

- Birmingham sees 23.8% of households with dependent children; 10.1% occupied by lone parents with dependent children.

- Comparatively high unemployment and low paid employment rates in the city are linked to the skills gap that exists locally with residents having lower skill and qualification levels than the national average. Around 28% of residents have no qualifications at all compared to the England average of 22.5%.

[1] Birmingham Poverty Commission (2016)

5. Estimating the Prevalence of Domestic Abuse

Key Messages:

- The Crime Survey for England and Wales underestimates the levels of domestic abuse in the population.
- Domestic abuse of women has been increasing since the economic downturn in 2009 and the increase is thought to be connected to reduced economic independence and availability of options (income, housing, employment) for women in the period of austerity.
- Domestic abuse of men has stopped decreasing since 2009.
- By the time they reach adulthood, nearly 1 in 4 of Birmingham's children and young people will have been exposed to domestic abuse.

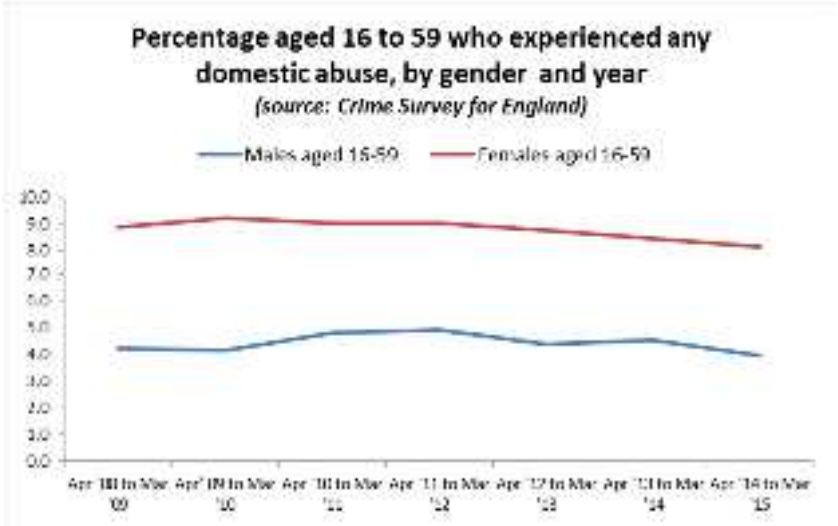
5.1 Estimating the Prevalence of Domestic Abuse

- There is no accurate measure of how widespread domestic abuse is in the population. It is known to be significantly and consistently underreported. It is a hidden crime and it is estimated that only 16% of incidents of abuse are reported to the Police (British Crime Survey, 2010).

- In the absence of an accurate measure, the Government relies upon the Crime Survey for England and Wales[2] formally the British Crime survey, hereinafter referred to as the Crime Survey, to estimate the prevalence of domestic abuse as well as the prevalence of other crimes.

- According to the Crime Survey, violent crime in England and Wales, including domestic abuse, has been continuing to fall since the mid-1990s.[3] Figure 5.1 illustrates the decline for both male and female's experiencing domestic abuse.

Figure 5.1 Percentage of population aged 16 to 59 who experienced any domestic abuse, by gender and year



Source: Office for National Statistics and Crime Survey [4]

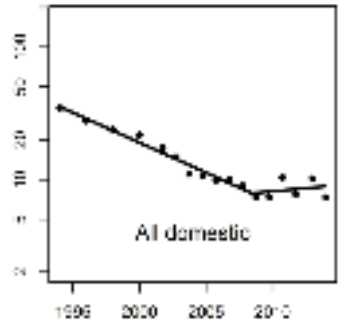
[2] The Crime Survey of England and Wales is a population survey managed by the Office for National Statistics. Domestic Violence in England & Wales, Briefing Paper Number 6337, April 2016 – http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SNO6337
[3] Domestic violence is defined in the Crime Survey as violent crime committed by a current or ex-intimate partner or other family member.
[4] Source: National domestic violence age specific rates have been extracted from the following sources: http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/compendium/focusonviolentcrimeandsexualoffences/yearendingmarch2015 - Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences Year ending March 2015

- Applying the estimates from the Crime Survey was the method used in our last Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment (2013) however since then, the Crime Survey has faced considerable challenge in respect of its quantitative analysis of the reduction in violent crime.

- Walby et al (2015) identified that domestic abuse crimes, unlike other forms of violent crime, are characterised by repeated victimisation. It is common practice in statistical analysis to remove incidents which are outside of the normal range of data ('outliers'). In the case of violent crime, the Crime Survey therefore puts a cap on the data results to remove any incidents over the range of 5 incidents in a 12 month period. More details can be seen in Appendix A.

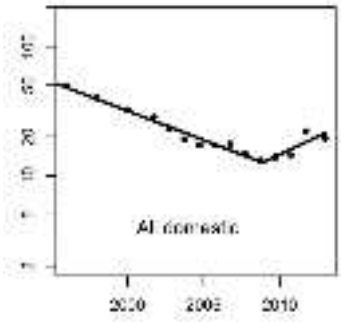
- Removing this 'cap' and including all responses to the survey, including high frequency victims, reveals that the rate of violent crime has actually been increasing since 2009.[5]

Figure 5.2 Domestic Violence Crimes Capped at 5 incidents per year (1994-2013/14)



Source: Walby et al (2014)

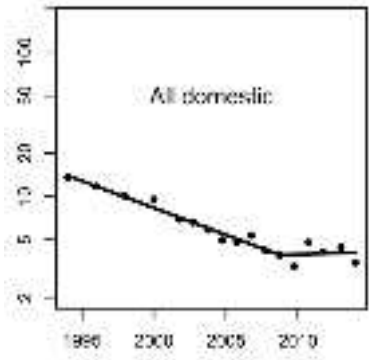
Figure 5.3 Domestic Violence Crimes With no cap (1994-2013/14)



Source: Walby et al (2014)

- As well as the number of crimes increasing, Walby shows, in Figure 5.4, that the number of people experiencing domestic abuse also began to increase in 2009 for the first time since 1994.

Figure 5.4 Rate of people experiencing domestic abuse per 1000 population (with cap removed) 1994-2013/14



Source: Walby et al (2014)

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http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/compendium/focusonviolentcrimeandsexualoffences/yearendingmarch2015/bulletintablesfocusonviolentcrimeandsexualoffencesyearendingmarch2015 - Data accompanying report

[5] This peer-reviewed research by Professor Sylvia Walby, Dr Jude Towers and Professor Brian Francis of Lancaster University was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) grant number ES/K002899/1. The open access journal article is published in the *British Journal of Criminology:* http://bjc.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/12/31/bjc.azv131.full.pdf+html

- Critically, the change point, from decrease to increase, correlates with the start of the economic downturn.[6] Although there is an absence of significant research in this area, commentators suggest that the barriers to ending a violent relationship have increased as income and access to social housing have depleted since the economic crisis (Fawcett Society, 2012; European Women's Lobby, 2012; Women's Resource Centre, 2013).

- If this were so, it would provide an explanation of the increase in violence against women, where women, who have been shown to be more dependent upon state welfare, are forced to remain in violent relationships for the absence of affordable alternatives. It might also explain why domestic violence against men, who are more likely to be economically independent, has not reduced.

5.2 Applying the Crime Survey to local prevalence

- The increase in reporting to the Police and other agencies in Birmingham can be seen as more consistent with this re-analysis of the Crime Survey. However, until the full details of this revised methodology are released, the following prevalence data applies the current formulation of the Crime Survey to Birmingham's population and caveats therefore apply. These can be seen in Appendix A.

- Table 5.1 illustrates how the Crime Survey considers the percentage of men and women aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence by age for year ending March 2015.

Table 5.1 Estimated percentage of men / women aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence (UK) (year ending March 2015)

Age Group	% of Domestic Abuse Victims	
	Male	Female
16-19	6.6	12.6
20-24	5.0	8.9
25-34	3.8	8.1
35-44	3.5	8.0
45-54	3.9	7.8
55-59	2.0	5.4
Total	**4.0**	**8.2**

Source: Crime Survey

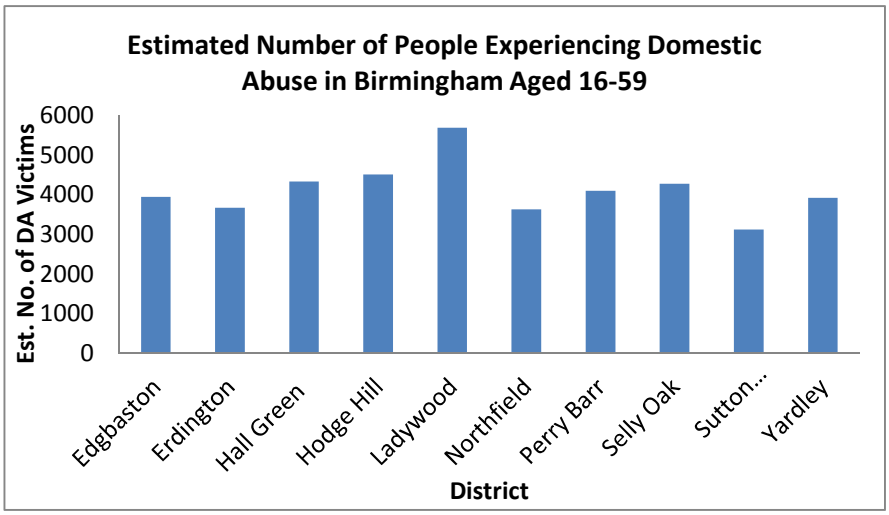
- Applying these figures to the Birmingham population would see an estimated total number of 41,218 adult's experiencing domestic abuse aged 16-59 living in the city. Of these, 32.3% are male and 67.7% are female. This is compared to a Birmingham population aged 16-59 of 49.6% male and 50.4% female.

- When applying these estimates to Districts within the City, Ladywood is estimated to have the greatest number of people experiencing domestic abuse (5,691), followed by Hodge Hill (4,516)

[6] More information on the effect of capping on violent crime can be found in S. Walby, J. Towers and B. Francis (2014) 'Mainstreaming domestic and gender-based violence into sociology and the criminology of violence', *Sociological Review*, 62(S2): 187-214, available at http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-954X.12198/pdf

and Hall Green (4,338). Sutton Coldfield may have the lowest estimated number of people experiencing domestic abuse at 3,125 (Fig. 5.5).

Figure 5.5 Estimated number of people experiencing domestic abuse in Birmingham aged 16-59 by Birmingham District



Source: Population ONS estimates 2014 & Crime Survey

- Table 5.2 identifies the estimated prevalence of domestic abuse by marital status and is consistent with a key message from Domestic Homicide Reviews: that the risk of domestic abuse increases when people experiencing domestic abuse seek to end a violent and abusive relationship.

Table 5.2 Estimated percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who experienced domestic abuse in the last year, by marital status and sex, year ending March 2015

Marital Status	% Male DV incidents	% Female DV incidents
Married	2.4	3.6
Cohabiting	4.8	6.6
Single	4.9	12.5
Separated	9.4	19.8
Divorced	8.9	18.7
Widowed	*	9.9

Source: Crime Survey

- Table 5.3 identifies the household structure of people experiencing domestic abuse.

Table 5.3 Estimated percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who experienced domestic abuse in the last year, by household structure and sex, year ending March 2015

Household Structure	% Male DV incidents	% Female DV incidents
No children	4.0	7.6
Adults and child(ren)	3.7	6.3
Single adult and child(ren)	18.3	22.6

Source: Crime Survey

6. Criminal Justice

Key Messages:

- There were 21,489 reports of domestic abuse to the Police in 2015/16 of which 85% were against women.
- Over 30% of reports of domestic abuse are repeated reports by the same person
- Over 6,600 domestic abusers were charged with an offence.
- There has been a low level of reporting of coercive control in the first six months of the new law but this is expected to increase as awareness increases.

Since 2013, there has been:

- 57% increase in reports to the Police.
- Increases in the 'most serious' domestic violence reported to the Police.
- 14% increase in domestic abuse prosecutions.
- 19% increase in domestic abuse convictions.

6.1 Police

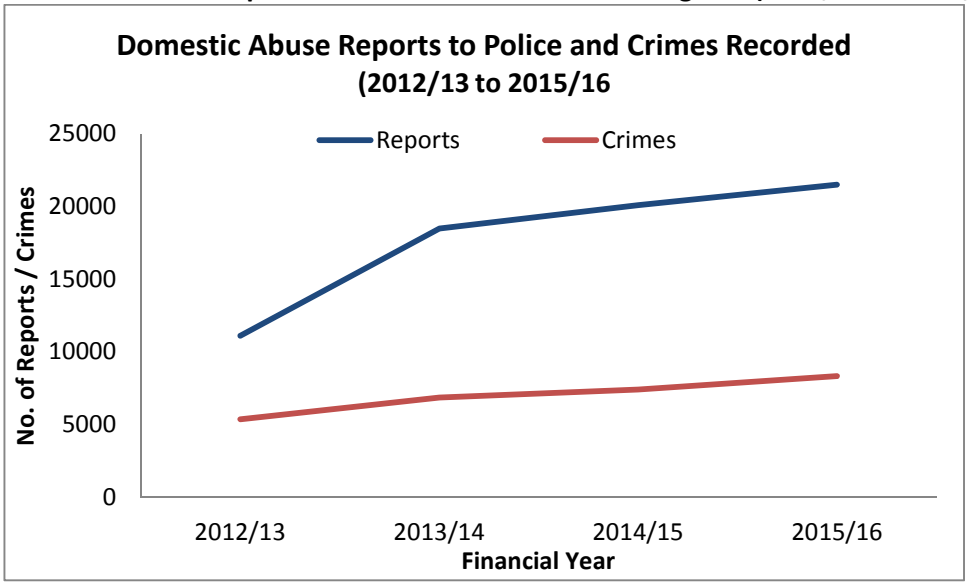
- Since the last Needs Assessment (2013), West Midlands Police have made significant changes to their response to domestic abuse. They have introduced dedicated domestic abuse investigation teams, introduced dedicated domestic abuse offender managers and undertaken an ongoing campaign of internal and external awareness raising (Operation Sentinel) each of which has undoubtedly had an impact upon the reporting of domestic abuse and the associated response.

- Although still significantly under-reported, there has been a sharp increase in reporting of domestic abuse since the last Needs Assessment was undertaken in 2013.

- In 2015/16 the Police in Birmingham received 21,489 reports of domestic abuse. Whilst variations do occur in Police recording practices, these alone cannot account for the increase, which has now reached nearly 2,000 reports per month.

- West Midlands Police categorise reported incidents where there is sufficient evidence to suggest that a crime has been committed and where there is not enough evidence to class the incident as an actual crime. This is particularly so in the case of domestic abuse which is often repeated and the prior indications of abuse are important for determining current and future risk. Figure 6.1 illustrates the number of reports and those that are classified as a crime

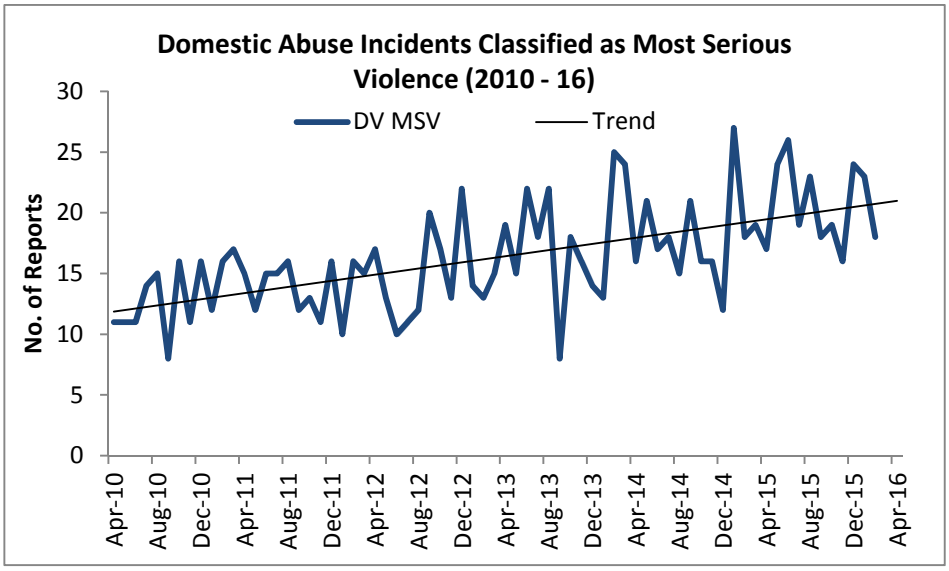
Figure 6.1 Domestic Abuse reports to Police and crimes in Birmingham (2012/13 to 2015/16)



Source: West Midlands Police 2016

- Of those reported, on average 39% were classified as a crime of which some related to assaults or most serious violence. This means that 61% of cases do not have any further action taken. Whilst it has been a consistent ambition of previous strategies to increase levels of reporting of domestic abuse, as it is an under-reported crime, the mark of success is in then reducing the escalation of violence and particularly most serious violence. However, levels of 'most serious violence' are also increasing (Fig. 6.2).

Figure 6.2 Domestic Abuse Involving Most Serious Violence in Birmingham April 2010 to March 2016



Source: West Midlands Police 2016

- Whilst domestic abuse can involve many potential crime types, reports relating to assaults demonstrate that over the last five years:

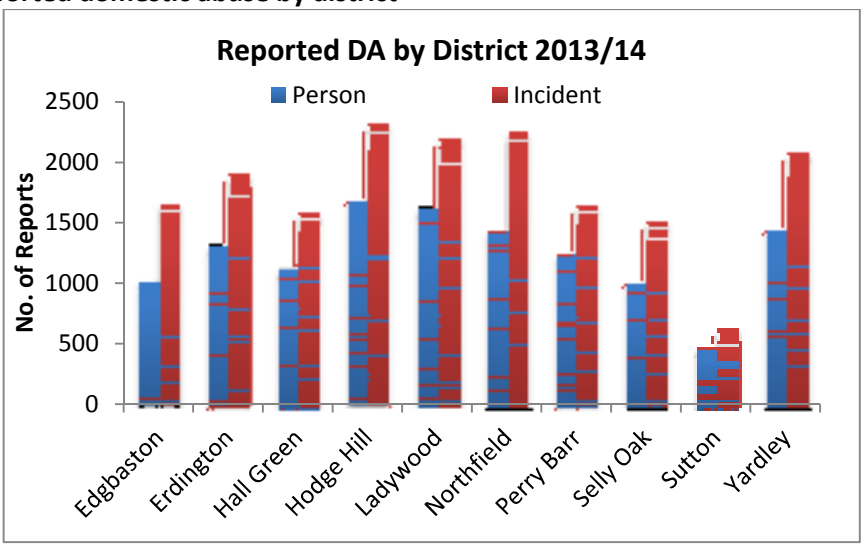
    - 85% of the victims of domestic abuse assaults were female,
    - 80% of the assaults were categorised as "Assault Occasion – Actual bodily harm".

- Over the period January to December 2014:

    - On average each person reported 1.4 incidents,
    - Around 30% of people reported a second incident or more.

- Heightened levels of reporting are recognised particularly in the following four Birmingham districts: Hodge Hill, Yardley, Northfield and Ladywood (Figure 6.3). Wards within these Districts have consistently featured in the highest levels of reporting of domestic abuse in the City (See DVA Needs Assessment 2013, pp55-59 for previous ward based data).

Figure 6.3 Reported domestic abuse by district



Source: West Midlands Police 2014

- Birmingham has had a consistently lower rate of domestic abuse reported incidents than the national average since 2011/12. The latest available year (2014/15) shows that this trend is now being challenged for the first time with Birmingham's rate at 22.4 incidents per 1,000 population compared to 20.4 nationally.

- Furthermore, when comparing the local picture with the other core cities, Birmingham has the third lowest rate of domestic abuse reported incidents after Bristol (17.3) and Nottingham (20.7). Sheffield has the highest rate of all core cities (29.9).

- West Midlands Police are currently reviewing their response to new legislation criminalising coercive control over the six months of its operation. An average of six reports per month have been made, although Home Office counting rules are likely to disguise levels of reporting of coercive control in favour of offences considered more serious.[7] Three abusers have been charged so far.

- For the 12 months ending in August 2013, West Midlands Police recorded 13,715 domestic abuse related crimes in Birmingham. Of these crimes, 32% resulted in charge, 6% resulted in a caution and 8% had an 'out of court disposal', such as a fixed penalty notice for disorderly contact (HMIC, 2014:7).

[7] When there are a number of possible offences concerning a specific report, Home Office Counting Rules require Police forces to record for data purposes only the most serious offence. In this way coercive control may be prosecuted alongside other offences of serious assault or rape but be hidden from data.

- By the 12 months ending in March 2016, West Midlands Police recorded 21,489 domestic abuse related crimes in Birmingham, an increase of 57%. Of these crimes, 31% resulted in charge, and a further 4% in a caution or community resolution.[8]

- Over 2,400 more domestic abuse offenders have been charged with an offence in year ending March 2016 compared to the year ending August 2013. This compares to the (national) Crime Survey findings of year ending 2015 which recorded that only 20% of reports of domestic abuse resulted in an abuser being charged.

- For those abusers not charged, cautioned or receiving an 'out of court disposal' or community resolution, Police action does not progress in 35-40% of cases due to the absence of support for people experiencing domestic abuse and 20-25% due to other evidential problems. [9]

- The power to issue Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders (DVPOs) came into effect on 8 March 2014 and enable the Police and magistrates to put in place protection in the immediate aftermath of a domestic violence incident. With DVPOs, a perpetrator can be banned with immediate effect from returning to a residence and from having contact with people experiencing domestic abuse for up to 28 days, allowing the person time to consider their options and, where possible, get the support that they need.

- West Midlands Police have made relatively little use of this new power, taking only 16 notices or orders in the last two years across the force area. This is compared to an average of 40 per month taken by Greater Manchester Police who were a pilot area for the new scheme. The scheme has been accused of being administratively burdensome with little outcome and insufficient sentencing outcomes where breaches of the orders have occurred. Offenders breaching orders have been reported to receive minor fines in the majority of cases and only one of the 16 has received a custodial sentence (7 weeks). Greater Manchester Police are currently undertaking an evaluation but West Midlands Police are strengthening their dedicated response whilst awaiting the outcome. [10]

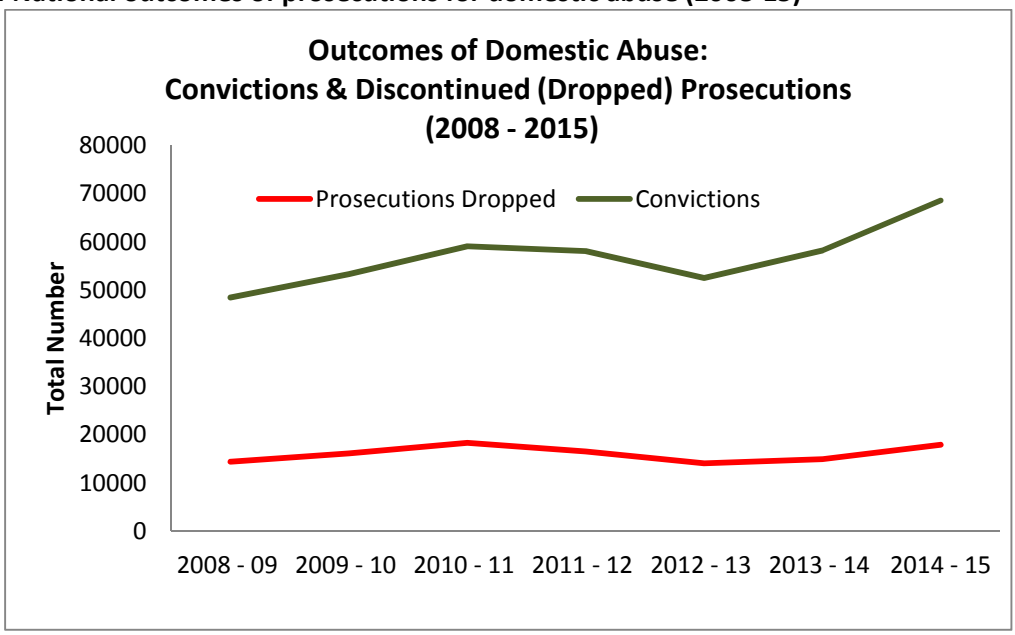
[8] 2016 outcomes data provided at West Midlands Police IAG 11.7.16 (presentation and data to follow)
[9] 2016 outcomes data provided at West Midlands Police IAG 11.7.16 (presentation and data to follow)
[10] West Midlands Police IAG 11.7.16

6.2 Outcomes at Court

- Nationally, there has been an increase since 2012 in the number of cases brought forward to the Crown Prosecution Service for prosecution.

- This increase has been matched by both the number and proportion of these cases which have resulted in a successful prosecution and conviction for a domestic abuse related crime (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 National outcomes of prosecutions for domestic abuse (2008-15)



Source: Crown Prosecution Service Violence Against Women and Girls[11]

- In Birmingham, the majority of domestic abuse cases are heard at Birmingham Magistrates Court, although a smaller number of most serious violence will be heard at the Crown Court. There has been a 14% increase in prosecutions and a 19% increase in convictions at court over the 3 year period 2013-16.

[11] Available at http://www.cps.gov.uk/data/violence_against_women/vawg_2014_15_report.html

7. Health Response to Domestic Abuse

Key Messages

- Assault data collected at Accident and Emergency Departments is likely to significantly under-report cases of domestic abuse.
- Overall, 85% of reported domestic abuse assaults are female however, there are a higher proportion of males than females presenting in the 46-60 and over 65 age groups. The 26-35 age group had the greatest number of assaults for both genders.
- Disclosed domestic abuse assaults in A&E are reducing which is inconsistent with increasing reports to the Police of most serious violence.
- There is evidence that GPs involved in the IRIS pilot have a greater understanding of domestic abuse and its relationship particularly with mental ill-health.
- GPs have not commonly referred to domestic abuse services. GPs can identify domestic abuse for groups of women who are traditionally under-represented in domestic abuse services such as older women and disabled women.

7.1 Accident and Emergency (A&E)

- When a person attends A&E Departments in the West Midlands region with injuries potentially caused by an assault, they are systematically asked a series of questions, including their relationship with their attacker and whether they intend to report the incident to the Police. This data is collected under the *West Midlands ARID* programme.

- Although the data presented defines domestic abuse as where the assailant has been identified as a partner or ex-partner, the data derived from this source has to be treated with considerable caution in respect of domestic abuse. There is local evidence of the under-reporting of domestic abuse in this context and an over-reporting of the likelihood of reporting domestic abuse to the Police (Rodriguez, 2008).

- Across the West Midlands around 10% of assault presentations to A&E Departments are recorded as relating to domestic abuse, with 87% of cases being female. In Birmingham hospitals, 10% of cases are recorded as being related to domestic abuse (Table 7.1) with 85 % of cases being female.

Table 7.1 Relationship of assailant to victim for all assaults (Birmingham)

Relationship	No.	%
Stranger	2,466	54
Acquaintance	1,123	24
Partner / Ex Partner	**439**	**10**
No Details	297	6
Relative	261	6
Total	4,586	100

Source: West Midlands ARID programme Sept 2013 to March 2016

- From September 2013 to March 2016 there were 9,267 cases of assault presenting at A&E departments across the West Midlands; 49.5% of these were in Birmingham A&E departments (4,586) (Fig. 7.1).

- Domestic abuse assaults made up 9.5% of all assaults across the region and 9.6% across Birmingham A&Es.

- Locally, the majority of domestic abuse assaults took place at home (68.6%), on the street (16.6%) or in a pub/club (4.6%). No location details were recorded for 29 cases (6.6%).

- Where ethnicity was recorded, White/White British people experiencing domestic abuse were over-represented in the presented domestic abuse assaults at A&E, 68.8% compared to the general population 57.9%. At the same time, Asian/Asian British people experiencing domestic abuse under-represented, 17.6% compared to the ethnic profile of the city 26.6%. Table 7.2 illustrates this.

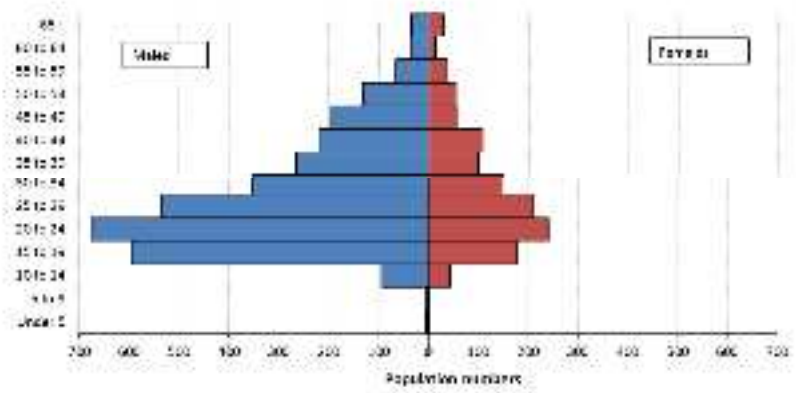
Table 7.2 Domestic abuse assault by ethnicity as proportion of Birmingham population

Ethnic Group	% Population	% Reported DA Assaults
White / White British	57.9	68.8
Asian / Asian British	26.6	17.6
Black / Black British	9.0	8
Mixed	4.4	3.6
Other	2.0	2

Source: West Midlands ARID programme Sept 2013 to March 2016

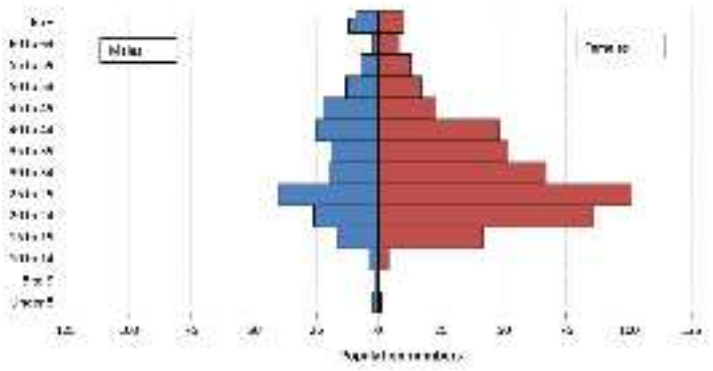
- Although males are significantly over-represented in attendance at A&E following all categorised assaults shown in figure 7.1, the picture is reversed for domestic abuse where 85 % of people experiencing domestic abuse reporting to A&E in Birmingham are female and 15 % male shown in figure 7.2.

Figure 7.1: Recorded Assaults by Age and Gender – Birmingham Only (All Assaults)



Source: West Midlands ARID programme Sep 2013 to March 2016

Figure 7.2: Recorded Domestic Abuse Assaults by Age and Gender



Source: West Midlands ARID programme Sep 2013 to March 2016

- For domestic abuse, the 25-29 age range shows the peak likelihood for presenting assaults at A&E for both genders. In those aged 46 to 60 and over 65 age groups, more males than females are presenting.

- We have seen that prevalence data is not captured for older people in the Crime Survey (see Section 5) and this provides one of the potentially few local indicators of prevalence, although still with low reported numbers.

- Domestic abuse is most commonly presented to A&E during the weekend in common with all assaults.

- 63% of people experiencing domestic abuse assaults at Birmingham A&E's advised that they had reported the abuse to the Police, with a further 1% suggesting they intended to report the incident. Police attended for 11% of the presentations. Previous research in Birmingham has evidenced that people experiencing domestic abuse are significantly more likely to say that they have reported or intend to report to the Police than actually do (Rodriguez, 2008). Therefore, Police attendance is perhaps the more reliable indicator of assaults likely to be reported to the Police.

- Alcohol consumption was a known factor in 50% of cases where domestic abuse has been presented at A&E departments as shown in Table 7.3. Note that in the Needs Assessment (2013) alcohol featured in only 10% of domestic abuse reports to the Police.

Table 7.3 Alcohol involved in assault – by relationship to abuser (Birmingham A&E)

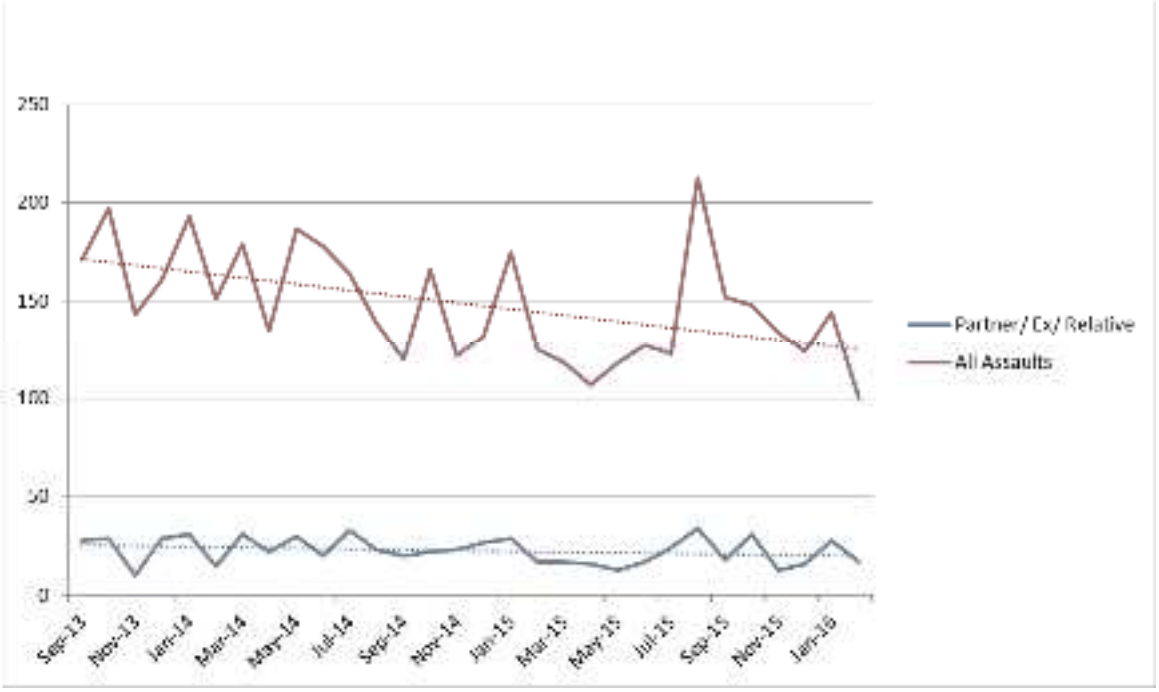
Relationship	Alcohol Involved	
	No (%)	Yes (%)
Stranger	41	59
Acquaintance	59	41
Partner / Ex-Partner	**50**	**50**
No details	60	40
Relative	62	38

Source: West Midlands ARID programme Sep 2013 to March 2016

- Nationally, the Crime Survey and analysis of Domestic Homicide Reviews found 56% of abusers of domestic homicide had problematic alcohol use. The relationship between domestic abuse and alcohol therefore warrants further exploration.

- The overall number of assaults leading to injury which are presented to A&E in Birmingham has been reducing over the period of analysis from September 2013 as shown in figure 7.3.

Figure 7.3: Time Series of Recorded Assaults (Birmingham A&E)



Source: West Midlands ARID programme Sep 2013 to March 2016

- This trend is not consistent with the significant increase in domestic abuse reported to the Police over this period nor the increase in 'most serious violence' which is also escalating. This therefore suggests one of a number of possibilities: that people experiencing domestic abuse are not accurately disclosing domestic abuse to A&E; that they are not gaining medical intervention at A&E for most serious violence, or that there is increased confidence in reporting to the Police. Further analysis is required.

7.2 Primary Care

- Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) is a DVA training, support and referral programme for GP practices in the UK. IRIS was evaluated in a randomised controlled trial (Feder et al.,2011) and was found to be effective in supporting GPs and practice staff in referring women who have experienced DVA appropriately and therefore improving their safety.

- IRIS commenced in Birmingham South and Central CCG and Birmingham Cross City CCG during 2015 and the first practices were trained in October 2015. By March 2016, an early evaluation report had been conducted and concluded that the programme has improved awareness among general practice staff and this has impacted positively on their practice regarding domestic abuse; particularly increasing understanding about the relationships between poor mental health and domestic abuse (Bradbury-Jones and Taylor:2016a).

- Similar results were found for the evaluation of the Sandwell and West Birmingham evaluation which was assessed separately (Bradbury-Jones and Taylor:2016b).

- The pilot provides evidence of previously undisclosed domestic abuse. Over 100 women accepted referrals to specialist support in the first 4 months of the pilot compared to an average of 9 referrals from GPs to the Safety Unit each year (2013-2016).

- Further analysis will need to be undertaken to understand the nature of this increased demand over time. As well as being a vehicle for earlier identification of domestic abuse, the pilot also provides evidence of new cohorts of service users for domestic abuse services. The women accessing were considered unlikely to have accessed domestic abuse services without this intervention either at an earlier or later stage of their abuse. This may be particularly so for older women and disabled women who are each under-represented in domestic abuse services.

8. Domestic Abuse, Housing and Homelessness

Key Messages

- Last year, domestic abuse accounted for 20% of homelessness.
- Almost 30% of victims seeking refuge were able to gain refuge accommodation; 2% of these gained refuge in another area.
- Just over 1 in 10 people in refuge have a disability.
- Since its five-year high in 2012/13, homeless applications due to domestic abuse have reduced by nearly a quarter. In addition, the proportion of homeless applications accepted from domestic abuse victims is declining.
- More than half of domestic abuse homeless applicants previously lived in the rented sector.

8.1 General

The Crime Survey indicates that 42% of people experiencing domestic abuse have to leave their homes, temporarily or permanently, because of the abuse (Home Office, 2011). Although, domestic abuse is one of the major contributors to homelessness and currently accounts for 20% of homeless applications in Birmingham (2015/16), it is worth noting that still only a minority of those expected to have to leave their homes through domestic abuse, approach the Local Authority for help. This maybe because they find alternative accommodation or are able to remain in their own home with prevention type support such as housing related floating support and the Sanctuary scheme.

8.2 Refuge

In the period since the last Needs Assessment, Birmingham has protected and marginally increased its provision of refuge accommodation and supported housing for domestic abuse. Despite this, demand continues to outstrip supply.

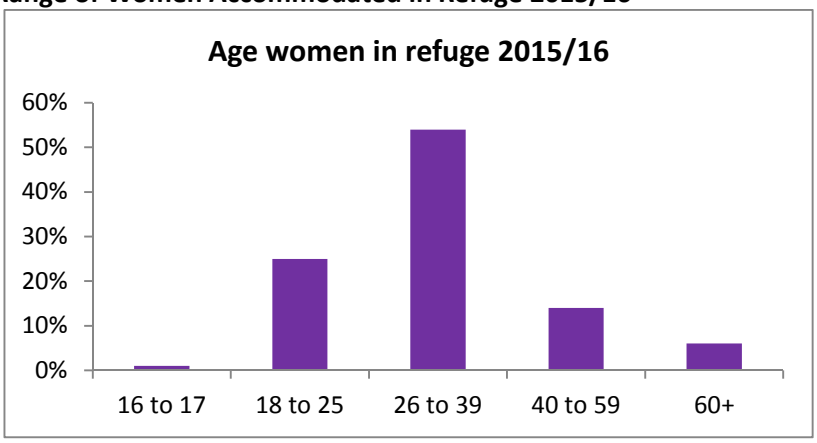
During 2015/16, 2,046 people experiencing domestic abuse sought refuge accommodation via the Birmingham Gateway, the single access point for Birmingham refuges and housing related support. 618 people, 30%, and their children were accommodated in Birmingham. In addition 43 people were accommodated in refuges funded by other agencies. This means that 32% of people were provided with refuge accommodation.

Therefore, 68% of people experiencing domestic abuse initially seeking refuge did not obtain it because:

- 477 people experiencing domestic abuse were turned away as there was no capacity in refuge and either were placed in alternative temporary accommodation or made private arrangements.
- 46 people experiencing domestic abuse had no recourse to Public Funds and were ineligible for refuge as they were unable to fund the accommodation.
- Refuge was considered unsuitable for 194 people experiencing domestic abuse.
- 206 people experiencing domestic abuse refused the referral to refuge.

The majority of women accommodated in refuge during 2015/16 were aged 26 to 39 years followed by those aged 18 to 25. Women aged 16 to 17 or 60 and over were the least represented age group. Figure 8.1 illustrates this.

Figure 8.1 Age Range of Women Accommodated in Refuge 2015/16



Data source: BCC Gateway 2016

- All Black and Minority Ethnic women access refuge in greater proportion than the wider population (<10%) although for Asian women the proportion is only 1 % more than the wider population.

- Just over 12% of women in refuge identified as having a disability (Table 8.1). Birmingham MARACs have not dealt with any disabled people experiencing domestic abuse at high risk.

Table 8.1 Birmingham Refuge Users Identifying as Disabled 2015-16

Refuge Users Self-Identification with Disability	
Yes	50
No	357
Don't know	2
Total	409
Nature of disability	
Mobility	12
Hearing Impairment	2
Progressive/Chronic Illness	0
Mental Health	21
Learning Disability	6
Autistic Spectrum Condition	1
Other	16

Source: BCC Supporting People 2016 – people may have more than one disability

- Mental ill health was the most prevalent disability with women in refuge with 42% describing this as the nature of their disability. Almost a quarter of women reported mobility issues, 24% and just over 1 in 10 had a learning disability, 12%.

8.3 Homeless Applications

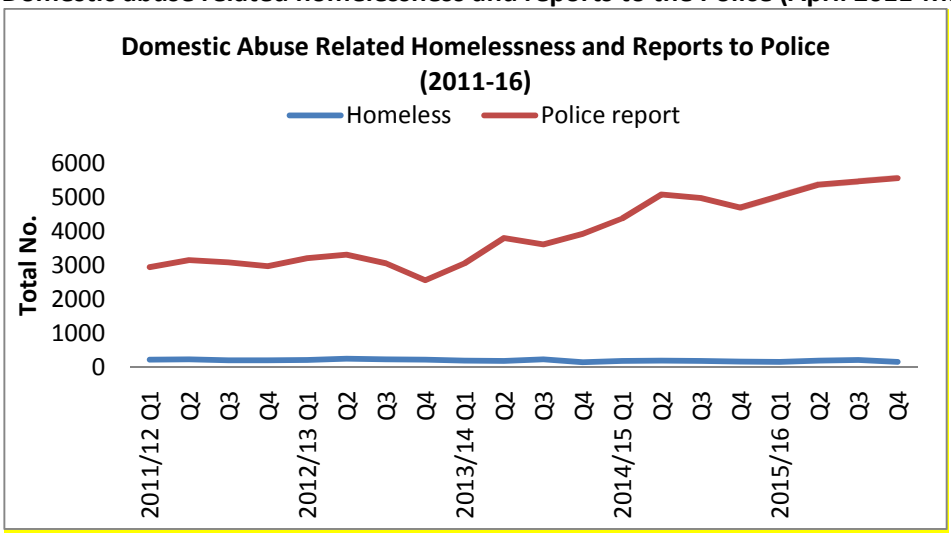
- During 2015/16, domestic abuse accounted for 21% of all (eligible) homeless applications.

- Since 2011/12, Birmingham homeless applications have reduced by 18.4%. During the same period, homeless applications due to domestic abuse have reduced by 32%[12].

[12] For applicants eligible to apply as homeless and losing their last settled home due to domestic abuse. Domestic abuse in this context refers to the violent breakdown of a relationship with a partner or associated person (as defined in Section 8.2 of Homelessness Codes of Guidance for Local Authorities in respect of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996)

- At the same time the city has seen substantial increases in reports to the Police and the estimated prevalence of domestic abuse. It is clear from Fig. 8.2 that when comparing the number of eligible applicants making a homeless application because of domestic abuse, the rising trend does not follow.

Figure 8.2 Domestic abuse related homelessness and reports to the Police (April 2011-March 2016)



Source: BCC Homeless and Pre-Tenancy Service and West Midlands Police

- The main cause of homelessness in Birmingham throughout 2014-16 was loss of rented or tied accommodation; making up 46% of all homelessness last year. Violent breakdown of relationship accounted for 24% of homelessness during the same period.

- Over the four year period between 2011 and 2015, more than two thirds (68%) of homeless applications due to domestic abuse were made by lone parents and 28% made by single adults.

- Over 50% of those who are homeless through domestic abuse previously lived in the rented sector (Private and Social Rented). When compared to the city's tenure profile there are far fewer presentations from the owner occupied sector and more from the rented sector, particularly BCC-previously rented properties. This is in itself not surprising and, whilst not researched, may well reflect either the often depleted economic circumstances of those in social housing or the familiarity with the Local Authority for those in BCC accommodation. Note that the high use of 'other' may distort this picture to some degree.

- The numbers of applications accepted from those homeless through domestic abuse had reduced from 1,227 in 2011/12 to 1,126 in 2014/15. The proportion of this group owed a full housing duty has also declined during from 69% to 63% over the same period. This is compared to an increase in the proportion of all applications deemed to be owed a full housing duty, which rose from 56% to 60% (2011/12 – 2014/15).

- Homeless people experiencing domestic abuse may apply directly to other areas to be housed, particularly if they have gained refuge accommodation elsewhere. Only 1 household was housed in another Local Authority during 2014/15.

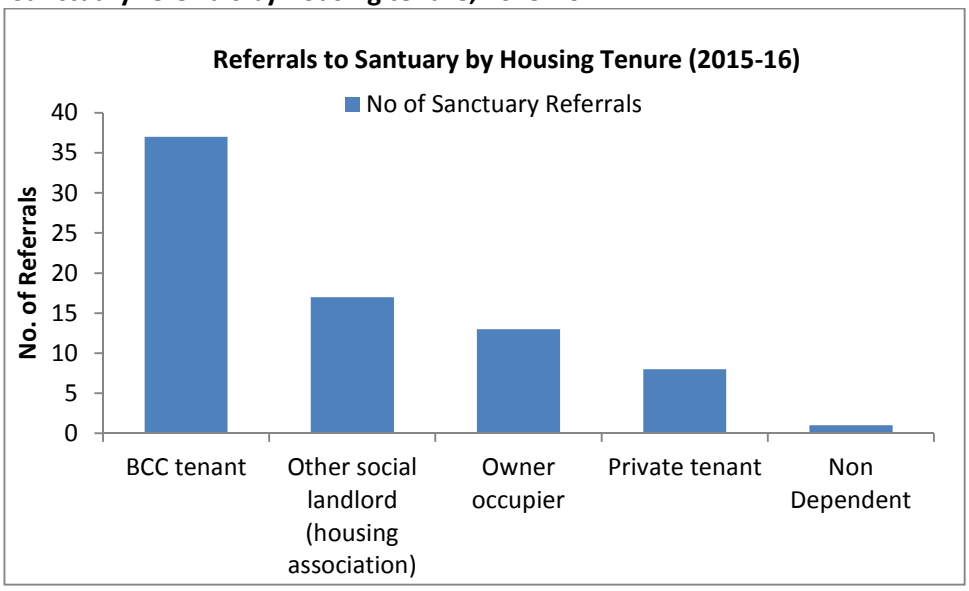
8.4 Sanctuary

- Sanctuary Schemes provide additional security measures to a home and are a key feature of homeless prevention for those experiencing domestic abuse, enabling people and families to stay in their own homes where it is safe to do so.

- In the last year, 78 people experiencing domestic abuse received sanctuary protective measures, 53 of whom had children living in the household (68%).

- Sanctuary is available irrespective of tenure. Most recently, the majority of beneficiaries (37) were BCC tenants but the scheme was being used across different types of tenure (Fig. 8.3).

Figure 8.3 Sanctuary referrals by housing tenure, 2015-16



Source: Birmingham City Council 2016

9. Children and Young People

Key Messages:

- More than three quarters of Birmingham's children in need are exposed to domestic abuse (77%).
- 1 in 5 children will have experienced domestic abuse by the time they reach adulthood.
- Multi-agency screening of children known by the Police to be in homes experiencing domestic abuse, increased by 29% in 2015.
- Adolescent to parent abuse shares many of the features of domestic abuse but is significantly under-reported.
- Domestic Homicide Reviews have identified the need for a cultural change in the way agencies safeguard children living with domestic abuse and call for a greater understanding of how coercive control affects both children and our engagement with parents.

9.1 Children in Need

- In the last Needs Assessment (2013), data around children and young people's experience of domestic abuse was lacking both locally and nationally. The fact that domestic abuse was commonly and inadvertently masked in official statistics compounded this deficit.

- The Department for Education undertakes a national Children in Need census. At the point of assessment, abuse or neglect shows to be the most significant feature of those identified as children in need (Table. 9.1).

Table 9.1[13] Children In Need 2014/15: Factors identified at the end of assessment as a proportion of episodes assessed in the year – UK figures

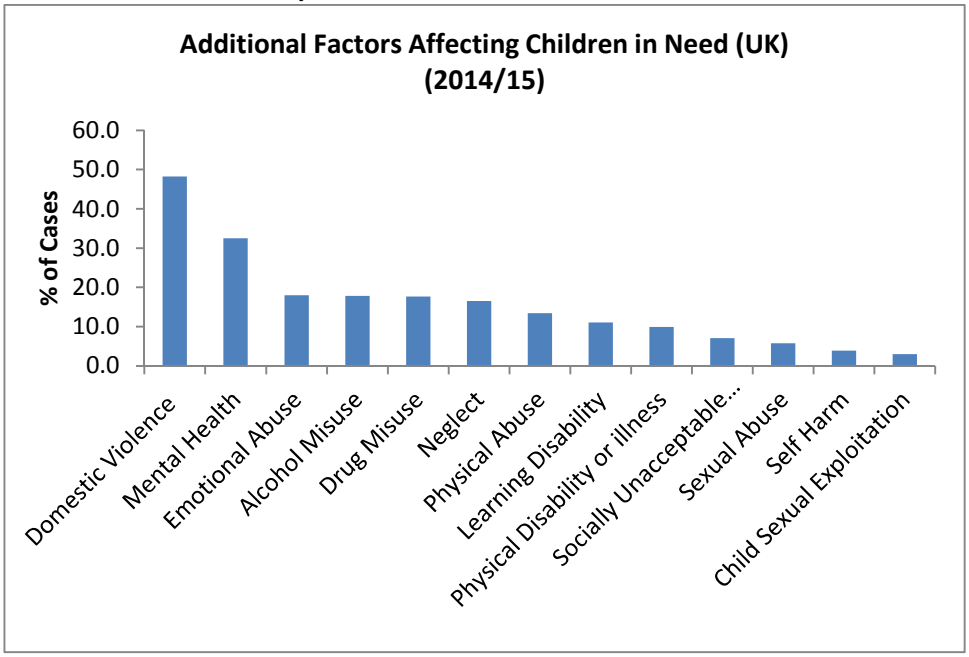
Children in Need	% of Assessed Episodes
N1 - Abuse or neglect	49.4
N2 - Child's disability or illness	10.2
N3 - Parent's disability or illness	2.8
N4 - Family in acute stress	9.2
N5 - Family dysfunction	17.9
N6 - Socially unacceptable behaviour	2.0
N7 - Low income	0.5
N8 - Absent parenting	2.6
N9 - Cases other than children in need	0.9
N0 - Not stated	4.5

Source: Department for Education 2015

- However, when issues in addition to the primary need are captured at the end of assessments, domestic abuse significantly outweighs other concerns. This data was not captured until 2014 but now usefully demonstrates this fact (Fig. 9.2).

[13] Available at https://www.gov.uk/Government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2014-to-2015

Figure 9.2[14] Children In Need 2014/15: Additional Need Identified at First Assessment



Source: Department for Education 2015

- For Birmingham, this contrast is even more stark. Whilst the rate of children in need in the population is only slightly higher than the England-wide average (>2%), the proportion of children identified to be experiencing domestic abuse is alarmingly 29 percentage points higher than England comparison and warrants further analysis (Table 9.2).

Table 9.2 - Birmingham Children in Need Characteristics

Children in Need Statistics		Birmingham	England
1	Children in Need at March 2015	9,676	391,000
	Rate of children in need at 31 March 2015 per 10,000 children	342.8	337.3
2	Number of Assessments completed by social services year ending March 2015	18,425	550,810
	Rate per 10,000 of children aged under 18 years	652.8	475.2
3	Factors identified at end of assessment ending March 2015 (Domestic Violence)	8,687 (77.2%)	197,700 (48.2%)

Source: Department for Education 2015[15]

[14] https://www.gov.uk/Government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2014-to-2015
[15] https://www.gov.uk/Government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2014-to-2015

9.2 Children witnessing domestic abuse

- Radford et al (2011) produced national prevalence estimates for the number of children witnessing domestic abuse. When applied to the Birmingham population of children and young people, it provides a picture of the potential number of children affected by domestic abuse in the City (Table 9.3).

Table 9.3 Estimated number of children in Birmingham witnessing domestic abuse

Number of children	Under 11 years	Estimated Numbers	11-17 years	Estimated Numbers	18-24 years	Estimated Numbers
	180,101		**102,130**		**134,258**	
Witnessed Domestic Violence in last 12 months	3.3%	5,943	2.9%	2,962	12.0%	16,111
Witnessed domestic violence during childhood	12.0%	21,612	18.4%	18,792	24.8%	33,296
Ever seen parent kick, choke or severely beat up other parent	3.5%	6,304	4.1%	4,187	6.0%	8,055

Source: Radford et al (2011) and Census 2011

- Data from West Midlands Police presents a picture for Birmingham where children are present, witnessing abuse, used as a shield or injured. It should be noted this data is only the first incident of reported domestic abuse recorded by the Police. It does not include repeat incidents or indeed, those not reported to the Police at all therefore the actual total numbers of children witnessing domestic abuse in the city is likely to be higher.

- The largest proportion of all domestic abuse cases reported to the Police came from Ladywood (14.8%), Hodge Hill (12.3%) and Northfield (11.7%). Sutton Coldfield had the lowest number of reported cases (829).

- Children are recorded as present in around 33% of reports and 42% of these children directly witness the abuse taking place. Hodge Hill (931) and Northfield (880) had the highest number of reported first incidents with children present. Again, Sutton Coldfield had the lowest number (238) and proportion (3.4%) of incidents of all Birmingham districts.

- Sutton Coldfield had the highest proportion of cases which reported children present *and* witnessing the incident (43.7%), followed by Yardley (43.2%) and Hall Green (43.1%).

- Ladywood had the most reported cases where a child had been used as a shield (6) or indeed injured (11) during the incident.

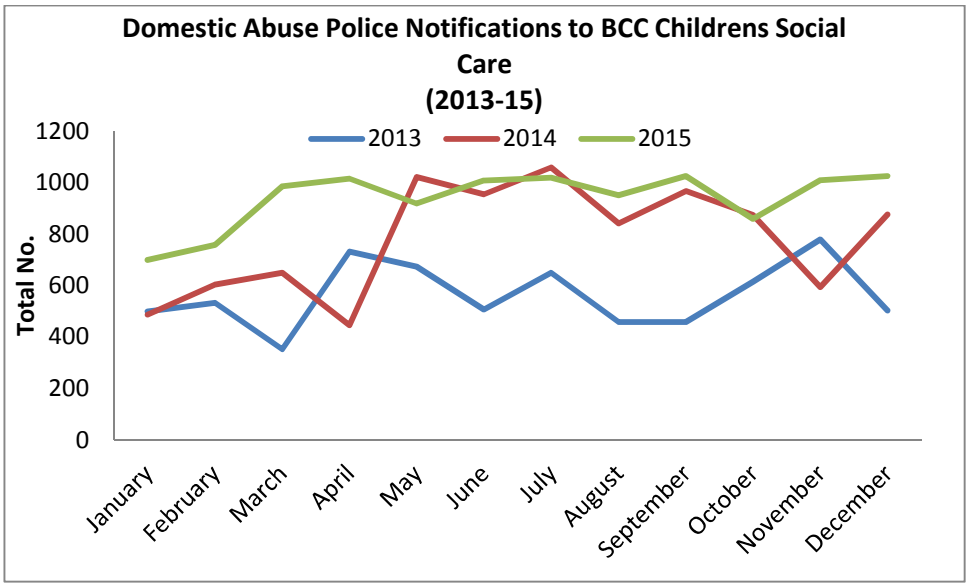
- It should be noted that witnessing individual acts of domestic abuse is perhaps not the most accurate measurement of the impact upon children of living with domestic abuse in a climate of fear, intimidation and control. These wider aspects, together with protective factors, form the basis of the assessment tool (DVRIM) used when screening children and young people exposed to abuse within Birmingham's multi-agency joint screening initiative (see section 9.3).

9.3 Joint (multi-agency) screening of children and young people exposed to domestic abuse

- During 2015, BCC received 11,276 notifications from the Police in respect of children affected by domestic abuse. These notifications were assessed with partner agencies through Multi-Agency Joint Screening.

- Figure 9.3 illustrates the growth in notifications over the past three years and reveals a 29% increase on 2014 (9,370) reflecting the increase in domestic abuse reports to the Police.

Figure 9.3 Domestic Abuse Police Notifications to BCC Children's Social Care 2013-15



Source: BCC Children's Social Care 2016

- Recent research into West Midlands Multi-Agency Joint Screening explored the use of the Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Risk identification Matrix (DVRIM) in Birmingham South (Robinson et al, 2014) [16]. The research found:

  - The majority of abusers were not living at the family home at the time of the incident.
  - The cohort (n=91) results in assessments of 30% at Scale 1 (no further action/ signposting); 34% at Scale 2 (individual agency response from Police or health); 15% at Scale 3 (child in need); 20% at Scale 4 (child protection)[17].
  - Where physical injuries to the mother had been reported, these were most likely to be attributed to Scale 3.
  - Where there were no physical injuries to mother, most likely to be attributed to Scales 1 and 2 or where the cases is already open to social care, to Scale 4.
  - There is a modest correlation between DASH and DVRIM($r=33$, $p<0.1$).
  - 79% of Scale 3 incidents also involved the arrest of the perpetrator.
  - 48% people experiencing domestic abuse supported prosecution for those charged and the higher the level, the more likely people were to support it.
  - Assessment of Scale 3 cases is generally coherent.

- This local study examined outcomes in terms of repeat calls to the Police and repeat screenings, one year on, and found:

[16] Available on-line http://www.baspcan.org.uk/files/Bell%20Maddie%20F%2033.3%20Mon%2012.00.pdf
[17] Note that the threshold descriptors used in the research appear to vary from those of the DVRIM Model.

- Repeat reports to the Police could be found across the assessed scales: 90% of Scale 1 rescreened were judged to have an increase in risk on subsequent reports; Scale 4 had the highest level of repeat reported incidents (37% with average of 7 incidents)
- Only Scale 4 involved breaches of parole, bail or non-molestation orders.
- Despite some correlation with DASH, there was little alignment with MARAC referrals: 4% of Scale 1 and 2, 15% of Scale 3 and 11% of Scale 4 were referred to MARAC.
- Perpetrator history of violence, presence of recent separation, perpetrator mental ill-health or substance misuse is good indicators of perpetrators who are likely to increase in risk over time. These factors were rescreened most frequently and not always identified earlier in the process.

- Critically, this local research found that little information was available to Joint Screening about the well-being of the child so the assessment was essentially measuring the 'child's risk by proxy to the risk to the adult experiencing domestic abuse'.

- There remain significant gaps in the research beyond the process, not least about the outcomes for children and whether children are safer because of automatic Police notifications.

9.4 Adolescent to parent violence and abuse

- Condry and Marsh (2014) undertook the first systematic analysis of large-scale official data and identified that:

  - Adolescents reported to the Police for violence against their parents were overwhelmingly male (87 %).
  - Parent victims reporting the violence were overwhelmingly female (77 %).
  - Majority of reported cases involved son-to-mother violence (67 %) and son-to-father (21 %).
  - Other cases were reported as daughter –to-mother (11 %) and daughter-to-father (under 2 %).

- APVA often involves a similar pattern of abusive behaviour such as coercion , control, violence, humiliation, threats to domestic abuse and may well be even more under-reported. As policy is new in this area, APVA is not officially documented and therefore does not appear in any public records or data sets. Although widely recognised by practitioners, there is no data available locally on APVA but a pilot programme to address APVA is currently taking place within the Youth Offending Service (2016).

10. Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence

Key Messages

- Forced marriage and honour-based violence are significantly under-reported and may be up to 35 times higher than reports currently suggest.
- Reports to the Police have featured people from 44 different countries or cultures of origin.
- Whilst the majority are female, up to 20 % are male and forced marriage involves LGBT community and people with either a physical or learning disability.
- New legislation has made forced marriage a criminal offence and strengthened organisation's responsibilities in preventing forced marriage.

10.1 Reports

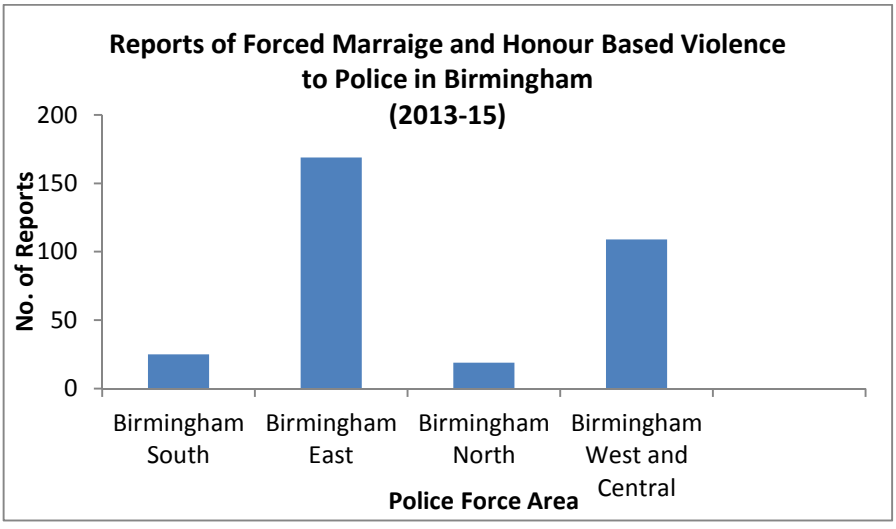
- Although crimes reported to the Police are not high, Birmingham and the West Midlands are consistently ranked either the highest or second highest area by the number of its residents contacting the Honour Network or the Forced Marriage Unit seeking help (West Midlands Police, 2015).

- Across the region, of those who report to West Midlands Police between 2013 and 2015:

  - 94 % of reports of forced marriage involve females.
  - the ages range from unborn to 58 years of age, peaking between 18 and 24.
  - 85 % of people experiencing forced marriage and honour based violence are of South Asian ethnicity.
  - reports have been received from people from 44 countries of origin.

- The largest number of reports of forced marriage and honour based violence were made to Birmingham East Police Force Area (169) and Birmingham West and Central (109). Birmingham North had the lowest number of reports (19) (Fig. 10.1).

Figure 10.1 Reports of Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence to Police in Birmingham (2013-15)



Source: West Midlands Police Forced Marriage Problem Profile 2015

- The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) report around 500 cases of honour based violence each year but believe this is 'massively unreported' and warn that the number of girls falling victim to forced marriages and honour-based violence is up to 35 times higher than reported figures suggest (Solihull MBC, 2016).

10.2 Forced Marriage Unit

- HM Government Forced Marriage Unit gave advice or support to a possible forced marriage in 1,220 cases during 2015. It also responded to approximately 350 calls per month of which calls from West Midlands ranked second in volume behind London.

- Of the total calls, the Forced Marriage Unit handled cases involving 67 'focus' countries which a person was at risk of, or had already, been taken to in connection with a forced marriage.

- Features of those linked to the Forced Marriage Unit in 2015 included:
  - 80% were female and 20% were male,
  - Where the age was known, 14% of cases involved people below the age of 16, and 27% were below the age of 18. The largest proportion of cases involved 18-25 year olds,
  - 2% of cases involved LGBT,
  - 12% of cases involved people with either a physical or learning disability.

11. Specialist Domestic Abuse Services

Key Messages:

- Since 2013, there have been gains and losses in the public funding of specialist domestic abuse services but charitable funding has increased
- Black and Minority Ethnic women are generally well represented in specialist domestic abuse services.

11.1 Changes in specialist services and responses

- Since the Needs Assessment in 2013, there have been the following changes in the provision and availability of specialist domestic abuse services.

- There have been a number of gains in relation to specialist services in Birmingham which include:

  - A specialist domestic abuse helpline for people experiencing domestic abuse, friends, family & professionals;
  - Drop-in services across the city;
  - A dedicated Independent Domestic Violence Advisor for the LGBT community;
  - Dedicated domestic abuse support for males experiencing domestic abuse;
  - Think Family specialist domestic abuse provision;
  - A primary care domestic abuse pathway;
  - Specialist workers in the MASH;
  - Police & Crime Commissioner capacity building for people experiencing domestic abuse services (2014 only);
  - Administration for Birmingham MARACs;
  - A specialist service for young women experiencing domestic abuse;
  - A specialist refuge for young women experiencing domestic abuse (from 2016);
  - Community support and awareness for women and girls (from 2016);
  - Community engagement forced marriage, honour based violence and FGM.

- At the same time there have been losses of service in the following areas:

  - Decommissioning of domestic abuse homeless prevention;
  - 50% cut in grant aid to the Women's Safety Unit;
  - Decommissioning of domestic abuse group work;
  - Decommissioning of Positive Relationships Programme in schools and youth settings.

- Table 11.1 provides a picture of throughput (demand) for services currently funded by Birmingham City Council and the Community Safety Partnership. It should be noted that service users may have used more than one service.

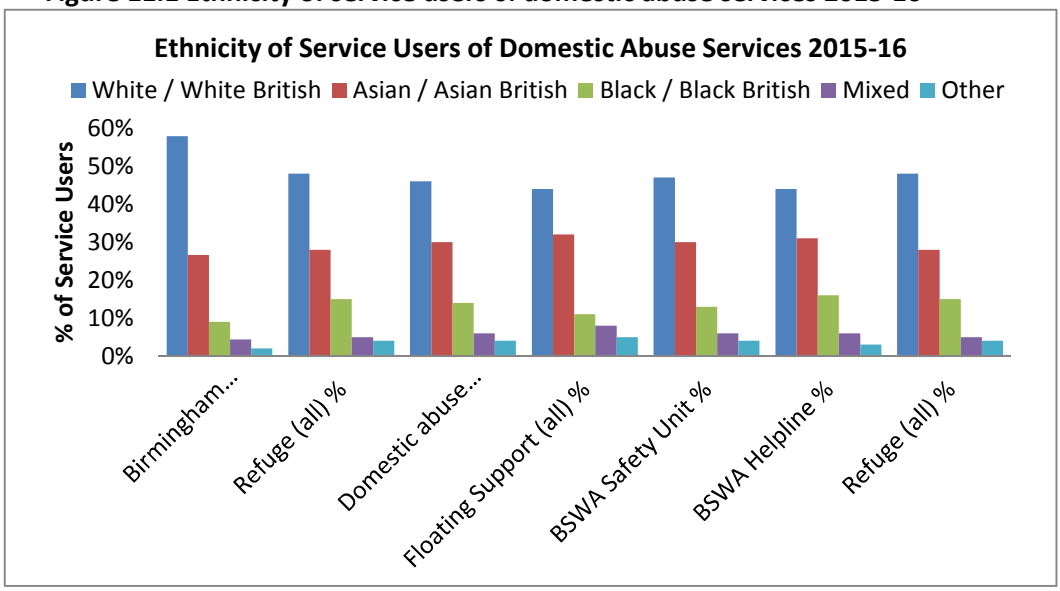
Table 11.1 DA services commissioned by Birmingham City Council and Community Safety Partnership (2015/16)

Service	Number
Think family	60
Sanctuary	78
Family support	118
IDVA	124
FGM	159
Group work	162
Floating	303
Refuge	562
Helpline	1716
Safety unit	1889
Gateway	3403

Source: BCC 2016

- Figure 11.1 illustrates the ethnicity of some of the service users accessing Birmingham City Council and the Community Safety Partnership commissioned services.

Figure 11.1 Ethnicity of service users of domestic abuse services 2015-16



Source: Birmingham City Council

- Compared to the ethnic population profile for the city:
  - Fewer White people accessed the service.
  - A higher percentage of Black/Black British people accessed the refuge service.

- Whilst the changes in provision prevent analysis of the overall changing demand for specialist services there has been a surge in referrals, particularly from the Police for MARAC support for high risk cases from September 2015.

12. Risk Management

Key Messages

- Despite a significant rise in numbers, Birmingham MARACs, with the exception of Birmingham South, are still dealing with approximately half the recommended number of high-risk cases for the size of the population.
- South Birmingham Local Policing Unit has made the most improvement, nearly doubling its numbers at MARAC and now serves close to national averages for numbers dealt with per population.
- Although still proportionately low, there has been an increase in numbers of referrals into MARAC from agencies other than Police.
- There have been no disabled people experiencing domestic abuse managed at MARAC in the last year despite their risk being anticipated to be higher than the wider population
- Referrals for LGBT have commenced following the introduction of Birmingham LGBT IDVA service

12.1 Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

- Although not on a statutory footing, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences continue to be the nationally endorsed multi-agency method for managing high risk adult domestic abuse cases. Safe Lives collects the data nationally from MARACs and sets the benchmarks for anticipated numbers and types of cases a local area might anticipate.

- In the last Needs Assessment, Birmingham was significantly under-performing in the numbers of high risk that it was managing in this way and in the low proportions of multi-agency referrals received. Table 12.1 provides the details of referrals and responses for the last financial year and shows a period of significant improvement in both the numbers of high risk case cases managed and the increased confidence of agencies other than the Police to refer high risk cases for this multi-agency consideration and management.

- Alongside the rise in reports of domestic abuse and the rise in most serious violence, seen above, on average, Birmingham's MARACs have increased their high risk cases by 36 % with Birmingham South Local Policing Unit increasing by 48 % over the past year. Birmingham South MARAC is now performing, in respect of capacity, close to the national average, but other Birmingham MARACs are still below capacity for their population size.

- A number of factors stand out in respect of diversity of Birmingham's identified high risk cases:

  - 60 % of Birmingham West and Central MARAC cases are Black and minority ethnic victims.
  - Disabled people experiencing domestic abuse have not featured in the high risk cases. Further analysis is needed of how the risk to disabled people experiencing domestic abuse is being managed through adult safeguarding arrangements and how these methods of multi-agency public protection are working together.
  - Research identifies high levels of domestic abuse for the LGBT community and particularly notes the high levels of risk involved in male on male violence and abuse (Donovan, 2006; Scottish Transgender Alliance, 2011). It is therefore reassuring to see that referrals for LGBT victims of domestic abuse facing high risk have increased to Birmingham MARACs following the introduction of Birmingham LGBT's independent domestic violence advocacy service.

Table 12.1 Birmingham MARACs, April 2015-March 2016

Indicator	National figure	Most similar force group	SafeLives recomm.	West Midlands Police Force	B'ham North and East	B'ham South	B'ham West and Central
Number of MARACs	282	31	-	9	1	1	1
Cases discussed	81,764	14,547	-	3,291	416	387	183
Recommended cases	98,510	14,880	-	4,390	820	500	340
Cases per 10,000 population	33	39	40	30	20	31	21
Children in household	103,404	19,281	-	4,423	520	502	242
Year on year change in cases	5%	6%	-	2%	24%	49%	34%
Repeat cases	25%	29%	28% - 40%	29%	17%	14%	13%
Police referrals	64%	70%	60% - 75%	84%	84%	90%	77%
Referrals from partner agencies	36%	30%	25% - 40%	16%	16%	10%	23%
BME	15%	16%	33%	27%	33%	26%	60%
LGBT	1%	1%	5%+	1%	1%	0%	1%
Disability	4%	4%	17%+	1%	0%	0%	0%
Males	5%	4%	4% - 10%	3%	3%	6%	4%
Victims aged 16-17	1,351	263	-	48	10	5	5
Cases where victims aged 16-17	2%	2%	-	2%	2%	1%	3%

Source: SafeLives Online 2016

- A multi-agency MARAC Operational Group has recently been established under the Community Safety Partnership to oversee the development of each of Birmingham's MARACs in line with national standards and expectations.

13. Domestic Homicide

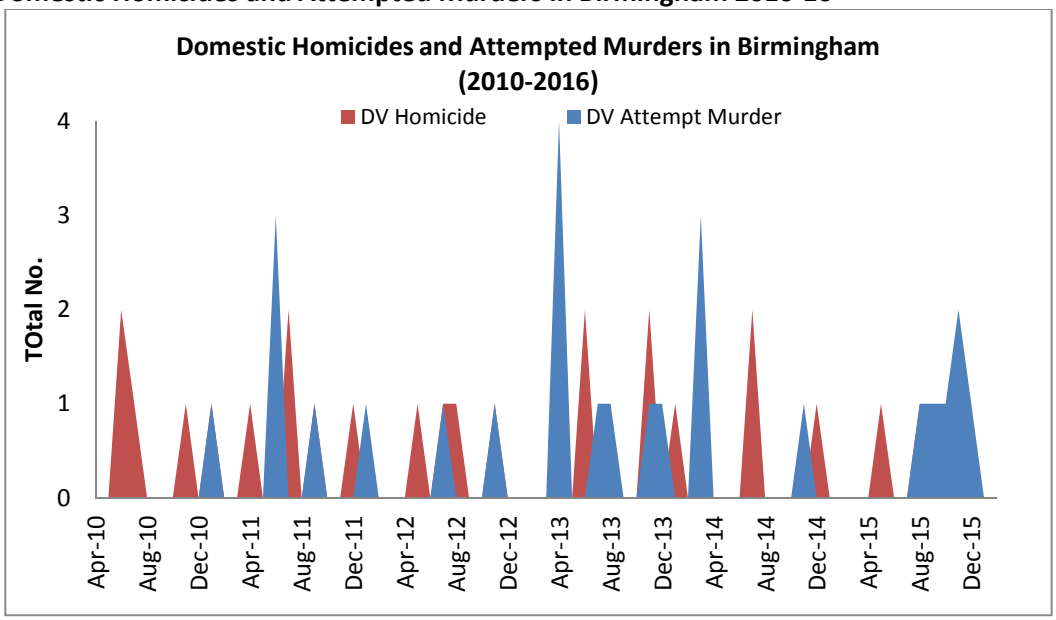
Key Messages

- Between 3 and 6 people experiencing domestic abuse are killed each year and 91% are female.
- More than 70% of domestic homicides occur when people try to end their violent relationship or seeking help.
- 84% of people experiencing domestic abuse had previously reported domestic abuse to the Police.
- Findings consistently show that a cultural change is needed in our organisations to address domestic abuse more effectively. This cultural change requires:
  - An understanding that domestic abuse is more than a series of physical assaults but a pattern of coercion and control which profoundly impacts on families and organisation's ability to engage with them.
  - That insufficient attention is given by agencies, particularly in respect of child safeguarding and mental

13.1 Domestic homicide and attempted murder

- Over the last ten years, the number of domestic homicides has ranged between 3 and 6 per year with an average of 4 in recent years. However, the range of attempted murders has been broader and also provides continued cause for concern (Fig. 13.1).

Figure 13.1 Domestic Homicides and Attempted Murders in Birmingham 2010-16



Source: West Midlands Police (2016)

- Since 2011, Birmingham has seen 0.041 domestic homicides per 100,000 population – the second lowest rate of domestic homicides of all core cities[18]. Liverpool has the highest rate of domestic homicides at 0.057 per 100,000 population.

13.2 Domestic Homicide Reviews

- Since 2011, local Community Safety Partnerships have been required to undertake a Domestic Homicide Review where a death in their area has been caused by domestic abuse. Birmingham

[18] Data for Sheffield, Newcastle and Glasgow unavailable at time of writing

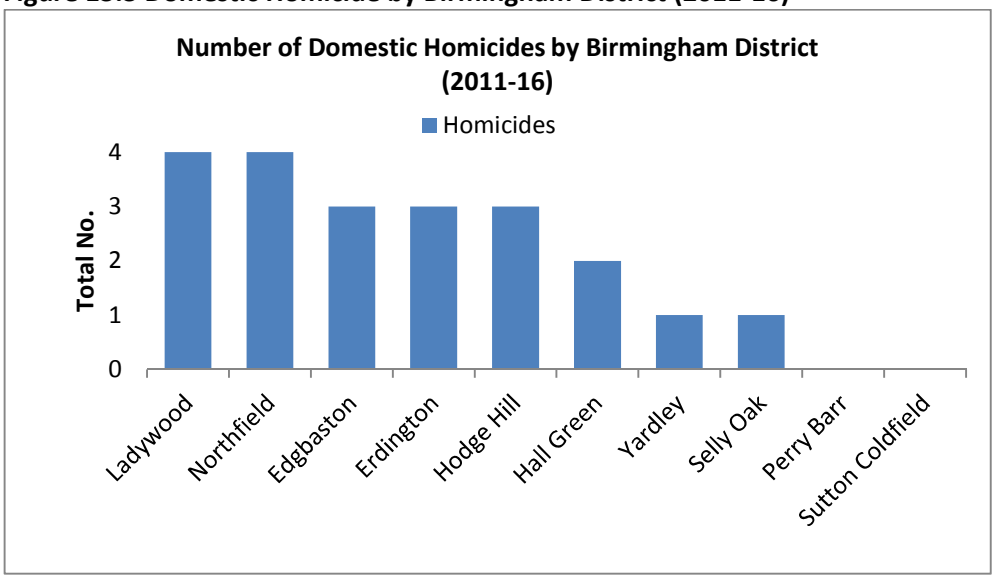
has been involved in 21 such reviews over this period and by virtue of its size, undertakes the largest number of reviews of any single area in the country.

- Of the 21 reviews, 86% (18) have involved domestic violence and abuse from an intimate partner, with the remaining 3 reviews involving intergenerational violence where the abuser, or alleged abuser, was experiencing mental ill-health.

- The ending of the relationship was a factor in 70% of the domestic abuse cases and 84% of these victims had reported to the Police previously.

- The most domestic homicides took place in Ladywood (4) and Northfield (4). There have been no domestic homicides in Perry Barr and Sutton Coldfield (Fig. 13.3).

Figure 13.3 Domestic Homicide by Birmingham District (2011-16)



Source: Birmingham City Council (2015)

13.3 Features of domestic homicides

- The homicide victims attributes have included:

  - 91% (19) of victims are female;
  - 38% (8) of victims are from black and minority ethnic communities (compared to 42% of the wider population);
  - Children have been bereaved through loss of a parent (mother) in 57% (12) cases and a baby has been killed alongside his mother in one case;
  - Adult victim's ages range from 22 to 72 with an average age of 42. Most victims were aged between 20 – 30 years of age.

- Abuser attributes included:

  - 95 % (20) were male;
  - 71 % (15) have known mental health problems;
  - 43 % (9) have substance misuse problems;
  - 38 % (8) are from black or minority ethnic communities.

13.4 Common themes

- The following common themes have emerged from Domestic Homicide Reviews in Birmingham:

13.4.1 Archetypal patterns of abuse demonstrated

- The threat of death or serious injury significantly increases when a victim tries to leave or end a violent relationship.
- Domestic violence involves sexual violence and coercion: continuous pregnancies from a young age could in some instances alert professionals to potential abuse.
- Domestic violence often starts or gets worse during pregnancy: a number of our reviews have revealed serious violence during pregnancy.
- Without effective intervention, domestic violence escalates.
- People experiencing domestic abuse seek immediate help from the Police and will often later retract their statements.
- Domestic violence abusers make counter allegations and minimise the abuse.
- Abusers often repeat their pattern of behaviour with subsequent people experiencing domestic abuse so it is all the more important to be aware of their offending history.
- People experiencing domestic abuse are judged poorly if they fail to end a violent relationship but may be struggling to keep the abuser away and fearful of doing so.
- Mothers are often held responsible for keeping themselves and their children safe, even where they are unable to in some situations.

13.4.2 Understanding the nature of domestic violence and abuse

- The majority of reviews have identified a lack of awareness and appreciation of the nature of domestic violence and abuse. Whilst the prevalence of domestic violence and the harm it causes children is now more widely appreciated, there remains insufficient understanding amongst professionals about the reality of coercive control and impact that domestic violence has upon victims and how their safety can be best protected.

- This is most evident, but not exclusively, within the context of child protection. Without such awareness, there is a danger that the risk and harm to victims and their children may be increased by professional actions rather than decreased.

13.4.3 Identifying risk

- The vast majority (88 %) of domestic violence homicides in Birmingham had been reported to the Police beforehand but few had been assessed as being at high risk of harm. It has been common for the offender's prior history of violent offending not to have been checked and common for agencies not to be sharing the information that they do know. There have also been instances when the perpetrator's threats to kill have not been taken sufficiently seriously.

13.4.4 Early help and Intervention

- Evidence of the nature of domestic violence highlights that when left unchecked and without intervention, the scale and severity of the harm that abusers inflict on people experiencing domestic abuse and children will normally increase. It follows that the earlier agencies engage, and provide safe options for people experiencing domestic abuse and children, the better.

- The reviews are identifying places that have not traditionally been referral points for domestic violence victims, such as primary care and hospital emergency departments, recognising that these are environments that victims frequently use and already trust.

13.5 Invisibility of abusers

- The reviews have revealed that more needs to be done to monitor and manage abusers who present the risk to families whether this be to protect children or to more effectively manage perpetrators inside and outside the criminal justice system.

- Whilst the numbers of homicides remain thankfully too low to form any statistically relevant conclusions in themselves, many of the issues revealed during the course of the Domestic Homicide Reviews are akin to the concerns raised by specialist domestic violence sector and resonate with the body of research evidence available. Nonetheless generalisations from the following features of the homicide reviews should be done with caution.

14. Conclusion

Overall conclusions are listed below:

- Prevalence of domestic abuse and demand for services are increasing whilst resources are shrinking.
- Domestic abuse has an adverse impact on children and young people who are exposed to it and features in the vast majority of child safeguarding and child protection..
- It is a complex and challenging social problem, with responsibility dispersed across agencies, places costly demands on public services and has overlapping governance arrangements.
- People experiencing domestic abuse often present with health professionals in primary and secondary care with symptoms resulting from domestic abuse including mental health problems and injuries. There is growing evidence of effective interventions in primary care through IRIS.
- Holding abusers to account and requiring them to change their behaviour is fundamental to addressing domestic abuse.
- The period of pregnancy and early childhood is a key focus of concern due to its importance in shaping future development and because it can be a time of high risk. Relevant agencies should be encouraged to input into a broader joint domestic abuse data set for Birmingham.
- In addition to pregnancy and early childhood, the following areas are identified as requiring further investigation:
  - Repeat victimisation in the context of welfare reform and changes to social housing
  - Older adult and disabled people who are under-represented in domestic abuse services
  - Domestic abuse amongst the LGBT community
  - Adolescent to parent abuse
  - Forced marriage and honour based violence
  - Experiences of domestic abuse amongst newly arrived communities and for those subject to 'No Recourse to Public Funds'
- Domestic Homicide Reviews have revealed that there is a need for a cultural change in how agencies approach domestic abuse and a better understanding of coercion and control is needed to enable an effective response
- Updates to the document are required to further inform the commissioning process due to commence this year.

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Appendix A

A1: Capping Violent Crime

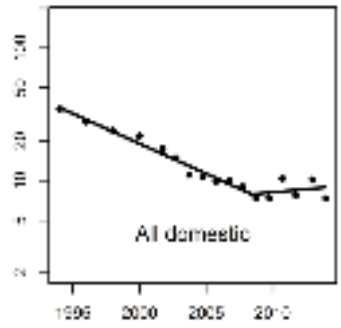
- Walby et al (2015) have identified that domestic abuse crimes unlike other forms of violent crime, are characterised by repeated victimisation. It is common practice in statistical analysis to remove incidents which are outside of the normal range of data ('outliers'). In the case of violent crime, the Crime Survey therefore puts a cap on the data results to remove any incidents over the range of 5 incidents in a 12 month period.

- Whilst capping is a widely used statistical technique designed to reduce year-to-year volatility when examining change over time, this method can introduce significant bias. In the case of domestic abuse, capping unusually distorts the outcomes, as a proportion of high-frequency victims will experience many more incidents of abuse than the given range.

- Removing this 'cap' and accurately including all responses to the survey, including high frequency victims, reveals that the rate of violent crime has actually been increasing since 2009 driven by the increase in violent crime against women (Walby et al., 2015).[19]

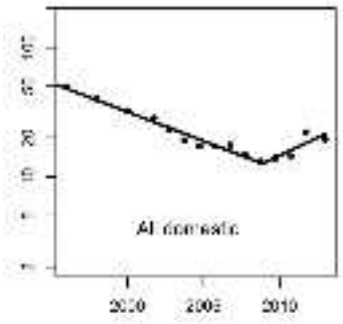
- Figures A1 and A2 demonstrate the difference for domestic violence crimes with and without the upper 'cap' in the Crime Survey for the period 1994 to 2013/14.

Figure A1 Domestic Violence Crimes Capped at 5 incidents per year (1994-2013/14)



Source: Walby et al (2014)

Figure A2 Domestic Violence Crimes With no cap (1994-2013/14)

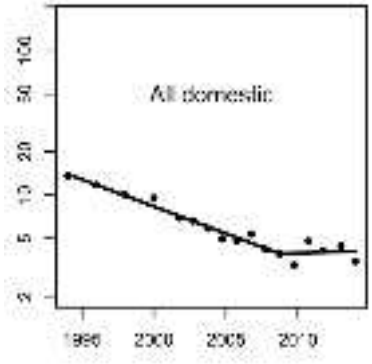


Source: Walby et al (2014)

- As well as the number of crimes increasing, Walby shows, in Figure A3, that the number of people experiencing domestic abuse also began to increase in 2009 for the first time since 1994.

[19] This peer-reviewed research by Professor Sylvia Walby, Dr Jude Towers and Professor Brian Francis of Lancaster University was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) grant number ES/K002899/1. The open access journal article is published in the *British Journal of Criminology:* http://bjc.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/12/31/bjc.azv131.full.pdf+html

Figure A3 Rate of people experiencing domestic abuse per 1000 population (with cap removed) 1994-2013/14



Source: Walby et al (2014)

A2: British Crime Survey

- Beyond the under-estimation of domestic abuse identified above, the Crime Survey has a number of significant shortcomings particularly in relation to gender and age.

- The Needs Assessment (2013) identified the Scottish Executive's conclusions that the Crime Survey both over-estimated and distorted the male experience of domestic abuse in so far as aspects of relationship discord which did not result in fear or harm were nonetheless recorded (Gadd et al, 2002).

- Since the Scottish Executive research, it has been common practice for analysts to modify the Crime Survey in respect of male experiences of domestic abuse to highlight those subjected to repeated victimisation (one or more) by the same partner (21%) and those subjected to four or more physical assaults (11%).

- The Crime Survey only samples the population within the 16-59 age range. The 2013 Needs Assessment identified the absence of reliable data in respect of violence and abuse in young people's relationships (although attitudinal surveys have been conducted) and the estimated prevalence of domestic abuse in the older population. Research has not developed in these areas in the intervening years.