

# Lewisham Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2021-26

## Summary

Our five priorities for tackling domestic abuse and violence against women and girls (VAWG) are:



Survivors of abuse in Lewisham told us that:

- There isn't enough understanding of coercive control amongst professional and in the community, including what this looks like and the huge impact it can have
- There is a lack of awareness in the community about how to get support for victims
- There is not enough support to help survivors and children to recover from abuse
- It is really important for professionals to have the courage to ask difficult questions and genuinely understand the problem
- Empathy, compassion and respect are valuable qualities for professionals to hold when working with victims and their families

Our action plan for the next five years is:

<p><b>Priority 1: PREVENT</b></p> <p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Deliver public campaigns which raise awareness of abuse and how to get support</li> <li>✓ Produce a specific campaign focused on coercive control highlighting our zero-tolerance approach</li> <li>✓ Develop a toolkit for primary and secondary schools to strengthen their delivery of healthy relationships education</li> <li>✓ Deliver training to staff working in Lewisham on spotting the signs of abuse and responding safely</li> <li>✓ Work with community organisations to deliver training that recognises cultural difference in identifying and responding to VAWG</li> </ul>	<p><b>Priority 2: PROTECT</b></p> <p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue to commission a community-based specialist VAWG service, including refuge provision for victims feeling abuse</li> <li>✓ Continue to deliver gold-standard Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences for high-risk victims</li> <li>✓ Enact the changes within the Domestic Abuse Bill</li> <li>✓ Ensure that domestic abuse is a priority for our new Early Help Service – Family Thrive</li> <li>✓ Ensure implementation of Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation within Lewisham Housing</li> <li>✓ Ensure services across Lewisham use routine screening for domestic abuse, and develop a process for auditing this, in partnership with survivors</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority 3: RECOVER</b></p> <p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure all services respond in a trauma-informed way when supporting victims of abuse, to prevent repeat victimisation</li> <li>✓ Maintain provision of evidence-based recovery programmes for victims and their children</li> <li>✓ Create forums for professionals to enable peer supervision and reflection</li> <li>✓ Develop a practical tool to be used by agencies when ending their involvement with victims, to enable access to follow-up support</li> <li>✓ Work with the specialist VAWG service to facilitate the development of survivor peer support networks</li> </ul>	<p><b>Priority 4: PURSUE</b></p> <p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue the use of tenancy enforcement tools and Sanctuary Schemes, to create safety for victims within their homes</li> <li>✓ Increase the use of protection orders, including Domestic Violence Protection Orders, FGM Protection Orders and Forced Marriage Protection Orders</li> <li>✓ Establish an advisory hub for professionals to provide them the skills and confidence to work with perpetrators</li> <li>✓ Seek external funding to commission holistic support programmes for perpetrators of abuse</li> <li>✓ Develop a toolkit for non-specialist staff focusing on working with fathers and partners that are perpetrators of abuse</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority 5: PARTNERSHIP</b></p> <p><i>We will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Establish a Survivor Advisory Group responsible for providing scrutiny of the strategy, feedback on services, and co-production of campaigns, training and tools</li> <li>✓ Create a space for professionals to share best practice tools and techniques and reflect on the experience of supporting victims and perpetrators</li> <li>✓ Evaluate the impact of the Domestic Abuse Advisory Hub pilot within Children's Social Care, and aim for long-term delivery</li> <li>✓ Use tools and processes to capture the voices of children and young people affected by domestic abuse, when evaluating services and programmes</li> <li>✓ Ensure that Lewisham Council and other key partner agencies have a Domestic Abuse Policy for staff affected by domestic abuse</li> </ul>	