



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

June 2021

Hi All!

Now that the Domestic Abuse Act is law across the UK, we are working hard on the required Needs Assessment for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The Act brings with it a new definition of domestic abuse, as well as some other changes – see page 2 for a summary of the Act.

On 15th June it will be the 10th Anniversary of World Elder Awareness Abuse Day! Look out on social media for the hashtag #WEAAD2021 – we will be sharing messages and so will our partners including the Safeguarding Boards.

Our latest DASV Champions sessions have been really well attended – remember that we upload the presentations to our website so if you're unable to attend you can still get the information [Welcome to Cambridgeshire DASV Partnership \(cambsdasv.org.uk\)](http://cambsdasv.org.uk) If you do want to sign up to the network, please email DASVChampions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk. Our next sessions will be around substance misuse and child to parent violence and abuse – look out for the dates in a future newsletter.

Finally, we'd like to highlight some job opportunities that are being advertised at the moment – We are looking for IDVAs, Cambridge Women's Aid are seeking an Outreach Worker and East Cambs District Council have a role supporting employees experiencing domestic abuse – see page 10 onwards.

Best wishes

Vickie Crompton & Julia Cullum
DASV Partnership Managers



The Domestic Abuse Act – summary of key changes

Definition of Domestic Abuse:

Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—

- (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and*
- (b) the behaviour is abusive.*

(3) Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;*
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;*
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;*
- (d) economic abuse (see subsection (4));*
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;*

and **it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.**

(4) “Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to—

- (a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
- (b) obtain goods or services.

(5) For the purposes of this Act A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of **conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).**

(6) References in this Act to being abusive towards another person are to be read in accordance with this section.

(7) For the meaning of “personally connected”, see below

Definition of “personally connected”:

(1) For the purposes of this Act, two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies—

- (a) they are, or have been, married to each other;
- (b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
- (c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- (d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- (e) they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;
- (f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));
- (g) they are relatives.

How will the Act help victims? The Domestic Abuse Act will:

- create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be emotional, coercive or controlling, and economic abuse. As part of this definition, children will be explicitly recognised as victims if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of abuse;
- create a new offence of non-fatal strangulation;
- extending the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse;

- extend the ‘revenge porn’ offence to cover the threat to disclose intimate images with the intention to cause distress;
- clarify the law to further deter claims of “rough sex gone wrong” in cases involving death or serious injury;
- create a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts (for example, to enable them to give evidence via a video link);
- establish in law the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, to stand up for victims and survivors, raise public awareness, monitor the response of local authorities, the justice system and other statutory agencies and hold them to account in tackling domestic abuse;
- place a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation;
- provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance;
- place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing;
- ensure that when local authorities rehouse victims of domestic abuse, they do not lose a secure lifetime or assured tenancy;
- provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance;
- stop vexatious family proceedings that can further traumatise victims by clarifying the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989;
- prohibit GPs and other health professionals from charging a victim of domestic abuse for a letter to support an application for legal aid

How will the Act strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators? The Domestic Abuse Act will:

- prohibit perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in family and civil courts in England and Wales;
- bring the case of R vs Brown into legislation, invalidating any courtroom defence of consent where a victim suffers serious harm or is killed;
- enable domestic abuse offenders to be subject to polygraph testing as a condition of their licence following their release from custody;
- extend the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences;
- provide for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order, which will prevent perpetrators from contacting their victims, as well as force them to take positive steps to change their behaviour, e.g. seeking mental health support;
- Extend the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences;
- Introduce a statutory duty on the Secretary of State to publish a domestic abuse perpetrator strategy (to be published as part of a holistic domestic abuse strategy).

When does the Act come into force?

The Act is now law and will begin to be implemented across criminal justice systems and agencies later this year. For more information and Fact Sheets on each new measure, please visit

[Domestic Abuse Act: Factsheet - Home Office in the media \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2021/03/25/domestic-abuse-act-factsheet-home-office-in-the-media)

Safeguarding Boards online training

The Safeguarding Boards have a number of online training presentations that are free to access. Topics include Domestic Abuse, Recognising Abuse in Adults at Risk, Making Safeguarding Personal

[E-Learning during Covid-19 | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board \(safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk\)](https://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)

Domestic Abuse and Brain Injury

The Disabilities Trust have released a new study, which adds to mounting evidence, examined the brain injury knowledge of domestic abuse practitioners across the UK. Practitioners working in domestic abuse services were invited to answer a short online survey to understand their perception of the prevalence of brain injury in those they support, alongside their level of experience of, and understanding of acquired brain injury. The study reveals that:

- Survivors 'often' or 'sometimes' report symptoms or causes of brain injury, including:
 - blows to the head, face or neck (56%),
 - being thrown against the wall or floor (56%),
 - having their teeth knocked out (66%) or,
 - loss of consciousness (66%).
- 81% of domestic abuse practitioners who responded had received no previous training on brain injury
- 62% felt 'mostly unprepared' to identify symptoms meaning that the potential life changing impacts of a brain injury remain invisible.
- 10% had heard of The Disabilities Trust's Brain Injury Screening Index (BISI) and there was even less knowledge of other screening tools for brain injury.

The results of this important study show that questions about possible causes of brain injuries are not being asked regularly or consistently enough in domestic abuse services and there is an apparent disconnect between what domestic abuse practitioners believe the prevalence to be, in comparison to the regularity of potential causes of injuries reported by survivors.

Research, however, is still lacking into how common brain injury is amongst survivors of domestic abuse in the community. Therefore, moving forward the Disabilities Trust is working collaboratively with survivors of domestic abuse and the specialist practitioners who support them, to gather further evidence and campaign for change in policy and processes to ensure training and holistic, tailored support is provided nationally.

You can read the research at

[A_Practitioners_Perception_Domestic_Abuse_and_Brain_Injury_The_Disabilities_Trust_.pdf \(mcusercontent.com\)](https://mcusercontent.com)

Call for Powers of Entry

Hourglass – the UK’s only charity dedicated to stopping the abuse of older people – is urgently calling for powers of entry for social workers. They are campaigning for this power for instances where access to interview an adult at risk or where there is suspected abuse, is being denied, leaving too many older people alone and at risk.

Hourglass originally argued for these powers to be included under the Care Act (2014) and tried again for the Domestic Abuse Act earlier this year. The case was for a new power in the context of a referral to adult safeguarding, where concerns are expressed by someone – a family member, a neighbour or a member of the public – about the potential abuse or neglect of an adult, where the Local Authority representative is unable to gain access to interview the adult in question. This year we campaigned for inclusion under the Domestic Abuse Bill. Unfortunately, these powers are yet to make it into legislation in England.

Making the case...

1 – To close the gap that can leave a victim exposed to on-going harm.

There are insufficient powers of access held by the Local Authority where they are refused entry to the premises and the suspected victim has mental capacity. A useful depiction of the operation of the Local Authority duties as they stand is found [here](#). The case concerned a 94-year-old woman, the Local Authority were acting on a duty to investigate suspected abuse following reports of harmful behaviour from third party sources. The social worker faced consistent obstruction in carrying out their duties. Despite several third-party referrals for an adult safeguarding assessment, the social worker was unable to gain access to the lady without the suspected perpetrator present.

The case notes read: *“The local authority had no alternative but to visit on numerous occasions and to attempt to see G on her own. Anything else would have been a dereliction of their duty to her as a vulnerable person about whom they had received complaints about possible financial predation. Local authority staff must be permitted to carry out their duty to investigate reports relating to safeguarding unhindered”*. The existing powers, which lie with the police and have a ‘life and limb’ threshold, were not sufficient in this instance and the victim in question experienced ongoing harm at the hands of her abuser.

2 – The power of entry was introduced in Scotland in 2008, and similar powers came into force in Wales in 2016. Legislative change could bring England in line with these legislations.

Some have cited the low utilisation of these powers, particularly in Scotland where the legislation has been in place for a significant amount of time. However, evaluation of the implementation of additional powers in Scotland have found that, although rarely used, codifying a power of access under the Adult Support and Protection Act (Scotland) (2007) improves practice and creates a stronger legal basis to investigate where access has been refused or made difficult (1,2,3).

3 – This power is supported by practitioners!

In 2017, Kings College London’s Social Care Workforce Research Unit undertook research that showed over half of practitioners interviewed were in favour. Practitioners identified many benefits of powers of entry, including: that it could prevent cases progressing to a point that life or limb powers were needed; might generally speed up the process of safeguarding enquiries; and that awareness that social workers have this power, might persuade some of the family members or other individuals obstructing access, to allow a social worker to talk to the adult at risk without having to get a court order at all (4).

Research into sexual violence of older people

Amanda in our team is carrying out some research into sexual assault perpetrated against older people in hospitals and care settings, inspired by the horrific case below. If you have any information – such as anonymised case studies or professional opinions that you'd like to share – please get in touch.

Stroke patient died after being sexually assaulted in hospital bed

Valerie Kneale, aged 75, was admitted to hospital in Blackpool following a stroke and later broke her leg after falling from a chair whilst in hospital. During the post-mortem, she was found to have 'internal and external haemorrhage which was in turn due to a vaginal laceration or tear' and this was found to be the cause of her death. A member of the hospital staff was arrested on suspicion of murdering Mrs Kneale as well as two rapes, one against a colleague. He has been released on bail whilst investigations continue.

BBC mental health tool

MHFA England has partnered with BBC News to develop some interactive exercises around the principles of Mental Health First Aid training.

Using situations relevant to the pandemic, people can try the exercises to see whether they could spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health, listen compassionately, and signpost individuals to get further support.

Published for the start of Mental Health Awareness Week, the tool has been shared on **BBC Headroom**, the BBC's dedicated platform for mental health advice, resources and content. It was shared on the BBC News social media channels, and has generated thousands of referrals to the MHFA England website.

Please share the tool with your teams, clients or network. The tool will provide people with useful tips for starting conversations around mental health, as well as a taste for the skills and knowledge that Mental Health First Aid training can provide. To view the [interactive exercises](#), [click here](#).

Ofsted release report into sexual harassment in schools

Sexual harassment, including online sexual abuse, has become 'normalised' for children and young people, a review from Ofsted has found.

Around 9 in 10 of the girls we spoke to said that sexist name calling and being sent unwanted explicit pictures or videos happened 'a lot' or 'sometimes'. Inspectors were also told that boys talk about whose 'nudes' they have and share them among themselves like a 'collection game', typically on platforms like WhatsApp or Snapchat.

The review recommends that school and college leaders act on the assumption that sexual harassment is affecting their pupils, and take a whole-school approach to addressing these issues, creating a culture where sexual harassment is not tolerated.

The full report can be read at [Ofsted: culture change needed to tackle 'normalised' sexual harassment in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Samaritans support for health and social care workers

To address the acute and long term mental health impact of the pandemic on frontline workers, Samaritans launched a dedicated emotional support line for NHS and social care workers which is free, confidential, and available 7 days a week from 7am to 11pm. While restrictions may be easing, the charity is aware that health and social care workers may be beginning to process the impact of the past 15 months and is encouraging anyone who might be struggling to reach out for support.

Samaritans is also part of Our Frontline, a coalition effort with Mind, Hospice UK and Shout 85258. Through the platform of Our Frontline, the four charities collectively provide round the clock, one-to-one mental health support, resources and advice for key workers all in one place. The additional pressures the pandemic has placed on the shoulders of health and social care staff for such a prolonged period of time has exposed how important mental health support is for people in these professions. Our Frontline recently launched a new campaign that aims to support health and social care workers in particular, encouraging them to take a breath and check on themselves.

If you or anyone you know would benefit from emotional support, please visit [Samaritans](#) or [Our Frontline](#).

An Introduction to Project Nova



Project Nova is a charity that works with veterans who have been arrested or are at risk of arrest through vulnerability. We provide, information advice, guidance and referrals to partner organisations to help the veterans we work with to find work, access training and wider support (health, housing) Project Nova takes ownership and manages the case without signposting only. Project Nova is a partnership between RFEA – The Forces Employment Charity and Walking with the Wounded.

Our team make Project Nova unique. We bring insight of the culture and life in the armed forces and blend this with experience of the criminal justice and charity sectors: we understand the challenge faced by veterans who we work with and know how to navigate policing and courts systems, while helping veterans to find work – a huge confidence boost, which often allows them to take back control of their lives.

Since 2014, we have worked with over 5000 veterans. For those 'at risk of arrest' we've diverted 75% away from the criminal justice system pre-charge. Where veterans have been charged, reoffending rates are between 5% and 9% - a huge improvement on the MoJ's proven reoffending rate of 29%. We currently work with 18 of the 43 police forces in England and Wales and support veterans in the criminal justice system.

The difference we make to our veterans.

Our independently verified reoffending rates are well below the MoJ's published *proven reoffending statistics* of 29%. Evaluation of our work in Norfolk & Suffolk and Humberside, saw rates of 4.8% and 8.4% respectively. We have also had great success helping veterans leaving prison to find accommodation, employment and stability.

- 81% - of Project Nova veterans stated their mental health and well being has improved since working with Project Nova.
- 73% - of Project Nova veterans improved their relationships with friends and community.
- 79% - of project Nova veterans improved their anger management.

We provide specialist support to veterans on the HMPPS CFO3 programme in the North East, Yorkshire & Humberside and the East of England. We are also identifying the impact of onset Mental & Physical Health issues due to service within the Veteran community, e.g. PTSD, Transition and a whole host of Mental & Physical Health conditions that may well contribute to reoffending. Project Nova has a very close working relationship with NHS Liaison and Diversion services, TILS & CTS and have been instrumental in shaping the new HIS service.

How we do this

Project Nova provides veterans with hands on, practical support in the following ways:

- End to end support through the Criminal Justice journey. Including liaising with the Police, NHS Liaison & Diversion teams, HMPPS, NPS, CRC, HMCTS Defence teams and CPS.
- Assistance to access housing, including veteran specific support.
- Access to employment related training grants and education from military charities.
- Facilitating the access to specialist mental and physical health services the TILS and CTS NHS service

For every veteran referred to us, our Project Nova Support Team, carry out an initial phone assessment, which in turn facilitates a home visit by a Project Nova Coordinator, where a Full Needs Assessment is carried out. This looks at the veteran's life pre-service; their military career; and how they have managed after leaving the military. This forms the basis of a care plan, between the veteran, the Coordinator and a Justice Outcome Star is commenced and revisited every 3 months.

Should the veteran appear in court, we provide a letter to the Clerk to the Court, NPS & Defence solicitor outlining areas of concern from the Needs Assessment and the support available to the veteran to reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

Our Project Nova Support Team provide ongoing support to our veterans, checking on their welfare and effectiveness of referrals to partner organisations. We retain close working links to our referral partners, to refine their support. While our Coordinators maintain regular contact with the veteran, including to community benefit projects. We assume responsibility for each veteran's journey with a network of trusted partners to deliver timely and appropriate support. This helps our veterans to engage with Community Benefit programmes, which boost self-esteem and reduce social isolation during their journey.

A recent shift has seen Project Nova begin to work in the Community Space early, pre-offence and police involvement. This is proving to be very effective. It also means that referrals, which traditionally came from the police following an arrest, now come from a wider ranges of sources e.g. community benefit projects, as well as a potential Community Rehabilitation Company referral for Rehabilitation Activity Requirement days.

[Project Nova - RFEA](#)

Cambridge Rape Crisis launch Live Chat

When is the Live Chat service open?

The Live Chat is open on Fridays, 10am – 12.30pm.

What is the Live Chat service?

If you need to talk, you can chat with one of our Live Chat volunteers during open hours.

It is an online service where you have up to 45 minutes to chat with one of our trained women and non-binary volunteers via text.

During the session, the volunteer will create a safe space for you to talk, and we will listen to whatever you want to say, at your pace. We will help you to find ways of expressing difficult feelings and to talk about difficult situations, without offering advice or telling you what to do.

We can ask questions and help you explore your options, and if you ask us for information about other forms of support, we can help provide this too.

Who is the service for?

Our Live Chat service is available for women and girls of all ages and backgrounds who have been subjected to, or are survivors of, any form of rape, child sexual abuse or any form of sexual violence. It doesn't matter when this abuse happened, whether recently or a long time ago, we are here for you.

This includes those women and girls who are trans.

It is also available to non-binary individuals who have complex gender identities which include 'woman'.

We are also here for anyone who is supporting a female survivor, personally or professionally.

How do I start and end a chat?

You can start a chat by clicking the green 'Chat live with us' at the bottom right of your screen. You can end a chat with us whenever you like, by clicking the cross at the top right of the chat box, and the window will disappear.

[Live Chat | Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre](#)

Family Court Rapid Consultation

Nuffield Family Justice Observatory is continuing its work to support a system wide understanding of how family justice practice has been shaped by COVID-19.

Now that social distancing restrictions are starting to be relaxed, we have been asked by the President of the Family Division [to undertake a further rapid consultation](#) to glean insights that will inform how the courts should operate during the 'recovery' period.

From 10 June to 27 June we will be carrying out [a short survey](#) to ask all those involved in the family justice system about what aspects of working remotely should be retained, what problems continue to be encountered, and how best to address these.

This consultation is open to anyone with experience of the family court or court of protection during the pandemic - public and private family law proceedings, including proceedings in relation to financial remedies.

IDVA Vacancies

Following additional funding, we are seeking to expand our team of IDVAs.

You would work as part of a large experienced and committed team of IDVAs, who work across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough supporting clients to increase their safety. We would provide you with full support including in working towards the Safelives IDVA qualification.

Currently we have a number of specialist roles available, working with our housing colleagues and supporting victims in safe accommodation, across health services, and in courts. We are also looking for IDVAs working specifically with men and with local BAME communities. The housing posts will require some work out of office hours and at weekends.

“Being an IDVA is a challenging but very rewarding, if your goal is job satisfaction then become an IDVA and help to make a difference” – Cambs IDVA

If successful at interview we would seek to match you with the most appropriate role. You will be experienced in supporting people who are experiencing difficulties in their lives, and work in a trauma informed way, being mindful of the range of challenges your clients may be facing. Along with a passion for supporting victims of domestic abuse, you will have a range of transferrable skills. You will be joining a dynamic and experienced team of IDVAs and be working within the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership Team.

Interview dates for these posts will be 5th and 6th of July 2021.

For more information and to apply, please visit

[https://www.publicsectorjobseast.co.uk/Independent Domestic Violence Advisers - Various-Chord Park - Godmanchester?jobId=23438&JobIndex=72&categoryList=&minsal=0&maxsal=150000&workingpattern=&keywords=&employee=-1&postcode=&Distance=0&AdvertiseOn=0](https://www.publicsectorjobseast.co.uk/Independent%20Domestic%20Violence%20Advisers%20-%20Various-Chord%20Park%20-%20Godmanchester?jobId=23438&JobIndex=72&categoryList=&minsal=0&maxsal=150000&workingpattern=&keywords=&employee=-1&postcode=&Distance=0&AdvertiseOn=0)

Full-time Outreach Support Worker vacancy

Cambridge Women’s Aid are currently looking for a full-time outreach support worker to join our team in providing practical and emotional support to women affected by domestic abuse.

You will understand the dynamics and impact of domestic abuse and how best to support survivors. Knowledge of help available to survivors of abuse is needed plus the ability to develop supportive relationships with women whilst maintaining strong professional boundaries. This is an enormously rewarding role in which you can make a real difference in women’s lives.

This post is fixed term for a minimum of one year in the first instance. Currently you will work from home, but normally the job is based in Cambridge City with some travel across the county and is paid at NJC pay scale 19-24, £25,481 - £28,672 p.a for a 37 hour week plus a 5% pension contribution. We are open to discussion about flexible hours and/or location where feasible.

How to Apply - Women only need apply under schedule 9 (Part 1) of the Equality Act 2010.

The closing date for applications is midday on Thursday 24th June 2021. However, we are open to interviewing earlier if we find the right person.

For more information and to apply, please download the application pack at this link: <https://cambridgewa.org.uk/blog.php>

Workplace Domestic Violence Champion

In this role at East Cambridgeshire District Council you will be the point of contact for employees that are suffering from domestic abuse and to sign post and support employees and their families where Domestic Abuse has been disclosed.

You will help to assist the Housing and Community Advice Manager and Housing Options Team Leader in administration tasks to achieve the DAHA accreditation. Arrange training needs in relation to Domestic Abuse for employees of the Authority and be involved in raising awareness and enhance overall level of knowledge within the Authority.

This post is for a 12-month fixed term contract opportunity for 18.5 per week. Any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Services check.

For more information and to apply [https://www.publicsectorjobseast.co.uk/WORKPLACE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CHAMPION \(PART TIME\) \(FIXED TERM\)-The Grange?jobId=23475&JobIndex=1&categoryList=&minsal=0&maxsal=150000&workingpattern=&keywords=&employee=-1&postcode=&Distance=0&AdvertiseOn=0](https://www.publicsectorjobseast.co.uk/WORKPLACE%20DOMESTIC%20VIOLENCE%20CHAMPION%20(PART%20TIME)%20(FIXED%20TERM)-The%20Grange?jobId=23475&JobIndex=1&categoryList=&minsal=0&maxsal=150000&workingpattern=&keywords=&employee=-1&postcode=&Distance=0&AdvertiseOn=0)