



Outcome 4

Fewer people experience domestic abuse in Scottish Borders



Outcome 4 - journey

- Police Scotland and VAW Partnership Coordinator agreed a range of key messages that could encourage communities to “reach in” to enable more survivors in Scottish Borders to know about specialist services at an earlier stage
- linked to wider prevention messages, and offering communities a way of becoming part of the solution
- to speak to survivors to promote the message of their community/support networks being supportive
- To remove some of the well evidenced barriers to disclosure
- To dispel myths about asking/enquiring



Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy

Launched 2016, refreshed 2023

- ✓ Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls.
- ✓ Women and girls thrive as equal citizens - socially, culturally, economically and politically.
- ✓ Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people.
- ✓ Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls, and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

What is the problem we're trying to solve?

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) damages health and wellbeing, limits freedom and potential and is a violation of human rights.

Risks, dangers and harms caused by VAWG to individuals, families, communities and societies can be complex. In some cases, long term or even lifelong levels of support from specialist or universal services are required to provide safety, security and recovery. This can only be provided through considerable public spend and investment in informed, safe and sustainable specialist and universal service responses.

There remains a lack of shared understanding that it is women's inequality in society that is a cause and consequence of VAWG. Gender inequality continues to be rooted in society and tolerated.

Progress made towards equality targets has recently been inhibited by the impacts of the covid pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

While all women, children and young people are at risk of experiencing harm from VAWG, people with protected characteristics face increased levels of risk or both experiencing and accessing appropriate support for VAWG.

Perpetrators of VAWG may not be held accountable for their choices and the harms they cause and may not be robustly supported to change their attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours.

What will we do to tackle this problem?

We are committed to adopting an evidence-based approach to identifying the specific activities that will be delivered as part of this strategy.

Our review of the existing evidence on 'what works' to prevent and eradicate VAWG along with consultation and engagement with experts by experience and profession has informed our commitment to prioritise actions which will:

- Prevent VAWG before it occurs
- Support early intervention
- Build a broad and shared understanding across our society and communities of what VAWG is and how it impacts those who experience it, its impact on society more generally, the scale of the problem and what causes it
- Build political, institutional, sectoral, organisational, community and personal commitment and contribution to the prevention and tackling of VAWG
- Hold perpetrators of VAWG to account, supporting change where possible
- Deliver sustainable, informed and safe specialist and universal service responses for victims/survivors that is holistic and meets the victim's individual needs
- Promote an intersectional approach to preventing, recognising and responding to the compounding inequalities and risks some women, children and young people may experience

What outcomes do we want to achieve?

Short-term outcomes

People have increase understanding of the causes, consequences and appropriate responses to VAWG.

People develop an understanding of positive, safe and healthy relationships from an early age.

Policy and practice adopts a gender lens to addressing the inequality women and girls experience at different ages and stages of life.

Fewer people adhere to harmful gender stereotypes.

Women, children and young people affected by VAWG are identified early and receive the support they need, at the time they need it.

Men and boys have an increased understanding of positive, healthy and safe relationships.

Men who perpetrate VAWG are identified at an early stage.

Medium-term outcomes

Tolerance of VAWG is reduced and people are more likely to challenge VAWG.

Power, decision-making and material resources are more equally distributed between men and women.

Women and girls are safe, respected and equal in our communities.

Women, children and young people's safety and wellbeing needs are being met.

Women, children and young people are supported to recover from the violence, abuse and trauma they have experienced.

Men and boys who perpetrate VAWG change their harmful behaviours, and are supported to do so.

Men who perpetrate VAWG are held to account by the justice system.

Long-term outcomes

Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls.

Women and girls thrive as equal citizens – socially, culturally, economically and politically.

Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people.

Men reject all forms of violence against women and girls, and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

What is our overall vision?

A strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetrate it.

How will we do it?

Lived Experience

The voices of women, children and young people with lived experience of VAWG will be listened to and respected, and will be used to shape policy and practice.

Workforce Care, Support and Development

Professionals working within universal and specialist services will have the knowledge, skills and support they need to effectively respond to victims/survivors.

Trauma-Informed and Person-Centred

The systems and services that victims/survivors come into contact with will be person-centred and trauma-informed, and will address the additional barriers some victims/survivors may face to accessing support.

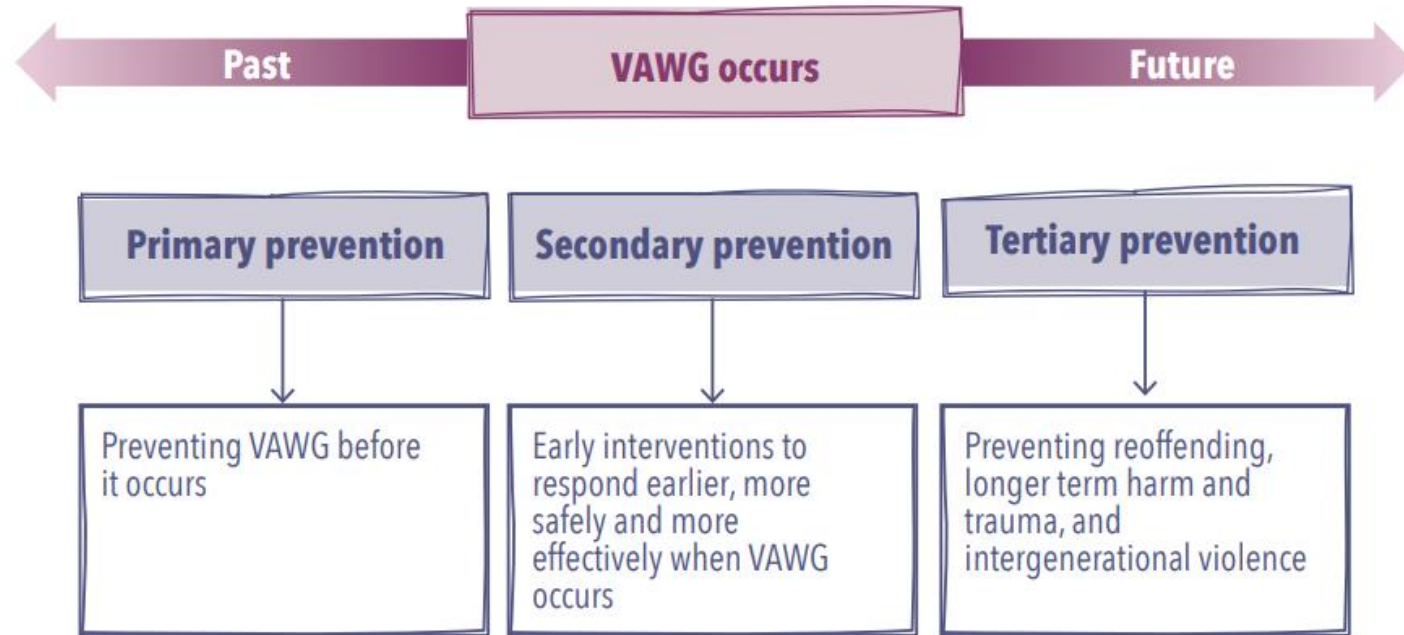
Evidence and Data

We will take an evidence-based approach to investing in systems and services that will improve outcomes for women, children and young people, and will use evidence and data to measure progress and performance.

Collective Leadership

There will be strong collective leadership at a local and national level across all key policy agendas that have a role to play in improving outcomes for women, children and young people affected by VAWG.

A public health approach



Equally Safe 2023 – role of CPP's

Community planning partnerships: In line with the principles underpinning the Verity House Agreement, community planning partnerships (CPP) are recognised as a critical mechanism for the alignment of resource locally. Focused on prevention and early intervention, CPPs support the delivery of our shared priorities. Bringing together local public services and the communities they serve, offers powerful potential to address often deep-rooted causes of inequalities, and to use preventative approaches to manage future demands on crisis intervention services. The statutory duty placed upon public bodies to actively address inequalities via the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 provides added impetus and a major focus to address one of the most significant areas of inequality in society. Some CPP activities already reflect a strong focus on improving outcomes for women, children, and young people affected by VAWG. Strengthening this will be key to the successful delivery of this strategy.

Domestic Abuse – the crime?

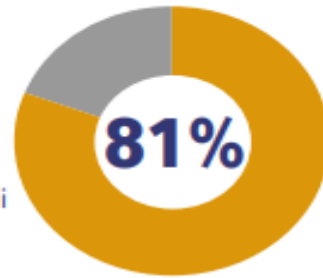
- ✓ 88% of all recorded domestic abuse incidents occurred in a home or dwelling
- ✓ Domestic incidents account for 24% of all violent crime in Scotland, and accounts for 20% of police business, with police attending a domestic incident every 9 minutes.
- ✓ It is the most often repeated and most under-reported of all violent crime
- ✓ In 2021/22 there were 1200 reported incidents of domestic abuse in Scottish Borders
- ✓ Over 1000 referrals to specialist services including Rape Crisis, Border Women's Aid, Children1st and DAAS.
- ✓ New DASA legislation (2019) makes coercive control a crime





64,807 domestic abuse incidents were recorded by Police Scotland in 2021-22.

Around **four out of five** of these incidents had a female victim and a male perpetrator.^{vii}



The 2019/20 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey found that **just under one-sixth (16%)** of those who experienced partner abuse in the 12 months prior to interview said that the police came to know about the most recent (or only) incident.^{viii}

What do we know about reporting:

- Repeated engagement with services increases safety
- Repeated engagement with service builds confidence and empowers clients to take different decisions
- Reporting “opens” a number of different doors for clients, often previously unavailable
- Technology increases opportunities to reach out safely
- Rurally isolated survivors have limited access to traditional access points
- Survivors choose the safest way for them to reach out
- Myth that survivors need to report to Police to get a service
- People are scared to ask for many reasons: survivors just want to be asked!

What do we know about reporting

Whole Lives Scotland 2020



Most survivors (87%) told someone about the abuse



Survivors in rural areas experienced abuse for nearly 2 years longer than those in cities and towns (7 years vs 5 years 3 months)

Experience of disclosure

Disabled survivors experienced abuse for one year longer before they disclosed to someone (5 years vs 4 years)



Survivors in rural locations experienced abuse for 2.5 years longer before disclosing than survivors in cities (5 years 6 months vs 3 years)

Average time before disclosure
4 years



Barriers varied for different groups of survivors

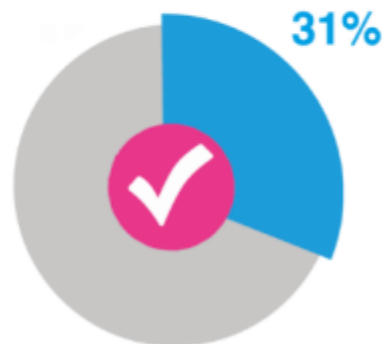
The majority of survivors had told someone about the domestic abuse. On average, survivors experienced four years of abuse before telling someone and then told four different people.

One third of survivors (31%) had disclosed to a work colleague about the abuse.



. Most frequently, survivors disclosed to family members (62%) and friends (58%). Disclosures to police (41%), counsellors (40%), GPs (38%), lawyers (36%), and colleagues (31%) were also common

One third of survivors accessed a specialist domestic abuse service.



Survivors who did not access a specialist service still told three people about the abuse, on average

Half (51%) of the survivors who did not reach a specialist service said they didn't know what support was available.



Next Steps – for consideration

- Consider draft document
- Agree target audience – “Community”/agencies?
- Consider best format
- Consider Recognise, Respond and Refer
- Key messages: “do you know someone or “are you experiencing”
- Level and extent of information: local, national
- Signposting to existing resources eg webpages would require updating
- Role of CPP stakeholders
- Budget implications



Thank you

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