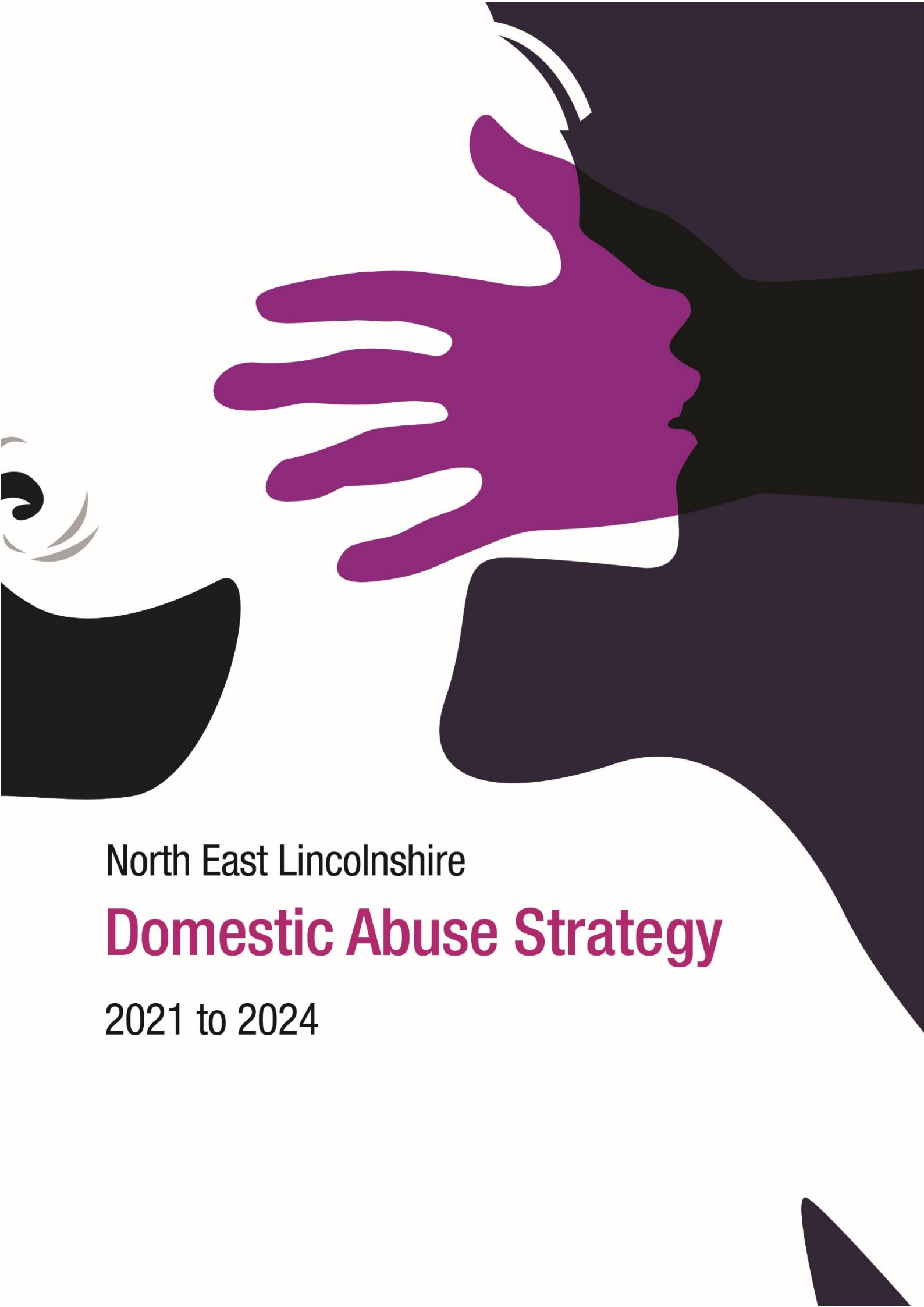




North East Lincolnshire

Domestic Abuse Strategy

2021 to 2024

North East Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021 to 2024

Foreword

Domestic Abuse is a serious challenge for North East Lincolnshire and is a complex problem interwoven with a range of social needs, of which each has the potential to exacerbate the others. Research has shown that each victim will experience a unique set of circumstances and we know to our social and financial cost about the harmful effects it has on individuals and families. This growing depth of understanding means that we are compelled to build on our collaborative work to tackle abuse in all its forms and reduce the disastrous impact on local people's lives.

In recent years, we have made many positive steps to improve our response to domestic abuse in North East Lincolnshire, but we know we must go further.

We must build on what we know works and in the design of this strategy, key stakeholders have been consulted, engaging in open, transparent, and reflective conversation to identify ways to improve our multi-agency approaches. Importantly we have also consulted with those who use our services. Associated local programmes have been linked in, and national good practice considered to ensure we work collectively toward the prevention and elimination of domestic abuse in all its forms.

This 3-year Domestic Abuse Strategy reflects the breadth of commitment from all local stakeholders to tackle domestic abuse, recognising that it is everyone's business.

It will inform our commissioning approach, our allocation of resources and our workforce development activities in the coming years to increase the effectiveness of our work and improve the lives of local residents affected by this harmful and destructive force afflicting our local area.

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1. What Is Domestic Abuse?

The existing cross-government definition for Domestic Abuse is;

“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. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- *Psychological*
- *Physical*
- *Sexual*
- *Financial*
- *Emotional*

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.”

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called ‘Honour’-Based Abuse (HBA), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender, ethnic group, or socio-economic group.

While the cross-government definition above applies to those aged 16 or above, ‘Adolescent to parent violence and abuse’ (APVA) can equally involve children under 16 as well as over 16. There is currently no legal definition of adolescent to parent violence and abuse, however, it is increasingly recognised as a form of domestic violence and abuse.

New Cross-Statutory Definition of Domestic Abuse

A landmark Domestic Abuse Bill was passed and became law on 29th April 2021.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 will create, for the first time, a cross-government definition of domestic abuse, to ensure that domestic abuse is properly understood, considered unacceptable and actively challenged across statutory agencies and in public attitudes.

The statutory definition of domestic abuse will be based on the existing cross-government definition and is in two parts. The first part deals with the relationship between the abuser and the abused and the second part defines what constitutes abusive behaviour.

It sets out two criteria governing the relationship between the abuser and the abused. The first criteria states that both persons must be aged 16 or over. Abusive behaviour directed at a person under 16 would be dealt with as child abuse rather than domestic abuse. The second criteria states that both persons must be “personally connected”. The definition ensures that different types of relationships are captured.

It lists broad categories which capture a range of different abusive behaviours, including physical, emotional, and economic abuse. Economic abuse has been specifically included to demonstrate that it is a distinct type of abuse.

Statutory guidance will be issued to provide further details on the different types of abuse and abusive behaviours that sit within those categories. The guidance will also recognise that the majority of victims of abuse are female.

The Domestic Abuse Act also recognises that domestic abuse can impact on a child who sees, hears, or experiences the effects of the abuse and treats such children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right where they are related to either the abuser or the abused.

A document setting out the commencement date of the new statutory definition and the provisions of each section of the Domestic Abuse Act can be found here: [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Commencement Schedule](#).

Further information on the new statutory definition of domestic abuse can be found in a [factsheet](#) on the GOV.UK website.

Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Domestic abuse remains high on the national agenda with the Government committing to support all victims of domestic abuse. The [Domestic Abuse Bill \(Home Office 2020\)](#) passed both Houses of Parliament and was signed into law on 29th April 2021. The Government is committed to raising awareness and understanding about the devastating impact of domestic abuse on victims and their families, further improving the effectiveness of the justice system in providing protection for victims of domestic abuse and bringing perpetrators to justice, strengthening the support for victims of abuse by statutory agencies. The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) will help transform the response to domestic abuse, helping to prevent offending, protect victims and ensure they have the support they need.

To help victims of domestic abuse, 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 no-fatal strangulation;
- Extend the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse;
- Extend the ‘revenge porn’ offence to cover 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;
- 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.

To 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).

An overarching [factsheet](#) on the aims of the Domestic Abuse Act can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Duty to Provide Safe Accommodation

One of the key measures introduced by the Domestic Abuse Act which has a direct implication for local authorities in England is the duty on local authorities to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.

The exact commencement date of the new duty has not yet been confirmed, though it is expected to come into force during summer 2021. A document setting out the commencement dates of the provisions of this, and other provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act, can be found here: [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 Commencement Schedule](#).

Local authorities were asked to begin work on implementing measures to meet the requirements of the new duty from 1st April 2021 and North East Lincolnshire Council has already begun making relevant preparations, in partnership with key stakeholders. This Strategy will ensure that wider measures to tackle domestic abuse across the Borough compliment the requirements of the new duty.

A [factsheet](#) containing further information on the duty around local authority support for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation is available on the GOV.UK website.

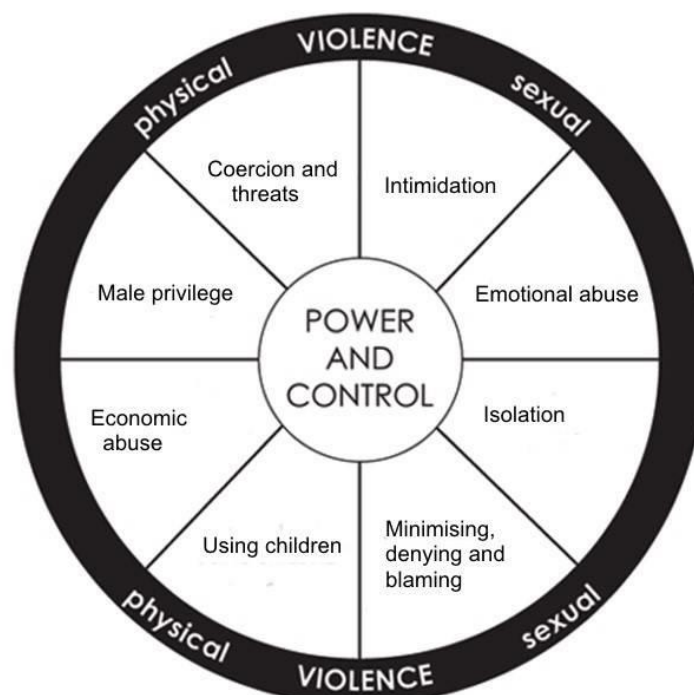
The Duluth Power and Control Wheel

Relationship violence is a combination of a number of different tactics of abuse that are used to maintain *power and control* – which are the words at the very center of the Duluth Power and Control Wheel.

The Power and Control Wheel is based on the widely recognised Duluth Model which was developed in the early 1980's by Ellen Pence and Michael Paymar. It was founded with the focus on male violence against women to take account of the gendered nature of domestic abuse. The fundamentals of the wheel are still relevant now.

The wheel shows the common themes and experiences of victims who have lived in an abusive relationship. It includes examples of the range of tactics used by abusers, showing that abuse may or may not be physical violence. The center of the wheel is surrounded by different types of behaviours that an abusive partner uses in order to maintain this power and control.

Further information about the Duluth Model and the Duluth Power and Control Wheel can be found on the Duluth Model website, at www.theduluthmodel.org.



Using intimidation

- Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures
- Smashing things
- Destroying her property
- Abusing pets
- Displaying weapons

Using emotional abuse

- Putting her down
- Making her feel bad about herself
- Calling her names
- Making her think she is crazy
- Playing mind games
- Humiliating her
- Making her feel guilty

Using isolation

- Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes
- Limiting her outside involvement
- Using jealousy to justify actions

Minimising, denying, and blaming

- Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously
- Saying the abuse didn't happen
- Shifting responsibility for abusive behaviour
- Saying she caused it

Using children

- Making her feel guilty about the children
- Using the children to relay messages
- Using visitation to harass her

- Threatening to take the children away

Using male privilege

- Treating her like a servant
- Making all the big decisions
- Acting like the “master of the castle”
- Being the one to define men’s and women’s roles

Using economic abuse

- Preventing her from getting or keeping a job
- Making her ask for money
- Giving her an allowance
- Taking her money
- Not letting her know about or have access to family income

Using coercion and threats

- Making and/ or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her
- Threatening to leave, to commit suicide, or to report her to the authorities
- Making her drop charges
- Making her do illegal things

2. Introduction

Domestic Abuse has no place in North East Lincolnshire. It causes untold harm to victims and their families and leaves a legacy behind that often changes people's lives. Put simply, it should not be tolerated as part of our local culture in any shape or form.

Local agencies in North East Lincolnshire have worked tirelessly to support victims across the Borough (the vast majority of which are women and girls). We all recognise that there is still much work to be done in order to:

- Safeguard victims and their families comprehensively;
- Reduce the number of repeat occurrences;
- Reinforce to perpetrators that domestic abuse is unacceptable and will be dealt with swiftly and effectively using the full weight of the criminal justice system;
- Address the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.

The current approach addresses these challenges by working together and putting in place real and lasting change. We have strengthened our partnership working and invested time and effort in areas where we need to improve. Research indicates that domestic abuse is prevalent in all neighbourhoods and it is not confined to particular communities, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or social status. With this in mind we ensure that all domestic abuse provision is tailored to meet the needs of all residents of North East Lincolnshire, including all groups with protected characteristics.

3. Incidence and Demand

The Picture Nationally

- Year ending March 2019, 218 women were murdered by a partner or ex-partner – 85% of partner related homicides (Office of National Statistics)
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/domesticabuseprevalenceandvictimcharacteristicsappendixtables>
- Year ending March 2019, 1.32 million domestic abuse-related incidents were reported to Police, of which 746,219 were deemed to be domestic abuse-related criminal offences (Crime Survey for England and Wales)
- Overall, in the year ending 31 March 2017, domestic abuse is estimated to have cost over £66 billion in England and Wales (Home Office 2018)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/772180/horr107.pdf

The Cost of Domestic Abuse

The cost of domestic abuse can be categorised into three areas:

- 1) Anticipation (expenditure on protective and preventative measures);
- 2) Consequence (property damage, physical and emotional harms, lost output, health, and victim services);
- 3) Response (police and criminal justice system).

Table 1: Total costs of domestic abuse in England and Wales for 2016/17 (£ millions)

Costs in Anticipation	Costs as a consequence				Costs in response				Total
	Physical and emotional harm	Lost output	Health services	Victim services	Police costs	Criminal legal	Civil legal	Other	
£6m	£47,287m	£14,098m	£2,333m	£724m	£1,257m	£336m	£140m	£11m	£66,192m

Table 2: Unit costs of domestic abuse in England and Wales for 2016/17¹

Costs in Anticipation	Costs as a consequence				Costs in response				Total
	Physical and emotional harm	Lost output	Health services	Victim services	Police costs	Criminal legal	Civil legal	Other	
£5	£24,300	£7,245	£1,200	£370	£645	£170	£70	£5	£34,015

The Picture Locally

In North East Lincolnshire there were 5,327 incidents of domestic abuse reported to the Police between March 2019 and April 2020. That is an average of 14-15 incidents every day. However, many incidents are never reported to the Police and it is generally accepted that the number of incidents of domestic abuse is under-reported with national research indicating that it takes on average between 2 and a half to 3 years before a victim seeks support.

This makes the recording of incidence of domestic abuse far from straightforward and it is clear that looking solely at the number of incidents reported to the Police does not give an accurate indication of domestic abuse incidence in the Borough. It is therefore important to consider data from a wide range of other sources, including referrals to specialist domestic abuse services and key partner agencies, as well as repeat victimisation and repeat and serial offending.

The information below gives a summary of some of the data highlights for domestic abuse in the Borough during the last financial year.

DOMESTIC ABUSE:

A snapshot of the data in North East Lincolnshire for 2019/20

<u>Humberside Police</u> • 5,327 incidents of domestic abuse reported to the police in 19/20 compared to 5,502 in 18/19 (a 3% decrease) • 3,355 crimes were recorded against the reported incidents. This is an average of 1.6 incidents per recorded crimes • On average, 86% of all high-risk domestic abuse crimes resulted in arrest	<u>Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)</u> • 548 cases heard in 19/20, compared to 430 in 18/19 (a 32% increase) • Repeat cases accounted for 34% of total cases (<i>this is within the SafeLives¹ recommended level of 28%-40%</i>) • 655 children identified as in household where there is a MARAC victim <i>1. A leading national domestic abuse charity</i>
<u>Support For Victims</u> • 3,457 contacts were made with victims at high risk of domestic abuse through the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor support service • 1,353 risk and safety initial assessments and reviews completed on individuals	<u>Support for Children affected by Domestic Abuse</u> • A total of 333 referrals were made to Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Service where the main category of referral was Domestic Abuse

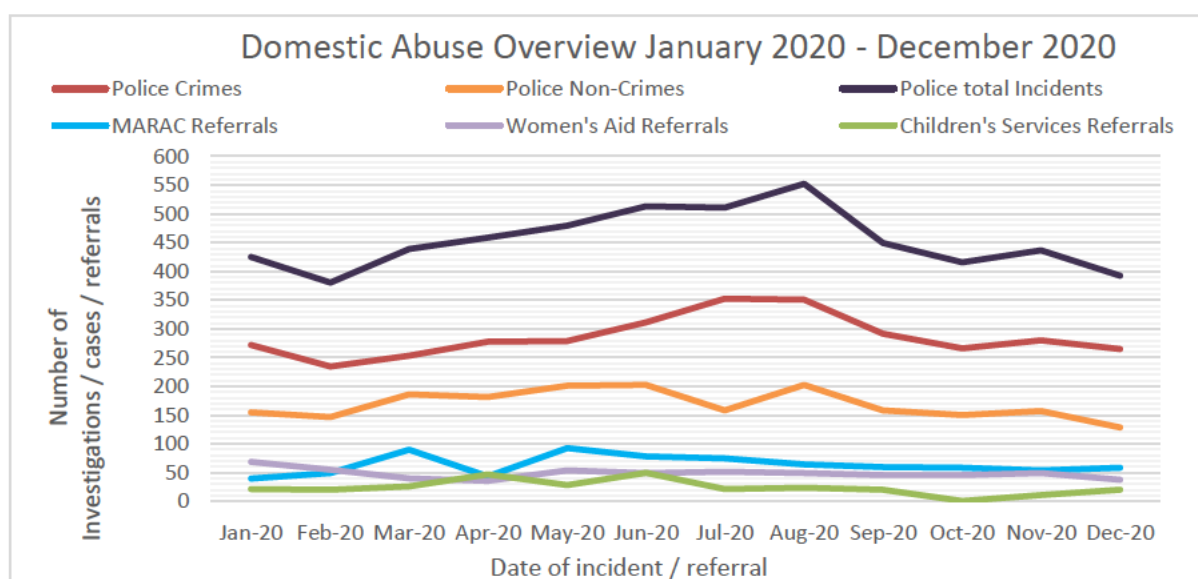
working with the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor service 647 referrals to service were accepted by Women's Aid¹ in 19/20, compared to 579 in 18/19 (a 12% increase) 158 women attended the Freedom Programme² (run by Women's Aid) in 19/20. - Most clients had attempted to leave their partner on average 1-5 times before accessing Women's Aid refuge and outreach services in 19/20 2. Women's Aid NEL provide refuge and outreach & resettlement support to victims at any level of risk 3. The Freedom Programme helps women and girls understand about how tactics, behaviours and rules are used to gain control in relationships and about the beliefs held by abusive men and how these are used to gain power and control over the victim.	- These made up an average³ of 9% of total referrals to North East Lincolnshire Council 'Front Door' 638 Operation Encompass⁴ disclosures were made, allowing Schools to offer relevant support to affected children 3. <i>Monthly figures averaged over the whole year.</i> 4. Operation Encompass disclosures allow Humberside Police to inform schools that a domestic abuse incident took place in the family home while the child was present the previous evening / weekend, giving the school context if a pupil is withdrawn or disrupted so they can support the child with increased understanding.
<u>Repeat Victims of Domestic Abuse⁵</u> 633 repeat victims of domestic abuse within the rolling year (averaged over 12 months) 5. <i>Someone who has reported two or more incidents of Domestic Abuse to the police within a 12-month period</i>	<u>Domestic Abuse Training</u> - A total of 362 practitioners received domestic abuse training - This included Levels 1 and 2 Domestic Abuse, E-learning, and Domestic Abuse Workshop sessions
<u>Repeat⁶ and Serial Offenders⁷</u> 692 repeat offenders of Domestic Abuse within the rolling year (averaged over 12 months) 588 serial offenders of Domestic Abuse within the rolling year (averaged over 12 months) 6. <i>Someone who is reported to have committed or threatened domestic abuse more than one against a victim in the last rolling 12-month period.</i> 7. <i>Someone who is listed as a domestic abuse suspect or offender, has more than one domestic abuse incident and has offended against two or more different domestic abuse victims within the last 3 years.</i>	<u>Non-Convicted Perpetrator Programme</u> The Re:Form⁸ programme has contacted and worked with: 57 Re:Form perpetrator cases (main programme) 77 Who's In Charge?⁹ Cases (supporting parents with an abusive child) 100% of participants in completed cases reported a positive change in behaviour 8. <i>Re:Form was a programme aimed at working with non-convicted perpetrators of domestic abuse to manage their offending behaviour and reduce the risk to victims and their children. A 2-year pilot ran from December 2018 to November 2020.</i> 9. <i>Who's In Charge? was an element of the overall Re:Form programme and was specifically aimed at supporting parents with an abusive child in the family home.</i>

Consultation and Mapping of Demand on Local Service Provision

Domestic abuse is cited as the most commonly occurring theme in North East Lincolnshire behind the demand across the whole of the system.

The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions put in place to reduce the spread of infection have had a huge impact on those affected by domestic abuse. While demand for some domestic abuse services reduced initially, it has since returned to pre-lockdown levels and has continued to rise, particularly in respect of those services supporting victims at the highest levels of risk. This has led to concerns that some victims are only reporting domestic abuse once the risk escalates.

Note: The references below to “lockdown” refer to national lockdown measures which were implemented from 23rd March 2020



Humberside Police

There has been a steady increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the Police in North East Lincolnshire throughout lockdown, peaking in August 2020, after which the rate began to decrease. When comparing data from Jan-March 2020 with data from April-Dec 2020, there has been 5% overall increase in the number of reported incidents of domestic abuse in North East Lincolnshire. During the peak in August 2020, Humberside Police reported there had been a 106% rise in high-risk cases across the South Bank (North and North East Lincolnshire) during lockdown.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

MARAC is a structured multi-agency process to ensure all necessary safety measures around high-risk victims and their families are in place.

Prior to lockdown, the number of cases being heard at MARAC was increasing year on year. Between April 2019 and March 2020 there were 548 cases heard at MARAC, which is a 27% increase from the previous year where 430 cases were heard.

Since the beginning of lockdown, there has been a change in the frequency of MARAC meetings which makes comparison of data more difficult. However, what is clear is that there has been an escalation in the number of cases heard at MARAC with on average 44 cases per month being heard during Jan-March 2020, and on average 62 cases per month being heard during April-Dec 2020.

Women's Aid

Women's Aid provide Refuge accommodation and Outreach and Resettlement support to victims and their children in North East Lincolnshire. They support victims at all levels of risk, though predominantly those at medium risk of domestic abuse.

At the beginning of lockdown there was a 37% reduction in the number of referrals being made to Women's Aid, based on a comparison of referrals figures for March and April 2020 compared to the previous two months and also the same period the previous year. Refuge is normally expected to be at around 90-95% capacity but was only at around 68% capacity as of the end of March 2020. This has since increased with referrals only slightly below the average pre-lockdown figures and Refuge back to normal/expected capacity, as at the end of November 2020. There was a slight dip in referrals December 2020, although this is in line with seasonal variations.

The impact of lockdown restrictions has also led to a change in type of referrals being received. Prior to lockdown (Jan-Feb 2020), around 57% of referrals were received via phone, website, Facebook, and email and around 39% were received via the drop-in sessions held in the community, with the remaining % being unrecorded. As we entered lockdown (March 2020) this split averaged at around 62% and 31% respectively (the remaining % being unrecorded), and

during lockdown (from April to December 2020), this split has averaged at around 85% and 15% respectively. Drop-in attendance has been particularly low throughout.

Support Provided to Children

During lockdown, the number of cases (children) referred to Children's Social Care where the main category of referral is domestic abuse increased to an average of 33 per month, compared to 22 per month pre-lockdown, with a spike of 49 cases in June 2020. In addition, the number of cases with domestic abuse as the main category of referral as a percentage of total cases referred to Children's Social Care was high in both April and June 2020.

Domestic abuse is cited as one of the core drivers of demand within Children's Services and practitioners are reporting anecdotally that it is present in over 95% of cases open to North East Lincolnshire Children's Services. In recent and continued dip sampling of re-referrals, domestic abuse was prevalent in all. The impact of Covid-19 and the lockdown restrictions has had a huge impact on demand with referrals to Children's Social Care increasing by an average of 66% during lockdown (between April-August 2020), compared to the previous three months (Jan-March 2020).

To add further context, in September 2020, there were 523 children and young people (cases) open at Early Help and Child In Need levels where domestic abuse was a factor. It is also estimated that approximately half of all children and young people (cases) open at the Child Protection Threshold of Need had domestic abuse as a factor. In addition, there were 615 contacts in relation to children and young people where domestic abuse was a factor where the threshold was not met for statutory Intervention.

A consultation was carried out as part of the strategy refresh which identified the need to ensure that children and families affected by domestic abuse can access relevant support services tailored to their individual need. Prevention of abuse is key to improving children's lives, reducing the need for services, and protecting children from harm.

A mapping exercise of service provision undertaken within North East Lincolnshire Children's Services identified that there was a general lack of

provision of prevention programmes outside of the interventions provided in the Locality Early Help Hubs. In order to address this gap in provision we need to look at integrating services with Early Help hubs whilst strengthening our partnership arrangements – from strategic plans to frontline practice – so that we can identify and respond to domestic abuse as early as possible in an effective, co-ordinated way.

North East Lincolnshire staff want to ensure that everything is done to protect children and young people from the impact of living with domestic abuse or being involved in abusive relationships. We know and see the effects of children witnessing domestic violence and how this impacts negatively on children's ability to thrive physically and mentally.

Early identification and getting early help means strengthening our first response so that all workers are able to identify domestic abuse and intervene at the earliest opportunity. The domestic abuse multi-agency approach is embedded into all aspects of prevention and early intervention in North East Lincolnshire and there is a continuing focus on workforce development so that children and young people are offered the best possible support. This includes working together alongside our statutory, voluntary and community sector partners to achieve success for our families.

We need to move to a culture where domestic abuse is culturally unacceptable and intervene before abuse starts. Prevention of abuse is key to improving lives and reducing the need for services. With our partner agencies we need to work together to further understand what works to prevent abuse and develop a preventative approach for sustainable positive change to reduce harm to ensure children and families in North East Lincolnshire have safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments.

What is evident from the incidence and demand data is that domestic abuse incidents are continuing to rise. This in turn means that there continues to be a high demand for services to support those affected by domestic abuse. It is therefore paramount that future service provision is focussed and targeted into areas of greatest need to prevent or reduce incidence of domestic abuse in the long-term.

4. Voice of Victims and their Children

Feedback provided by a range of local domestic abuse service providers, including audits, needs assessments and practice reviews, has been collated in order to ensure that real life accounts of victims and their children accessing support services are heard and understood. This provides valuable feedback on how local service provision can be improved to meet the needs of local people accessing support.

Victims accessing support have told us that:

- They knew little about local specialist domestic abuse support services available before accessing them, and most only heard about those services through Humberside Police.
- The length of time a victim experienced domestic abuse before seeking help varied on an individual basis. Some service-users may only experience domestic abuse after leaving their partner while others may experience domestic abuse for 20 or more months before accessing services.
- They did not always need support immediately but found it useful to know about the support services available in case they needed them in the future.
- The specialist support received from voluntary sector agencies was invaluable.
- The specialist support they received had helped them to realise they needed to get away from their situation and that it had also helped them to feel better.
- They would recommend specialist domestic abuse services to others who were going through a similar experience and would access it again in the future if further advice was needed.

Children provided with support have told us that:

- Taking part in a therapeutic programme made them feel nervous at first, but that it was not scary, and they made new friends. It was ‘fun’ and ‘exciting’ and they had a good time.
- Children who were provided with support told us that it made them feel strong and made it easier to talk to their mum because they got to spend time with them.
- *“DART* needs to carry on, so you get happy.”*
**The Domestic Abuse Recovery together (DART) programme is group therapy aimed at mum and child after mum has left a domestic abuse relationship.*

The parents of children affected by domestic abuse told us that:

- Taking part in a therapeutic programme with their child helped them to “grow and heal together” and strengthened their relationship.
- It gave their child a voice to speak about their emotions and helped their child to deal with feelings of anger and resentment.
- They learnt a lot by taking part in a programme as it helped them understand their child better and improve their parenting.

Perpetrators accessing support have told us that:

- Taking part in a perpetrator programme helped them recognise their previous behaviour was abusive and unacceptable.
- It also helped them recognise the impact their violent behaviour towards their ex/partner had on their children.
- Some are now able to recognise difficult situations and have learnt how to deal with them without being violent or abusive.
- Some indicate that the support they received has helped them to change their abusive behaviour.

Domestic Abuse Survivor Consultation

During October 2020, survivors of domestic abuse who had been working with Women's Aid were consulted on their experiences of contacting local domestic abuse support services.

When asked about finding information on locally available support services:

- 38% said they knew where to find out about local support services before seeking help, while 55% said they didn't (a further 7% were unsure).
- 55% answered 'yes' to it being easy to find out about locally available support services, while 24% answered 'no' (a further 21% were unsure).
- 31% of respondents reported having seen information on domestic abuse locally in a range of formats and at a variety of local venues.
- They wanted to see more information advertised 'everywhere': in public places, public buildings, and local shops, venues, and businesses. They wanted to see adverts on social media, TV, buses, and billboards.

When asked whether anything stopped them from getting or asking for help regarding the abuse:

- Many told us it was because they were 'scared', in 'fear', or due to 'shame'
- Many told us their abuser (partner/ex-partner) prevented them from getting help, either directly or through fear of the repercussions:
 - *"I was frightened my partner would find out"*
 - *"Partner telling me I wouldn't get any help"*
- Others were worried about social services getting involved:
 - *"Thinking social services would get involved with my children"*
 - *"Fear of what social services would do"*
- Several mentioned housing and/or money:
 - *"I didn't want to leave the home which I had helped to make, and I still loved my partner"*
- Other reasons given were:
 - *"I wasn't hit so didn't think it was domestic abuse"*
 - *"My parent's beliefs"*

When asked what their experience has been when contacting local support services for domestic abuse:

- 72.5% told us it was 'all good', 24% told us it was 'mostly good', and 3.5% told us it was 'mixed'
- A number of local services received a positive mention, including domestic abuse service providers, Police, drug and alcohol services, young people's services and even employment support services.

When asked what other services they would like to see made available locally to help people (adults) affected by domestic abuse they wanted:

- Better availability of local walk-in / drop-in centres and more 24hr services
- Education / awareness raising about domestic abuse
- Easier access to counselling and therapeutic services
- Programmes such as Freedom, to help victims learn about the reality of domestic abuse
- More services for young adults

When asked what other services they would like to see made available locally to children affected by domestic abuse they wanted:

- Awareness of domestic abuse in schools
- Counselling and therapy for children who have witnessed domestic abuse
- Self-worth / confidence building
- Someone for children to talk to about their feelings
- Support groups and support for children in schools and children's centres

When asked what one thing they would say to services who help victims and survivors of domestic abuse:

- 83% said something positive, such as 'thank you', 'you are amazing', 'you save lives' and 'keep up the good work'. Some of the most powerful responses were:
 - *"Thank you for helping me to feel my life is worth living"*
 - *"Thank you for saving my life"*
 - *"I don't know where I would be now without Women's Aid – probably dead, killed or committed suicide".*
- Other responses included: *"don't make cuts on funding", "educate people", "listen without judging".*

5. Achievements and Successes

There have been a number of achievements and successes since the strategy was last refreshed in 2018.

From 2018 - 2020 we have:

- Embedded Outcomes Based Accountability as a management framework enabling us to better understand the impact of the support we provided.
- Commenced work with the NSPCC “Together for Childhood” programme around a preventative approach to domestic abuse which has improved the practices within midwifery.
- Delivered Domestic Abuse Recovery Together (DART), a therapeutic programme for victims of domestic abuse and their children.
- Piloted a non-convicted perpetrator programme aimed at reducing perpetrator behaviour thereby managing and reducing risk to victims and their families, which concluded in November 2020.
- Embedded Operation Encompass throughout all schools across North East Lincolnshire. This disclosure scheme provides schools with timely information about Police attended domestic abuse in the family home so they can support children experiencing domestic abuse whilst in school.
- Established a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference Steering Group (MARAC Steering Group) to develop, manage and monitor the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process, which ensures all necessary safety measures around high-risk victims, and their families (children) are in place through a structured multi-agency process.
- Established a pilot Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordinating (MATAC) process, aimed at addressing the offending behaviour of repeat and serial perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- Consistently published and communicated domestic abuse messages via a range of physical publication and social media methods to raise awareness of domestic abuse issues.

- Launched the new Safer North East Lincolnshire [website](#), providing guidance and support for victims of domestic abuse.
- Established a project providing intensive support for victims of domestic abuse with complex needs which includes a children's case worker to support their children.
- Put in place arrangements to ensure domestic abuse service provision has continued in full throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

6. Vision and Strategic Priorities

“We will reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse across North East Lincolnshire and ensure that where it does occur, we will provide the right support and services to minimise the short-term and long-term impact it has on local victims, children and their families”.

We will continue to take a three-pronged strategic approach by:

PREVENT

- Cultivating an environment that prevents domestic abuse and brings about a continual reduction in incidents across North East Lincolnshire, by raising awareness of what constitutes an abusive relationship, encouraging victims to report earlier, and tackling the culture of acceptance.

PROTECT AND PROVIDE

- Nurturing an environment where high quality, wide-ranging support services are accessible, as well as operationally and financially sustainable, in order to protect and provide for victims and their families on their journey to recovery.

PURSUE

- Deploying the full weight of the criminal justice system to bring perpetrators swiftly to justice, whilst also offering opportunities to those who want to change their behaviour.

7. What We Will Do – The Outcomes We Will Achieve

What We Will Do:	How We Will Do It:	What Difference Will We See?	When Will We See it?
P R E V E N T			
Raise awareness of domestic abuse across the Borough through sustained and consistent domestic abuse messages.	Develop a comprehensive, targeted, rolling communications and marketing plan supported by appropriate funding.	Our Community is aware of domestic abuse, its impact and where to seek help and rejects social acceptance of domestic abuse.	Years 1-3
Offer an effective Target Hardening programme which increases the safety of victims of domestic abuse.	Implement a sustainable Target Hardening programme which meets the needs of local victims and contributes to the prevention of homelessness.	Victims of domestic abuse feel safe to remain in their own homes or their dispersed / move-on accommodation.	Year 1
Ensure support is provided to victims of 'Honour'-Based Abuse (HBA) (including Forced Marriage (FM) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM))	Include 'Honour'-Based Abuse as part of wider workforce development and ensure tailored provision is in place when required.	Victims of 'Honour'-Based Abuse are identified early and supported appropriately.	Year 1
Ensure support is provided to male victims of domestic abuse.	Include male victim support as part of wider workforce development and ensure tailored provision is in place when required.	Male victims of domestic abuse are identified early and supported appropriately.	Year 1
Review the existing domestic abuse core data set.	Establish a multi-agency task and finish group to review and develop new measures that clearly reflect the aspirations of the strategy.	More accurate and informative data that enables us to measure the success of the strategy implementation resulting in improved outcomes for victims of domestic abuse and their families.	Year 1

What We Will Do:	How We Will Do It:	What Difference Will We See?	When Will We See it?
Research potential preventative interventions around domestic abuse for a better understanding of what works.	Work with NSPCC Together for Childhood programme around "Theory of Change".	Suggested practice around domestic abuse is trialled, implemented, and evaluated.	Year 2
Raise the skills and confidence of our workforce across the locality to implement best practice.	Implement a sustainable Workforce Development Plan which draws on best practice, learning from audits and incorporates the latest learning and methodology.	Strengthened local arrangements and improved practice including a confident locality workforce equipped with the skills required to better identify and support those affected by domestic abuse.	Year 2
Focus on changing attitudes, preventing domestic abuse, and promoting healthy relationships in children and young people.	Implement prevention and early intervention activities that are embedded within a range of settings including primary and secondary education, Locality Family Hubs, and midwifery, Health Visiting and School Nursing services.	Children and young people have healthier and improved attitudes towards relationships and are less likely to perpetrate or become a victim of domestic abuse.	Year 2
Increase the use of 'professional curiosity' in all practitioners to encourage earlier identification or disclosure of domestic abuse.	Embed 'professional curiosity' as best practice across all agencies and provide referral pathways for practitioners to signpost victims.	Individuals experiencing domestic abuse are identified or disclose sooner and the time it takes them to access support is reduced. There will be strengthened coordination and information sharing arrangements between all agencies working with families at risk of domestic abuse.	Year 2
Take an Informed approach to commissioning domestic abuse services.	Implement a shared multi-agency commissioning model that demonstrates invest to save principles supported by robust data, analysis, and evaluation, with capability to 'scale up' provision / interventions that are proven to work.	Commissioned services that clearly demonstrate impact and are evidence based.	Year 2

What We Will Do:	How We Will Do It:	What Difference Will We See?	When Will We See it?
Use Public Health insights to inform our approach to tackling domestic abuse.	Work actively with local Public Health colleagues to ensure that appropriate data informs our practice.	Public health data will be used to better identify targeted opportunities to prevent and tackle domestic abuse.	Year 2
PROTECT AND PROVIDE			
Ensure individuals, families, and children affected by domestic abuse are aware of and are able to access relevant support services tailored to their individual level of need.	Develop and implement a menu of services available to support individuals, families, and children affected by domestic abuse.	Individuals, families, and children affected by domestic abuse receive relevant support in a format appropriate to their needs.	Year 1
Provide appropriate housing-related support for victims of domestic abuse with complex needs unsuitable for traditional Refuge accommodation (taking into account the new Domestic Abuse Duty around Safe Accommodation)	Implement an improved housing 'offer' in relation to dispersed / move-on accommodation and for victims of domestic abuse with complex needs.	Victims of domestic abuse with complex needs are able to access housing and receive appropriate support to remain housed.	Year 1
Ensure ongoing consultation with victims of domestic abuse and their families.	Engage with key stakeholders who are supporting victims of domestic abuse and their families, to ensure the victims voice is heard and acted upon.	Greater understanding of the impact we are having by remaining close to the identified needs and wishes of victims of domestic abuse and their families.	Year 1
Ensure arrangements around MARAC and high risk IDVA provision are effective and sufficient to meet the volume of demand locally.	Commission strengthened arrangements around MARAC and high risk IDVA provision in line with SafeLives recommended levels of provision. Undertake review of MARAC Arrangements utilising SafeLives assessment tool.	All high-risk victims of domestic abuse are able to access IDVA provision and receive full support through an effective MARAC process.	Year 2
Strengthened links to the mental health and substance misuse agendas to ensure individuals affected by domestic abuse receive support for all their needs.	Develop an integrated strategic framework across those responsible for commissioning domestic abuse, mental health, and substance misuse services.	Victims of domestic abuse who have additional mental health and substance misuse issues receive full and effective joined up support.	Year 3

What We Will Do:	How We Will Do It:	What Difference Will We See?	When Will We See it?
Provide earlier help to prevent escalating levels of domestic abuse.	Implement a wide range of early intervention activities aimed at individuals where there is a risk of domestic abuse.	Low level domestic abuse does not escalate to more serious levels of harm.	Year 3
PURSUE			
Ensure where work is undertaken with a perpetrator that support is provided to the victim and family.	Enhanced victim engagement and safety planning activities alongside increased perpetrator disruption activities to be embedded in best practice for a perpetrator programme.	A reduction in the number of repeat victims of domestic abuse and a reduction in the impact of repeat incidents where the perpetrator is engaged in a perpetrator programme.	Year 2
Explore opportunities to provide a non-convicted perpetrator programme that delivers long-term positive outcomes.	Identify the funding required to re-commission an appropriate non-convicted perpetrator programme.	Better engagement with perpetrators of domestic abuse and a cessation in their offending behaviour.	Year 2
Support victims of domestic abuse to participate safely in relevant criminal proceedings.	Review current support for victims who are supporting the criminal justice system processes.	Increased numbers of successful victim-supported prosecutions and improved experiences for victims at court.	Year 3
Pursue victimless prosecutions where the victim is not able to support it.	Work with the Crown Prosecution Service to encourage and promote victimless prosecutions.	An increase in the number of victimless prosecutions pursued and improved outcomes at court.	Year 3
Actively engage with Crown Prosecution Service Regional Community Scrutiny Panels and Police Scrutiny Panels.	Ensure that issues experienced by victims of domestic abuse are highlighted through these panels.	A coordinated, multi-agency approach that effectively addresses the issues victims of domestic abuse experience in respect of the CPS and Courts.	Year 3
Ensure perpetrators continue to be engaged in the Multi-agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) process to disrupt their offending activities.	Strengthen MATAC arrangements by reinforcing requirements for all relevant agencies to be involved and provide effective resources for the practical work to be carried out.	A cessation in the offending behaviour of repeat and serial perpetrators of domestic abuse.	Year 3

8. Indicators

Domestic Abuse Core Data Set

To emphasise the importance of tackling domestic abuse across North East Lincolnshire, “Reducing domestic abuse rates” remains a key indicator in the North East Lincolnshire Outcomes Framework to support the outcome that “*all residents in North East Lincolnshire Feel Safe and are Safe*”.

To support the revised Strategy, a set of key indicators and performance measures has been developed to better understand the impact that existing and newly commissioned services and interventions will have on the lives of those affected by domestic abuse. These will be monitored by the Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Group and fed through to the Tri-Board arrangements (Children Safeguarding Partnership, Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board) on a quarterly basis.

Indicators

Indicator	2018/19 result	2019/20 result	2020/21 Result (6 months)	Direction of Travel	What we aim to see
Number of domestic abuse Incidents	5,502	5,327	2,946	↑	↓
Number of domestic abuse crimes	3,432	3,355	1,844	↑	↓
Number of children directly affected by domestic abuse (<i>number of referrals to Early Help where domestic abuse is a factor and number of referrals to Children’s Assessment and Safeguarding where domestic abuse is a factor</i>)	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	↓
Number of Operation Encompass disclosures made	1,874	1,638	826	↓	↓
Time it takes for victims to request support (Women’s Aid data)	Average 2-5 years	Average 2-5 years	Average 2-5 years	=	↓
Number of clients presenting to Women’s Aid	579	647	281	=	↓
Number of cases heard at MARAC	430	548	393	↑	↓

Number of MARAC repeat Cases	159	233	185	↑	↓
Percentage of repeat MARAC cases (within a 12-month rolling period)	37%	43%	47%	↑	↓
Number of children living in households where there is a MARAC victim	527	655	458	↑	↓
Number of Repeat victims of domestic abuse incidents	502	633	642	↑	↓
Number of repeat perpetrators (within a 12-month rolling period)	569	692	714	↑	↓
Number of Practitioners trained (in Domestic Abuse Levels 1 and 2 and Domestic Abuse Awareness e-learning))	163	287	131	↑	↑

Performance Measures to support the Indicators

One of the initial actions which will take place as a result of the refreshed Strategy is the establishment of a multi-agency group to determine a set of performance measures which aligns with the actions set out in the Strategy in support of the indicators.

9. Commissioning and Resourcing

Partner agencies across North East Lincolnshire remain committed to tackling the prevalence of domestic abuse as a priority.

Whilst funding has historically and periodically been provided across partner agencies to enable a wide range of services and interventions to be delivered, there remains opportunity to further strengthen collaboration by identifying sustainable funding to increase domestic abuse provision across all levels of risk.

That is why this Strategy is supported by a joint commissioning approach between relevant statutory partners and other key stakeholders. The commissioning approach is informed by ongoing work to analyse and identify the necessary financial input to support the effective delivery of the Strategy. This will ensure that adequate levels of service provision are placed on a sustainable footing moving forward and provided in areas where they can have the greatest impact.

It is also paramount that every opportunity to maximise external funding is explored, working with our wider voluntary sector organisations to take advantage of funding that becomes available. This will provide added value and enable time limited projects to be tested, evaluated and upscaled when proven successful.

An informed approach to commissioning domestic abuse services is key. The provision of domestic abuse services must be intelligence-led to ensure it fully meets the needs and demands of the local population. This will require implementation of effective and resourced data collection and analysis alongside the evaluation of projects and interventions to determine whether they are working.

10. Governance

It is essential that robust governance arrangements are in place as these will strengthen the overall commitment to tackling the agenda and ensure that this Strategy can be fully implemented.

The revised Domestic Abuse Strategy will be supported by a dynamic action plan managed via the multi-agency Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Group, which will in turn take strategic direction and be accountable to the Safer North East Lincolnshire Tri-Board arrangements which incorporates the following statutory Boards:-

- **North East Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership**

This statutory board, established as part of the requirements set out in the Crime and Disorder Act, has oversight and responsibility for developing strategy to improve the Community Safety Strategy. Domestic abuse remains a Partnership Indicator and the Community Safety Partnership is also the statutory lead for Domestic Homicide Reviews.

- **North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership**

The local Safeguarding Children Partnership (which replaced the Local Safeguarding Children Board in 2019) has identified an outcome around ensuring *Children Are and Feel Safe*. Domestic Abuse has been identified as a key area of risk around safeguarding children and a thematic area of focus with a number of performance measures being monitored.

- **North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board**

This statutory Board is responsible for the safeguarding of those individuals with care and support needs. The local Safeguarding Adults Board has identified domestic abuse as one of its three strategic priorities.

Scrutiny

In addition to the above arrangements, periodic reports will also be provided to the Council's Scrutiny Panel and Crime and Disorder Committee arrangements to enable elected representatives to scrutinise the approach to domestic abuse and make recommendations back to the Tri-Board arrangements.

North East Lincolnshire Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board

The Local Domestic Abuse Partnership Board is a partnership group responsible for supporting North East Lincolnshire Council in meeting its duty under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act. Its role is to work together to support, advise, and work in partnership with North East Lincolnshire Council to ensure victims of domestic abuse have access to adequate and appropriate support within safe accommodation services. To improve outcomes for victims of domestic abuse, including their children, through a strategic approach to identifying and addressing gaps in support within safe accommodation services.

Domestic Abuse Forum

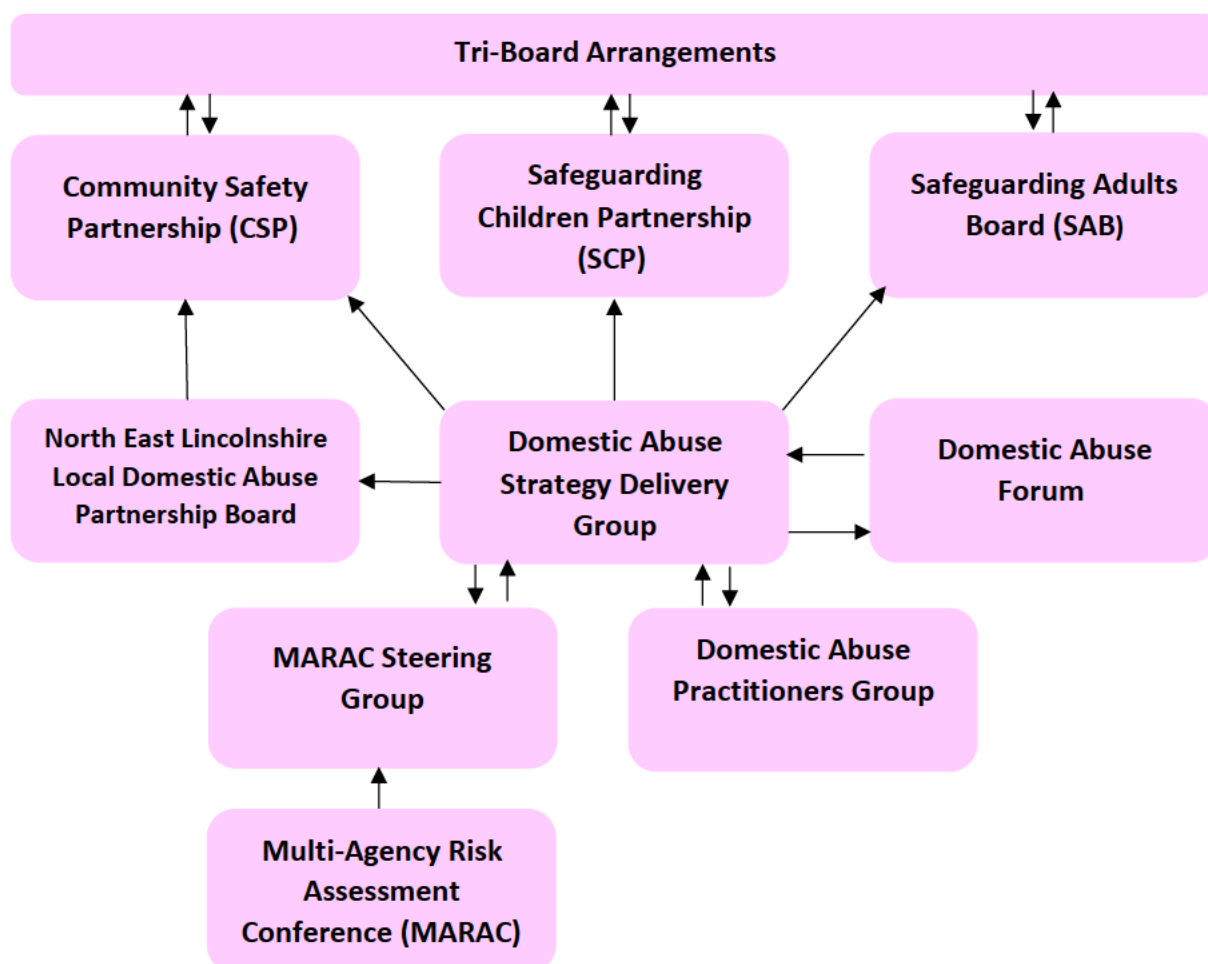
The purpose of the Domestic Abuse Forum is to bring together relevant practitioners to obtain updates on actions and activities arising from the Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Group as well as share ideas and good practice. The Forum also provides additional checks and challenges in respect of the work being undertaken by the Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Group.

Multi Agency-risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference Steering Group (MARAC Steering Group)

MARAC is a structured multi-agency process to ensure all necessary safety measures around high-risk victims and their families are in place. The MARAC Steering Group was set up in line with established national best practice to manage and monitor the MARAC process. The MARAC Steering Group consists of Designated MARAC Officers from each of the MARAC core agencies (as defined by Safelives, a leading national domestic abuse charity), representatives of other agencies involved in the MARAC process, the MARAC Coordinator, the MARAC Chair, and the MARAC Steering Group Chair. The MARAC Steering Group is in turn accountable to the Domestic Abuse Strategy Delivery Group.

The below structure chart sets out the governance arrangements in place around the Domestic Abuse Strategy delivery.

Domestic Abuse Strategy Governance Structure



In addition to the governance arrangements detailed above, a strong level of focus will remain in place with the Safer NEL arrangements and wider Outcomes Framework to ensure that domestic abuse remains a high priority for North East Lincolnshire.

11. Conclusion

This Strategy is the culmination of a range of engagement and consultation conversations with stakeholders with the aim of gleaning the best possible input into creating a suitable and effective way forward for our multi-agency approach to tackling domestic abuse in North East Lincolnshire.

It sets out a roadmap for us to improve service provision and outcomes around domestic abuse and ultimately to improve the lives of anyone affected by this harmful social ill.

Our challenge now is to stride forward with the implementation of the ambitions articulated here and make a real and lasting impact for our population.