

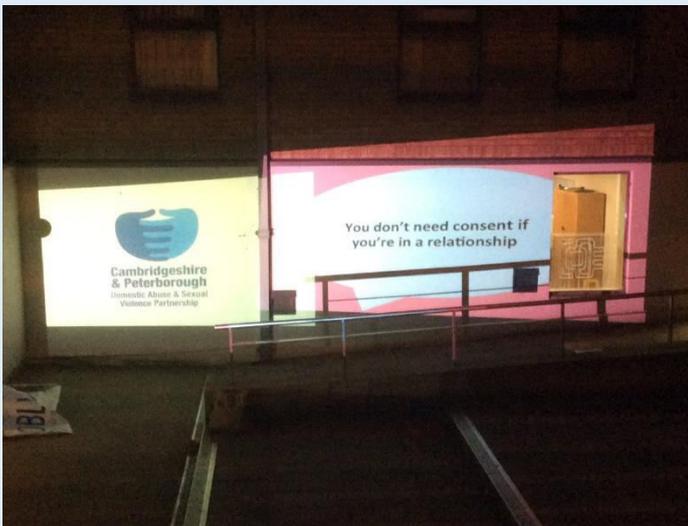


Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Newsletter
A monthly newsletter brought to you by the
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Partnership

February 2020

We were ecstatic this month to find out that a further bid we made to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has been successful and we will be able to continue with some of the great projects that have been running in Cambs and Peterborough. More information about the funding can be found at this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/housing-secretary-confirms-new-support-for-survivors-of-domestic-violence>

On a freezing cold night at the beginning of February we gathered outside Anglia Ruskin University, along with colleagues from Cambridge Rape Crisis and The Elms SARC, to Light up the Dark for Sexual Violence Awareness Week. We were joined by ITV Anglia News who interviewed Norah Al Ani about the importance of highlighting myths about sexual violence and assault. We were also joined by Oblique Arts who provided a light projection of myths and members of the ARU Student Union and the Wellbeing Team.



We also featured on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire at the end of the week talking about local support services and stigma around male victims. Thank you to everyone who re-posted the campaign on social media.

Next month it's International Women's Day (8th March) and we will be putting our own twist on this year's theme of 'Each is Equal' by highlighting the gendered statistics of domestic abuse.

Julia Cullum
Partnership Manager



Recovering Together and Caring Dads

Unfortunately, we will no longer be running the Caring Dads and Recovering Together Domestic Abuse programmes in Cambridgeshire. Early Help will continue to deliver the RISE programme and will continue to develop capacity to deliver this, to ensure that there is sufficient coverage across the county.

We are also planning to develop a network of champions who have been trained to deliver either the Caring Dads or Recovering Together programmes to support other staff working with families experiencing domestic abuse. This will be achieved through the Early Help Development Days and also within teams. The champions will be supported and developed through the DASV champions network, facilitated by the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership.

Operation to tackle FGM and forced marriage honored at awards

Female Genital Mutilation is an important issue within our societies, therefore it is up to us as professionals to be aware, promote awareness and use our professional curiosity and confidence to prevent this practice from occurring.

A joint collaboration between the police and Border Force has been praised at the World Class Policing Awards.

A police led initiative called: Operation Limelight, is carried out during the summer holidays over a short period of time. Whereby passengers travelling between the UK and FGM-Prevalent countries have extra attention.

Limelight is a coordinated multi-agency operation, carried out over a short period, normally the summer holidays; titled 'The Cutting Season' the rudimentary term highlights the importance of the matter. Young girls and women are often taken abroad over the summer holidays for FGM. The focus is placed on passengers travelling between the UK and FGM-prevalent countries. Health care professionals, social workers, NGO's, port officials are also a part of this initiative.

Families, groups and accompanied women and girls are taken to one side, in order to speak to them about their trip. Baggage checks are conducted, and to look for articles linked with FGM.

The questioning is conducted in a sensitive manner, by trained personnel and NGO's. Therefore, engaging with the passengers and raising awareness, the hope is that Limelight will help prevent future acts of FGM taking place. Advice and support is available to any victims who make a disclosure at the time.

This is a highly sensitive and difficult safeguarding matter; all professionals play a huge role in tackling, preventing and raising awareness about FGM.

Family Safeguarding Project starts in Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire County Council is introducing a new approach to keeping children and families safely together by supporting parents to change their behaviour.

Cambridgeshire County Council secured a £4.15million investment from the Department for Education (DfE) for the implementation of Family Safeguarding from today (10 February).

Most children who are facing the greatest risks to their wellbeing are those who live in families where at least one of the adults is struggling with mental or emotional health issues, substance or alcohol difficulties, or where there is domestic abuse.

Family Safeguarding improves outcomes for vulnerable children and young people by expanding children's social work teams to include adult practitioners who are skilled at supporting adults to address mental and emotional health issues, substance or alcohol difficulties or domestic abuse. It builds on work which has been underway in Peterborough for the last two years. Initially developed in Hertfordshire, the model has resulted in significantly better outcomes for some of the most vulnerable and at risk children.

Families in Peterborough have welcomed the approach which has been in place for two years, saying that the support that they have been offered has been much better at helping them to address their challenges and make positive changes – and it has been instrumental in keeping more children living safely with their own families in the city.

We are pleased to be working with a number of experienced and committed delivery partners who will employ the adult practitioners based in the Family Safeguarding teams. These are Barnardo's, cgl (change, grow, live), Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) and Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Probation (BeNCH).

Councillor Simon Bywater, Chairman of Cambridgeshire County Council's Children and Young People's Committee said: "The introduction of Family Safeguarding will make a real difference to the lives of our most vulnerable children and mean that – when it is in their best interests – that more children can stay safely at home. We know that this approach will work as it has been successfully rolled out in neighbouring Peterborough and will put children's services in Cambridgeshire at the forefront of innovation and best practice."

Isabelle Trowler, the UK's Chief Social Worker for Children and Families, said "Family Safeguarding is proven to keep more children living safely at home with their families, and I'm delighted to see Cambridgeshire is taking a leading role in supporting the Government's nationwide rollout of this innovative approach to delivering children's social care."

Nurse speaks out about her own experiences of domestic abuse

A nurse from Norwich, who experienced over a decade of domestic abuse, is urging healthcare professionals to have more conversations about the issue to help others in similar situations to come forward.

Kathryn Lake, 38, qualified last year and now works as a community mental health nurse at Julian Hospital at Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust.

As many people who experience domestic abuse develop mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders and self-harm, Ms Lake is now regularly supporting those going through similar experiences to hers.

In particular, Ms Lake is keen to break down the barrier that sometimes exists between service users and healthcare professionals.

People who experience domestic abuse do not always know who to trust, because they are worried about repercussions if their abuser found out they have disclosed, Ms Lake told *Nursing Times*.

From her own experience, victims may avoid the topic or deflect from it when they are asked questions by healthcare professionals.

She said: "I would answer the question but not give enough away, I'd miss appointments and I think the missed appointments is a [sign], especially if they're pregnant or they've got young children.

"Or if there are things that they're trying to conceal, like bruises. In sexual abuse [cases], the perpetrator wants you to heal, or have it not be so obvious before they make contact with somebody else."

Often victims of domestic abuse will only disclose once to a trusted professional, and if they do not get enough support they will be reluctant to do so again.

Ms Lake advised: "If someone makes that disclosure, you don't necessarily have to say anything, just listen.

"Take it all on board explain to the patient that you're being honest with them, say that it must be really hard to disclose and then seek advice.

Ms Lake described how when she left her situation she had no identification and, therefore, no way to prove she was who she said she was – it was as though she has lost her identity completely.

Now she advises people to be prepared and make sure they keep a copy of their ID somewhere safe, just in case they need to leave in a hurry.

Full story in the Nursing Times <https://www.nursingtimes.net/news/nurse-survivor-of-domestic-abuse-on-a-mission-to-break-taboo-16-12-2019/>

Violence in Young People's relationships studied in Wales

Cardiff University researchers who questioned 75,000 11 to 16-year-olds about their experiences of violence in their own relationships found that 17% of boys (3,369) and 12% of girls (2,469) said they had experienced physical violence by a romantic partner at least once. The study also found that the problem affects boys and girls from all socio-economic backgrounds, although there were higher rates of exposure among children not living with both parents.

Graham Moore, deputy leader of Cardiff University's school health research network, said long-term consequences of violence in young people's dating relationships had not been well researched until now.

He said there was no reason to believe exposure to violence within romantic relationships would be different from exposure to other violence in adolescence and could mean there were some "potentially profound consequences".

Read more at this link <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/amp/uk-wales-50390689>

Evidence based DA prosecutions report

An inspection report has concluded that that neither the police nor the CPS can distinguish those domestic abuse cases where an evidence led approach may be more effective. This is because there are no systems to flag relevant cases – those that are suitable to be built by the police and prosecuted by the CPS – as evidence led. The CPS's *Domestic abuse guidelines for prosecutors*¹ make it clear that all cases of domestic abuse should have an evidence led approach and that the starting point should be to build cases in which the prosecution does not need to rely on the victim.

The report, which can be found at the link below, makes a number of recommendations around training and strategies.

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/01/Joint-Inspection-Evidence-Led-Domestic-Abuse-Jan19-rpt.pdf>

New research into sexual violence towards older women

Four rape and sexual abuse charities, the South West Rape Crisis Centre Partnership, have identified a chilling silence and invisibility around sexual violence against older women in the South West of England. The charities have published their findings on a survey and research they undertook to gather information on sexual violence experienced by local women, at any time in their life, who are now aged 55 and over. The charities have made recommendations on how local police forces, local authorities, local aged care and statutory organisations can help affected older women in the region.

Claire Bloor, CEO of Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support (SARSAS) said,

'We have calculated there are approximately 176,000 older women living in the South West who have experienced sexual violence at some point in their life. Only 10% of users of the Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Centres in Cornwall, Devon, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Avon are over the

age of 55. We know this should be higher. We are concerned that there are older survivors or victims of sexual violence hidden in plain sight in our cities, towns and villages.

'Sexual violence against older women can and does occur in many places including their own homes and in residential, care and nursing homes. 'Older women are less likely to speak openly about past and present sexual and domestic violence including child sexual abuse. Reasons for this include a legacy of old societal norms such as the stigma of shame, dependency on their abuser for daily care and fear that disclosure may be misinterpreted as part of dementia.

'It is hard not to conclude that we live in a society that is willing to ignore and turn away from older women who are victims or survivors of sexual violence in the same way that we once ignored and turned away from the victims or survivors of child sexual abuse.'

The charities are calling on local organisations to identify new ways to make sexual violence services more accessible to older women and to introduce new guidelines to enable aged care and organisations to better understand the needs of older women disclosing sexual violence.

The report makes the following recommendations:

- The term 'elder abuse' is no longer used to describe sexual violence by national and local aged care and statutory organisations working in the South West of England. The correct terminology should be sexual violence, rape, sexual assault or sexual abuse.
- New research on sexual violence against older women is commissioned in the South West and nationally covering (but not limited to): women living in social care settings, impact and coping strategies, the experiences, prevalence and impact of sexual violence within minority communities, women living with dementia, women with disabilities, the impact of the menopause.
- An appropriate support and service delivery model for older women who are victims or survivors of sexual violence should be funded by statutory bodies, developed and implemented in the South West of England.
- Clear referral pathways and access to advice is developed for professionals including GPs in order to improve support provisions for older survivors and victims.
- Across the South West, all appropriate organisations including Police Forces and Local Authorities, review their older people and sexual violence and rape strategies to ensure older women are actively included and reflected in their work and campaigns. These organisations need to proactively challenge ageism and the still prevalent cultural beliefs and myths surrounding older women as victims or survivors of sexual violence.
- National and local aged care and statutory organisations working in the South West of England review their guidelines in order to improve their support for older women disclosing sexual violence. Aged care sector staff are trained on signs and symptoms in older women relating to sexual violence.

Controlling or Coercive Behaviour in a Family Relationship

Controlling or Coercive Behaviour by a partner, ex-partner or family member is already recognised as domestic abuse, and is an offence under section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015. But section 76 contains two exclusions which leave certain victims unprotected by the criminal law, namely, anyone being abused by a family member or ex-partner who is not living with them.

The need to plug this gap in the law is illustrated by the account of the survivor “Jane” at <https://1drv.ms/w/s!AjFFwRKmCPBigtAQCJGmoQGp4NGp4g>. “Jane’s” abuse lasted 22 years, only ending with the death of her sister. Several safeguarding alerts were raised with Social Services by concerned friends and local charities, but fear induced by coercion inhibited her from discussing the reality of her degrading situation, to which she had become thoroughly habituated. The Office of the Public Guardian also declined to intervene. Without any possibility of a ‘victimless’ domestic abuse prosecution, the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005 were both effectively powerless to safeguard this lady.

There is no other suitable offence for tackling this kind of abuse. It is not in general covered by offences of stalking or harassment. Elderly or disabled people who live alone, but are dependant in some way on a relative, are particularly vulnerable to exactly the same kind of controlling or coercive behaviour – and in particular economic abuse - as can be perpetrated by relatives living at the same address. It is the relationship of dependency, rather than their living arrangements, which enables control and coercion not only to take place but also to lie hidden from the authorities.

Jane’s story shows that this kind of abuse need not resemble stalking or harassment any more than does controlling or coercive behaviour between partners, or between relatives/ex-partners who live together.

The case for change is explained more fully in a joint submission by Shaping Our Lives and Andrew Todd to the Joint Select Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill 2017-2019 (at <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/human-rights-committee/legislative-scrutiny-draft-domestic-abuse-bill/written/97763.pdf>):

"Action on Elder Abuse found that over 50% of financial abuse reported to them is carried out by adult children. They said, 'elder abuse within older people’s own homes ... often perpetrated by members of their own family ... is the hidden abuse of UK society'.

Shaping Our Lives advised in relation to disabled victims, 'caring relationships provide additional opportunities for perpetrators to abuse and coercively control. The perpetrator can coercively control the disabled person by withholding essential support such as food, medication or prevent them going out independently. This type of abuse can be done by a family member wherever they live and this type of coercive control would not be easily recognised by the legislation around stalking'.

Advice to government from a policing expert said, 'there is a gap where harassment and stalking legislation does not explicitly cover behaviour within the context of a familial relationship'."

The time has now come for this kind of abuse to be recognised by the criminal law for what it is, namely controlling or coercive behaviour in a family relationship.

Perpetrator programme drives call for change of approach

A pilot scheme working with perpetrators of domestic abuse has published results which have led for a number of agencies to call for the Government to invest in services for perpetrators.

The Drive Project worked with 506 prolific domestic violence perpetrators, aged 17 to 81, in Essex, West Sussex and south Wales from 2016 to 2019 and involved one-to-one counselling sessions with offenders - most of whom were white men while nearly half were involved in ongoing legal proceedings in the criminal or civil courts. They were given help on building relationships, controlling their impulses and developing empathy and understanding of the impact of abuse.

The University of Bristol analysed results from the project in what it said was the "largest evaluation" of perpetrator intervention to be carried out in the UK.

It found that Drive had led to a drop in incidents of abuse to a "greater degree" than in cases where only victims were given help, with improvements sustained for more than 12 months after the scheme ended.

Police data for one sample of perpetrators showed domestic abuse offending had reduced by 30% in the six months after the scheme compared to the six months before.

A control group, made up of offenders who had not taken part in the project, were reported to be committing crimes at the same rate as before.

The Home Office said future legislation would promote perpetrator programmes.

An Invitation to Celebrate Peterborough Together!

In March 2018, the Government announced Peterborough as one of its five Local Integration Areas. Peterborough City Council, its Partners and its local people have made great progress since then in developing plans and activities to support stronger and more integrated local communities.

The Peterborough City Council Integration Team are hosting an event on **Tuesday 17th March from 4-7 pm at the Reception Room in the Town Hall** to bring people together and to celebrate some of the amazing achievements of residents and groups in Peterborough to date. This will include the work of the Ask Me domestic abuse ambassador project run by Cambridge Women's Aid.

There will be entertainment from the **Lithuanian choir Motyva**, **Latvian dance groups Rakstā** and **Virpulis** and **Roma dance group Cerchena**, and an opportunity to contribute to some Integration Artwork, and speak with people about their personal experiences of integration in the city.

Why TV needs to take rape more seriously

Marie Claire have highlighted an important topic by Lizzie Denning, which has been summarised below.

One of the most painful experiences for a victim or survivor of sexual violence is switching on the TV and watching something which reminds you of an experience you want to or have healed from. It can leave you feeling a mixture of emotions and feeling alone.

There is evidence which suggests that dramas and soaps on sexual violence do impact the way survivors reach out for support. The Rape Crisis helpline experienced a huge 132% increase in calls after Broadchurch's sexual assault plot – when a helpline number was included. Some programs do handle this sensitively and accurately and provide the appropriate contact information. There are suggestions that helpline numbers should be provided before and after any show.

Campaigners have also suggested:

1. To always use information cards across programs, drama, documentaries as well as live TV and radio
2. To provide support with all types of abuse and violence
3. To provide a 'warning' with support information before the program and after
4. Repeat information in all formats. Provide a warning with support info till the end
5. Provide training and internal guidelines
6. Update often. Keep up to date with research and legal changes, and update support information at least every 3 years
7. Obtain feedback. Involve survivors, survivor-led organisations and support agencies in evaluating the appropriateness and impact of the support information provided

FREE TRAINING: Complicated Matters: The Links Between Experiences of Domestic & Sexual Violence, Substance Use and Mental Ill-health (CPD Accredited)

Domestic and sexual violence, substance use and mental ill-health are three issues which often co-exist. And when they do, things can become complicated. This training is designed to 'uncomplicate' matters by raising awareness about how the three issues intersect and offer effective ways to engage with individuals and families who are affected by these issues.

The training is offered by Against Violence and Abuse and takes place in London on 26th May 2020.

For more information and to apply for a place https://avaproject.org.uk/events/complicated-matters-the-links-between-experiences-of-domestic-sexual-violence-substance-use-and-mental-ill-health-cpd-accredited-3/?mc_cid=04089b89bc&mc_eid=273e6b246c

Increase in women murdered by partner or ex

The number of women killed by a partner or ex has risen by almost a third in just one year, new figures show.

Data published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show 80 women were killed by a current or ex-partner between April 2018 and March 2019 – a 27 per cent increase on the year before.

The number of female victims of overall homicides in England and Wales rose by 10 per cent in the year up to March 2019 – the highest number for 13 years.

Almost half of these female victims were killed in a domestic homicide – with the suspect being a partner or ex-partner in 38 per cent of cases and this was an increase of 12 homicides compared with the previous year. In contrast, 8% of male victims were victims of domestic homicide (30) in the latest year. This was an increase of six homicides compared with the previous year.

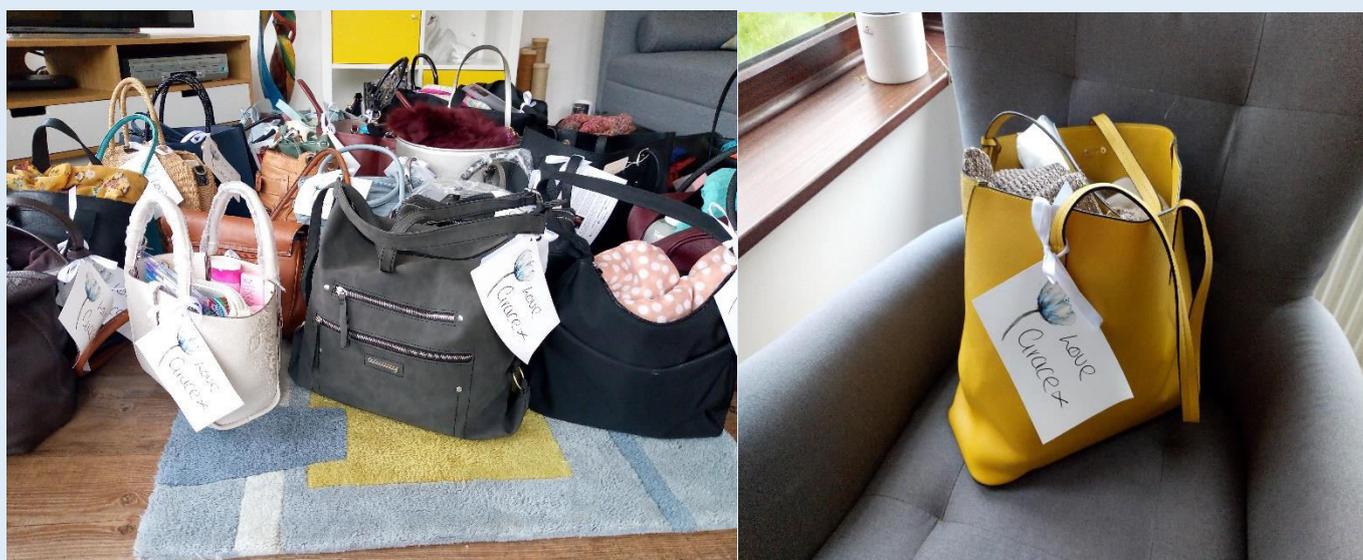
In regards to convictions for homicide, 229 men were convicted compared to 21 women in the year ending March 2019.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/homicideinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2019#main-points>

Love Grace campaign

The family of Grace Millane who was murdered in New Zealand have set up a charity to support victims of domestic abuse by providing them with handbags filled with toiletries and we were really grateful to collect some of the bags for Cambridgeshire. The first lot were collected by Refuge (photo below) and will be distributed to women using their services in Fenland, Huntingdon and Peterborough

We are looking at setting up a collection scheme for the bags in Cambridgeshire but will need drop-off points with enough space to store them and potentially volunteers to quality control what is donated – if you think you can help then contact Amanda.Warburton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk





You are invited to celebrate the Ask Me Community Ambassador scheme!

We've held **5 courses** and trained almost **50 Community Ambassadors** in Peterborough over the last year, and the Ask Me project is now coming to an end. We would like to celebrate the amazing work that Ambassadors have done within the community!

We're inviting Community Ambassadors to come along to see their impact and meet wider community organisations making a difference in Peterborough. This will be a networking event to create new opportunities for ambassadors and local organisations to link and support each other's work in the Peterborough community. Free lunch provided!

When:

Monday 23rd March
11am-1pm

Where:

Allia Future Business Centre
(near the Football Club)

Please RSVP to sophie@cambridgewa.org.uk

Cambridge women's aid
Supporting women & children since 1977