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Domestic abuse and interpersonal violence



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Executive Summary

Domestic abuse is a priority for Blackpool. Reducing and preventing domestic abuse is essential if Blackpool are to make any progress on the priority of: *Communities: creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.*

The purpose of this Needs Assessment is to set out current understanding of issues relating to domestic abuse in Blackpool, based on analysis of the latest available data. The assessment is intended to inform the Strategy for Blackpool, which sets out the Partnership's high-level priorities and strategic direction. This document is one of a substantial series of Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Reports that helps Blackpool meet its statutory duty to determine health and wellbeing priorities, based on analysis of needs.

The local data highlights victims in Blackpool are predominantly young and female. There is also a concern about the growing impact of domestic abuse/violence on children and young people. The needs assessment highlights there are a range of services across Blackpool, however, fragmented and insecure funding around domestic abuse affects the planning and delivery of services. Domestic abuse is a cross cutting theme and effective management is reliant on maintaining a strong partnership approach.

The actions emerging from this Needs Assessment are:-

- There is a need to develop a whole system approach to identify and respond to those perpetrating abuse in the borough
- Implement a strategic approach to integrated commissioning to develop a 'One public service' offer.
- Reduce the impact of domestic abuse and interpersonal violence by using a multi-agency collaborative approach.
- Continue to improve and develop partnership working to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families.
- Improving early help and intervention for victims, children and perpetrators.
- Continue to build on the work of the [White Ribbon Campaign](#)
- Work effectively with individuals who have complex needs, which include but is not limited to substance misuse, mental health and domestic abuse.

Recommendations

- Strengthen and further develop a whole system approach to tackling domestic abuse to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families which ensures victims receive the right support at the right time.
- Need to continue to have a systematic approach to domestic abuse prevention and reducing its impact, in the context of decreasing public sector budgets.
- Implement a strategic approach to integrated commissioning and develop pooled budget arrangements to achieve an outcome based 'One public service' offer.
- Reduce the impact of domestic abuse and interpersonal violence by using a multi-agency collaborative approach.
- Improve early help and interventions for victims, children and perpetrators.
- Early intervention and prevention work should include targeting perpetrators before they reach the criminal justice threshold.
- Prevention of violence against women and girls - need to challenge attitudes and behaviours which foster it.

Introduction

The purpose of this needs assessment considers all the evidence available on domestic abuse prevalence, characteristics, trends, perceptions, national and local drivers and policy change to inform decision making in Blackpool. It will help inform strategic commissioning of domestic abuse services and pathways in Blackpool and demonstrate the need for a whole system approach for tackling the issues of domestic abuse, which will need to be owned by the partnership. In assessing what currently exists, the needs assessment will analyse the complex nature of domestic abuse, describe and assess the current demand for domestic abuse services and highlight the current pathways that victims and perpetrators currently follow. The needs assessment will identify the gaps in services and pathways, review the evidence based on good practice, and provide recommendations for future activity. To understand domestic abuse and how it impacts on individuals, families and communities is crucial to ensure quality and cost-effective services are delivered in Blackpool.

Domestic abuse is a significant public health issue, having a major impact upon those directly affected and their families. It is estimated the total cost of domestic abuse in the UK, per year, is £23 billion; around £3 billion of this cost is directly to government funded services, including criminal justice, health care and social services¹. The cost to health, housing and social services, criminal justice and civil legal services is estimated at £3.9 billion². Based on the calculations used by Walby it has been calculated the total service cost of domestic abuse pan-Lancashire is £103,231,552 per year. Thus demonstrating the need for all services to focus on innovative service reform to prevent domestic abuse.

On the 31st March 2013 the definition of domestic abuse was extended to include 16 to 17-year-olds and coercive, or controlling behaviour. The decision to change this follows a government consultation which saw representatives from the police, voluntary sector and local authorities call overwhelmingly for change. It is expected the new definition will increase awareness that young people in this age group experience domestic violence and abuse, encouraging more people to seek help. The previous definition defined domestic abuse as a single act or incident. The new definition recognises that patterns of behaviour and separate incidents of control can add up to abuse - including incidents of intimidation, isolation, depriving victims of their financial independence or material possessions and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Domestic abuse is defined as:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality".

This encompasses but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

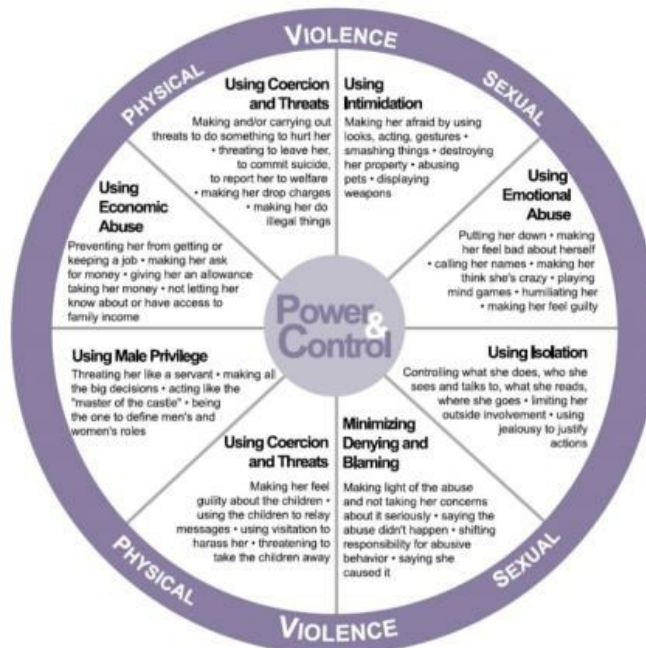
Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an impact or a pattern of acts of assault, 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 violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group³.

Domestic abuse comprises of a number of different behaviours which are demonstrated in the Power and Control wheel. This is a tool which can help understand the overall pattern of abusive and violent behaviours, which are used by a person to maintain control over another person. Often one, or more violent incidents are accompanied by an array of these other types of abuse.

Figure 1: National Centre on Domestic and Sexual Violence: Power and Control Wheel



Source: National Centre on Domestic and Sexual Violence

There is a range of risk factors for an individual becoming a victim of domestic violence, and the potential to become a victim increases when a combination of risk factors occurs. The National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence have defined these as:-

- Being female
- Having a long term illness or disability
- Age (women in younger age groups, in particular those aged 16-24 and men aged 16-19 are at greatest risk)
- Pregnancy - the greatest risk is for the teenage mothers and during the period just after a woman has given birth
- Having a mental health problem
- A woman who is separated
- Alcohol consumption
- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Poverty, economic stress and unemployment

Whilst both men and women may perpetrate or experience domestic abuse or violence, it is more commonly inflicted on women by men. Women are also more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of violence, including sexual violence and are also more likely to have sustained psychological or emotional impact or result in injury or death.

Domestic abuse is linked with sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancies and miscarriage⁴. Furthermore, this can have long lasting impacts on victims, with relationship, isolation, trust and intimacy problems common.

Who is affected?

Estimating the number of people affected by domestic abuse is difficult due to the hidden nature of the problem and difficulties for individuals in recognising domestic abuse. The most reliable estimates come from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)⁵, an annual representative sample survey which asks about the extent to which people have been victims of crimes. The under-reporting of crime to the police is known to be particularly acute for intimate violence offences and one of the strengths of the CSEW is that it covers many crimes that are not reported.

The CSEW estimates that:

- There were 2 million adults aged 16 to 59 who said they were a victim of domestic abuse in the last year, a prevalence rate of 6 in 100 adults.
- Women were twice as likely to report having experienced domestic abuse than men.
- 8.2% of women and 4.0% of men report experiencing some type of domestic abuse in the previous year (that is, ex-partner abuse or family abuse (non-sexual), sexual abuse or stalking).
- 6.5% of women and 2.8% of men reported partner abuse in the previous year.
- Overall, 27.1% of women and 13.2% of men have experienced some form of domestic abuse since the age of 16; an

estimated 4.5 million females and 2.2 million male victims.

The Office for National Statistics 'Domestic abuse in England and Wales'⁶ Report uses Home Office (HO) and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) data as well as the CSEW to estimate prevalence across the country and by police force area.

- 1.03 million domestic abuse-related incidents were recorded by the police. Following investigations, the police concluded that a domestic abuse-related criminal offence was committed in approximately 4 in every 10 (41%) of these incidents (421,000).
- The majority of victims of domestic abuse, as measured by the CSEW, will not report their experiences to the police and therefore CSEW estimates should not be seen as indication of demand on the police.
- Recent increases in the number of domestic abuse-related crimes were due, in part, to police forces improving their recording of domestic abuse incidents as crimes and to forces actively encouraging victims to come forward to report these crimes.
- Domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police accounted for approximately 1 in 10 of all crimes. The majority of domestic abuse (78%) consisted of violence against the person offences.
- In 68% of the domestic abuse cases referred to CPS the defendant pleaded guilty, so most of the cases recorded as successful outcomes were due to guilty pleas.
- Over half of unsuccessful prosecutions (53%) were due to victim retraction, victim non-attendance or evidence that the victim did not support the case. Victims may not want to be involved in the prosecution for a number of reasons, for example due to the level of fear and control exerted by the perpetrator.

The prevalence of domestic abuse means that there are many children who are also affected. We don't know exactly how many children this is, because the official source of self-reported data, the CSEW, only gathers information about the experiences of adults. While domestic abuse has been estimated to affect around 1 in 5 children in some studies, the experience of children in relation to domestic abuse may go unrecorded unless they come to the attention of formal agencies, such as those in health, children's social care, the police or schools.⁷

Data from the NSPCC estimates that:

- Around 1 in 5 children have been exposed to domestic abuse
- Domestic abuse is a factor in over half of serious case reviews
- A third of children witnessing domestic violence also experienced another form of abuse.
- 1 in 5 teenagers have been physically abused by their boyfriends or girlfriends
- 130,000 children live in households with high-risk domestic abuse.
- Children exposed to domestic violence are more likely to have behavioural and emotional problems

The Department for Education reports on how many children need support or protection. When a child is referred to children's social care, an assessment is carried out to identify if the child is in need of services which local authorities provide. As at March 2016, 49.6% of children in need had domestic violence as a factor identified at end of their assessment.⁸

Facts, figures and trends for Lancashire and Blackpool

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) provides data at police force area level on domestic abuse⁹ and figures for Lancashire police force area show:

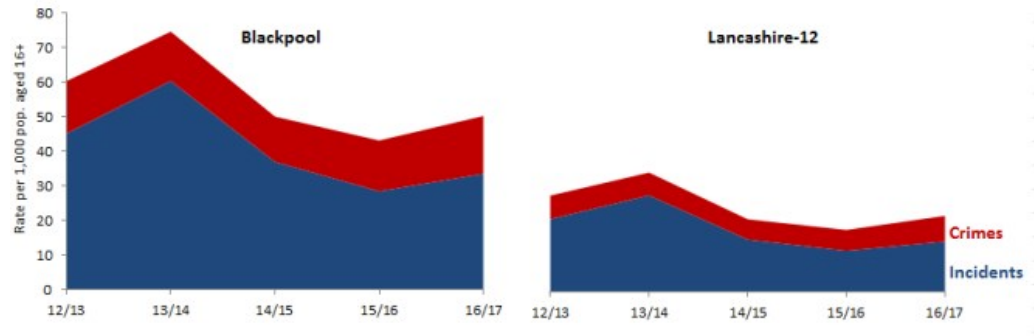
- Approximately 52,800 people aged 16-59 had been a victim of domestic abuse in the last year; 70% were women.
- 9.1% of women and 3.9% of men aged 16-59 experienced at least 1 incident of domestic abuse during this period.
- 23,890 domestic abuse-related incidents and offences were recorded in 2015/16, this was equivalent to 16 incidents and offences for every 1,000 people in the population.
- 8,886 domestic abuse related-offences were recorded in 2015/16, equivalent to 6 offences for every 1,000 people in the population.
- 37% of combined domestic abuse related incidents and offences were classified as offences in Lancashire in 2015/16. This compares to 41% across England and Wales.
- There were 10 domestic homicides recorded in Lancashire between April 2012 and 31 March 2016; 5 were female. Of these 10 crimes 2 were committed in Blackpool and the victims were both female.
- Of the 3,492 domestic abuse-related prosecutions in Lancashire in 2015/16 and 77% (2,681) resulted in a conviction.

Police and crime data from the Safer Lancashire Multi-Agency Database Exchange shows that across Blackpool:-

- Domestic abuse accounts for 9% of calls to the police for assistance.¹⁰
- There were 3,824 calls to the police (incidents) relating to domestic abuse in 2016/17.
- This was an increase of 18% from 3,244 incidents in 2015/16, though this increase was less than the Lancashire-12 increase of 22%.

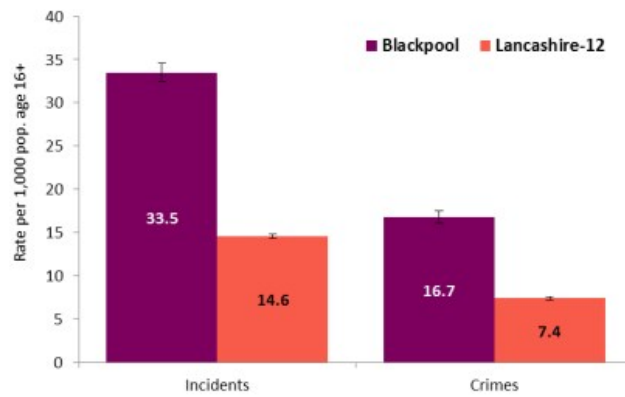
- However, the incident rate of 33.5 per 1,000 pop. aged 16+ is more than twice the Lancashire-12 average of 14.6 per 1,000.
- There were 1,912 domestic abuse crimes in Blackpool in 2016/17, an increase of 14% from 1,681 in 2015/16.
- The domestic abuse crime rate of 16.7 per 1,000 pop. aged 16+ is more than twice the Lancashire-12 average of 7.4 per 1,000.

Figure 2: Trend in rate of Domestic Abuse incidents and crimes in Blackpool and Lancashire-12, 2016/17



Source: Safer Lancashire MADE database, District Profile v16.1

Figure 3: Domestic Abuse incident and crime rates in Blackpool and Lancashire-12, 2016/17

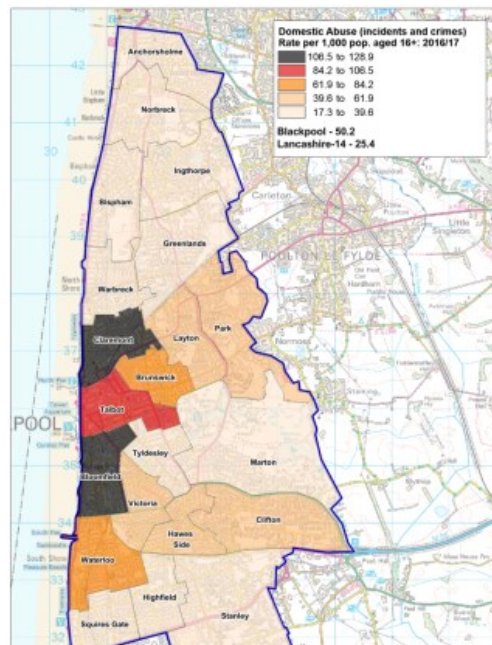


Source: Safer Lancashire MADE database, District Profile v16.1

There is wide variation in domestic abuse incidents and crimes across Blackpool, with the majority of cases coming from the Central West and South Central areas. Figures for incidents and crimes combined show that:

- There were over 5,700 domestic abuse incidents and crimes in Blackpool in 2016/17.
- Rates of domestic abuse ranged from 17.3 per 1,000 in Anchorsholme to 128.8 per 1,000 in Claremont.
- Of the 21 wards, only 5 are significantly higher than the Blackpool average of 50.2 per 1,000; Bloomfield, Brunswick, Claremont, Talbot and Waterloo.
- There were just over 900 domestic abuse incidents and crimes in these wards, accounting for 47% of all domestic abuse across Blackpool.

Figure 4: Domestic Abuse (incidents and crimes combined) rate by ward, 2016/17





Source: Safer Lancashire MADE database, District Profile v16.1

Both men and women who live in the 20% most deprived areas of England and Wales were more likely to be victims of domestic abuse: 11.1% of women and 4.8% of men living in these areas were estimated to have been victims of any domestic abuse compared with 5.6% of women and 3.0% of men living in the 20% least deprived areas of England and Wales.¹¹ Approximately 70,000 (50%) people in Blackpool live in the 20% most deprived areas.

Blackpool also has greater proportions of younger people who may be lone parents, on low incomes, have a long term illness and/or low education levels, all risk factors for greater domestic abuse.¹²

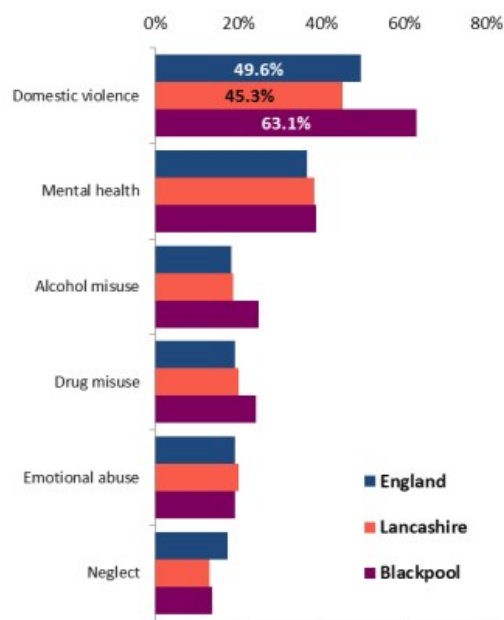
Children affected by Domestic Abuse in Blackpool

Children in Need⁸ statistics from the Dept for Education provides information on the number of referrals to children's social care and assessments carried out upon those children. When a child is assessed following a referral, the practitioner determines the child's primary need at a first assessment.

Factors identified at the end of assessment are in addition to the primary need identified. More than one factor can be identified and each can be reported. Most children will have more than one factor identified and reported.

- Abuse or neglect was the most common primary need at assessment for Blackpool children in need at March 2016 - 59% (1,123) of children had abuse or neglect identified as their primary need at assessment.
- This compares with 51% across England.
- Domestic violence, which includes that aimed at children or other adults in the household, was the most common factor identified for children in need at March 2016 - 63% (794) of children in Blackpool had domestic violence as a factor identified at end of assessment compared to 50% nationally.
- Blackpool figures for children in need and for those affected by domestic violence are significantly higher than the Lancashire and England averages.

Figure 5: Children in Need episodes with assessment factor information - the 6 most common factors identified at the end of assessment, England, Lancashire and Blackpool 2015/16



Source: Dept for Education, Characteristics of Children in Need, 2015/16

Throughout the needs assessment it has been discussed about substance misuse being involved with domestic abuse and the data in the next tables demonstrates the number of children affected by parental substance misuse.

Figure 6 shows the number of drug users who have entered treatment in 2016-17 who live with children and the stated number of children who live with them. In addition, the table shows the number of pregnant female clients entering treatment, as well as the number of children living with drug users.

Figure 6: Drug clients who are parents/carers and their children, Blackpool and England, 2016/17

Parental status	Local n	Proportion of new presentations	Proportion by gender		National n	Proportion of new presentations	Proportion by gender	
			M	F			M	F
Living with children (own or other)	234	56%	54%	59%	15,875	20%	17%	29%
Parents not living with children	65	15%	15%	15%	24,705	31%	31%	32%
Not a parent/no child contact	117	28%	29%	26%	37,535	48%	51%	38%

Living with children	Local			National		
	n	Proportion of children by client gender		n	Proportion of children by client gender	
		M	F		M	F
Number of children living with drug users entering treatment in 2016-17	831	71%	29%	33,312	66%	34%
Pregnancy data	Local			National		
	n	Proportion of new female presentations		n	Proportion of new female presentations	
New female presentations who were pregnant	7	6%		875	4%	
Incomplete data	0	0%		888	4%	

Source: Public Health England Adults - Drugs Commissioning Support Pack 18/19 key data

Figure 7 shows the number of alcohol users who have entered treatment in 2016-17 who live with children and the stated number of children who live with them. In addition, the table shows the number of pregnant female clients entering treatment, as well as the number of children living with alcohol users.

Figure 7: Alcohol clients who are parents/carers and their children, Blackpool and England, 2016/17

Parental status	Local		Proportion by gender		National	Proportion of new presentations		Proportion by gender	
	n	Proportion of new presentations	M	F		n	M	F	
Living with children (own or other)	113	40%	35%	50%	13,303	25%	21%	33%	
Parents not living with children	44	16%	17%	14%	12,402	24%	26%	20%	
Not a parent/no child contact	119	43%	47%	34%	26,374	50%	53%	46%	
Incomplete data	4	1%	1%	2%	414	1%	1%	1%	
Living with children	Local			National					
	n	Proportion of children by client gender		n	Proportion of children by client gender				
Number of children living with alcohol clients entering treatment in 2016-17	372	56%	44%	26,024	52%	48%			
Pregnancy data	Local		National						
	n	Proportion of new female presentations	n	Proportion of new female presentations					
New female presentations who were pregnant	5	5%	255	1%					
Incomplete data	2	2%	864	4%					

Source: Public Health England Adults - Alcohol Commissioning Support Pack 18/19 key data

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs)

Multi-agency risk assessment conferences were introduced in England and Wales as a non-statutory meeting where information about high risk domestic abuse victims is shared between agencies and a risk-focused coordinated safety plan is produced to support victims. A MARAC is usually attended by local authorities, health services, housing authorities, criminal justice agencies, specialist domestic violence services, and other statutory and voluntary sector agencies to improve service provision. An evaluation of the MARAC process was undertaken in Cardiff¹³ which established MARACs:

- Increased information sharing and trust between agencies
- Provided a setting where children's needs could be raised and discussed
- Prevented re-victimisation

Additionally, a review of MARACs in 2011 found that they have the potential to improve victim safety and reduce re-victimisation therefore may be a highly cost effective measure. However there are limitations with this evidence due to the limited number of studies undertaken and more robust evaluation would be required to strengthen this conclusion.¹⁴

Information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. The role of these Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) is to facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing to enable appropriate actions to be taken.

- Blackpool had 523 cases discussed at MARAC's in 2016/17.
- This is 17% of Lancashire's total, the highest proportion of all the districts.
- 153 (29%) were repeat cases, that is, a case which had already been referred to a MARAC in the previous 12 months.
- 83% of cases came from police or IDVA referrals.

Figure 8: Trend and characteristics of MARAC Cases, Lancashire and Blackpool

	Lancashire			Blackpool		
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17

Cases discussed	Cases discussed	2,932	2,932	3,054	575	395	523
	Repeat cases	819	794	788	154	74	153
	% repeat cases	27.9%	27.1%	25.8%	26.8%	18.7%	29.3%
	No. of children in the household	3,480	3,342	3,500	714	456	558
Diversity	Cases from BME community	257	306	274	14	0	28
	% from BME community	8.8%	10.4%	9.0%	2.4%	0%	5.4%
	LGBT cases	19	31	28	5	6	11
	% LGBT cases	0.6%	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%	1.5%	2.1%
	Cases where victim had a disability	42	43	63	10	7	9
	% where victim had a disability	1.4%	1.5%	2.1%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%
	Male victims	157	182	213	37	26	54
	% male victims	5.4%	6.2%	7.0%	6.4%	6.6%	10.3%
Young people	Victims aged 16-17 years	65	81	52	22	11	10
	% victims aged 16-17 years	2.2%	2.8%	1.7%	3.8%	2.8%	1.9%
	No. harming others aged 17 or below	21	42	30	8	13	12
	% harming others aged 17 or below	0.7%	1.4%	1.0%	1.4%	3.3%	2.3%

Source: Safer Lancashire MADE database, Domestic Abuse Report (v6) Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)

Figure 9: MARAC Referral sources, Lancashire and Blackpool

	Lancashire						Blackpool					
	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
Police	2,156	69%	1,991	68%	2,048	72%	435	75%	228	58%	373	71%
IDVA*	574	18%	490	17%	399	14%	20	3%	30	8%	64	12%
Voluntary Sector	114	4%	47	2%	33	1%	31	5%	7	2%	0	0%
Primary Care Service	63	2%	72	2%	51	2%	28	5%	41	10%	12	2%
Children's Social Care	29	1%	65	2%	29	1%	17	3%	51	13%	20	4%
Secondary Care	17	1%	35	1%	53	2%	7	1%	0	0%	12	2%
Other**	154	5%	233	8%	214	8%	40	7%	39	10%	42	8%

*IDVA-Independent Domestic Violence Advisors **Other: Probation, Housing, Substance Abuse, Education, Mental Health, Adult Social Care, MASH, Other

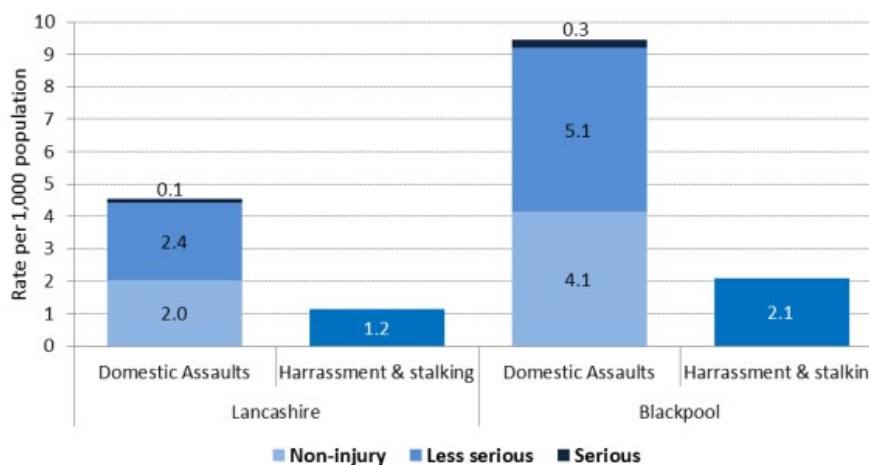
Source: Safer Lancashire MADE database, Domestic Abuse Report (v6) Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences(MARAC)

Safelives data for April 2016 to December 2016 identifies the 'year on year change in cases'; the national figure being 5% and Blackpool being 8%.

Police crime outcomes data categorises domestic assaults into 3 groups; serious, less serious and non-injury. There is also a separate category for harassment and/or stalking. Data for 2016/17 shows:

- Blackpool and Lancashire have similar proportions of serious, less serious and non-injury domestic assaults.
- 20% of all Lancashire's domestic assaults occur in Blackpool.
- 3 out of every 100 domestic assaults is serious.
- There were 35 'serious' domestic assaults in Blackpool.
- More than half (56%) of domestic assaults result in injury.
- Rates of domestic assault at all seriousness levels are twice as high in Blackpool as in Lancashire.
- There were 292 harassment and stalking crimes in Blackpool.

Figure 10: Domestic assaults by seriousness level, Lancashire and Blackpool rates per 1,000 population: 2016/17



Source: Safer Lancashire MADE database, Crime Objective Results and Analysis-CORA (v17)

National Policy, Strategy and Evidence

Domestic abuse sits within an increasingly growing body of legislation, policy and guidance that is applicable to victims, perpetrators and children.

Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016 - 2020: The overall outcome of the strategy is to achieve a reduction in the prevalence of all forms of violence against women and girls, matched by increases in reporting, police referrals, and prosecutions. The policy contains four guiding principles for work around violence against women and girls which are preventing violence and abuse; provision of services; partnership working; pursuing perpetrators.²

The multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse: In September 2016 a review was undertaken by Ofsted to examine the multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse. The findings from the report considered children's social care, health professionals, the police and probation officers were effective in safeguarding children who live with domestic abuse. Six local areas were inspected which included Bradford, Hampshire, Hounslow, Lincolnshire, Salford and Wiltshire. As part of the review a literature review was undertaken, national data considered, discussions with survivors of domestic abuse, and surveyed teachers in schools. The key findings of the report calls for a national public service initiative to raise awareness of domestic abuse and violence, as well as a greater focus on the perpetrators and better strategies for the prevention of domestic abuse.

Human Rights Act 1998: the right to life (Article 2); the prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment and torture (Article 3); and security of the person (Article 5). This includes a duty to have adequate laws in place to punish those who violate the right to life of others, or who inflict on others inhuman or degrading treatment. Parallel rights are included in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 6 states the rights to life, Article 19 the right to protection from violence, injury, abuse, neglect and maltreatment).

The Crime & Disorder Act 1998: places a duty on local authorities and the police to work together with other agencies to tackle crime at a local level through the provision of a Community Safety Strategy that should include domestic abuse. The police are key partners in multi-agency domestic abuse groups that have been established in most areas to develop inter-agency responses to domestic abuse and improve service provision across agencies such as health services, specialist domestic abuse services (refuges and outreach services), housing authorities and many other statutory and voluntary sector agencies. This was updated in 2004 to place a responsibility on health services to participate.

The Housing Act 1996 sets out clearly those duties a housing authority owes vulnerable victims of domestic abuse and other violence. Under Part 7 of the Act on homelessness the duties are to advise and assist the applicant, and depending on the particular circumstances, to provide temporary accommodation while the case is investigated, followed by longer term accommodation if the authority confirms that it has a full duty to accommodate the person or household. The Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002, further clarified the statutory duty around 'reasonable to continue to occupy' in the

context of violence and set out that 'a person who is vulnerable as a result of ceasing to occupy accommodation by reason of violence from another person or threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out' has a priority need.

The Crime and Security Act 2010: section 24 introduces Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO's) which give police and magistrates the power to ban a domestic violence perpetrator from returning home or having contact with the victim for up to 28 days. The orders were initially piloted and rolled out across the UK in 2014.

The Care Act 2014 puts adult safeguarding on a legal footing and updates the scope of safeguarding to directly include domestic abuse. The Act specifies that freedom from abuse and neglect is a key aspect of a person's well-being.

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS); often referred to as "**Clare's law**" is a framework, launched in 2014, to enable the police to disclose the public information about previous violent offending by a new or existing partner where this may help protect them from further violent offending. The DVDS introduces two types of process for disclosing this information. The first is triggered by a request by a member of the public ('right to ask'). The second is triggered by the police where they make a proactive decision to disclose the information in order to protect a potential victim ('right to know').

Serious Crime Act 2015; section 76 introduces the offence of controlling and coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship and provides guidance about investigation.

Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2015. This guidance provides information around the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote welfare of children, and a clear framework for local safeguarding board to monitor the effectiveness of local services. For the purposes of this guidance safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health and development, ensuring that children grow in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Public Health Outcomes Framework for England 2016-19 was published which sets out opportunities to improve and protect health across life and reduce inequalities, of which domestic abuse has a role.

NICE guidance [PH50] Domestic violence and abuse: multi-agency working: this public health guidance had been developed to help identify, prevent and reduce domestic violence and abuse. The recommendations highlight the need working in a multi-agency partnership approach is the most effective way to tackle the issues of domestic abuse.¹⁵

NICE Quality Standard [Q116] Domestic Violence and Abuse: this quality standard covers services for domestic violence and abuse in adults and young people (aged 16 and over). It includes identifying and supporting people experiencing domestic violence or abuse, as well as support for those who carry it out. It also covers children and young people (under 16) who are affected by domestic violence or abuse that is not carried out against them. It describes high quality care in priority areas for improvement.¹⁶

NICE Local Government Briefing [LGB20] Domestic violence and abuse: how services can respond effectively: this is a briefing which summarises NICE's recommendations for local authorities and partner organisations on domestic violence and abuse. This includes lead members of adult and children's social services, health and wellbeing boards, local safeguarding boards for children and adults and members of local crime and disorder reduction partnerships.¹⁷

NICE guidance [CG110] Pregnancy and complex social factors: a model for service provision for pregnant women with complex social factors: this guidance recognises that pregnant women with complex social factors may have additional needs. The guidance sets out how healthcare professionals as individuals, and antenatal services as a whole can do to address these needs and improve pregnancy outcomes in this group of women. The four groups identified as exemplars are women who misuse substances (alcohol and/or drugs), women who are recent migrants, asylum seekers or refugees, or who have difficulty reading or speaking English, young women aged under 20, and women who experience domestic abuse.¹⁸

Local Policy Drivers

The issues of domestic abuse doesn't happen in isolation and many local strategies and policies link to and influence local actions on reducing the impact of domestic abuse on the town. The local drivers for tackling the issues of domestic abuse are:


Blackpool Council Plan 2015-2020: Priority Two - "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience". The plan is looking to reduce the levels of domestic abuse, and support services which increase resilience and will contribute to the creation of stronger communities within Blackpool.

Blackpool's Domestic Abuse and Interpersonal Violence Partnership Strategy and Action Plan: These documents provide strategic direction for the Blackpool domestic abuse and interpersonal violence partnership board. The aim is to:

- ensure victims and their families in Blackpool experiencing domestic abuse and interpersonal violence have access to quality

- provisions of services appropriate to the needs of the Blackpool population.
- reduce the impact of domestic abuse and interpersonal violence by using a whole system approach.
- develop a strategic approach to integrated commissioning to develop a "one public service offer".
- break the cycle of domestic abuse and interpersonal violence across Blackpool.

Blackpool's Domestic Abuse and Interpersonal Violence (DAIV) Partnership Strategy 2016-2020  (737 KB)

Blackpool's Domestic Abuse and Interpersonal Violence (DAIV) Partnership Action Plan 2016-2018  (607 KB)

Blackpool Community Safety Plan (2012-2015) - Working together to make a difference: The Blackpool Community Safety Plan sets out the partnerships priorities for the 3 years of the plan, which is committed to improving community safety in Blackpool. The plan is based on the 2015 Strategic Assessment, which highlighted the key priorities for the town. There priorities are antisocial behaviour, domestic abuse, violence against the person, sexual offences and rape, and child sexual exploitation.

Blackpool Alcohol Strategy (2013-2016): This strategy has been developed to deal specifically with the unique problems faced by Blackpool on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Board and sets out the strategic priorities for local partners in tackling alcohol related harm in the town. The key priorities are developing healthy attitudes to alcohol across the life course, promoting responsible retailing, and early identification and support alcohol issues.

Blackpool Mental Health Action Plan 2016-2019: The aim of the action plan is to provide a framework for the promotion of mental health and resilience in Blackpool, creating supportive environments for individuals and communities to flourish. This will be achieved by promoting good mental health and resilience across the Blackpool population, preventing mental ill health and suicide, reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness, and improving the quality and length of life people living with mental illness.

Blackpool Sexual Health Strategy 2017-20: The Blackpool Sexual Health Strategy aims to improve the sexual health of Blackpool's population by providing clear direction and focus for sexual health improvement. The strategy has 6 key priorities which are reduce unplanned pregnancies among all women of fertile age, reduce the rate of sexually transmitted infections and re-infections, improve detection rate in chlamydia diagnosis in 15-24 year olds, reduce onward transmission and proportion of late diagnosis HIV, reduce inequalities and improve sexual health outcomes, and tackling sexual violence.

Blackpool Safeguarding Children's Board Business Plan 2017-19: The Blackpool Safeguarding Children's Board has four key priorities, which reflect both national and local priorities. These are child sexual exploitation, early help, neglect and the toxic trio of parental domestic abuse, mental health and substance/alcohol misuse.

What is currently offered in Blackpool

Blackpool Council wants Blackpool to be a safe place for people to live and work and recognises that for many people one of the most dangerous places for them is within their own home or their own relationships. It is important to recognise that interpersonal violence is a widespread problem that cannot be ignored. It is unacceptable and as a council we will promote the understanding that everyone has the right to live free from violence and abuse in any form and the responsibility for the violence lies with the perpetrator.

The impact of interpersonal violence is vast, having serious consequences for those involved and can occur in any household crossing boundaries of race, class and sexual orientation. Interpersonal violence can have devastating effects extending beyond the victim, impacting on children, family, friends and work colleagues.

Blackpool's Domestic Abuse and Interpersonal Violence Partnership Sub Group views interpersonal abuse as a particularly serious issue and recognises the importance of its role to ensure the right services are provided and coordinated as a partnership.

Linked to the national strategy 'Ending Violence against Women and Girls' for service transformation, a range of targeted activity shall be delivered during the next three financial years until March 2020; and work is now progressing towards the development and implementation of this. This will include support for young people contributing towards breaking the cycle of domestic abuse and building resilience; work with perpetrators in respect of behaviour change; and working with adults, children and families in respect of behaviour change adopting a whole family approach.

There are a range of programmes offered in Blackpool to support individuals affected by domestic abuse:-

- **Inner Strength Perpetrator Programme:** This is a programme that is delivered in partnership with the Police and aims to change behaviour for perpetrators and reduce the risk to victims. The programme is an evidenced based programme designed to raise self-awareness, resilience and provide alternative coping strategies to ultimately reduce frequency of domestic abuse incidents.
- **Blackpool Better Start:** This is a partnership which is working to transform services in Blackpool for the 0-4 year old children

and their families, is launching programme called Steps to Safety in Summer 2018. The Steps to Safety programme will work with families who wish to remain together in domestic abuse situations, and will work towards supporting the children to remain with their families safety.

- **Local Family offer:** This is a tool that has been developed for frontline practitioners to support routine questioning around inter parental relationships to increase staff skills and confidence to support interactions with parents.
- **The Tavistock Foundations Parents as Partners Programme** aims to improve parent's relationship and communication, strengthen family relationships, support parents to manage the challenges of family life and reduce relationship conflict.
- **SafeNet Domestic Abuse Services:** this is a Blackpool commissioned service providing independent domestic violence advocates (IDVA) for high-risk domestic abuse victims and children experiencing domestic abuse (children's independent domestic violence advocates - CIDVA).

The services aim to provide an integrated response for adult victims who are at high risk of domestic abuse including children as part of the whole family approach. Increase safety and wellbeing of victims and their children to ensure they are able to lead healthy and safe lives now and in the future, reduce harm caused by taking a whole family approach to preventing further abuse; and increase the resilience of children and young people who have/are experiencing domestic abuse.

Activities involved in the service are MARAC, urgent safety advice and support, safety planning, support through legal measure and criminal justice system, referrals to safe accommodation, therapeutic group work, CIDVA one to one and where appropriate group work and support to schools.

- **SafeNet Abuse Services - Power to Change Programme:** This programme is for victims who have ended the relationship or are no longer in an abusive relationship and looking to move forward in their life. It looks at healthy relationships, self-esteem and confidence
- **Women's Aid National Domestic Violence Helpline:** This is a 24 hour Freephone confidential National Domestic Violence Helpline for women, children, professionals and concerned adults

Fylde Coast Women's Aid (FCWA)

- **Fylde Coast Women's Aid Refuge:** A Fylde Coast helpline which is accessible 9am -9.30pm Monday - Friday and 12 noon to 9pm at weekends. Contracted to provide specialist short term accommodation and support to prevent victims of domestic abuse from rough sleeping and experiencing homelessness, ensure and promote safety; and to promote independence and move people into independent accommodation.
- **FCWA SafeHaven Team:** This is a service supporting children and young people who have experienced or still experiencing domestic abuse. It provides domestic abuse early intervention service for children and young people in Lancashire.
 - **Connect with Respect** - For young people aged 11-18 years. It is available across Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde. Promotes positive messages for healthy relationships, raises children and young people's expectations so they can recognise harmful and risk taking behaviour and develop better strategies for coping.
 - **Connect with Respect - Look Ahead:** prevention strand of work for young people aged 11-16 years. Designed to empower young people to seek out advice if they are in danger and need of support. Sessions are available to schools which can be delivered during flexible learning/health impact days when pupils are off their normal timetabled lessons; and to groups of young people in community and youth group settings.
- **Fylde Coast Women's Aid - Recovery Programme:** Explores self-esteem and confidence, coping with consequences of abuse, improving wellbeing, learning to become more assertive; and being able to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- **Fylde Coast Women's Aid - Community drop in sessions:** This programme offers immediate advice and support around safety, emotional support and practical help.
- **Fylde Coast Women's Aid - Outreach Support:** Offers safety planning, legal advice, housing options and financial matters.
- **High risk Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) Support - FCWA**
 - **Hospital based IDVA:** This service is based at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals and offered to individuals who present to the hospital and require support due to domestic abuse.
 - **BME IDVA**
 - **Male IDVA**

Delivery partners include FCWA, Healthworks, Horizon, CGL-Inspire and Blackpool Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust delivering the **Complex Needs Pilot**. In partnership with Fylde and Wyre a 12-month complex need victims pilot is being undertaken. This commenced on the 31 July 2017 and provides support and accommodation for complex victims across the Fylde Coast. It offers a flexible and timely response at a time of crisis for victims. The model will provide a co-ordinated response to victims of domestic abuse with complex needs, ensuring their safety, removal of barriers to specialist services and support to help live independently. It is anticipated that by working with key services this will encourage behaviour change and work towards breaking the cycle of domestic abuse.

- **Empowerment 'The Den'** - Support for children and young people (CIDVA) aged 3-21 years old. Support includes exploring safety planning and what to do in an emergency, identifying support / support networks, raising awareness on healthy and unhealthy friendships / relationships, exploring feelings and emotions and introduce practical coping strategies

** Please note as there is support for children and young people in Blackpool that is both commissioned and non-commissioned there is a clear referral pathway into these services.*

Sanctuary Support - Co-ordinated by Blackpool Council and delivered by Blackpool Coastal Housing Care and Repair enables victims to maximise their independence, wellbeing and safety; enhancing security in the property through 'target hardening' for example extra door and window locks, boarding up and securing windows and fire retardant letter boxes.

Families in Need/Early Action: Blackpool's socio-economic climate; levels of deprivation and transience all contribute to form a pool of hard to reach families that have complex needs, placing considerable demands on services. In response to this, Blackpool Council have developed services that offer these families support, ranging from proactive, preventative services to complex multi-disciplinary interventions.

Families in Need Service delivers support to families receiving Early Help or statutory intervention in accordance with the Pan-Lancashire continuum of need.

Underpinning this work is a **whole family approach** where families receive a holistic package of intervention to challenge behaviours and support better outcomes for children.

The approach to supporting families

- utilises the 'continuous assessment'
- is practical hands on support in the family home
- is persistent and tenacious
- provides a co-ordinated multi agency approach to tackling issues
- offers a step down facility for children no longer requiring statutory intervention

Troubled Families: The Families in Need Service have also led on the delivery of the Troubled Families programme in Blackpool; a cross government programme, led by the Department for Communities and Local Government, to address many of the issues facing hard to reach, problematic families across England. In April 2012 the Troubled Families programme was formally launched targeted at families who meet the criteria laid down by Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) which include persistent absence, school exclusion, anti-social behaviour and families accessing out of work benefits. Blackpool has been successful in achieving positive outcomes for families in the first phase of troubled families and was selected as an early implementer of phase 2, which has a wider brief to support children with a variety of vulnerabilities.

Blackpool Coastal Housing: Provides practical support to victims of domestic abuse such as lock replacement, lock repairs and boarding up windows.

Housing Options: A Council run service, which provides advice and information and emergency accommodation.

Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA): Lancashire Victim Support have been awarded the wider contract for ISVA provision across Lancashire, including Blackpool. This service works in collaboration with the Renaissance, Safe Centre and Trust House ISVA's to ensure equity of service provision across Lancashire. The ISVA service provides independent support for those who have experienced or been affected by sexual violence, assault and/or abuse. The service provides emotional and practical support in the aftermath of sexual violence and supports people as their case progresses through the criminal justice system. Advice can include areas such as the police and wider criminal justice procedures, sexual health and contraception and emotional support.

The PCC Office is currently developing hospital based ISVA support which will support Blackpool.

White Ribbon Campaign: Blackpool on behalf of the Blackpool Domestic Abuse and Interpersonal Violence (DAIV) Partnership received White Ribbon accreditation in November 2017 along with all Lancashire district councils, Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire County Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and several health bodies. Lancashire becoming the UK's first White Ribbon county supported by Lancashire's Police and Crime Commissioner. The White Ribbon campaign aims to educate and raise awareness of violence against women and engage more men to be part of the solution. Supporters of the campaign are asked to pledge never to commit, condone, or remain silent about men's violence against women in all its forms; with Blackpool being clear that all violence and abuse is not acceptable for any victim regardless of gender. Some of the diverse range of organisations that are to be involved are Blackpool Council, Blackpool Muslim Community, schools, children's centres, Blackpool Teaching Hospital, Safenet Domestic Abuse Service, Fylde Coast Women's Aid, Blackpool & The Fylde College, neighbourhood policing and community safety teams, police cadets, Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Fire and Rescue service, and Blackpool Coastal Housing.

Conclusion

The Needs Assessment has demonstrated that domestic abuse/violence is a significant issue for Blackpool. It is a significant Public

Health issue, which is having a major impact upon those directly affected and their families. The introduction highlighted the cost to health, housing and social services, criminal justice and the civil legal system. All this highlights the need for our services to focus on innovative service reform to prevent domestic abuse.

Throughout the document, it highlights that domestic abuse/violence is an issue for both men and women, however, it is more commonly inflicted on women by men. The data shows that young women are more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of violence, including sexual violence. It is acknowledged that these individuals are more likely to have sustained psychological or emotional impact or result in injury or death.

There are range of national and local policy drivers shaping and influencing how domestic abuse should be addressed at a local level. The Needs Assessment has highlighted there are a range of services being offered in Blackpool to both men and women who have been a perpetrator or experienced domestic abuse/violence. However, further work needs to be undertaken to consider where services are being delivered, in particular consideration on delivering/locating services in high prevalence areas.

The Ofsted report on multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse highlighted that the volume of activity domestic abuse has created for agencies is so great that it requires sophisticated systems and well-coordinated processes. The report acknowledged professionals had made progress in dealing with the immediate challenges presented by the volume of cases of domestic abuse; however, domestic abuse is a widespread public health issues that needs a long-term strategy to reduce its prevalence. The report highlights the good work being done to protect children and victims, but far too little is being done to prevent domestic abuse and repair the damage that it does. Keeping children safe over time needs to be the long-term solution. There is a strong focus on immediate crisis intervention, which only supports the people and children immediately affected, or at visible risk. As a result of this, agencies are not always looking at the right things, and in particular, not focusing enough on the perpetrator of the abuse. Finally, the report discusses the lack of clarity about how to navigate the complexities of information sharing. Therefore there is a need for greater consistency in definition of harm, and in the understanding of whose rights to prioritise.

[1] Walby S (2009)The cost of domestic violence; Lancaster Univeristy; retrieved from <http://.lancs.ac.uk/FASS/sociology/profiles/34>

[2] HM Government (2016) [Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-2020](#)

[3] Home Office 2015; Home Office Domestic Violence and Abuse

[4] Ellesberg, M; Jansen, H; Heise, L; Watts, C; Garcia-Moreno, C & WHO (2008) Intimate partner violence and women's physical and mental health and domestic violence against women study team; Lancet, 1165-72

[5] Crime Survey for England and Wales <http://www.crimesurvey.co.uk/>

[6] ONS statistical bulletin [Domestic abuse in England and Wales: Year ending March 2016](#)

[7] Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI) [Joint inspections of the response to children living with domestic abuse: September 2016 to March 2017](#), September 2017

[8] Dept for Education, [Characteristics of children in need: 2015 to 2016](#)

[9] ONS, [Domestic abuse in England and Wales - Data Tool](#), December 2016

[10] This figure includes domestic incidents (incidents which fall outside the ACPO definition of Domestic Abuse) as well as domestic abuse.

[11] ONS, Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences : Year ending March 2015, [Intimate personal violence and partner abuse](#), February 2016.

[12] [Blackpool Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)

[13] Robinson L (2004); Domestic Violence MARACs (multi agency risk assessment conference) for very high risk victims in Cardiff

[14] Steel N; Blakeborough L; Nicholas S (2011); Supporting high risk victims of domestic violence; A review of multi agency risk assessment conferences (Research Report 55 Summary); London; Home Office

[15] NICE, PH50-Domestic violence and abuse; multi-agency working, February 2014

[16] NICE, QS116-Domestic Abuse, February 2016

[17] NICE, LGB20-Domestic violence and abuse; how services can respond effectively, June 2014

[18] NICE, CG110-Pregnancy and complex social factors: a model for service provision for pregnant women with complex social

Social Networks

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