

# PLYMOUTH VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE STRATEGY 2023-2026





# FOREWORD

Whether it happens at home, at work, online or out in our public spaces, the impact of violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence has and continues to have a devastating impact on the lives of all those affected.

The city of Plymouth has endured more than its fair share of so many people's lives cruelly cut short. The tragic cases of Bobbi Anne McLeod, Kerry Power and the five victims of the Keyham shooting, provide stark evidence of the need to take urgent action now.

For all those who have been murdered, it is incumbent upon us all to ensure they did not die in vain, instead their deaths must be the catalyst that galvanize a movement to bring about positive change, creating a community where women and girls can enjoy life without the need to change their behaviour across every aspect of their lives because of the threat of VAWG and where family and friends no longer have to grieve for a life lost because of the use of violence.

In an effort to develop a meaningful and comprehensive strategy, we have taken the accounts of over 150 people with lived experience, as well as the knowledge and experience of agencies and organisations who work in the field of domestic abuse and sexual violence, to develop a strategy that details how we will challenge the attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate violence and abuse, setting out a wide range of actions that aims to deliver real and lasting change, creating safer city for us all, and as a partnership we will work hard to make sure it happens.

**Lyn Gooding,**  
Chair of DASV Partnership Board,  
CEO of First Light

**Hannah Shead**  
Vice Chair of DASV Partnership Board,  
CEO of Trevi



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# Plymouth Multi-Partnership Commitment to Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

In Plymouth we recognise that tackling violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence is everyone's business. This strategic plan brings together four statutory partnership boards in Plymouth with responsibility for community safety and safeguarding adults and children to deliver a shared vision and action plan to end violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence. The DASV partnership board leads on the development of strategic priorities and overseeing the implementation of the action plan. All the statutory partnerships boards are committed to the strategic aims and to working together to implement the action plan.

## Safer Plymouth

**Safer Plymouth**, our Community Safety Partnership, helps agencies to work together to improve the safety of our residents. We are made up of six statutory organisations, working alongside a wide range of other agencies, to protect our local community from crime and to help people feel safer.

## Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership

**The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership Board** provides system-based community leadership for preventing and ending Violence Against Women and Girls, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWG/DASV) in Plymouth.

## Plymouth Safeguarding Adults Partnership

**Plymouth Safeguarding Adults Partnership (PSAP)** is committed to ensuring improvements in the safeguarding of adults at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation by Assurance, Challenge, Support and Learning.

## Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership

**The Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP)** brings together partners to ensure the right support is available and accessible, at the earliest opportunity, to ensure children & young people in Plymouth are safe and feel safe in their families and communities.



## Definitions

We use the phrase **Violence Against Women and Girls, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWGDA SV)** to refer to all forms of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence. We recognise that anyone can experience and be affected by violence and abuse and at the same time, evidence shows us that women and girls are disproportionately affected by violence and abuse and men disproportionately are responsible for causing harm.

### Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

The term, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) refers to acts of violence or abuse that we know disproportionality affect women and girls. Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, so called 'honour-based' abuse, (including female genital mutilation, forced or early marriage), drink spiking, misogyny, sexism and pornography.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality.

This definition is based on the Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls definition. However it also includes drink spiking, sexism, misogyny and pornography which were added by the Plymouth VAWG Commission.

### Gender-Based Violence definition

Gender-based violence (GBV) is often used interchangeably with Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and refers to harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms.

This is taken from the United Nations definition of Gender Based Violence.

### Statement on men, boys and gender diversity

We know that men, boys and gender diverse people are also victims/survivors of violence, abuse and affected by harmful gender norms. Our plans and partnership work seek to prevent and address all forms of gender based abuse, domestic abuse and sexual violence and make Plymouth a community where all can feel safe and secure.

# BACKGROUND/HISTORY

Since 2009, Plymouth has worked to address DASV via a multi-agency, coordinated community response. The City recognises that many of its residents will be impacted by violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWG/DASV) and is committed to coming together to address these issues in the most effective way.

In 2009 multi-agency partners came together in a sub group of Safer Plymouth (The local Community Safety Partnership) to form the DASV forum. This multi-agency partnership brought together partners from police, local authority, specialist voluntary sector organisations, housing and health.

In 2018, Plymouth partners began to reimagine our city's response to domestic abuse and in 2019, the DASV Forum conducted a DA-systems leadership exercise to reconsider the outcomes and value we might add for people in Plymouth at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse.

In April-May 2021 the DASV Forum completed an audit of partnership working in Plymouth using Standing Together's 'In Search of Excellence' as a guide. It identified both our strengths as a partnership and areas for development.

As part of the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 the DASV group agreed to fulfil the statutory duties of a Local Partnership Board under the Act. Whilst the DA Act 2021 necessitates certain partners to be a member of the partnership board, the partnership board in Plymouth has a broader membership of partners reflecting the strength of the local commitment to a coordinated community response. All members of the partnership have equal value and status.

Plymouth applied successfully in 2021 to be part of the Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities (DHLUC) and National Lottery Changing Futures programme. The purpose of the programme is to enhance partnerships between local organisations to better support those who experience multiple disadvantages including homelessness, substance misuse, mental health issues, domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system.

In late 2021, the City came together in the wake of the Keyham and Bobbi-Anne McLeod tragedies to form the Men's Violence Against Women and Girls Commission, with a report and recommendations published in May 2022.

The DASV Statutory Partnership Board continues both the work of the VAWG Commission and the legacy of partnership working around DASV in the City. The board meets every six weeks and is currently chaired by two CEOs of specialist Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence services in Plymouth.

This strategy and the work of the Board is set within the wider context of the National Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2021; the National Strategic Direction for Sexual Assault and Abuse Services; and the National Domestic Abuse Plan. It is legislatively underpinned by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Serious Violence Duty 2022 and the Victims Bill.



# WHAT PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE TELL US

In 2019 the Plymouth Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) partnership listened to over 150 stories from people with lived experience, children and young people, people displaying harmful behaviours and staff working in services. This was called the Domestic Abuse Systems Leadership.

As part of this work we:

- held informal non-structured conversations
- some groups; some one-to-one
- developed stories and personas
- carried out extensive story telling circles
- sat with the discomfort and uncomfortable truths

In February and March 2022 the Plymouth VAWG Commission listened to the experience and feedback of a wide range of local people including survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse and from organisations and experts. A survey was commissioned to understand how violence affects women and girls and to seek views about how it should be prevented and addressed.

In February 2023 we held a community conversation to revisit the systems leadership work as part of the Plymouth City Council procurement process for a new Domestic Abuse service for Plymouth.



## WHAT WE HEARD...

People told us they didn't feel listened to or believed. They were afraid to tell their friends and family and then when they had contact with services they didn't feel heard.

People told us they were frightened. Frightened that professionals would take their children, that they would lose their homes, frightened that their family and friends would reject them. Ultimately they were afraid that their partner would kill them.

People told us they felt isolated. They had often lost contact with their family and friends. Their support networks had been stripped away.

**"I had lost all my friends and had no confidence before engaging with services"**

Staff told us that they were fearful in their work around domestic abuse and feel like they are operating in a blame culture. That the system does not always work in a collaborative way, leaving them feeling isolated and unsupported.

Staff told us that the system does not always allow them to work in the best interests of the people they are trying to help.

**"It was hard to be believed as I didn't have scars and bruises"**

## People who have carried out acts of domestic abuse told us:

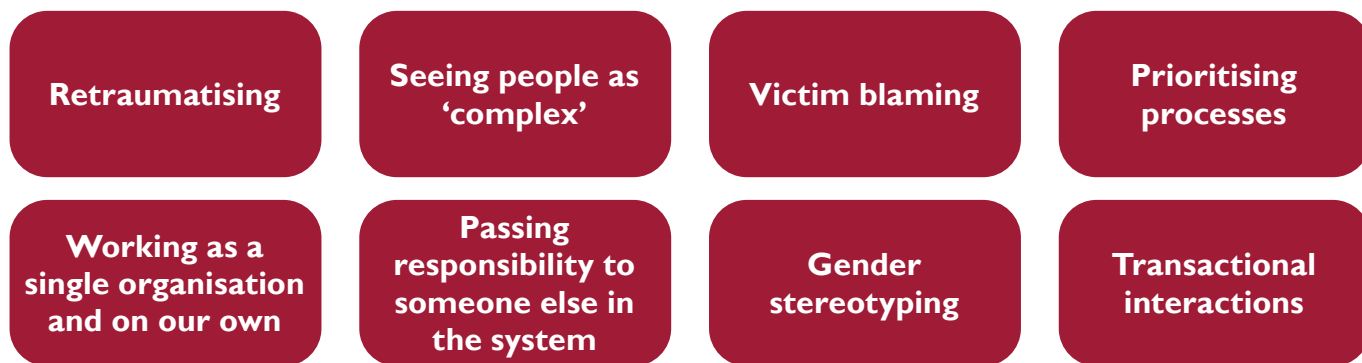
**"No one knows me, no one cares or is interested. This is the first time anyone has bothered to really listen"**

**"I tried to get help when I realised I had a problem but when I rang the DA service they were rude and told me to just google it"**

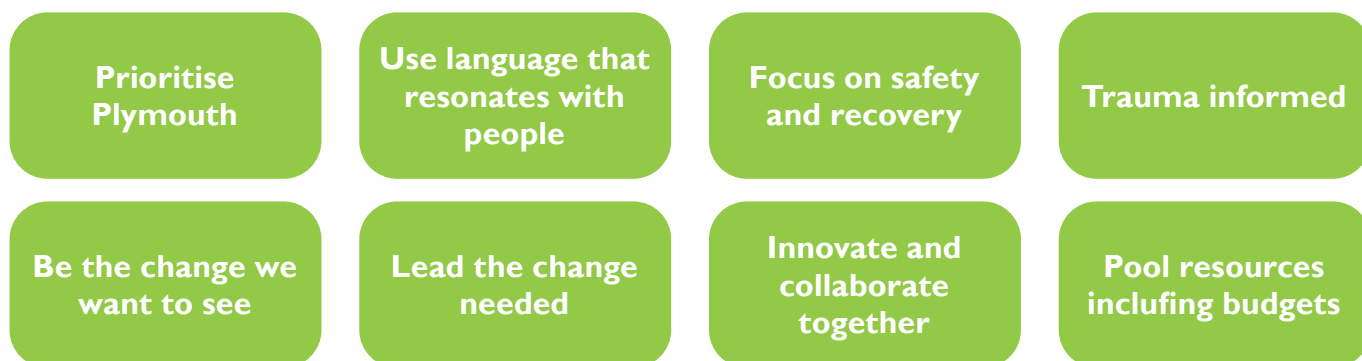


# WHAT WE LEARNT ABOUT OUR WORK AS A SYSTEM

**How we have been working and want to change:**



**Work more like this:**



**Staff can expect us to provide:**



**Our ideal system design principles are:**



# PLYMOUTH VAWG COMMISSION SURVEY

- 89% agreed that violence against women and girls is a problem in Plymouth
- 49% had experienced some level of harm/abuse and/or inappropriate behaviour whilst at home
- 60% felt violence against women and girls in Plymouth happens more often compared to 5 years ago
- 64% felt safe when out during the day
- 78% felt unsafe when out after dark
- Nearly 40% had experienced inappropriate comments or messages that offended them or made them feel uncomfortable on social network websites e.g. online dating
- Nearly 40% had experienced unwanted sexually explicit online comments, emails, messages or images

## What should our priorities be for addressing VAWG?

- 80% said working with schools to encourage healthy behaviour/relationships
- 58% said provide training to people so they can safely intervene if they witness violence against women and girls
- 54% said increasing understanding about the importance of healthy and respectful relationships






# DATA AND PREVALENCE

## Recorded crime statistics show that between April 2021 March 2022 there were:


- 4,884 domestic abuse crimes in Plymouth. This accounts for 21.7% of all crimes recorded in that year. In addition to recorded crimes there were 2,212 domestic abuse incidents – enquiries and reports that did not result in a crime being recorded. 73.6% of victims were women and 26.4% were men. 88% of people causing harm were men.
- 1,318 sexual offences (rape and other sexual offences) – this is a 25% increase from the previous year. Of these 447 (33.8%) were for rape and 874 (66.2%) were for other sexual offences. The rate of sexual offences is the third highest (out of 15) of the Most Similar Groups – those areas with similar demographic, economic and social characteristics. The data for sexual assault crimes indicates that 84.3% of victims were women and 97.7% of people committing these crimes were men.
- Domestic abuse is the third most common reason for homelessness in the city over the last 12 months with approximately 450 approaches in the last 365 days.
- In 2022 for adults who meet the Care Act definition and have been triaged as requiring a safeguarding response there were 92 domestic abuse cases, of which 74 were female and 18 were male.
- From 2020-2023, Plymouth received 10 referrals for domestic homicides and suspected suicides associated with domestic abuse Reviews – 8 progressed to Domestic Homicide Reviews
- In 2022/23 1,307 children and young people assessed by Plymouth City Council's Children's Social Care service were considered to have current violence-related factors in their environment and this was most likely to be concerns about domestic abuse.
- In the 2022 Plymouth Health Visitor Caseload Survey of 8,296 families with children under-5, violence in the family was noted in 5.8% (483 families).
- In the 2022 Plymouth Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 10% of the 3,720 pupils responding said that there had been violence (e.g., hitting, punching, slapping) at home at least once or twice in the last month.

# THE PLYMOUTH DASV STATUTORY PARTNERSHIP BOARD

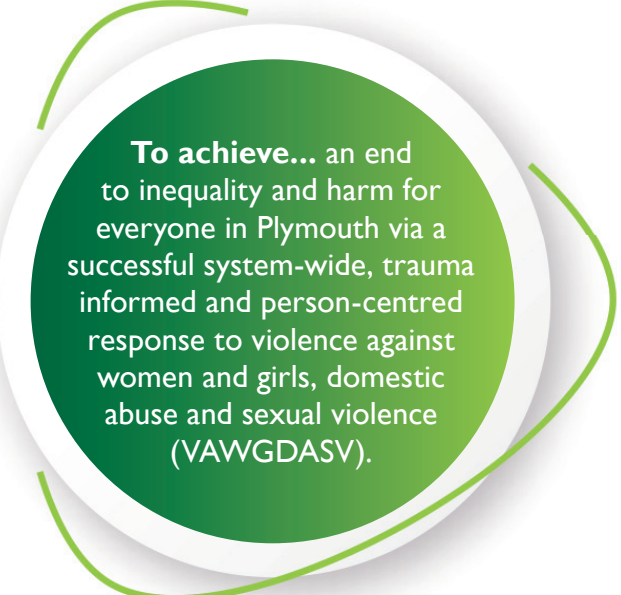
## Our Vision and Mission




**A Partnership Board**  
**to...** provide system-based community leadership for preventing and ending violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWGDAV) in Plymouth.



**By the means of...** working collaboratively and innovatively to change culture, attitudes and behaviour and centring the voices of those with lived experience.



**To achieve...** an end to inequality and harm for everyone in Plymouth via a successful system-wide, trauma informed and person-centred response to violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWGDAV).



**In the belief that...** we can support people to live free from fear and abuse and those who harm will change their behaviour.



# OUR VALUES AND COMMITMENTS

## Values:

- **Evidence-based** – using best available evidence to direct what we do
- **Intelligence-led** – interpreting a range of data sources to understand the issues
- **Centring the voice of lived experience** – working with communities and people with lived experience to ensure that they are involved in conversations, co-design and delivery
- **Accountable** – ensuring transparency and appropriate governance
- **Inclusive** – engaging with a range of people and organisations
- **Passionate** – making a real difference for the people of Plymouth
- **Trauma-informed** – employing trauma informed/responsive approaches to promote safe and respectful places and spaces
- **Ambitious** – always striving for continuous learning and improvement
- **Resourceful / efficient** – making best use of resources
- **Courageous and Innovative** – being brave and not afraid to test, learn and develop new ways of working

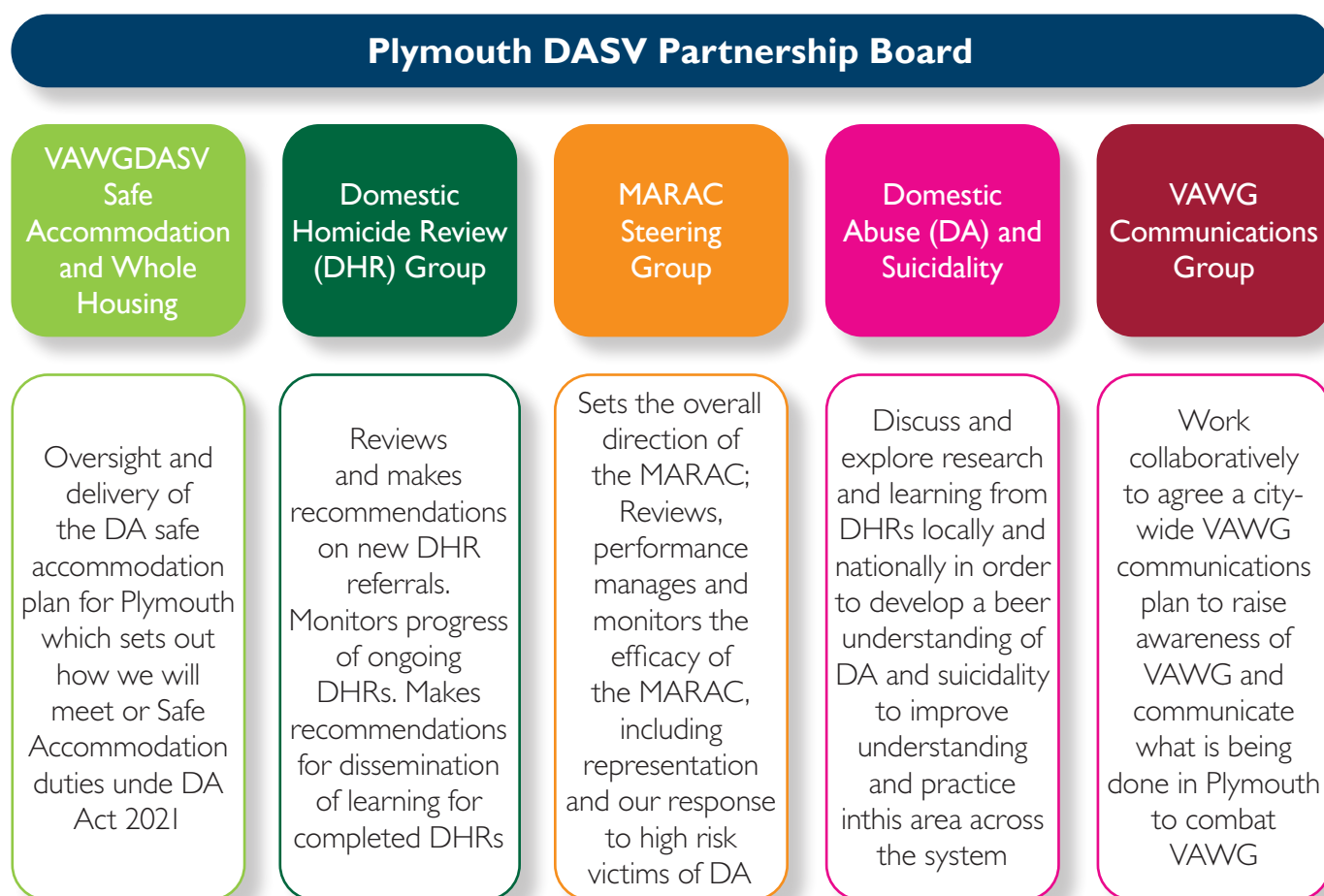
## Commitments:

- Individually and collectively demonstrate leadership to lead a system-wide response to DASV and VAWG
- Be active participants to achieve results
- Embrace, discuss and seek to solve even the most difficult problems
- Offer both support and challenge
- Enthusiastically take on activities outside of the meeting
- Contribute to a friendly, collegiate and values-based culture
- Talk about DASV and VAWG issues with our colleagues, friends and associates
- Take a coordinated community response / whole system approach; linking in with other networks locally and nationally

# STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

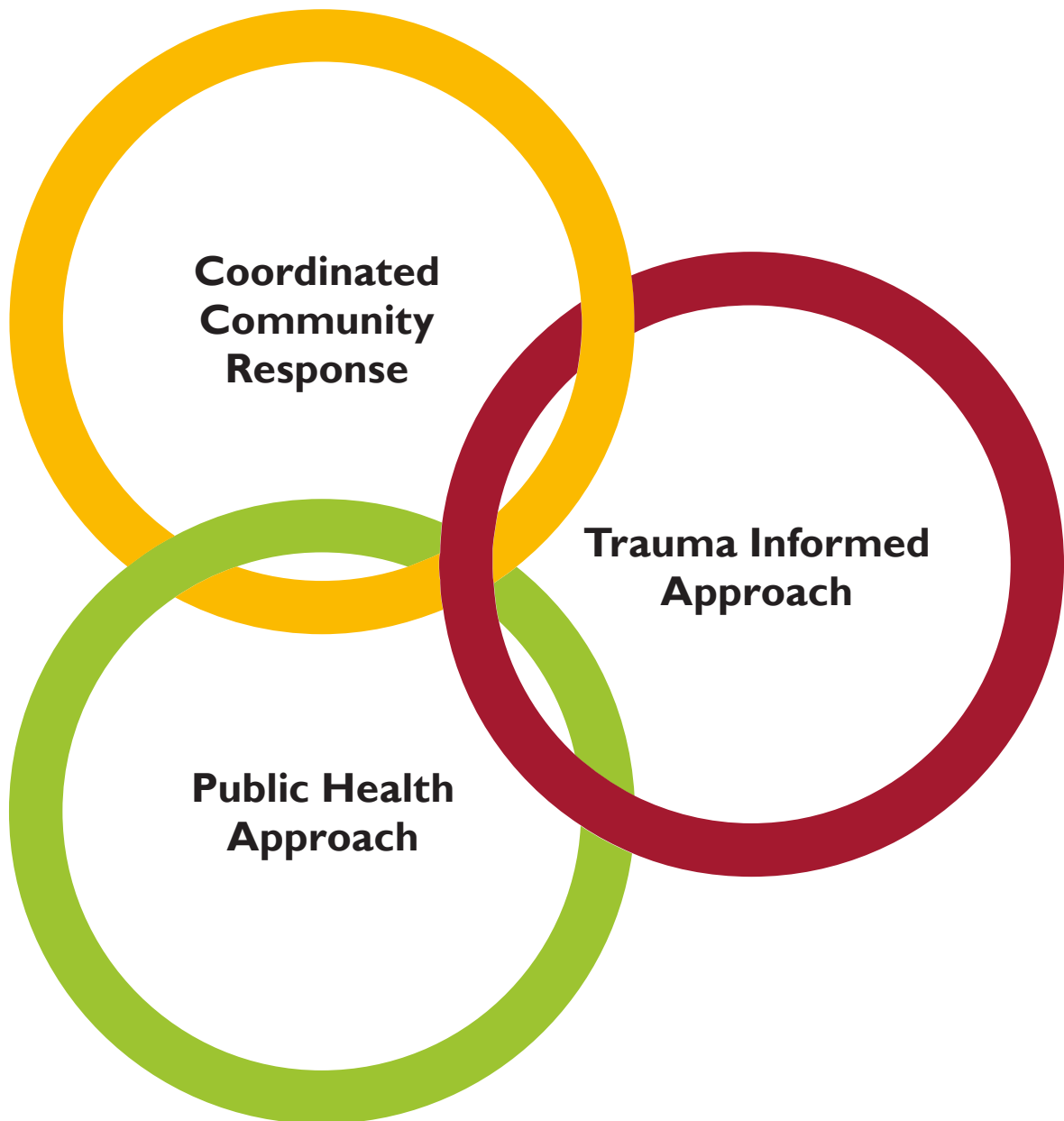
The Plymouth DASV Board reports into the Community Safety Partnership - Safer Plymouth

Alongside the main board meeting there are sub-groups and test and learn groups which have specific focus areas. They report into the main board.



# OUR APPROACH TO PREVENTING VAWGDASV

In Plymouth our approach to preventing violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence is underpinned by the following three approaches:





# COORDINATED COMMUNITY RESPONSE (CCR)

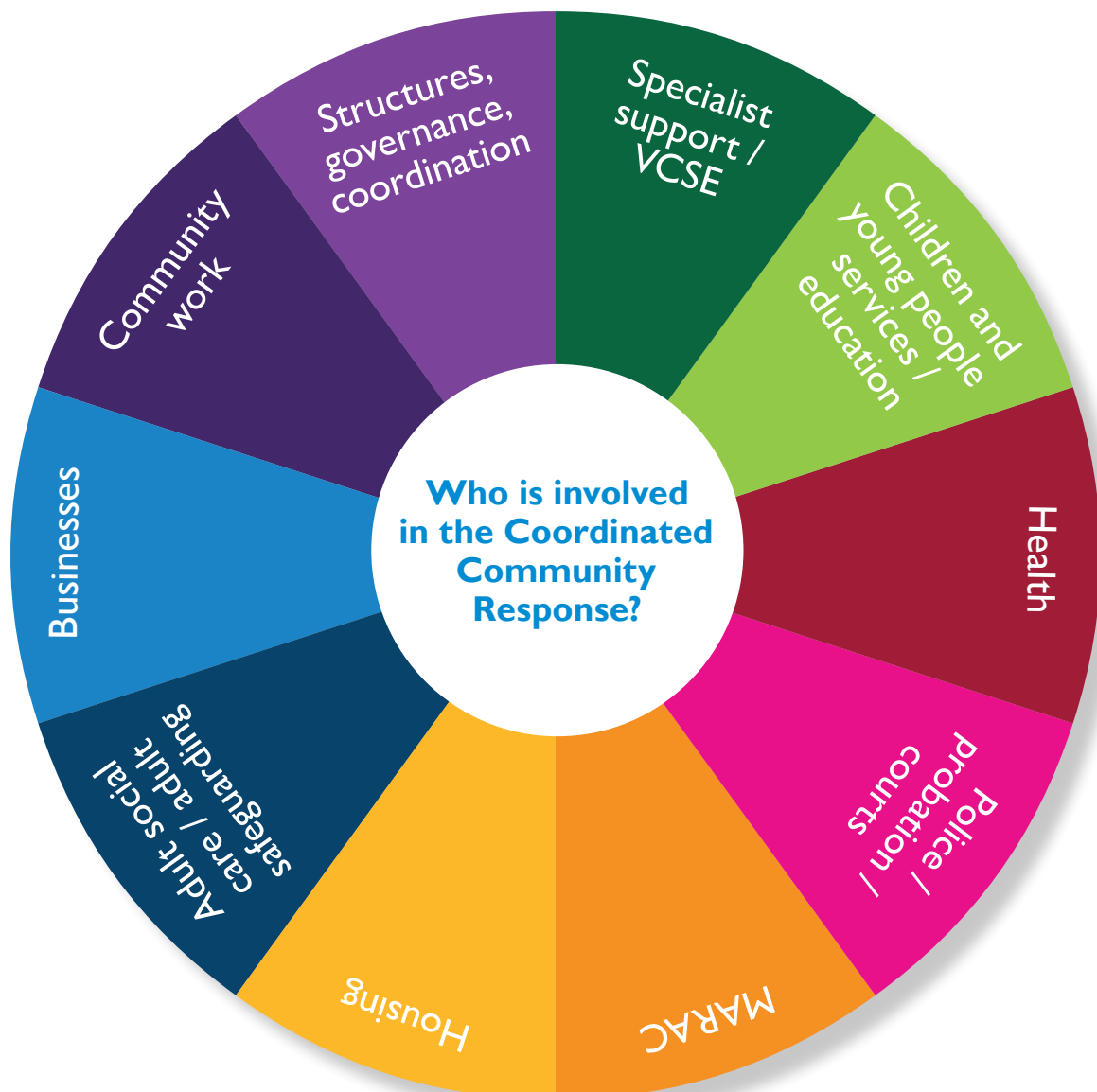
## What is the Coordinated Community Response?

A local whole system approach to violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence

Every agency who has responsibility for dealing with victims of violence, their children and or people who harm, must work effectively within their own agency and with all other agencies to secure the safety of the victim and their children and hold people who harm to account. The process by which this work is integrated and managed is known as the CCR

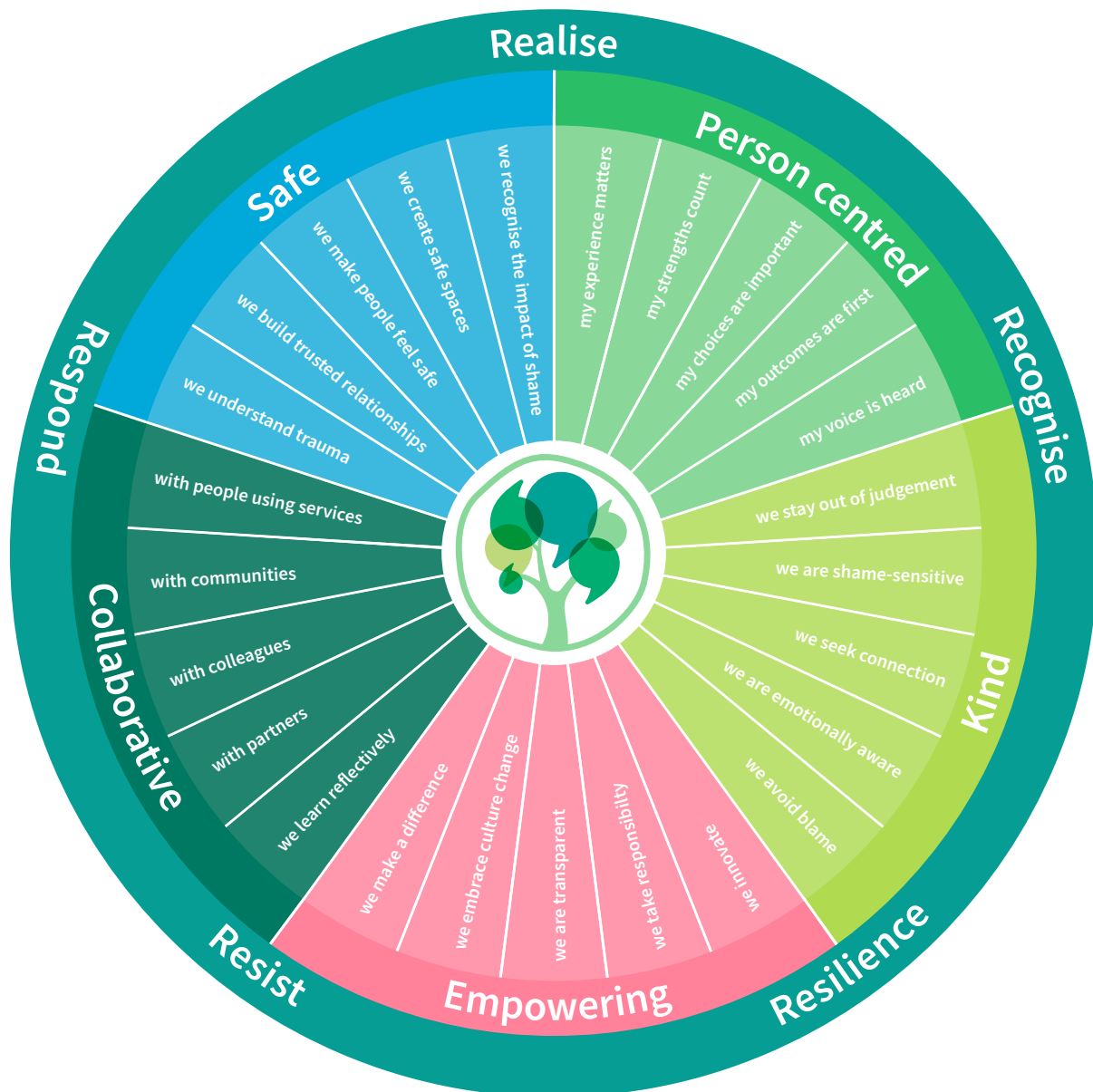
Encompasses broadest response to VAWGDASV addressing risk and need:

- Prevention
- Early Intervention
- Dealing with Crisis and Risk Fluctuation
- Long Term Recovery and Safety



# TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH

The Plymouth approach to trauma informed practice is one which 'envision[s] a transformative approach that enables its people, its communities and its services to come together, to innovate and create a truly compassionate city.' (Trauma Informed Plymouth Network (TIPN)). The Plymouth Trauma Lens (below) and the 'Envisioning Plymouth as a Trauma Informed City' (TIPN) and 'Kindness Charter' (TIPN) sets out the definition of trauma, vision and values of the Plymouth Approach.



## Trauma Informed Lens

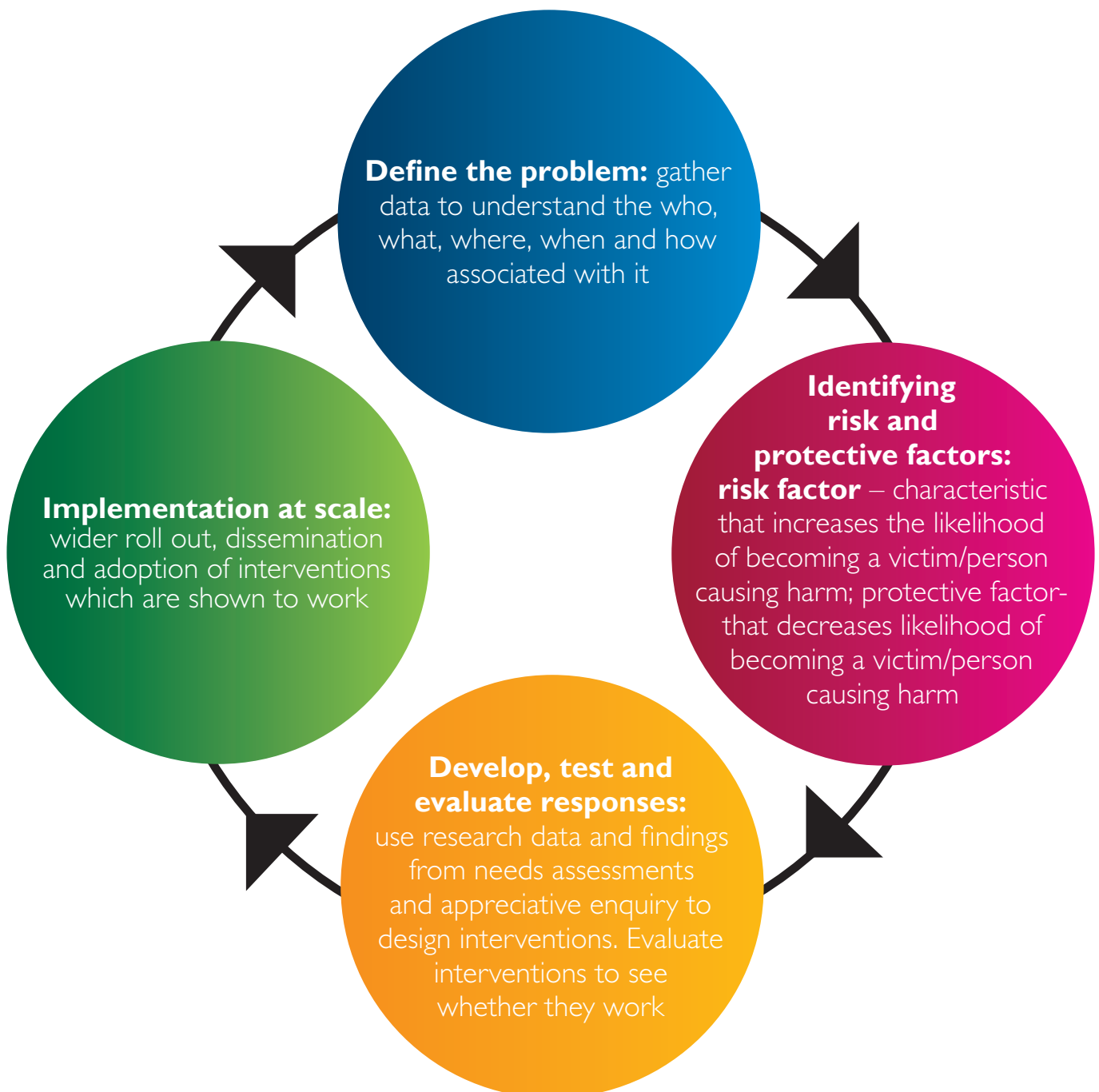
Hardwick, Moss and Shaw for Trauma Informed Plymouth Network CIC

# PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

We are committed to using a public health approach to violence prevention using the WHO definition below:

The public health approach to violence prevention seeks to improve the health and safety of all individuals by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim/survivor or a person who causes harm.

The approach consists of four steps:





## OUR STRATEGIC AIMS

**Increase system and community-wide responsibility for violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWGDAV)**

**Promote positive culture change around VAWGDASV**

**Deliver effective support to survivors**

**Develop a systemic response to people who harm**

**Improve our city-wide response to justice**

**Coordinate communications**

**Improve intelligence, learning and impact**

**Influence the wider system beyond Plymouth**

## Increase system and community-wide responsibility for violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWG DASV)

We will use every opportunity to influence wider policy and programme structures to ensure that prevention of violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWG DASV) is a priority across the system (holding the system accountable); We will be bold and ambitious to evolve the way we collectively prevent and address VAWG DASV.

### **We will achieve this by:**

- Engaging the leadership, authority and influence of every member of the VAWG DASV Partnership at every possible interaction, meeting, place in the system. We are ambassadors of this work across the city
- Advocating for issues relating to violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence to be embedded in wider policy and system structures
- Strengthening our coordinated community response to violence against women and girls, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWG DASV)
- Developing a whole life course approach/framework to VAWG DASV in collaboration with the DASV board, Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Partnership (PSCP) and the Plymouth Safeguarding Adults Partnership (PSAP)
- Delivering our Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Plan
- Ensuring all opportunities for investment in VAWG DASV initiatives are realised to support the sustainable delivery of prevention and support of VAWG DASV
- Developing and implementing a VAWG Charter Mark scheme, VAWG Champions Network and Safe Spaces Network across the city
- Reviewing and strengthening our workforce development offer across the city
- Developing and implementing a citywide Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) prevention strategy in partnership with the DASV board and Plymouth Child Safeguarding Board
- Developing a Whole Family Approach to domestic abuse in collaboration with the Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Partnership
- Reviewing and strengthening our health response to VAWG DASV
- Increasing the influence of the voice of lived experience on the system

## Promote positive culture change around VAWGDASV

We will identify and challenge intersectional inequalities, harmful perceptions, and behaviours.

### We will achieve this by:

- Better understanding and responding to the needs of communities in Plymouth:
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer; intersex and asexual people
  - Reducing stigma around male victims of child sexual abuse and domestic abuse
  - Women involved in prostitution
  - Refugees and asylum seekers
  - People displaying Harmful sexual behaviours
  - Older people (aged 60+)
  - People with care and support needs
  - Disabled people
  - Younger victims
  - Minoritised communities
- VAWG anti-racism work and links with anti-racism allyship network
- Delivering of VAWG Commission recommendations
- Developing our understanding and approach to so called 'Honour-based' abuse
- Mainstreaming and Sustaining our Bystander Training Programme
- Developing a male allyship programme; Men/boys work
- Coordinating and Delivering a Whole school approach to cover respectful behaviour, healthy relationships and gender equality





## Deliver effective support to survivors

We will commission and provide person centred and trauma informed support and services to victims, including children, of VAWGDASV

### **We will achieve this by:**

- Ensuring throughout system that victim/survivors get needs-based support at the right time in the right place and only have to tell their story once
- Commissioning a new Domestic Abuse Service for the city drawing on our learning from those with lived experience and ensuring that we meet our statutory duties.
- Improving responses in Primary Care through the Interpersonal Trauma Response Service
- Conducting review/needs assessment and delivery of child survivor-specific services
- Improving our responses to prostituted women including developing clear exit pathways building on our work as a partnership and learning from the Sparks Project.
- Delivering the NHS England Sexual Violence Pathfinder project
- Re-commissioning of the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) service for Plymouth
- Commissioning sexual violence therapeutic services for Plymouth

## Develop a systemic response to people who harm

We will develop a coherent response people displaying harmful behaviours.

### **We will achieve this by:**

- Developing a public health approach focussing on prevention, early intervention and behaviour change programmes looking at evidence of best practice and what works and where there are gaps in evidence taking a bold approach to developing test and learn pilots.
- Actively targeting people who harm across the system
- Delivering a robust response to those that pose High Risk, and cause High Harm.
- Developing our understanding and approach to child to parent abuse (CPA)
- Developing our understanding and approach to people who may sexually harm children
- Actively seeking and pursuing funding opportunities sustain our behaviour change work with people who harm and expand our interventions focussing on primary and secondary prevention

## Improve our city-wide response to justice

We will improve our justice responses to Violence Against Women and Girls Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

### **We will achieve this by:**

- Defining what we mean by justice in co-production with those with lived experience – victims/survivors and bereaved families
- Ensuring victims/survivors can report their experiences to anyone in system and are responded to
- Developing understanding and awareness of coercive control within the criminal justice system and the community
- Strengthening CJS Leadership: Op Moonstone (DA) Op Gemstone (SV) and neighbourhood policing
- Improving justice in schools for young women and girls i.e. misconduct processes and ways in which schools responds to reports of harassment and sexual violence
- Understanding and improving the experience of survivors in the family court process
- Reviewing and improving the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court in Plymouth

## Co-ordinate communications

- We will develop a collective approach to communicating about our work as a partnership and increasing awareness of Violence Against Women and Girls Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence across the community

### **We will achieve this by:**

- Coordinating a dedicated communications group gathering together communications professionals from across the partnership to lead on this work - VAWG Communications Group
- Developing the DASV Partnership Board online presence within upcoming Safer Plymouth Website to update the community on what work is being done across the city as well as provide information about VAWGDASV and local services
- Developing a learning hub for open access resources and learning about VAWGDASV.

## Improve intelligence, learning and impact

We will use an evidence informed approach to planning and delivery and will embrace a continuous learning approach to testing and evaluation.

### **We will achieve this by:**

- Developing a data dashboard so we know where we are making progress, where we need to consider different approaches to improving outcomes and so we understand emerging trends and issues
- Domestic Abuse and Suicidality test and learn group will consider research, best practice and information from domestic homicide reviews (DHRs) locally and nationally to improve understanding and practice in this area.
- Embedding Appreciative Enquiry and learning from those with lived experience (including Changing Futures Peer Researchers) across the Partnership
- Supporting the work of the VAWG Knowledge Exchange Group
- Ensuring the learning from DHRs and other enquires is used to inform system change
- Reviewing MARAC will consider best approaches to preventing serious harm
- Refreshing our Domestic Abuse needs assessment and update it yearly to support us to understand what is going on in Plymouth, identify gaps, support funding applications and track our progress.
- Developing a framework to evaluate our approach/strategy implementation to measure impact

## Influence the wider system beyond Plymouth

We will use every opportunity to influence wider regional and national practice, policy and legislation to advocate for policy reform and increased resources to effectively prevent and address Violence Against Women and Girls, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

### **We will achieve this by:**

- Working across Peninsula and linking to regional and national groups and programmes to share best practice, learning and achieve economies of scale.
- Influencing national research, policy and practice by contributing to policy consultations, research projects.
- Sharing local practice in regional and national forums
- Amplifying the Voice of lived experience on a regional and national level
- Co-developing the Coordinated Community Response accreditation framework with national 2<sup>nd</sup> tier charity Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse and aiming to be the first Local Partnership to achieve accreditation nationally







# GLOSSARY

## Types of abuse and what they mean

### Conversion Practices

Also known as 'conversion therapy'. This means any practice which tries to change or suppress who an LGBT+ person is (sexual orientation or gender identity). This may be committed by family members, community members or groups, religious leaders or organisations, health workers, counsellors/therapists or other practitioners within the 'well-being sector'.

### Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of economic, psychological or emotional abuse, controlling or coercive, threatening, degrading or violent behaviour, including sexual abuse and physical abuse between those aged 16 and over. In the majority of cases by a partner or ex-partner, but also includes abuse by other family members including extended family. It is very common. In the vast majority of cases it is experienced by women and men are the ones causing harm.

### Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### Early and forced marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used, to force them to do so. In the UK the legal age of marriage is 18.

### Exploitation

Exploitation is where someone takes unfair advantage of others to gain something for themselves or the benefit of others. It occurs when a person is persuaded to do things in exchange for something that they need or want (coercion), or threatened or forced to do things by people with more power than them. This can be someone of a similar age to the child or young adult being exploited, as well as an adult. Adults with learning disabilities and other vulnerabilities are also particularly at risk of exploitation. It can include being made to provide sexual acts (sexual exploitation) and/or to commit crimes such as dealing, carrying or growing drugs, theft and fraud (criminal exploitation).

### Faith-based abuse

This is when someone uses religion or faith to justify the abuse of another person, usually a child or adult with vulnerabilities. It is not caused by religion or faith.

### Female genital mutilation (FGM)

A procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there's no medical reason for this to be done. It's very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth and mental health.

### Forced prostitution and sexual exploitation

Where someone is being coerced or forced into selling sex or performing sex acts. Sometimes this may be in exchange for food or a place to stay. Victim/survivors may be trafficked internally within the UK or externally into or out of the UK into prostitution. Children, young people and adults with vulnerabilities may also be sexually exploited and coerced into receiving or performing sexual acts. Abuse of children and adults can include sharing pornographic images and the use of technology.

### Harassment

This is a pattern of persistent and unwanted attention or behaviour that makes someone feel scared, distressed or threatened. Harassment may include: bullying at school or in the workplace; cyber stalking (using the internet to harass someone); antisocial

behaviour; sending abusive text messages; sending unwanted gifts and or unwanted phone calls, letters, emails or visits

### **So called 'honour' based abuse**

Honour-based abuse is a crime or incident committed to protect or defend the 'honour' of a family or community. If your family or community think you've shamed or embarrassed them by behaving in a certain way, they may punish you for breaking their 'honour' code. Honour based abuse can take many forms, including 'honour' killings, child marriage, virginity testing, enforced abortion, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, as well as physical, sexual and economic abuse and coercive control.

### **Intimate image abuse**

Intimate Image Abuse, also referred to as 'Revenge Porn', is the act of sharing intimate images or videos of someone, either on or offline, without their consent with the intention of causing distress. This is against the law in the UK.

### **Modern slavery**

Modern Slavery is the exploitation of people who have been forced, deceived, or coerced into a life of labour and servitude. It is a crime hidden from society where victims are subjected to abuse, inhumane and degrading treatment. Examples of enslavement include: a person who is forced to work or serve (domestic servitude) ; dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property' (human trafficking) ; physically constrained or has restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement; forced or coerced into sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation. Modern slavery is linked to human trafficking, but not all victims of modern slavery have necessarily been trafficked.

### **Rape and sexual violence**

Sexual violence is any kind of sexual activity or act (including online) that was unwanted or involved one or more of the following: pressure; manipulation; bullying; intimidation; threats; deception and or force. In other words, any kind of sexual activity or act that took place without consent. There are lots of different types of sexual violence, including child sexual abuse, rape and sexual assault.

### **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual behaviour that makes someone feel upset, scared, offended or humiliated, or is meant to make them feel that way.

### **Stalking**

A pattern of fixated and obsessive behaviour which is repeated, persistent, intrusive and causes fear of violence or engenders alarm and distress in the victim.

## **Key terms**

### **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)**

A MARAC is a meeting where 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 primary focus of a MARAC is to reduce risk of harm and homicide and to increase the safety of victims of domestic abuse (age 16+) and their children.

### **Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)**

Domestic homicide reviews are done when the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by either: a relative; a spouse, partner or ex-partner; a member of the same household.

This includes death by suicide and suspected suicide.

The purpose of a DHR is to: help identify lessons we can learn from the death; prevent further domestic abuse; improve services for victim/survivors of domestic abuse; improve responses to people who cause harm



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