



# DOMESTIC ABUSE

**ACTION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF  
LONDON 2018/19**

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# COMMANDER'S FOREWORD

I am proud to introduce the City of London Police Domestic Abuse Action Plan 2018/19. It sets out how we and our partners will tackle the issue of domestic abuse and ensure our officers and staff have the skills and knowledge to provide the best possible service to all victims and our community. It is a sad fact that the extent and nature of domestic abuse remains shocking, illustrated by the below statistics:

- *There were an estimated 2 million victims of domestic abuse last year in the UK*
- *Women are 5 times more likely than men to experience sexual abuse*
- *20% of children in the UK have been exposed to domestic abuse<sup>[3]</sup>*



Domestic abuse is a cause of great harm and a serious and complex issue; it can take many forms, which includes physical and sexual assaults, and financial, psychological & emotional abuse. It is a crime that remains largely hidden behind closed doors, leaving victims feeling trapped, powerless and isolated. The devastating and lasting impact these crimes have on victims' lives cannot be underestimated.

I believe that we all have a responsibility to end Domestic Abuse. I am committed to ensuring our approach to these crimes is consistent, robust and places vulnerable victims at the heart of our response. Working closely with our City partners and agencies, we will tackle domestic abuse head-on. We will continue to raise awareness of the issues at the core of domestic abuse and encourage people to report, so that we can adequately safeguard and support the victims of this abhorrent crime.

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

# PROGRESS AND OUR WAY FORWARD

In 2014 the City of London Police was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) as part of an all force inspection programme on HMIC's approach to tackling domestic abuse.

The HMIC reported that the City of London Police demonstrated a positive approach to domestic abuse victims, many of whom did not live in the force area, and that its safeguarding plans are of a high standard.

Since the inspection, Domestic Abuse has continued to feature strongly in the Annual HMIC 'PEEL' inspections and has retained a strong focus within the City of London Police.

Most recently in 2017 the HMICFRS has published a Progress report on the Police response to Domestic Abuse. This most recent version of the DA Action Plan incorporates activity that reflects the recommendations within this report.

Over 2017/18 the force has continued to make progress in its response to Domestic Abuse. This includes:

- Continued funding for a Vulnerable Victim Advocate working within the Public Protection Unit to support victims of Domestic Abuse at all risk levels.
- Implementing a new integrated IT system which improves the way risk assessments are captured and supervised.
- Further development of the way in which victims of Domestic Abuse are surveyed in order to improve service delivery.
- Ongoing training programme for police officers and staff in Domestic Abuse, including Coercive control and a drive to ensure this is mandatory for all areas of the COLP.
- Continued scrutiny of the response to DA and linked areas of vulnerability through the Vulnerability Working Group and Steering Group.
- Inclusion of 'Vulnerability' as a Policing Priority to ensure strategic oversight and support for areas including domestic abuse.
- Building on existing links with partners around key areas such as management of perpetrators and support for victims. For example the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meeting which brings together representatives from the police, social services, Victim Support, housing, NHS, LFB, Drug and Alcohol services, charities and other agencies to consider and implement effective safety plans to protect and support victims and their families.

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The City of London Police continues to demonstrate its commitment to supporting all victims who report domestic abuse, regardless of where they reside.

The Domestic Action Plan 2018/19 retains many of the actions from previous plans which are now key parts of daily business for the City of London Police but should remain a key focus. This demonstrates the force's commitment to providing an excellent service to victims of domestic abuse and continually striving to improve.



# IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

The Force will seek to build on what it has already accomplished and deliver progress on what more it can address in the 2017-18 action plan that centres on the following improvement actions:

- Leadership & Governance
- Initial Contact
- First Response
- Investigation
- Management of Victims and Offenders
- Learning and Training



# ACTION PLAN

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

This section monitors how the force provides strategic leadership and direction, has an overview of performance management and operates using an intelligence-led approach involving partners. The actions here are designed to improve the strategic way the force operates in handling domestic abuse.

Action	Timing
To produce an annual Domestic Abuse Problem Profile to establish the nature of domestic abuse in the City of London and understand the extent of the risk.	Annually
To maintain a Domestic Abuse Performance Dashboard to regularly monitor the scale of domestic abuse in the City of London. To continue to update this dashboard to cover key areas that require scrutiny (e.g. arrest rates/victimless prosecutions)	Quarterly Return
To attend statutory and third sector key safeguarding meetings to improve support for victims of domestic abuse.	Evidenced over life of plan
To identify and support innovative and evidence based practice in tackling domestic abuse.	Evidenced over life of plan
To continue to engage with members of the City of London community, by building on earlier campaigns, to raise awareness of domestic abuse and sexual violence and provide guidance on how to get support.	September 2018
To monitor level of referrals of cases to the Crown Prosecution Service and charge rates	July 2018
To conduct bi- annual audits to ensure accurate and timely recording of Domestic Abuse crimes, including Coercive Control	Evidenced over life of plan

## INITIAL CONTACT

This section monitors how the force will ensure that their arrangements for assessing and managing risk at the earliest stage of the initial contact in a domestic abuse incident is understood and implemented by staff.

### Action

### Timing

To ensure the COLP continue to adhere to a standardised model for initial assessment of risk in domestic abuse incidents, ensuring an effective graded response. Have a clear system for monitoring and auditing compliance.

Evidenced over life of plan

Through the use of background information and intelligence checks, to ensure that officers attending incidents of domestic abuse have sufficient information to fully assess situations and make informed decisions.

Evidenced over life of plan

## FIRST RESPONSE

This section monitors how the force will ensure that their arrangements for assessing and managing risk in relation to domestic abuse are well understood and appropriately used by officers and staff.

### Action

### Timing

To ensure that all staff and officers understand their role in dealing with reports of domestic abuse, including recognising abusive behaviours, conducting thorough risk assessments, and collating appropriate information and material to enable evidence-led prosecutions.	Evidenced over life of the plan
To ensure that risk assessments and actions taken during initial attendance at domestic abuse incidents are supervised.	Evidenced quarterly
To ensure that staff across the COLP take action in respect of children and vulnerable adults who are residing in households where domestic abuse may be occurring, whether they are present during incidents or not.	May 2018

## INVESTIGATION

Domestic abuse cases should be prioritised and allocated for investigation on the basis of risk and effective scrutiny of these investigations should involve specialist trained officers.

### Action

### Timing

To ensure that the progress of all domestic abuse related investigations is monitored through regular supervisory oversight.	In place and evidenced over life of the plan
To ensure that the appropriate vulnerability flags are recorded on the City of London Police crime recording system for all domestic abuse related investigations.	In place and evidenced over life of the plan
To gather and utilise a variety of sources of evidence in all domestic abuse investigations to reduce the strain on victims throughout the investigative and prosecution process.	Evidenced over life of the plan

## MANAGEMENT OF VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS

In safeguarding victims we need to recognise the dynamic nature of risk in domestic abuse situations and make sure that appropriate safeguarding is put in place throughout their involvement with police. Referral routes to partner organisations and access to specialised support is provided to ensure we maintain the safety and well-being of victims while bringing the perpetrator of the crime to justice.

### Action

### Timing

To ensure that COLP are proactively working to identify hidden victims and encourage them to come forward, and working with the community to prevent persons becoming future victims or perpetrators of domestic abuse through early interventions with families.	Evidenced over life of plan
To ensure that perpetrators of domestic abuse are referred to and are part of an Integrated Offender Management approach to address abusive behaviours and provide appropriate support.	Evidenced over life of plan
To ensure that repeat and cross-border perpetrators of domestic abuse are identified at the earliest opportunity and steps are taken to address the risk they pose.	Evidenced over life of plan
To proactively consider the use of protective orders in all domestic abuse related cases.	Evidenced over life of plan
To maintain working relationships with Adults and Children's Social Care Teams and other multi-agency partners to develop a holistic approach to safeguarding.	Evidenced over life of plan
To explore options for using new technologies to support and safeguard victims.	Evidenced over life of plan
To ensure ongoing compliance with the Victims Code of Practice, specifically in relation to offering and completing Victim Personal Statements.	Evidenced over life of plan
To maintain regular contact with victims in domestic abuse investigations to ensure that they are kept up-to-date with relevant information, including changes in risk assessments, protection plans, bail, sentencing and prison releases.	Evidenced over life of plan

## LEARNING AND TRAINING

It is important that officers and staff understand the dynamics of domestic abuse and that their attitudes and behaviours reflect their knowledge. This will improve the way the force operates in handling domestic abuse.

Action	Timing
To ensure that best practice guidance and all learning and recommendations arising from Domestic Homicide Reviews is identified and included in City of London Police policy and procedure.	Evidenced over life of plan
To assess the effectiveness of the City of London Police response to domestic abuse incidents through internal auditing of domestic abuse records on a quarterly basis and disseminate learning from these audits.	Evidenced on a quarterly basis
To establish a programme to undertake testing and exercising of the COL response to domestic abuse on a bi-annual basis and review/respond to findings.	July 2018
To implement a standard process for obtaining feedback from victims of domestic abuse to assess their levels of satisfaction on service delivery and ensure that information provided is acted upon and incorporated into policy, procedure and training.	April 2018 following pilot completed in Dec 2017
To deliver ongoing training on all elements of domestic abuse and different forms of vulnerability to frontline and investigative staff and officers, including call handling staff. Ensuring the training is up to date with latest legislation, policy and practice	Ongoing
To ensure that all new processes, guidance and changes to policy are communicated across the Force to all staff.	Ongoing

## DELIVERY AND MONITORING

Our Domestic Abuse Action Plan will be monitored as part of our internal performance framework at our monthly Vulnerability Working Group and Steering Group Meeting and supported by our City partners.

We will ensure this area remains on our agenda and is an integral part of how we monitor performance. Keeping a separate action plan for this area will facilitate in-depth monitoring of capability and performance and allow quick actions to be taken where we feel we are not meeting our high standards.

