



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

October 2025

Hello Everyone

As October arrives, we are currently in the midst of our DASV Champions sessions focusing on our specialist domestic abuse services – this includes the changes to commissioned outreach services. From 1st October DASS will continue to provide support in Cambridgeshire but in Peterborough the Peacock Project is now the commissioned service.

In

More details can be found on our website at www.cambsdassv.org.uk. If you visit the website, you will also notice some changes as we try to make it more user friendly. This is a work in progress, so more changes will be made over the coming weeks. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please let us know.

We are looking forward to White Ribbon Day on the 25th November and the following 16 Days of Action. White Ribbon Day is also known as the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls. There are several events planned for this and more details can be found in the newsletter.

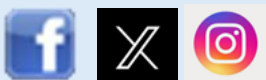
As always please let us know of any updates or developments in your services that we can include in future newsletters.

Best Wishes

Julia & Vickie

Julia Cullum, DASV Head of Service – Cambridgeshire

Vickie Crompton DASV Manager - Peterborough



16 Days of Action

16 Days of Action against domestic abuse is the international campaign that runs annually from November 25th to December 10th to raise awareness of violence against women and girls. As a Partnership we will be raising awareness via social media posts and webinars throughout the campaign.

Please see details below details of three of the sessions and click on the links if you would like to book:

26th November 2025 14.00 – 15.00

Caroline Deeprose, Founder & CEO of The Angels Foundation, will speak about their work and the Impact of furniture poverty.

[Angels Foundation - The Impact of Furniture Poverty](#)

27th November 2025 12.30 – 13.00

With 80% of women reporting harassment in public spaces and 75% of harassment victims saying no one helped, the need for action is urgent. We are excited to be working with the [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#) to deliver bystander training. This globally approved programme empowers individuals to safely step in and support victims of public harassment by teaching them five practical tools. Most people want to help but don't know how - this training changes that.

[Stand Up Against Harassment - Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#)

2nd December 2025 11.00 – 12.00

The Peterborough IDVA Service and PWA will be sharing the support available for Lithuanian victims of domestic abuse.

[Local Support for Lithuanian Victims of Domestic Abuse](#)

Peterborough Women's Aid are also running some excellent training workshops some of which will coincide with 16 Days of Action – please see the poster below and contact Mandy Geraghty

Amanda.geraghty@wa-support.co.uk to book a place

TRAINING WORKSHOP
Exclusive
All session delivered on Teams

Our expert-led sessions provide practical insights, and valuable learning to help you support survivors from the South Asian Community.

- 14th October 9.30am or 1.30pm Honour Based Abuse and FGM
- 21st October 9.30am Coercive Control and Stalking
- 11th November 9.30am or 1.30pm Honour Based Abuse and FGM
- 27th November 9.30am Coercive Control and Stalking

Contact amanda.geraghty@wa-support.co.uk with the time and date of the session you would like to attend.

Peterborough Women's Aid
Set yourself free

SafeLives Updates

Risk pathways save lives - we should be working together to strengthen them.

There's been a lot of debate recently about the DASH risk checklist. When SafeLives co-developed DASH 15 years ago with survivors, academics and sector partners, it was ground-breaking: it created a shared language around risk and ensured the victim's experience was central to assessment. It must continue to evolve to reflect the realities victims face.

Domestic abuse is at epidemic levels - and the shared purpose must be to turn the tide and make families safer, sooner. That means strengthening risk pathways and driving meaningful change, together. **[Read our statement](#)**

We're proud to stand alongside the [End Violence Against Women Coalition](#) (EVAW) and more than 60 organisations in calling on the government to deliver a robust Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy. Together, we've set out five key questions that must be at the heart of any meaningful plan:

1. Primary prevention through public-health approaches – education, awareness campaigns and regulated online spaces
2. A comprehensive approach that addresses all forms of VAWG, reflecting women and girls lived realities
3. Inclusion for all – with equalities at the core and no one left behind
4. Sustainable funding for specialists, by and for support services
5. Accountability across government, backed by a clear framework

SafeLives stands united – we join 200 women's rights organisations in rejecting the racist weaponization of violence against women and girls (VAWG). We condemn the exploitation of survivor narratives by far-right groups and politicians to promote anti-migrant agendas. This misappropriation not only divides communities - it distracts from the critical work of addressing the root causes of VAWG.

Let's keep survivor-centred justice at the heart of our response to VAWG, not political expediency. We signed 'The For Baby's Sake' Trust's open letter to Jess Phillips MP, Minister for Safeguarding and Violence Against Women and Girls calling for babies and very young children to be explicitly recognised within the upcoming VAWG strategy

Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)

Please see the link for the latest DHR which was published at the end of September. Scroll down to the bottom of the link for Polly

[Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews | Peterborough City Council](#)

Coercive Control – Dr Emma Katz

Dr Emma Katz is widely regarded as one of the world's foremost academic experts in her area of research — how coercive control impacts children and young people. Emma specialises in the harm caused by father-perpetrated coercive control, as well as children's and mothers' resistance and recovery.

Every year new victims-survivors start to wonder – am / was I a victim? Was that bad relationship actually coercive control? Was I abused or am I overreacting? Every year people who've known for a long time that they did experience coercive control want to find new ways to reach out and help people going through this now. They want to know how best to raise awareness.

Follow the link to read the article by Dr Emma Katz which provides a resource to help people answer questions and take action.

[Decoding coercive control with Emma Katz](#)

Behind the Mask – domestic abuse of healthcare workers

A [new research paper](#) has highlighted the experiences of domestic abuse amongst healthcare workers. Focusing on one English NHS Trust, researchers analysed over 200 responses and found 56% had experienced current or past domestic abuse. 84% of respondents had not sought workplace support, and worries about confidentiality were cited as a key barrier. In addition, 40% of the total sample were unaware of all workplace support options.

The Trust have implemented several initiatives in response, including:

- Safety planning advice for staff on the intranet
- Key links developed for financial support and information or pay redirection
- Enhanced staff support discussed at the start of every training session by the DA coordinator
- Training on supporting staff is available for human resources departments and other corporate teams.

We recommend that all domestic abuse policies include staff as well as patients, and that information on support services is shared regularly. If you need help to develop a policy or information about local services, please contact Amanda.Warburton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk who is the Domestic Abuse Health Strategic Lead for Cambridgeshire.

Peer Action Collective (PAC)

PAC has released a new report exploring how violence impacts children and young adults across England and Wales. PAC is a youth-led network working across England and Wales to make communities safer and fairer. Since 2021, over 12,000 young people have taken part through peer research and social action, shaping solutions grounded in lived experiences of violence.

This report captures learning from the second phase of PAC (2023–2025), in which over 5,158 young people contributed. Together they explored the realities of violence in their lives and neighborhoods and led social action to address the issues they identified. Their insights highlight how violence is experienced not only on the streets but also online, and how access to safe spaces and positive activities can provide vital alternatives. They emphasised the importance of fair, empathetic relationships with adults and called for greater understanding of the reasons behind young people's behaviour, particularly in schools. Mental health and wellbeing emerged as a concern, with young people asking for consistent support and trusted adults who create safe, non-judgmental environments. Across the PAC network, young people turned these findings into social action - from tackling online harms and barriers to safe travel, rethinking school discipline, improving mental health support, and creating youth-friendly spaces.

The report presents five key lessons from young people's research:

Safe places and positive activities matter – spaces where young people feel safe, included, and able to thrive can divert them from risk.

Understanding the 'why' behind behaviour is vital – exclusion without support can push young people towards greater harm.

Consistent mental health support is lacking – young people want safe, supportive environments to manage their wellbeing.

Trusted adults make the difference – empathy and authentic relationships help young people feel understood and supported.

Involving young people creates trust and engagement – when young people lead and co-design solutions, services are more creative, engaging, and effective.

You can read the full report here: [PAC Report](#)

Refuge: Tech Safety

Article by Vicki Trapps: Service Manager SignHealth

The experience of technology-facilitated abuse can be even more complex and isolating for survivors who are Deaf. As awareness of technology-facilitated and economic abuse grows, it is crucial that we also understand how these forms of abuse uniquely impact Deaf people.

Deaf people can often live in increased isolation, especially when key services, support networks, and information are not accessible in British Sign Language (BSL) or other visual formats. For a Deaf person experiencing abuse, the isolation can be used against them. They may rely on their partner or others to interpret calls, access services, or even attend medical appointments. It gives perpetrators more control and reduces opportunities to seek help.

When professionals such as police officers, healthcare workers, or social workers rely on family members or the perpetrator to interpret for a victim/survivor, it can lead to serious risks. The perpetrator or family member may control what is said and how it is translated, filtering or distorting information to hide abuse or manipulate the situation. In some cases, the perpetrator may lie about what the victim says and speak on their behalf instead of translating their actual words, convincing professionals that everything is fine when it is not. As a result, the victim/survivor may be too afraid to speak openly, especially if the abuser is present. They may feel trapped and silenced, unable to ask for help, which can lead to further isolation or punishment after the interaction.

Technology is often seen as a tool for connection, but for some survivors, it becomes a tool of control used by perpetrators. For Deaf people, technology-facilitated abuse may involve tampering with visual communication tools such as video relay services or captioned calls, monitoring conversations through hacked devices or shared apps, or withholding access to phones, tablets, or Wi-Fi, which cuts off essential communication.

Technology is a lifeline for many Deaf people, and losing access can mean losing connection to the outside world. Deaf people already face barriers in employment and education, often due to a lack of accessible opportunities or interpretation and translation support. Perpetrators may exploit this vulnerability by controlling finances or withholding disability benefits, blocking access to work or training to create financial dependence, or damaging or withholding tools needed for employment, such as phones or laptops.

It becomes significantly harder for survivors who are deaf to leave abusive situations or rebuild their lives without financial independence. They are also navigating abuse that others can't see or hear. By raising awareness of how technology and economic abuse specifically affect Deaf people, we can begin to dismantle barriers and build a safer, more inclusive support system for all.

To do this, we must make our systems more inclusive. It includes funding Deaf-aware support services and ensuring websites and helplines are accessible in BSL. It also involves training mainstream services to understand the specific risks and barriers Deaf people face and to make people aware of accessible educational resources around healthy relationships and digital safety within the Deaf community. It is vital not to use family members or perpetrators as interpreters, even if they offer their assistance, and always ensure that the survivor has the opportunity to speak privately and safely.

Inclusion means more than just recognising differences; it means actively working to remove barriers and protect everyone's right to communicate safely. Technology can be a powerful tool, but only when it is used responsibly and with everyone's needs in mind.

SignHealth Domestic Abuse Services –

Text only 07800003421

da@signhealth.org.uk

From Lifesaving to Life-Threatening: The Hidden Dangers of Assistive Tech in Domestic Abuse

Evidence shows that technology is now routine in cases of Domestic Abuse. Whilst technology can be a lifeline for many, improving independence, convenience and removing barriers to support - technology is being increasingly misused to cause harm. The Technology-Facilitated Abuse & Economic Empowerment team's recent report found that cases related to technology abuse have risen by 58% since 2018, with new methods including Wi-Fi hacking, GPS tracking, and the misuse of AI.

SafeLives reported that disabled survivors typically experience domestic abuse for a longer period before accessing support - 3.3 years average length of abuse vs 2.3 years, and that disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse as non-disabled women.

Assistive and medical technologies introduce additional risks. Many hearing aids, fall-detectors, and telecare systems can be configured via companion apps or online portals. If a perpetrator controls the account, they can disable alerts or listen through home hubs connected to pendants. The UK government recently warned that around 2 million people rely on telecare alarms highlighting how widespread, safety-critical and potentially abusable these systems are if account access is compromised.

Some telecare or GPS-enabled devices like pendants, trackers, or smartwatches are set up to notify a carer if the person leaves a safe zone, called "wandering alerts". Usually designed for those with dementia, learning disabilities, or other conditions where safety monitoring is needed. A perpetrator with access to the account or app could send false alerts to create distress, make the survivor seem unsafe, or justify restricting their movement. They could also suppress real alerts, meaning if the person genuinely needed help, no one would know. It is essential that all front-line staff are trained to look for and spot the signs of tech-facilitated abuse.

Improving accessibility should also mean tech-safety by design:

- Access to support when devices are compromised. Pharmacies / banks with trained staff to support, free webchat from library PCs, and BSL access can provide additional options for survivors when personal devices are compromised.
- Trauma-informed tech checks. Frontline services should ask who controls logins to things such as hearing-aid apps, telecare dashboards, smart locks, etc. With support to reset account login information and remove shared access as part of safety planning (where this is deemed to be safe to do).

- Safety-by-design. Prioritising the risks of tech-facilitated abuse and involving tech-safety experts and end-users during development.

Accessible domestic abuse support saves lives. But for disabled and chronically ill survivors in particular, safety depends on recognising that assistive and medical devices can double as instruments of coercive control, so the focus should be on building services, products and protocols that prevent this.

The Tech-facilitated abuse and Economic Empowerment team regularly conducts consultations and reviews for apps, devices and other services to highlight any potential risks of tech abuse. We also produce guides and resources for securing accounts and devices. If this is of interest, please get in touch at techabuse@refuge.org.uk.

New guidance for supporting older victims of tech abuse

The Dewis Choice project, hosted by Aberystwyth University, has released new guidance for practitioners around supporting older victims of technology-enabled abuse.

This guide serves as a comprehensive toolkit for practitioners responding to technology-facilitated abuse, providing actionable advice and guidance to frontline staff and practitioners working with older victims of domestic abuse, stalking, and harassment.

The guidance aims to help practitioners to:

1. Understand how technology can be misused to perpetrate abuse against older victims.
2. Recognise how coercive control is linked to technology-facilitated abuse in cases of intimate partner abuse and adult family abuse involving older adults.
3. Access practical advice and guidance to support older victims in enhancing their cyber security.
4. Integrate protective strategies into ongoing safety planning and risk management with older victims.
5. Develop an understanding of key legislation relevant to technology-facilitated abuse

The guidance can be downloaded at

[DewisChoice_PractitionerGuide_English_Sept2025_compressed_compressed-compressed.pdf](#)

Learn & Thrive

Learn and Thrive have several free resources – including guidance and videos – for teaching young people with SEND about love and relationships.

Topics covered in the videos include:

- Respectful Relationships
- Respectful Friendship
- Mate Crime
- Social Media
- Phone Etiquette
- Love
- Starting a Relationship
- Ending a Relationship
- Obsession

[Respectful Relationships - Information Page](#)

CPSL Mind



CPSL Mind's first Good Mood Cafe to launch was at the Art & Soul Cafe on New Street in St Neots (now named The Priory Centre). Approximately 160 people per week are supported at the Good Mood Cafes.

For a list of times and locations of all cafes please click the link below

[Find your local Good Mood Cafe session](#)

Living Keys

Living Keys has teamed up with Christine Grahame from Restored, and together they will be offering a monthly family support group. This support group is for families who have grown-up children living with domestic abuse.

If anyone is interested in doing a talk at one of the sessions, please contact Linda

Admin@livingkeys.co.uk



Living Keys will be working with Peterborough Women's Aid and also, in the short term, with Cambridge Women's Resource Centre to deliver the Freedom Programme. They are taking bookings for their next programme which will start in January 2026.

Living Keys are also taking applications for the next The Domestic Abuse Recovery Toolkit programme which also starts in January 2026

The next Living Keys Swap Shop is on 21st November 2025 – see poster below



Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Targeted Support Team

The CCC Targeted Support team has just launched a Healthy Communications booklet that can be used to support families where there is conflict between parents. They can be handed out to families or left in communal areas for members of the public to take: [Healthy Communications Booklet](#)
Please send requests for hard copies to Lydia.mack@peterborough.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire County Council

Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) programme is set to continue until 2029

The Government has announced it will continue to fund the programme across England for a further three financial years, meaning that families in Cambridgeshire will continue to benefit from the scheme until March 2029.

Through the programme, local holiday schemes offer free access to fun, enriching activities and nutritious meals for children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals. Running during the Easter, summer, and Christmas holidays, HAF helps reduce pressure on families by providing safe, engaging environments where children receive a meal while having fun.

Holiday scheme experiences include sports, creative arts, forest school, playschemes, and outdoor adventures. The programme also supports families by reducing childcare costs, promoting social inclusion, and connecting them with local support services.

Cambridgeshire County Council ran 132 schemes over the summer holiday period, with an estimated 3,300 children participating (figures based on 2024 attendance).

The highest number of children attending a scheme this summer was at 'Come and Play' in Whittlesey, where 135 children attended.

To find out more about HAF, head to our website: [Cambridgeshire Holiday Activities and Food \(HAF\) Programme | Cambridgeshire County Council](#).

Target Hardening

24/7 Locks, the commissioned target hardening provider for specialist DASV services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, has rebranded from 1st October 2025. Their new name is **Secure Horizon**.

This is to reflect their move away from reactive lock fitting and into target hardening services.

The new name will appear on referral forms and documentation.

Their branding on vans, uniforms, and ID cards will change to Secure Horizon, and they will introduce themselves on the phone and in person as Secure Horizon. Please make sure you make clients aware and pass it on to anyone in your organisation who isn't aware.

Peterborough Women's Aid

Poem by Hayley, Peterborough Women Warrior

UNBREAKABLE: THE WARRIOR IN YOU

There is a warrior in you
Even if she hides from view.

You left.
And they said freedom.
But freedom can taste like metal in the mouth,
Like waking to ghosts
Still haunting your house.

You carry bruises no one can see,
Words that still rot in your memory.
Some mornings,
Rising feels like crawling through glass,
A battle with shadows that never quite pass.

They don't tell you loneliness can cut like a knife,
That silence can echo louder than life.

And then come the battles you never chose –
Police with reports that half-disclose,
Courts that balance truth with lies,
Social workers with watchful eyes.
Your story spilled again and again.
A cycle of proof just to begin.

There are days you feel unworthy of love,
Days swallowed whole by the sky above.
Days when you're lost in your very own skin,
But those heavy feelings don't define what's within.

Because healing isn't a race to run.
There's no clock ticking, no setting sun
It comes when it comes,
In your time, in your way.
No one can rush the night into day.

It's like planting a seed deep under the ground,
It waits for the season, it waits for the sound.
It needs water, patience, the touch of light,
And it bends, but it grows, through each long night.
Storms may break it, winds may tear,
Setbacks may strike in the cold, hard air.
Appointment that wound, memories that sting,
Yet still you rise – still growing within.

And listen to me
It takes a different kind of strength to stay,
To walk into power and not look away.

To speak with a voice from tumbles and shakes,
Yet still holds ground, no matter what it takes.

Healing isn't pretty, it's raw and it's true.
Rage in your throat, steering wheel blue,
A reflection you start at and barely know,
A fractured self, that still dares to grow.

Yet Still –
Each breath through panic and each fight for your child,
Each time you refuse to be silenced, defiled –
That is courage cut deep into bone,
That kind of strength carved out of stone.

And know this,
We here at Women's Aid, all of us, stand by your side
Through all that you face.
With no expectations, no pressure, no pace.
What's right for you is the path you take,
No two journeys the same, no step a mistake.
We will never minimise the weight you bare –
We will listen, we'll comfort, we'll always be there.

Because we see you – the strength you show,
The fight you summon from deep below.
You are not just survivors pulling through –
You are true warriors, fierce and true.

You are proof that survival is sacred, not small,
That rising from wreckage is power and is all.

And one day – the weight will shift,
The ghosts will lessen, their grip will lift.
You will recognise yourself again –
Not the woman he tried to bend and break,
But the warrior who walked through fires awake,
Who faced the system, storm and tide,
With courage unbroken, and support at your side,
And still you keep moving and still alive.

South Cambs District Council

Child & Family Centre - Young Parents Group

Stay and Play sessions for young parents aged 25 and under with children aged 0-5 years are held in Cambourne and Northstowe. You don't have to live in Cambourne or Northstowe to attend - all young parents are welcome.

[Child & Family Centre - Young Parents Group](#)

Cambridge Dial-a-Ride

Cambridge Dial-a-Ride provides safe, affordable transport for people who have difficulty accessing public transport due to disability, infirmity and/or age, covering a number of South Cambs villages.

[Dial A Ride](#)

Royston Library Health & Wellbeing Drop-In

Supported by Healthy Hub North Herts, these sessions are free to anyone to attend for advice and signposting about a range of topics including being more active, weight loss, eating well & cooking on a budget, social activities, digital skills and more. With a Herts postcode, people can even access an NHS health check. Held on Mondays and Wednesdays, you can find out dates/times by emailing healthyhub@north-herts.gov.uk or by calling 01462 474111.

Community Hubs – Cambridgeshire Acre

Additional Community Hubs opening or re-opening for the winter months to offer company, connection, coffee and light refreshments in South Cambs:

- **Toft Community Hub** – Toft People's Hall, 1 School Lane, Toft, Cambridge, CB23 2RJ. Opens: Monday, 10am – 12pm. *Re-opens on 27 October 2025.*
- **Weston Colville Community Hub** – Weston Colville Reading Room, Chapel Room, Weston Colville, Cambridge, CB21 5NX. Opens: Wednesday, 11am – 3pm. *Re-opens 1 October 2025*

For more information about the whole network of Community Hubs visit: [Community Hub network](#)

Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service

The Age UK CAP Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service supports older people and anybody over the age of 18 with a long or short-term disability to live independently and safely in their own homes. For reasonable rates, handypersons carry out adaptation works such as key-safe supply & fit; banister and grab rails. They also offer general tasks such as fitting outdoor wheelchair access; putting up shelves; assembling flat-pack furniture; changing taps and washers; fitting curtains/blinds; and changing lightbulbs. For more information, please contact 01480 700 205 or email

chp@ageukcap.org.uk

Cambridgeshire Police

Officers supporting victims fleeing from domestic abuse can now provide them with emergency **grab bags**.

Bags filled with essentials such as mobile phones with credit, toothbrushes, toiletries and snacks have been donated to Cambridgeshire Constabulary by Amazon and Tesco in Peterborough. The bags have been distributed to Peterborough, March, Wisbech, Huntingdon, Ely, and Cambridge stations and the SARC.

In addition, bags have also been donated for the children of victims, which include colouring books, crayons and playing cards.

Some bags will feature a soft toy made by call handler Annabel Evans, who has been busy knitting the colourful creations.

Peterborough Lithuanian Community

The Peterborough Lithuanian Community is hosting a powerful and thought-provoking photographic exhibition highlighting the realities of domestic abuse, captured through the lens of an acclaimed local photographer. This moving exhibition will run until 1st November at the Peterborough Culture Centre. The exhibition aims to raise awareness and foster important conversations around the impact of domestic abuse on our communities.

As part of this initiative, they are also hosting a special White Event on 25th October at 6:00 PM, also at the Peterborough Culture Centre. This evening will bring the community together in solidarity and support for survivors - with all proceeds going towards Women's Aid in honour of their 50th anniversary.

Dress Code: White- to symbolise hope, unity, and a future free from abuse.

They would be deeply grateful for your presence and support at either or both important events.