

# ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS STRATEGY

2022- 2025

Richmond upon Thames is committed to developing an ambitious, long-term strategic approach to ending violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Our strategy is based on a preventative model that has, at the heart of it, plans to deliver the cultural and behavioural shift needed to deliver long-term change in men's attitudes to women. Most importantly, this strategy is informed by survivors.



## Acknowledgements

Richmond upon Thames Community Safety Partnership (CSP) would like to thank the survivors and partner agencies, who shared their experiences and expertise to support the development of this strategy.

We recognise that this is a first step to resolving a much bigger problem, but we know we can only achieve that by working better together and listening to the voices and experiences of those affected.

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## Survivor Foreword



“We are mothers who have experienced domestic abuse and we want things to be different for our children”

We know what it's like not to have a voice, to keep a secret, to live with coercive controlling behaviour. We know what it is like when we say “No” and we are not heard. Some of us have lived with honour-based violence because we are women.

We are frightened that when our home wasn't safe, our children went to look for comfort and support outside the family home. This was not always safe for them.

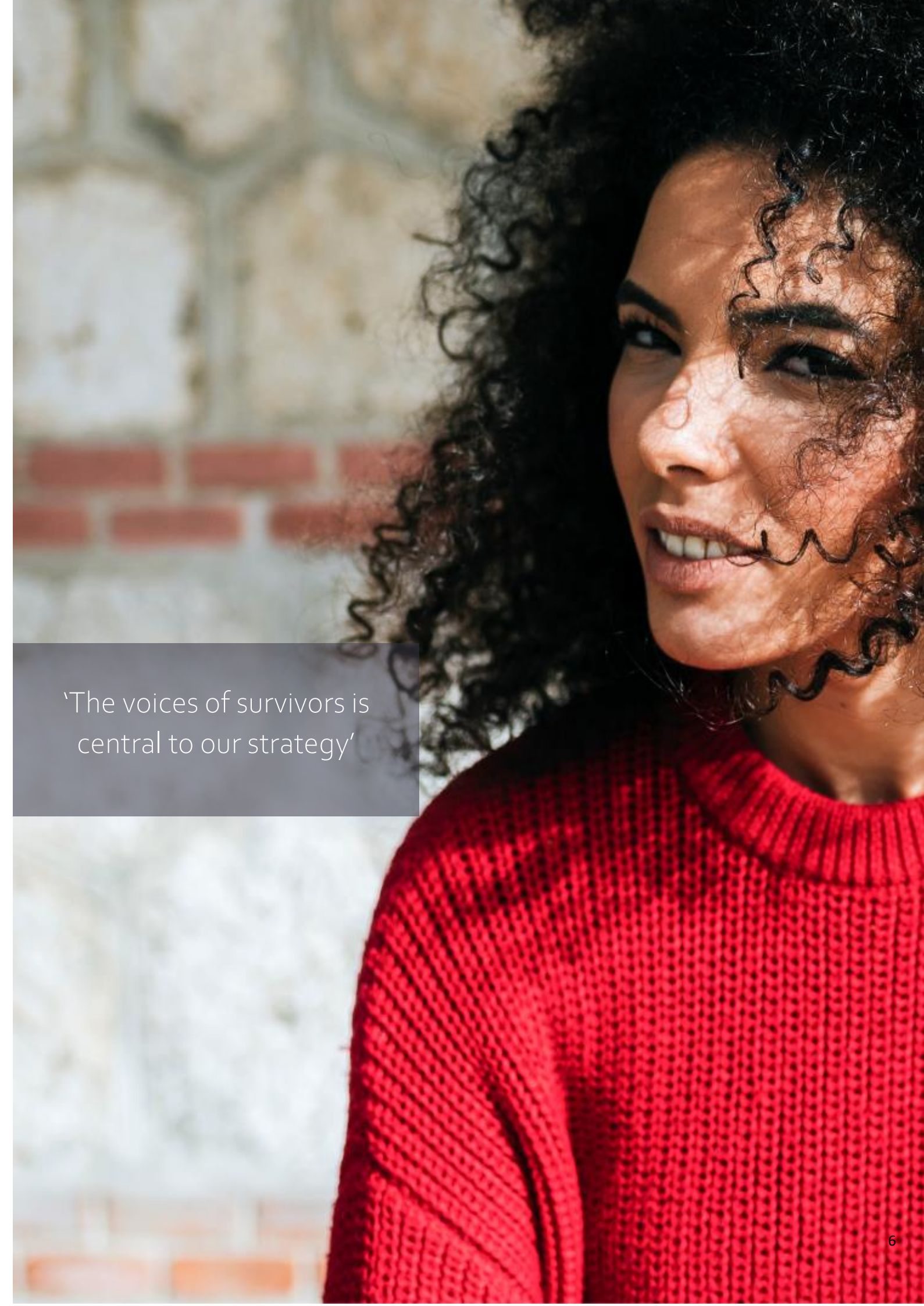
We would like to see earlier education and prevention for everyone that will promote awareness around healthy relationships and living with true pride not false pride.

We have learned to be the person we want to be. We will work with the council to make a difference so that the cycle of abuse stops. We know that shame dies when stories are shared, and action is taken.

Working together and hearing directly from the services designed to support us has been beneficial. We feel heard and have the space and opportunity to communicate where things need to be improved. Having all partners and agencies working together will have the most impact and is the way forward. To be part of that helps us to feel positive that the right action is being taken.

This strategy is a step forward to making the changes needed to address this important issue that impacts so many in so many different ways.

### Survivors



‘The voices of survivors is central to our strategy’



## Understanding Violence against Women and Girls

Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) is both a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights. To understand the changes needed we must first have a collective understanding of what VAWG is...

In Richmond upon Thames we have adopted the United Nations declaration on elimination of violence against women, to support our understanding of VAWG. The United Nations defines violence against women as:

*“any act of gender-based violence that results or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, that is directed at a woman because she is a woman or acts of violence which are suffered disproportionately by women.”*

The definition incorporates a wide range of abusive behaviours including physical, sexual, financial, emotional, and psychological abuse, and describes violent and oppressive patterns of behaviour and practices to achieve power and control over women and girls. When considering VAWG we must also examine the impacts on the physical safety, health and emotional wellbeing of individuals and impacts on families, carers, children and the community as a whole.

VAWG can be categorised under the following 10 strands:

- 1 Domestic violence and abuse
- 2 Coercive and controlling behaviour
- 3 Sexual violence including rape
- 4 Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- 5 Forced marriage
- 6 Crimes in the name of 'honour'
- 7 Stalking
- 8 Prostitution and trafficking
- 9 Sexual exploitation
- 10 Girls and gang violence

# Why we need to address this...

## Violence against women and girls has increased.

Women and girls should not have to tolerate acts of abuse or violence. They should be empowered to live their lives without fear of sexual objectification, harassment, or physical and mental abuse.

The tragic and fatal events of Sarah Everard, Sabina Nessa, Biba Henry and Nicole Smallman have resonated across the country and highlighted and reignited the urgency to revisit and review the approach to addressing VAWG. Raising awareness, educating others and creating places where women and girls feel safe and are able to go about their lives confidently, without fear of being assaulted or harassed is paramount.

We know that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated incidents of violence against women and girls. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) report identified that in mid-May 2020, there was a 12% increase in the number of acts of violence and domestic abuse cases referred to victim support. Between April and June 2020, there was a 65% increase in calls to the national domestic abuse helpline, when compared to the first three months of that year, and between March 2019 and March 2020, a 7% growth in police recorded domestic abuse crimes.

The hidden nature of abuse and the reluctance and limitations of victims to seek support or medical attention during the pandemic makes it difficult to fully understand the widespread impact and changing nature of domestic abuse. However, in April 2020, the Home Affairs Committee said there was "evidence that cases are escalating more quickly to become complex and serious, with higher levels of physical violence and coercive control." We need to act to address this.

While this strategy focuses on women and girls, we acknowledge that men and boys can also be victims of violence and domestic abuse. Women are certainly more disproportionately affected but there is much more we can do to support men and boys across a number areas, including their safety. Further work around this is being developed. Irrespective of gender, all victims of domestic abuse can and should expect a compassionate and responsive service.



## Violence against women and girls can have lasting impacts.


Research into the longer-term impact of domestic abuse/ VAWG on children and adults demonstrates that this can have negative effects on health and wellbeing. The longer domestic abuse is experienced or witnessed the more severe the effects can be, which prevents children and adults from achieving their full potential

### IMPACT ON ADULTS

Abused women are 3 times more likely to be diagnosed as depressed or psychotic and 5 times more likely to take their own lives.	Long term social difficulties as a result of emotional harm affected by increased anxiety, PTSD, loss of confidence, low self-esteem, shame and embarrassment.	Inability to secure and sustain employment – frequent absences from work, poor concentration, inability to fulfil work role.
Lowered ability to care for others and themselves resulting in punitive parenting and perceived neglect of children.	Substance misuse to cope with circumstances. Abused women are 15 times more likely to abuse alcohol and 9 times more likely to use drugs.	Long term and chronic health problems including asthma, epilepsy, digestive problems, migraine, hypertension and skin disorders.
Physical and sensory impairments such as walking difficulties or deafness.	Gynaecological issues – pelvic pain, pelvic inflammatory disease, recurrent infections.	Miscarriage, still birth and other complications during pregnancy.

### IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Experience mental health problems including anxiety and/or depression which can lead to eating disorders and self harm	Lowered sense of self-worth and confidence	Demonstrate anti-social behaviour that affects education and social interaction
Increased truancy and lowered educational attainment	Turn to substance misuse	More likely to be engaged in criminal activity and gangs
Likely to become victims/perpetrators of violence or abuse as adults		More likely to become subject to statutory social care intervention



'The new Domestic Abuse Act places new duties on local authorities'

## Emerging Legislation- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The government committed to transforming the response to domestic abuse, through the introduction of a Domestic Abuse Bill. The Bill received Royal Assent and is now law.

The new Domestic Abuse Act provides a statutory definition for Domestic Abuse, along with a number of legislative changes. There are four key aims to the Act: 1) Protect and Support Victims; 2) Transform the Justice System; 3) Improve Performance and 4) Promote Awareness.

The new Act, places requirements upon local areas to ensure there is a robust and coordinated approach to domestic abuse under the new bill. In London, this is a role carried out by the Greater London Authority (GLA) who will discharge duties for Richmond upon Thames and other London Boroughs.

Under the new Domestic Abuse Act the GLA will:

- (a) Assess the need for support and prepare strategies to provide support for victims who need to reside in relevant accommodation
- (b) Appoint a multi-agency board
- (c) Assess the need for support in their area (London)
- (d) Publish a strategy
- (e) Monitor and Evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy
- (f) Report back annually

### What this means for the local area:

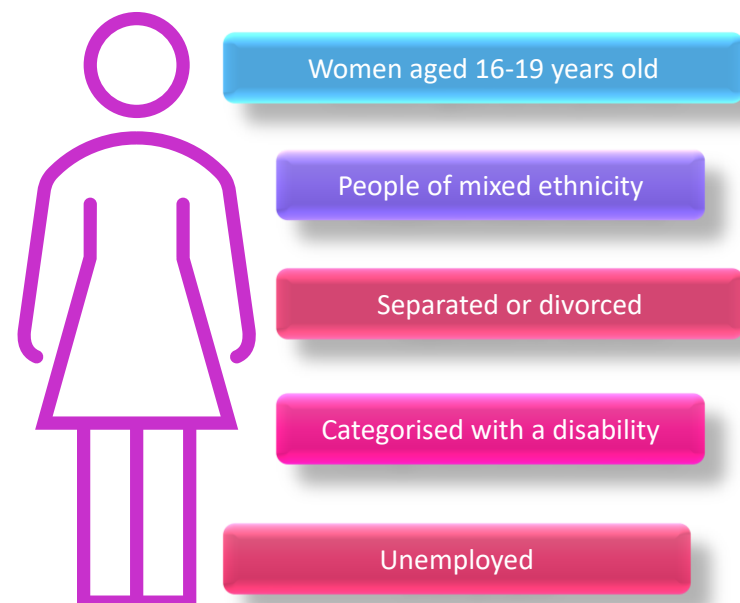
Richmond upon Thames has a duty to co-operate with the GLA to enable them to fulfil the duties of the new Act. This may require allocating staff and resources to providing the necessary information, including data to support a London wide needs assessment.

Whilst there is no requirement for a local Partnership Board, it is prudent that the VAWG Strategic Board evolves to perform a function to provide local governance in respect of our GLA obligations in response to the new Domestic Abuse Act.

# What we know about violence against women and girls...

Understanding some of the factors that make domestic abuse and violence against women and girls more prevalent is crucial to our work to eradicate it. National data and information provide a useful basis to enable us to deepen and widen our contextual understanding of VAWG.

Diagram 1: those more likely to experience domestic abuse



Data published by the Office for National Statistics in November 2020 indicated that in the last year those more likely to experience domestic abuse were likely to have one or more of the characteristics described in diagram 1:

**In the year ending March 2020, 92% of defendants in domestic abuse-related prosecutions were male, according to the ONS. 77% of the victims were female**

**Intimate partner violence is by far the most prevalent form of violence against women - 1 in 3 women, are subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence from a non-partner**

Younger women are at highest risk, the highest rates (16%) of intimate partner violence in the past 12 months occurred among young women

Violence disproportionately affects women living in deprivation

Victims of abuse have a higher rate of drug and/or alcohol misuse (whether it starts before or after the abuse): at least 20% of high-risk victims of abuse report using drugs and/or alcohol and an analysis of domestic homicide reviews found that in more than 50%, substance use was mentioned

**Only around 15% of those who experience sexual violence report it to the police. 5.7% of reported cases lead to convictions**

The number of people prosecuted and convicted for rape fell to the lowest level since records began. Police recorded **55,130 cases of rape**, but there were **only 2,102 prosecutions and 1,439 convictions** in England and Wales between 2019 and 2020

**5,000 women are raped and over 400,000 women are sexually assaulted in England and Wales every year**

**97% of women aged 18-24 have been sexually harassed**, while 80% of women of all ages said they had experienced sexual harassment in **public spaces**

Understanding the prevalence of 'honour'-based abuse, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, is challenging – information is limited. Experimental statistics from the Home Office show 2,024 'honour'-based abuse offences were recorded by the police in 2019/20

4% of adults aged 16-59 experienced **stalking** in the last year – this equates to 1.3 million victims. Of these 892,000 are women, 50% more than the number of men

**A woman dies at the hands of a man every three days**

Mental health issues: 40% of high-risk victims of abuse report mental health difficulties

**The total number of women killed at the end of March 2019 increased by 10% from 220 to 241, the second consecutive annual increase and the highest number since 2006 – the majority (50%) were killed by intimate partners or family members**

**Nearly 2 in 3 children (62%) exposed to domestic violence were also directly harmed**



# What we know about violence against women and girls in Richmond upon Thames

In 2019, Richmond upon Thames commissioned a needs assessment to understand and inform the development and approach to addressing domestic abuse /VAWG and the services that are required. From this we know that:



**Domestic abuse is generally under-reported: crime survey data continues to show domestic abuse is not reported when offences first occur.**

**The demand for domestic abuse services will increase considering the local projected population growth of 7.3% by 2030 and British Crime Survey results that show significant under-reporting.**



**There is an under-representation of older people aged over 65 who report abuse, accounting for 5% of victims against a population level of 14.8%.**

Approximately 12% of Richmond upon Thames' population report a long-term health problem or disability and we know that disabled people are twice as likely to be a victim of domestic abuse and a significant proportion of high-risk domestic abuse cases have specialist needs regarding mental health and substance misuse.



**We have a gap in knowledge around the experiences of the LGBTQ+ community: From the data contained within the ONS data sets regarding sexuality, it is estimated that at least 2.2% of the population are LGBTQ+.**

**More of our services need to be targeted to reach black and ethnic minority communities.**



**Young women and girls are over-represented as victims of sexual offences compared to the local population levels.**

**The wards where VAWG is most prevalent (or reported) in Richmond upon Thames are Hampton North, Heathfield and West Twickenham. These wards combined account for 26% of incidents across the borough.**



**26%**

# The voice of survivors – children and adults

Ensuring the voices and lived experiences of survivors are heard and responded to in our strategy is vital. To support this a number of workshops have been held to gather the views of professionals, communities and survivors. This has supported the development of our priorities and strategic aims.

The workshops provide a powerful platform for us to really understand what needs to change. The views of children and survivors about how they feel and the changes they would like to see are outlined here:



# Our approach and commitment to addressing acts of violence against women and girls and in Richmond upon Thames

## 1. Survivor Voice

We will ensure that the voices of survivors, communities and professionals are listened to. We will hold regular consultations and workshops to obtain a unique insight into community perspectives and survivor experiences, identifying areas to focus and improve upon. This includes early education through to support from specialist organisations and training for our professionals.

## 2. Coordinated Community Response

No single agency can be responsible for our vision of ending violence against women and girls. Working in partnership across all agencies and the community will ensure that we can achieve the best possible outcomes for victims/survivors in Richmond upon Thames.

The response to the pandemic in Richmond upon Thames has demonstrated the power of communities, capable of springing rapidly into action. The crisis showed that great things can be achieved when everyone in the community works together.

## 3. Intersectionality

Ensuring that we understand the interconnected nature of social categorisation, ensuring service delivery reflects service demand and seeks to address the gaps that exist in services to support those with protected characteristics and those disproportionately affected.

We commit to actively seeking to support the duties instilled by the Equalities Act 2010, having due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance the equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between people from different groups. This includes population groups with protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual orientation.

## 4. Continuous learning and development

Tackling Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls is a complex subject, where our understanding continues to evolve.

We will deliver practice and process that reflects and embraces emerging intelligence and research, that continually evolves and is based upon reflection and learning, including Domestic Homicide Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and Adult Reviews.



# Our priorities

01

## Changing attitudes and behaviours

To support a better understanding of VAWG, the impact it has and what healthy relationships look and feel like.

- Effecting a culture change to recognise and respond to Domestic Abuse and acts of violence against women and girls.
- Empowering practice across organisations through strategic leadership, operational management and supervision.
- Increasing public awareness so that those experiencing abuse will be better able to understand what they are experiencing and know that help is available.
- Encouraging public bodies and employers to adopt a common approach to supporting employees who experience abuse, ensuring policies are in place, staff and managers are trained and creating the confidence for employees to disclose abuse.

02

## Early identification and help

Enabling and supporting agencies to identify the early signs of violence and abuse, to provide opportunities for women and girls to disclose and receive the right help early on.

- Ensuring there is a strong, effective and co-ordinated response across the system that supports women and girls at risk of abuse and violence .
- Our services are confident in identifying the signs of abuse. They are trained and enabled to engage, to risk assess and signpost and support effectively in a way that delivers lasting changes in the lives of those impacted by acts of abuse and violence.
- Providing appropriate training to support awareness.
- Improving information sharing to prevent issues escalating.

03

## Safety and support

Ensuring women and girls are safe in public spaces and that those who experience abuse and/or violence (and their children) are safe and protected from harm and have access to the right support at the right time.

- Provision of high-risk intervention support, followed up with more emotional and practical support that may include counselling, peer and group work.
- Ensuring the first response of agencies is professional and compassionate,
- Partners work together, providing safety and support in a holistic manner, taking account of individual and family circumstances.
- Women and girls are safe in public spaces and within the overall nighttime economy.
- Support and protection are provided whilst action is taken against abusers.

04

## Holding perpetrators to account

Perpetrators of abuse recognise they are responsible for their behaviour and subsequently reduce the levels of violence/abuse they perpetrate.

- Ensuring a focus on prevention and early intervention by developing a range of universal perpetrator educational programmes that encourage healthy relationships.
- Ensuring that perpetrators are able to recognise their own behaviours as unhealthy and abusive, and signpost them to appropriate help and support.
- Supporting perpetrators to understand the consequences of their behaviour and putting in place measures to change perpetrator behaviours.
- Putting responsibility on perpetrators rather than on victims/survivors who often have to change the way they live, move and leave their supportive social networks behind.
- Decreasing risks to victims and wider family members through appropriate use of criminal justice processes.

## Our plan of action

Priority	Changing attitudes and behaviours				
Objectives	Educate	Prevention	Raise awareness	Empower	
Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?		Lead	Deliver by
AB.01	Work together with schools to support learning and understanding of healthy relationships, abuse and VAWG. This will be based on evidenced best practice that strengthens equality and respect and supports children and young people to increase their understanding, and knowledge of how to report abuse and receive support.	Consistent approach across all schools with a programme of activity that ensures all pupils receive a minimum agreed standard of awareness and education that enables children and young people to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Recognise healthy relationships, peer on peer abuse and wider VAWG and the impact and effect of it</li> <li>(b) Understand how to report it and where to get support</li> <li>(c) Feel empowered and safer as a result</li> </ul>		Schools and Local Authority (Community Safety, Public Health and Childrens Services)	
AB.02	Work with local colleges and Universities to develop awareness in respect of healthy relationships and awareness in respect of VAWG, that supports understanding, identification, and knowledge as to how to report and receive support.	Young adults: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Recognise healthy relationships, peer on peer abuse and wider VAWG and the impact and effect of it</li> <li>(b) Understand how to report it and where to get support</li> <li>(c) Feel empowered and safer as a result</li> </ul>		Local Authority - Community Safety	
AB.03	Implement a survivor forum to listen, learn and hear directly from women and girls with lived experiences of VAWG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Survivors feel heard and listened to</li> <li>(b) Residents, communities, and partners better understand VAWG and its impact through hearing the lived experiences of survivors</li> <li>(c) Services are better able to meet need</li> </ul>		Local Authority - (Community Safety and Childrens Services)	
AB.04	Develop a comprehensive partnership training offer to educate, inform and empower the partnership in their work to address and support VAWG. Ensure this is co-produced with survivors	Partners are better equipped to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Recognise VAWG and the impact and effect of it</li> <li>(b) Manage and support incidents effectively</li> <li>(c) Signpost and support</li> <li>(d) Support victims and survivors ensuring they feel heard and believed.</li> </ul>		Local Safeguarding Partnerships/ Community Safety, Adults and Childrens Services	
AB.05	Deliver a public-facing and culturally relevant communications campaign, which raise awareness of abuse in all its forms and educate on how to get support from local and national services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Increased public awareness and understanding of what VAWG is and the many strands and forms it takes.</li> <li>(b) Women, girls, and wider public recognise and understand abuse and feel empowered and comfortable to report – supported to disclose sexual offences and harmful behaviours</li> <li>(c) Increased community engagement</li> </ul>		Local Authority (Communications department with input from Community Safety Partnerships Boards)	
AB.06	Help wider organisations and businesses public bodies and employers to adopt a common approach to supporting the public and its employees who experience VAWG. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Support with White Ribbon accreditation; and employers initiative on domestic abuse.</li> <li>(b) DAHA accreditation and policy development</li> </ul>	More businesses and organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Actively demonstrate they understand VAWG</li> <li>(b) Pledge their commitment to addressing VAWG - Organisations achieving accreditation</li> <li>(c) Include White Ribbon accreditation in their commissioning arrangements</li> </ul>		Local Authority - (Community Safety)	

Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?	Lead	Deliver by
AB.07	Work in partnership with local community organisations to ensure engagement with and, representation from across all communities including those with protected characteristics to ensure all voices are heard to better understand needs, inform service delivery, and ensure survivors know where to get support.	More underrepresented groups (a) Engage with statutory partners (b) Feel confident and supported to report incidents (c) Access support services (d) Attend engagement events	Local Partnership Boards and Local Authority - (Community Safety, Adults and Childrens Services)	
AB.08	Work with local communities and stakeholders to understand the prevalence of harmful practices locally and take practical steps to prevent occurrence, support survivors and address any permissive cultural norms that are prevalent.	(a) A comprehensive understanding of prevalence (b) Education and awareness campaign (c) Assurance that survivors are provided with appropriate support	Local Authority – Community Safety and Partnership Boards	

Priority	Early Identification and Help			
Objectives	Inform	Minimise and manage risk	Early intervention	Support
Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?	Lead	Deliver by
IH.01	Develop a coordinated community response to abuse, that involves the breadth of community, voluntary organisations, and faiths in offering choice of support that is integrated into the system, ensuring there is a clear, transparent, and accessible 'service offer' to all communities who live and work in the borough.  1. Safe spaces 2. Better information sharing 3. Confidential services 4. Family Hubs	(a) Expansion of the offer of support beyond mainstream commissioned services (b) All victims and survivors know where to go for help and can easily and flexibly access the right support, at the right time, based on their individual needs, including beyond mainstream commissioned services (c) Improved information sharing	Local Partnership Boards and Local Authority - (Community Safety, Adults and Childrens Services)	
IH.02	Work closely with school designated safeguarding leads to address the needs of  1. Young people who are survivors of domestic abuse by virtue of living and witnessing abuse in the home 2. Those experiencing 'peer on peer' abuse and develop safe spaces and pastoral support that enables children to be heard and disclose issues.	(a) Early Identification of abusive behaviour and increase in help being sought. (b) Escalation, risk, and harm reduced	Schools and Local Authority - (Community Safety and Childrens Services)	
IH.03	Ensuring that staff across the partnership are trained to recognise, respond, engage with, and refer victims/survivors of all forms of VAWG and domestic abuse with compassion and professionalism	(a) Increase rate of disclosure and identification (b) Women and girls report feeling more comfortable and supported to disclose (c) Health services feel confident in identifying and supporting incidents of VAWG inclusive of harmful practices	Local Partnership Boards, Health and Local Authority - (Community Safety and Social care – Adults and Children)	

Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?	Lead	Deliver by
IH.05	Expand the practice of routine enquiry across health, social care, and other professionals in line with learning from DHR's and case reviews. 1. Develop and implement screening tool to support identification amongst agencies	(a) Agencies feel confident in identifying VAWG (b) Increase rates of disclosure to professionals (c) Increased referral rates to advocacy services	Local Partnership Boards, Health and Local Authority - (Community Safety and Social care – Adults and Children)	
IH.06	As part of a new ambitious Night-Time strategy develop actions and interventions that promote a safe night-time economy for all that use it, including: 2. Expansion of Safe spaces initiatives 3. Development of 'by-stander' and 'stand by her' initiatives 4. Working with local businesses to promote place-based safety for women 5. Ensuring that CCTV is used effectively to support public safety, including deployment of mobile systems as appropriate	(a) Fewer reports of VAWG in public spaces (b) Women and girls report feeling safer in public spaces and out at night in Richmond upon Thames.	Economic Development / Community Safety, key partners	
IH.07	Contextual safeguarding - Deliver targeted contextual safeguarding panels and introduced a Contextual Safeguarding Conference pilot, underpinned by a multi-agency approach to risk management and response to young people's extra-familial experiences of harm within their schools and local community	(a) High detection of safeguarding issues related to contextual safeguarding to support young people and also identify and hold perpetrators to account (b) Feedback from families and young people feeling safer in school and local community (c) Conference outcomes being met	Children's Services (Achieving for Children)	
IH.06	Develop a comprehensive offer of trauma informed support to victims and survivors from the point of help and identification	(d) Victims/survivors feel supported and have a safe space and offer of interventions	Local Partnership Boards and Local Authority - (Community Safety, Adults and Childrens Services)	

Priority	Safety and Support			
Objectives	Safe	Protected	Supported	
Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?	Lead	Deliver by
SS.01	Ensure the provision of effective high-risk intervention support, so that survivors from all communities can access the right support and help at the right time to keep them (and their children safe).	(a) Bespoke services are in place and accessed for hard to reach/ under reporting communities (b) Services are in place and pathways are clear to professionals for those living with the challenges of substance misuse and mental illness (c) High risk support organisations commissioned or grant funded report improved outcomes and de-escalation of risks (d) High risk support is making a difference as high-risk need is reducing – reported at MARAC	Local Safeguarding Partnership/ Community Safety	
SS.02	Improve the service offer for post crisis support including counselling, peer, and group work to ensure there is consideration of longer-term needs and practical help	(a) Victims and survivors feel supported long after a crisis period or incident (b) Reduction in waiting lists for counselling (c) Breadth of and menu of options for support developed	Health, Local Safeguarding Partnerships, and Local Authority (Community Safety,	

Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?	Lead	Deliver by
			Housing, Childrens Services, Adults Services)	
SS.03	Undertake monitoring to ensure all commissioned services are meeting needs of victims and survivors of VAWG, ensuring we are delivering an impactful and high-quality service	(a) Services meet the need of the community and effectively supports victims and survivors	Commissioning Services	
SS.04	Ensure that 'Children as Victims' are recognised, and that appropriate support is offered and put in place	(a) All children who witness domestic abuse are offered support irrespective of whether they are open to children's services (b) All children who are victims of sexual offences are offered appropriate support (c) Develop and deliver recovery groups for children who are victims of parental domestic abuse (d) Develop domestic violence support and safety planning for children and young people once cases have met the threshold for significant harm as identified by MARAC or statutory children's services (e) Developing bespoke trauma recovery work for children who are identified as victims in homes affected by domestic abuse	Local Safeguarding Partnerships and Local Authority – (Childrens Services)	
SS.05	Ensure that high risk survivors, including young people, are identified, and are responded to appropriately using a Safelives approved effective and robust Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	(a) Annual MARAC report and quarterly monitoring of performance (b) Reduction in repeat victimisation rates	Police and Local Authority (Community Safety)	
SS.05	Develop and implement a plan that addresses safety in public spaces, such as open spaces of parks and common areas and the overall night-time economy. 1. Expansion of Safespaces initiatives 2. Development of 'by-stander' and 'stand by her' initiatives 3. Working with local businesses to promote place- based safety for women 4. Ensuring that CCTV is used effectively to support public safety, including deployment of mobile systems as appropriate 5. More visible patrols and services in areas where women and girls feel unsafe. 6. Deliver a 'Night-time' Strategy	(a) Women and girls report feeling safer in public spaces especially at night	Police and Local Authority (Community Safety)	
SS.06	Work with schools to create a VAWG policy, which details the response and approach to children, parents and staff affected by VAWG,	(a) Schools are confident in identifying and supporting disclosure and accessing services when VAWG is identified.	Schools and Local Authority - (Community Safety and Childrens Services)	
SS.07	Ensure provision of good quality, secure temporary accommodation, and support with longer term accommodation for victims and survivors fleeing VAWG.	(a) Women do not return to households where violence or abuse take place because of poor quality housing	Housing	
SS.08	Ensure that the provisions of Part IV of the DA Act are adhered to and that appropriate support is put in place for those living in 'Safe Accommodation'.	(a) Victims and survivors feel supported long after a crisis period or incident	Local Safeguarding Partnerships, and Local Authority (Community Safety,	

Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?	Lead	Deliver by
			Housing, Childrens Services, Adults Services)	
SS.08	Ensure provisions of the Domestic Abuse Act are enacted including: 1. Ensuring that survivors of domestic abuse automatically have priority need for homelessness assistance and are provided with support when living in safe accommodation.	(a) Agencies work together to protect those at highest risk and prevent repeat incidents	Local Authority - (Community Safety and Housing	



Priority	Holding Perpetrators to Account				
Objectives	Education	Prevention	Accountability and acceptance	Minimise risk	
Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?		Lead	Deliver by
PA.01	Develop and implement a strategy and plan to address/change perpetrator behaviour, placing the emphasis on 'change', being innovative and considering YOT, IOM, MATAC, DAPP, perpetrator programmes, etc	(a) Reduction in reoffending (b) Reduction in revictimisation (c) Reduction in first time offending (d) Strategy and plan in place		Police, Community Safety Partnership and Local Authority.	
PA.02	Implement a range of proven universal educational programmes that encourage healthy relationships and help perpetrators to change their behaviours	(a) Perpetrators are able to recognise their own behaviours as unhealthy and abusive (b) Reduction in repeat incidents of violence or abuse		Community Safety Partnership and Local Authority.	
PA.03	Review and increase the use of protection orders, including Domestic Violence Protection Orders, FGM Protection Orders and Forced Marriage Protection Orders, as an effective tool for limiting a perpetrators space for action	(a) Perpetrators of VAWG, not survivors, are held accountable for their actions and responsible for making changes (b) Victims and survivors feel safer		Police/ Community Safety	
PA.04	Hold perpetrators to account at 'teachable moments', placing responsibility on them to change, taking steps to ensure 1. Perpetrators face consequences such as having to move 2. Exploring how mandatory training may be used to have access to children	(a) Reduction in repeat incidents of violence or abuse (b) Victims and survivors do not feel further victimised by the system (c) Perpetrators recognise the consequences of their actions		Community Safety Partnership	
PA.05	Understand the profile of perpetrators to implement a targeted approach to preventative support	(a) Incidents of VAWG reduce (b) Perpetrators are supported to manage their behaviours before incidents occur (c) High risk perpetrators are known, and risk is managed		Community Safety Partnership	
PA.06	Multi-agency staff receive mandatory training on the dynamics of VAWG and typologies of different perpetrators, making them more likely to identify and be confident to address coercive, controlling, and manipulative behaviours 1. Develop a toolkit for non-specialist staff focusing on engaging and working with fathers and partners, including in substance misuse and homelessness services	Multi-agency staff: (a) Are able to recognise key attributes of perpetrators – manipulation and control (b) Feel knowledgeable and supported to act to prevent incident occurring (c) Work with perpetrators to manage their behaviours before incidents occur		Probation/ Community Safety/ Local Safeguarding Partnership Childrens Services	
PA.07	Holding perpetrators to account through appropriate use of criminal justice processes	(a) Survivors feel safe (b) Perpetrators are held to account		Police	

Priority	Governance -Whole Systems Changes				
Objectives	Education	Prevention	Accountability and acceptance	Minimise risk	
Ref	Activity	How will we know we are making a difference?		Lead	Deliver by
G.1	Introduce integrated governance and operational structure, with appropriate sub-groups and task/finish groups where required that delivers accountability and ability to report into the GLA.	1. Strategic Group in Place 2. Review of Operational Groups with revised ToR 3. Annual report to the Community Safety Partnership		Community Safety	
G.2	Ensure that the survivors voice is continuously sought and informs strategy and service delivery	1. Survivor forum in place for R and W Representation from survivor groups at operational and strategic groups 2. Annual public consultation 3. New and refreshed profile		Community safety and Childrens service	
G.3	Ensure a comprehensive understanding of the challenges of VAWG, by drawing upon and analysing information from police, health, education, housing, business, communities and third sector, as well as through consultation and survivor engagement.	1. Annual refresh of DA profile 2. New and refreshed problem profile of Sexual Offences and Stalking that are not related to DA New and refreshed profile of harmful practices		Community safety Partnership	
G.4	Ensure that a holistic problem-solving approach is adopted to tackle the challenges of VAWG	1. Problem solving approach in place for existing and emerging high-risk areas, be that localities or themes that ensures a range of tactical options implemented.		Community Safety Partnership	
G.5	Develop and implement a systemic approach to learning	1. DHR Action Plan and Policy to monitor progress regarding DHRs. 2. International, National, and local learning are shared locally and inform local service delivery 3. An accessible training programme for professionals from universal training for all staff, to specialist training according to needs such as substance misuse and domestic abuse.		Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Boards	

## Delivery

We are committed to achieving our goals to eliminate violence against women and girls. We have been ambitious, but we will be resilient in our approach to achieving them. Violence Against Women and Girls impacts all our lives and it will take collective responsibility to address it.

This strategy will be delivered by listening to the needs and experiences of our communities. We know that our communities are rich with assets that can provide solutions to address many of these needs. We want women and girls to feel safe and supported by their community and know where to access support. We can only achieve this by really listening to and understanding the needs of our communities.

The strategy will be delivered by a wide range of partners, our councillors, council officers, our residents, experts by experience, practitioners, stakeholders, and our communities. Community meetings and websites allow residents and community groups to work with organisations that provide local services, like the police and the council. The aim is to build community resilience, improve community safety, and reduce violence.

### Practitioners' Forum

Practitioners working or volunteering in VAWG services will have unique insight into needs and solutions and as such will have a route in to influencing and informing our work via the VAWG Forum.

### Survivor Forum

Whilst survivors will be involved with the wider community approach, we understand that they may also need a safe space to share their experiences. VAWG crosses public and private spaces and impacts people in different ways; those with lived experience, both adults and children and young people, may need a separate space that is survivor-led, inclusive, confidential, and appropriately supported. A small panel of survivors will lead and manage these forums and engage directly with the wider structure on their behalf.

### Strategic priorities

Each priority in this strategy will be overseen by a Strategy Priority Workstream – each workstream will represent the relevant expertise in our borough, collectively identify what action is needed and own the delivery of those actions. The operational action plans they create will set out how we will deliver on our commitments to meet our goals; these will be shared and publicly available. We will ensure there is officer resource available to support these groups.

### VAWG strategic partnership board

The Strategy Priority Workstreams will report regularly to a Strategic Partnership Board to ensure there is singular and central oversight of the workstreams and provides the link to the Community Safety Partnership and GLA.

## Glossary

Term	Acronyms/Alternatives	Definition
Coordinated Community Response	CCR	A coordinated response to tackling Domestic Abuse across agencies and communities, to ensure a 'whole system' response to a 'whole person' which shifts the responsibility away from individual survivors to keep themselves safe, and onto agencies, communities, and services.
Domestic Abuse	Domestic Violence, DA, DV	As defined in the Domestic Abuse Act as any incident of emotional, psychological, economic, physical, sexual abuse and/or controlling and coercive behaviour between people over the age of 16 who are, or have been, in an intimate relationship, or are family, regardless of gender or sexuality.
Domestic Homicide Review	DHR	A review that takes place within local authorities when there has been a death which appears to be a result of domestic violence or abuse.
Female Genital Mutilation	FGM, Female Circumcision, Cutting	A procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured, or changed where there is no medical reason for this to take place. FGM can include removing the clitoris, all, or parts of the labia, or narrowing the opening of the vagina.
Forced Marriage	FM	Where one or both people do not, or cannot, consent to marriage as they are pressured or forced into doing so, often using coercion or force.
Greater London Authority	GLA, City Hall, London Assembly	A regional authority responsible for delivery services across all London boroughs, including Transport, Economic Development, Policing and Crime etc.
Honour Based Violence	HBV/HBA, HBAV, Honour Based Abuse	Abuse involving violence or threats of violence, intimidation, coercion, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, economic or emotional abuse) which has been committed to defend the perceived 'honour' of an individual, family and or community for perceived breaches of the family and/or community's code of behaviour.
Intersectionality		The theory that the overlap of various social identities, as race, gender, sexuality, and class, contributes to the specific type of systemic oppression and discrimination experienced by an individual. The theory that the overlap of various social identities, such as race, gender, sexuality, and class, contributes to the specific type of systemic oppression and discrimination experienced by an individual.
LGBTQ+	LGBT, LGBTQIA	Refers to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer community, with the + including a number of additional identities that fall within that community (such as those who are pansexual, non-binary, intersex etc.)
Office for National Statistics	ONS	Collects statistics related to the economy, population and society and conducts the census, reporting relevant statistics to the government.
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	PTSD	A mental health condition caused by a traumatic, frightening, stressful, or distressing event.
Violence Against Women and Girls	VAWG	Gender-based violence that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm to women such as threats, coercion, or deprivations of liberty, that is directed at women because she is a women, or which disproportionately affect women. This includes, domestic abuse, controlling and coercive behaviour, sexual violence, FGM, forced marriage, HBV, stalking, trafficking and sexual exploitation, girls and gang violence.



LONDON BOROUGH OF  
RICHMOND UPON THAMES

Ending violence against women and girls strategy 2022-2025

