

We hope you find this pack useful

In it you will find information about the Domestic Violence and Abuse Delivery Group – a multi-agency group that is working to reduce and eliminate domestic abuse, and find out more about the valuable work that we carry out to tackle domestic abuse throughout Herefordshire.

This information pack is about domestic violence & abuse, what you can do about it and where you can get help, advice and support if you, or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse. The pack is for anyone who is – or has been – in an abusive relationship. It also provides an essential source of information for professionals in supporting and working with victims.

Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for all agencies across Herefordshire; however, no one agency can achieve this on their own. We are stronger working together in partnership in seeking to make a difference to some of the most vulnerable people within our communities.

1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will sometime in their lifetime experience some form of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse has a devastating effect on children. 2 women are murdered every week in England and Wales by a current or former partner, this statistic has been the same for the past 20 years and this needs to change. This information pack seeks to raise awareness of how you can help break this cycle and better identify, support and signpost victims to the range of excellent services across Herefordshire.

We need to remember that it takes tremendous courage to ask for help and we need to get it right first time...there may not be a second chance.

And remember! if you are in an abusive relationship:

You are not the only one

You are not to blame

You cannot change your abuser's behaviour

Ignoring abuse is dangerous

There is life after an abusive relationship

Don't suffer in silence – tell someone...



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What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic Violence and Abuse – also referred to as **domestic abuse, domestic violence, spousal abuse or intimate partner violence (IPV)** – is defined by the UK Government 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. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional
- Coercive control

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 assaults, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Who are we?

The Domestic Violence Abuse Delivery Group is a multi-agency partnership that brings together a range of voluntary and statutory agencies to work on tackling issues related to domestic abuse and sexual violence across Herefordshire. The group works closely with Herefordshire Council, the Police, Probation, Health and Women's Aid.

The Group aims to reduce domestic abuse and sexual violence by strengthening inter-agency working, raising public awareness and changing attitudes. This is achieved through multi-agency meetings, policy development, lobbying, awareness raising campaigns and training. The group works closely with West Mercia Women's Aid (WMWA) and the West Mercia Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC) providers to ensure that policy work is practice-based, consistent and up to date and to provide resources to support the effective delivery of services.



Our vision

The group has the ultimate goal of preventing and reducing the incidents of domestic abuse and sexual violence in all its forms. The groups approach in promoting its strategies will be to strive to benefit all communities, to end abuse and the social attitudes and tolerance which condone it.

Everyone in our society has a part to play in raising awareness about both Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, its prevention and protection of those affected. Our message is clear and simple to victims/survivors, **"Please don't suffer in silence"**.

0800 783 1359

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The Impact on Children

Children can often be the forgotten witnesses and victims of domestic abuse and violence and are considered to be passive in the home situation. Parents can have an over optimistic view that their child does not know about abuse, thinking the children have not been exposed to it. Sadly, this can also be an issue for professionals talking to parents. Prolonged or regular exposure to domestic violence and abuse can have a serious impact on a child's development and emotional well-being, despite the best efforts of the victim parent to protect the child.



Children and young people who live in families where domestic abuse occurs are likely to have an awareness of it despite the fact that they may not be physically present in the room when the incident occurs. Children may be greatly distressed by witnessing and hearing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent, even if the children are young or unborn. There may be serious developmental effects on children who witness domestic abuse, which can result in behavioural issues, low self-esteem, depression, absenteeism, ill health, bullying, antisocial or criminal behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm and psychosocial impacts. Practitioners who work with adolescents are increasingly finding evidence of domestic abuse in intimate relationships between young people themselves.

The risks to unborn babies should always be considered if domestic abuse is suspected. It is a shocking statistic that 30% of domestic abuse starts during pregnancy. Therefore pregnant women are particularly susceptible to being victims of domestic abuse and practitioners working with pregnant women should be alerted to this possibility.

Children and young people can 'witness domestic violence' in a variety of ways.

- They may be in the same room and may even get caught in the middle of an incident in an effort to make the violence stop
- They may be in the room next door and hear the abuse or see their parent's physical injuries following an incident of violence
- They may be forced to stay in one room or may not be allowed to play
- They may be in their bedroom and/or woken to hear the shouting or crying or hear a parent in great distress and be too scared to react
- They may be forced to witness sexual abuse or they may be forced to take part in verbally abusing the victim

When responding to incidents, the Police/Social Care member in question should always find out if there are any children in the household. The Police/Social Care member should see any children present in the household to assess their immediate safety and ascertain the whereabouts of any child normally resident in the household. The voice of the child is vitally important; they should not be invisible to professionals.

The Police/Social Care member responding needs to consider what support, services and safeguarding services are needed for the family, focusing on the needs of the child. If you are worried about a child you can call the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and get advice on 01432 260800. If there are safeguarding concerns and you feel the threshold is met for Children's Social Care, a referral can be made by completing the referral form <http://hscb.herefordshire.gov.uk/>. or follow the links on the Herefordshire Council website for 'if you are worried about a child' on <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/>.

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Asking the Question Routine Enquiry

It is acknowledged that professionals can find it challenging and sometimes uncomfortable to routinely ask the question around domestic abuse. But as we know it saves lives and although it may feel awkward and take us out of our comfort zone, lessons learnt tell us that many silent victims are just waiting to be asked, in the hope of sharing their secret in order to access help and support. Victims are often sworn to secrecy by the abuser and their fear of consequences. It is vitally important that we give victims the opportunity to share this secret by asking the question.

There is a strong likelihood that a person living in fear of domestic abuse may consider that the problem is their fault; that nobody will believe them; they may be too frightened to tell, may not understand that domestic abuse is more than physical violence, they may not perceive that they are in fact a victim or may continue to minimise or misunderstand the risks to them and/or their children.

An important aspect of asking the question is that staff recognise the legitimacy of their role in asking and are confident and competent in offering supportive responses, hence the importance of training, support and supervision for all staff. It should be emphasised that the person may not answer the question on the first occasion and it is vitally important to ask the question on future occasions.

It takes tremendous courage to acknowledge that abuse is taking place and ask for help. We know that asking the question can save lives.



The role of the professional is not to be the specialist but to signpost victims to specialist services and provide resources giving information and support. It is important to understand that the victim is best placed to know when to make these calls and how to manage their safety on a day to day basis. Enquiry should be made in private on a one to one basis in an environment where the person feels safe, and in a kind, sensitive manner.

Listed below are some examples of questions you might ask.

Initial questions:

- How are things at home?
- Do you feel safe?
- How are you feeling?
- Are you getting the support you need at home?

Follow up

Here are some possible follow-on questions that may help you to develop a discussion following a disclosure of abuse. Remember that it is important to allow the victim to take things at their own pace.

- Do you ever feel frightened of your partner?
- Does your partner ever treat you badly, such as shout at you, constantly call you names, push you around or threaten you?
- We all have rows at home occasionally what happens when you or your partner fight or disagree?
- Has your partner ever: forced sex on you, withheld sex or made you have sex in a way that you are unhappy with?
- Does your partner get jealous and if so, how does he/she act?
- You mentioned that your partner uses drugs/alcohol. How does he/she act when drinking or using drugs?

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Recognising Domestic Abuse



There are many signs of domestic abuse. If you think you are in an abusive relationship ask yourself this question:

Are you afraid of your partner?

Fear is the main way an abusive partner will control you and continue with their abuse unchecked.

If you are suffering from emotional abuse you may feel afraid, you may avoid doing certain things for fear of angering your partner, you may feel that you cannot do anything right or that you deserve to be hurt or abused.

Another sign of domestic abuse is control. Your partner may be abusing you through controlling and manipulative behaviour – checking up on you, demanding to know where you've been and the conversations you have had.

Your partner may deny you money or force financial control on you while undermining your ability to cope.

Your partner may be violent towards you sexually or physically, forcing you to do things against your will or degrading you.

They may even blame you for their abusive behaviour and treat you more as an object than a human being.

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Recognising Domestic Abuse

Signs of domestic abuse can often go unnoticed, listed below are 16 signs that may indicate someone is affected by domestic abuse.

Injuries

Bruising, cuts or injuries occurring frequently, or in areas that can be hidden by clothing, or perhaps walking stiffly or appearing sore. Sometimes victims give explanations for injuries that just don't fit.

Excuses

Victims often minimise or excuse injuries, perhaps blaming a 'clumsy' nature or giving the same explanation each time.

Stress

Victims often display physical symptoms related to stress, other anxiety disorders or depression, such as panic attacks, feelings of isolation and an inability to cope. Victims may talk about suicide attempts or self-harming.

Absence from work

Often off work, taking time off without notice or frequently late.

Personality changes

You may notice personality changes when around the partner or the appearance of 'walking on eggshells' when in his or her company. A victim may be jumpy or show nervous mannerisms. Such personality changes may become evident over time, even when the partner is not around.

Low Self-esteem

A victim of domestic abuse often has low self-esteem when talking about the relationship or life in general and may seem sad, weepy or depressed.

Lack of opportunity to communicate independently

Perhaps the partner talks over the victim, or for him or her, and he or she may be reluctant to speak. The partner can often make disparaging remarks.

Self blame

You may notice that he or she may take the blame for anything that happens, whether it's at work, with the children or with

friends. A victim of domestic abuse often blames him or herself for the abuse.

Lack of money

Perhaps he or she never seems to have any money on them because their partner is withholding money as a form of control.

Stopping socialising

He or she may make excuses for not going out with friends, or suddenly pull out of social get togethers at the last minute.

The abuser displaying irrational behaviour

A victim may say that his or her partner is jealous, irrational or possessive, accusing him or her of having affairs or flirting.

Unwanted pregnancy / termination

Pregnancy often triggers the start of domestic abuse, whether or not the pregnancy is wanted. A woman may be unhappy at being pregnant, not wish to continue with the pregnancy, or be forced into having a termination.

Substance Misuse

Victims may use alcohol or illegal drugs to cope or even prescribed drugs such as tranquillisers or anti-depressants.

Lack of assertiveness

Perhaps he or she can't make decisions, stick up for him or herself, give an opinion or displays a lack of interest.

Damage to property

Damage in the home or even harm to pets.

Unwillingness to give out personal details

He or she may not give friends and colleagues an address or telephone number and may insist that they contact you, so that you don't turn up on their doorstep.

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Make a Plan

Admitting to yourself and others that you are experiencing domestic abuse may seem very difficult but it is an important step in the journey towards seeking protection for yourself and your children, if you have any.

**Remember! It is not your fault. You are not alone.
You have the right to live your life free from fear.**

Sometimes victims of domestic abuse leave home in a hurry in order to escape assault or to make a break for safety and sanity. It can help if you make some plans.

Making a crisis plan is a way of feeling more in control, more positive and confident. Here is a suggested plan of action that you can add to or change to suit your circumstances:

- If you don't have a mobile phone, find somewhere with quick and easy access to a telephone, such as a neighbour or a close friend
- Make and always carry with you a list of emergency numbers. Include the Domestic Abuse Helpline, friends, relatives and local police as even well known numbers can be forgotten in a panic
- Try to save some money for bus, train or taxi fares
- Have an extra set of keys cut for your home and your car
- Keep the keys and a set of clothes for you and your children packed and ready in a bag somewhere easily accessible
- Leave when your partner is not around
- Try to take all of your children with you
- Take any medicines that you or your children might need
- Take legal and financial papers, marriage and birth certificates, court orders, national health cards, passports, driving licence, child benefit books, address book, credit cards and all other important documents
- Take any personal possessions that have sentimental value such as photographs or jewellery
- Take your children's favourite toys
- Take clothing for at least several days
- If you have any pets and are worried about them arrange for someone to care for them.
An animal charity may be able to help; <http://www.reducingtherisk.org.uk/cms/content/pet-refuge-services>

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MARAC

Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference

What is MARAC?

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARACs) are regular local meetings where information about high risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of murder or serious harm) is shared between local agencies. By bringing all agencies together at a MARAC, and ensuring that whenever possible the voice of the victim is represented by the IDVA, a risk focused, co-ordinated safety plan can be drawn up to support the victim. In Herefordshire MARAC meets once a month.

Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA)

IDVAs work with high risk victims providing risk assessment and safety planning and supporting them through the criminal justice system. IDVAs also represent victims at MARACs, ensuring that their voice is heard by all professionals.

How to make a Referral to an IDVA

A referral to IDVA can be made via the Women's Aid website: <http://www.westmerciawomensaid.org/>

Referral Criteria

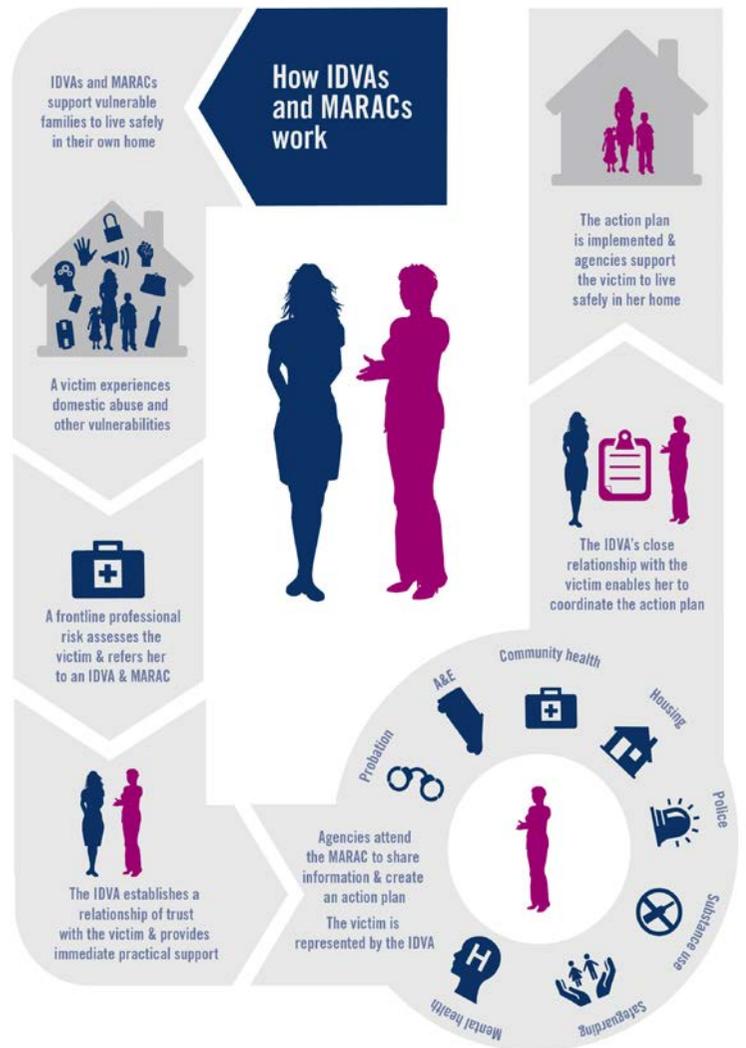
- Professional judgement
- Visible high risk
- Potential Escalation
- Repeat victimisation

Referral Process

- Complete a referral form
- Inform victim and obtain consent
- If appropriate, complete DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking & Honour Based Violence) Risk Assessment
- Liaise with your agency MARAC Representative
- Agency Representative refers to MARAC

MARAC Coordinator

Tel: 01432 346723 or Secure email to: MARACHerefordshire@westmercia.pnn.police.uk



SafeLives (formerly Caada). (2012). A Place of Greater Safety. Bristol: Caada.



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Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Risk Assessment

The DASH Risk Assessment is based on research and lessons learnt and seeks to identify and assess levels of risk at a given time by asking the series of questions below. It seeks to identify those at the highest risk for referral into MARAC to collectively manage that risk down.

REMEMBER: circumstances can change and the risk assessment should be subject to regular review. Dynamic assessments save lives.

1. Has the current incident resulted in injury?
2. Are you very frightened?
3. What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence?
4. Do you feel isolated from family / friends i.e. does (name of abuser(s) _____) try to stop you from seeing friends / family / doctor or others?
5. Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts?
6. Have you separated or tried to separate from (name of abuser(s) _____) within the past year?
7. Is there conflict over child contact?
8. Does _____ constantly text, call, contact, follow. Stalk or harass you?
9. Are you pregnant or have you recently had a baby (within the last 18 months)?
10. Is the abuse happening more often?
11. Is the abuse getting worse?
12. Does _____ try to control everything you do and/or are they excessively jealous?
13. Has _____ ever used weapons or objects to hurt you?
14. Has _____ ever threatened to kill you, your children or someone else and you believed them?
15. Has _____ ever attempted to strangle / choke / suffocate / drown you?
16. Does _____ do or say things of a sexual nature that make you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else?
17. Is there any other person who has threatened you or who you are afraid of?
18. Do you know if _____ has hurt anyone else?
19. Has _____ ever mistreated an animal or the family pet?
20. Are there any financial issues? For example, are you dependent on _____ for money/ have they recently lost their job / other financial issues?
21. Has _____ had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life?
22. Has _____ ever threatened or attempted suicide?
23. Has _____ ever broken bail / an injunction and / or formal agreement for when they can see you and / or the children?
24. Do you know if _____ has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history?



Am I in an Abusive Relationship?

There are many signs and indicators that you may be in an abusive relationship. Below are a series of statements that may indicate that you are. This list is not definitive but provides some of the indicators of an unhealthy relationship.

If you are concerned please contact the [Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0800 783 1359](tel:08007831359) for further advice and support. Do not attempt to tackle the abuse without speaking to the helpline as this may put you at an increased risk of harm.

Self Assessment Questionnaire

- My partner teases me in a hurtful way in public
- My partner calls me names such as stupid or worse
- My partner acts jealous of my friends and/or family
- My partner checks up on me by phone or coming to my home / work
- My partner gets someone else to check up on me
- My partner insists I tell them who I am on my phone with / interacting with
- My partner blames me for their bad mood or problems
- My partner gets angry easily, I walk on eggshells
- My partner throws or destroys things when they are angry
- My partner hits walls / drives dangerously or does other things to scare me
- My partner drinks a lot or takes drugs (this in itself is not necessarily abusive only if it is linked to aggressive behaviour)
- My partner insists that I drink or take drugs when they do
- My partner accuses me of being interested in someone else
- My partner reads my texts / emails and goes through my bag
- My partner keeps money from me
- My partner has threatened to hurt me

Am I in an Abusive Relationship?

- My partner has threatened to hurt my family or friends
- My partner has hurt me
- My partner has hurt someone who is my family or friend
- My partner has threatened to harm my or someone else's pet/s
- My partner has actually hurt my or someone else's pet/s
- My partner has threatened suicide if I leave
- My partner has struck me with his hands or feet (punched / slap / kick)
- My partner has struck me with an object / threatened me with a weapon
- My partner has given me visible injuries (bruises / welts/cuts)
- I have had to administer first aid to myself due to injuries from my partner
- My injuries from my partner have meant I needed medical treatment
- My partner forces me to have sex when I don't want to
- My partner forces me to have sex in ways I don't want to
- My partner has been in trouble with the police (this is not necessarily abusive in itself)
- My partner acts one way in front of others and another way when we are alone
- My partner is secretive or lies about past relationships
- I feel isolated or alone and have no one that I can really talk to
- I have lost friends because of my partner and some of their actions
- I no longer see my family or friends because of my partner
- I have thought about calling the police because my partner scares me
- I have thought about calling the police because my partner has been violent
- I have actually called the police on one or more occasions because of my partner
- I am afraid to call the police because of threats from my partner

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Support & Recovery

Provided by West Mercia Women's Aid (WMWA) and the Male Domestic Abuse Service (MDAS)

Herefordshire Domestic Abuse Service

Herefordshire Domestic Abuse Service and Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership are working in partnership to continue to deliver a wide range of specialist individual and family support to manage and reduce risk for children, young people, women and men affected by domestic abuse. The DVA Delivery Group aims to raise awareness of domestic violence and abuse and provide support services to enhance the wellbeing and quality of life for all clients.

If you are in need of our support our referral pathway will ensure that you only need to know one phone number **(0800 783 1359)** and there will be a single point of access for the wide range of support available in the county.

If you are a professional seeking advice or making a referral please ring **01432 356146** or use the web referral form www.westmerciawomensaid.org

24 hr Domestic Abuse Helpline

The helpline operates 24 hrs a day, 365 days a year and takes calls from both victims and survivors, offering listening support and advice, as well as referral to other WMWA services and signposting to other agencies. Helpline staff can process admissions into refuge and safe accommodation, and will always carry out an initial risk assessment to understand the level of risk to both adults and their children. The helpline accepts referrals from professionals and will provide expert advice when requested.

Community Support

We provide specialist support to clients on a one-to-one basis, and help to address the practical and emotional issues that may arise from domestic abuse such as housing, finance, legal, alcohol / substance misuse and health issues among many more. We can also make referrals for home adaptations to enhance the safety of a property (Sanctuary scheme).

Refuge and Safe House Accommodation

We can provide temporary accommodation in Herefordshire for women or men and their children who need to flee their own homes to escape domestic violence and abuse.

Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA)

IDVAs work with high risk victims providing risk assessment and safety planning and supporting them through the criminal justice system. IDVAs also represent victims at MARACs, ensuring that their voice is heard by all professionals.

Recovery Pathway

We also provide recovery group programmes and peer support that enable clients to overcome the traumatic effects of living with abuse. A full list of programmes and Survivor Network activities is available from: lucy@westmerciawomensaid.org



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Useful Contacts

WISH - <http://www.wisherefordshire.org/>

WISH - an online information, advice and signposting service for the county.

West Mercia Rape and Sexual abuse Support Centre

Call: 01432 344777 or visit www.wrsasc.org.uk

West Mercia Rape and Sexual abuse Support Centre (WRSASC) is a free, confidential and non-judgemental support service for survivors of any form of rape or sexual abuse. Whilst WRSASC encourages individuals to self-refer, we also accept referrals from other agencies or representatives if this makes it easier for individuals to access our services.

WRSASC offers a comprehensive training package to professionals working with survivors of sexual abuse. Training can be tailored to meet the specific needs of an agency or individual.

West Mercia Women's Aid 24hr Helpline 0800 783 1359

WMWA provides comprehensive domestic abuse services, all of which can be accessed through the 24-hr helpline.

Addaction

Call: 020 7251 5860 or visit: <http://www.addaction.org.uk>
Addaction support people to make positive behavioral change. Whether that's a problem with alcohol, drugs, or mental health and wellbeing – Addaction are there to help people make changes to their lives in ways they never thought possible.

Our work takes in community support, education, help for those in the criminal justice system, mental health services, family support, employment and much, much more. And because our services are joined up even those with the most complex problems can find the support they need.

Service to Civvy Street

A booklet to help ex-service personnel and their families navigate healthcare, employment, housing, education and other support available in Herefordshire. This booklet is available from Herefordshire Council, to download an electronic copy go to: www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search Civvy Street.

Men's Advice Line

0808 801 0327

Men's advice line: confidential helpline for men experiencing domestic violence from a partner or ex-partner (or from other family members). We help by: giving you time to tell your story; offering emotional support; providing practical advice and signposting you to other services for specialist help.

Male Domestic Abuse Service (MDAS)

Tel: 01432 384079

Email: mvreferrals@hhl.org.uk

Male Domestic Abuse Service (MDAS)

is a service for men in Herefordshire who are affected by domestic violence and abuse. The service offers support and advocacy to men of all sexualities and backgrounds who are aged 16 years and above. If you would like more information about the service or would like to refer yourself or a client then please contact us:

Address: MDAS, Herefordshire Housing,
Legion Way, Hereford, HR1 1LN.

MARAC Coordinator

Secure email to local MARAC Co-ordinator
MARACHerefordshire@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

West Mercia Police

101 (non-emergency) 999 (emergency)

The 24 hour Herefordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0800 783 1359

www.westmerciawomensaid.org

National 24hr Domestic Abuse

Helpline: 0800 2000 247

This is a national helpline, which is provided in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge to offer a listening ear, advice, referrals and support.

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327

www.mensadvice.org.uk



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Useful Contacts

Sexual Assault Referral Centre (The Glade)

0808 178 2058
24hr Self-Referral Number
01886 833555
www.theglade.org.uk

The Glade in West Mercia offers a free and confidential service to men, women and children who have been victims of rape or sexual assault, these services can be accessed via the police or by completing a self-referral (by calling 0808 178 2058).

Where appropriate clients will be offered a forensic medical examination to gather evidence, advice about pregnancy and sexual health, medication where appropriate, referrals for ongoing and long term support and/or to the clients GP and counselling. The Glade offers a safe and welcoming environment to victims of sexual violence.

Karma Nirvana 0800 5999 247

www.karmanirvana.org.uk
Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence & Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
Providing support and advice around Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Karma Nirvana believes that cultural acceptance does not mean accepting the unacceptable and acknowledges that often there remains a lack of professional confidence. Our work equips professionals so that they do not fear offending communities when tackling forced marriages and honour related abuse as we deal with the abuse within a Child and Public Protection Framework.

One of our key principles is that we never talk to or engage with your family. Our commitment and loyalty is to you and we understand the fears when family members become involved.

National Stalking Helpline

0808 802 0300
www.stalkinghelpline.org

The Helpline provides guidance and information to anybody who is currently or has previously been affected by harassment or stalking. The Helpline can provide guidance on:

- The law in relation to stalking and harassment in the UK
- Reporting stalking or harassment
- Effective gathering of evidence
- Ensuring your personal safety and that of your friends and family
- Practical steps to reduce the risk

Galop.org.uk

0300 999 5428 or 0800 9995428
<http://www.galop.org.uk/>
Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people experiencing domestic abuse.

Childline 0800 555 111

www.childline.org.uk
Childline is the UK's free, confidential helpline dedicated to children and young people. Whenever children need us, Childline will be there for them – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.

Paladin (National Stalking Advocacy Service)

0207 840 8960
www.paladinservice.co.uk
Paladin assists high risk victims of stalking throughout England and Wales. A number of Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworkers (ISACs) ensure high risk victims of stalking are supported and that a coordinated community response is developed locally to keep victims and their children safe.

Victim Support (Local)

0300 303 1977
Victim Support is here to help anyone affected by crime, not only victims but their friends, family and any other people involved. Because we are an independent charity, you can talk to us whether or not you reported a crime to the police. If you want, we can support you without the involvement of the criminal justice system, and we won't contact them about you unless we feel someone is at risk. We are here just to support you.

National Rape Crisis Helpline (Freephone) 0808 802 999

National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV) 0844 8044 999

Provides a free, fast emergency injunction service to survivors of domestic violence regardless of their financial circumstances, race, gender or sexual orientation.



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Local & National Schemes

Visual Evidence for Victims (VEV)

Visual Evidence for Victims (VEV) is a West Midlands project designed to take approved photographs of injuries or things that have been damaged. Examples being: Physical injuries, such as bruises, cuts, scratches or pulled out hair. The project can also store photographs securely so they will be available if you decide to report a crime later on. Images are stored securely for up to 6 years allowing the victim time to decide what they want to do whilst securing that vital evidence.

VEV is run by Victim Support with the help of other local organisations independent of the police. Across Herefordshire there are a range of agencies trained as VEV champions.

Sex Offenders Disclosure scheme (Sarah's Law)

Threats to child safety are more likely to originate from a family member or a friend than a complete stranger. Around 75 per cent of child sex offenders are related to or known to their victim. The Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme has been developed to respond to this.

The scheme allows members of the public – parents, carers, guardians or interested third parties – to ask the police to tell them about a person's record of child sex offences if they are concerned about that person's access to a child.

The police already disclose information about registered sex offenders and violent offenders in a controlled way to a variety of people, including head teachers, leisure centre managers, employers, landlords and parents. The disclosure scheme is an additional tool that the police can use to keep children safe.

For more information go to <https://westmercia.police.uk/article/2502/Child-Sex-Offender-Disclosure-Scheme>.

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Claire's Law)

The aim of this scheme is to give members of the public a formal mechanism to make enquiries about an individual who they are in a relationship with or who is in a relationship with someone they know, and there is a concern that the individual may be abusive towards their partner.

If police checks show that the individual has a record of abusive offences, or there is other information to indicate the person you know is at risk, the police will consider sharing this information with the person(s) best placed to protect the potential victim. Advice and guidance is available at your local police station.

The scheme aims to enable potential victims to make an informed choice on whether to continue the relationship, and provides help and support to assist the potential victim when making that informed choice.

Domestic Violence Protection Notice / Orders (DVPN's & DVPO'S)

A Domestic Violence Protection Notice is a notice served by the police against a person (an alleged perpetrator) where the police reasonably believes that the alleged perpetrator has been violent or has threatened violence. When considering whether to serve a DVPN, the police will have talked to all those involved, including the victim. The police will serve a DVPN if they believe that a threat of violence by the alleged perpetrator exists and that it is necessary to protect you in your home.

The DVPN lasts for up to 48 hours. It will prohibit the alleged perpetrator from returning to, entering and being within a certain distance from your home, or face arrest; it will prohibit the alleged perpetrator from molesting the victim.

After 48 hours the alleged perpetrator will appear before a court and this can be extended for up to 28 days. It provides 'breathing space' and time for agencies to work with the family and individuals.



Information Sharing

Effective information sharing is at the very heart of partnership working. It is vital in identifying, supporting and reducing risk to vulnerable people, both adults and children. Information sharing is a crucial element in improving outcomes for all. It is therefore vitally important that practitioners share information appropriately as part of their day to day practice and do so confidently. Information sharing is like doing a jigsaw puzzle. We all have different pieces and it is not until we share them that we start to realise the significance of what we have and how we can reduce 'collective risk' and protect victims. Don't underestimate the power and significance of your pieces of the jigsaw!

It is important to remember there can be significant consequences of not sharing information. You must use your professional judgement to decide whether to share, or not, and what information is appropriate to share. Remember that the Data Protection Act 1998 is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately.

There are some simple things to consider:

- Is it necessary to share the information?
- Is it justified to share the information?
- Is it proportionate to share the information?
- Is the information relevant

Remember BE BOLD, No child or adult has ever died as a result of sharing information but sadly plenty have as a result of not; your information could be the missing piece



Where possible obtain the consent of the person to share information. However, it may not be appropriate to inform a person that information is being shared, or seek consent to this sharing. This is the case if informing them is likely to hamper the prevention or investigation of a serious crime, or put any child or adult at risk of serious harm. It is good practice to document the legal gateway that allows you to share the information and the process for doing so.

Below are some key links to helpful documents that underpin information sharing and provide practical advice and guidance:

MARAC Information Sharing Protocol:

<http://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/sharing-information/files/MARAC-Information-Sharing-Protocol-checklist-March-2012.pdf?res=true>

Herefordshire Council Sharing Information Protocols:

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/8059617/information_sharing_overarching_protocol_v2.pdf

Caldicott Guardian Principles:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/striking-the-balance-practical-guidance-on-the-application-of-caldicott-guardian-principles-to-domestic-violence-and-maracs-multi-agency-risk-assessment-conferences>

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>



Herefordshire
Community Safety Partnership

SAY NO
TO DOMESTIC ABUSE
AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE