

VAWG Strategy 2019 – 2024 Achievements and Challenges

Achievements

- Celebrated residents and professionals working to tackle VAWG through 'Blooming Strong' awards
- Annual campaigns to raise awareness of VAWG: '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence'; White Ribbon Campaign and local campaign 'Domestic Abuse No Excuse'. Activities and literature available in several languages. Including 2 multi agency conferences raising awareness around VAWG, one around perpetrator theme and the other Honour Based Abuse.
- Ongoing development of the Anti-Sexual Exploitation (ASE) Champions role in response to the recommendations from the research paper LBTH commissioned. A guide created to help professionals identify and respond to women selling sex.
- Collaborating with the Licensee Team to deliver sexual harassment in the nighttime economy alongside their WAVE programme.
- Increase in IDVA provision and victims supported
- Economic Abuse Programme of work implemented in borough including co-location at DWP.
- Learning from DHR (please refer to DHR Analysis for achievements)
- Children Social Care Domestic Abuse Summit and conference occurred. Development of THSCP DA Subgroup and delivery of action plan improving services for children impacted by DA.
- 220 VAWG Champions trained between 2019-2023, including 11 councillors from previous administration
- Increased engagement with Muslim and Bangladeshi communities
- Maintained 34 refuge bed spaces, including specialist Asian bedspaces
- Single women with complex needs supported in Riverside women-only accommodation; all bedspaces maintained
- VAWG training programme extended to include trauma-informed practice, coercive control training, economic abuse, allyship and misogyny, VAWG and non-English speakers.
- Maintained funding for Sanctuary Project which assists VAWG victims remain in their home
- Positive Change Service increased provision for DA perpetrators who are fathers including secured funding for pan London DA Perpetrator programme for non-fathers called Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA) recognising need for culturally appropriate interventions and support to change behaviours.
- Pan London DRIVE Perpetrator Programme also funded and available in TH. Pathways established via MARAC representation.
- MARAC review conducted and increase in victims supported. Repeat victimisation rate remains low.
- ELFT's Domestic Abuse and Harmful Practices policy updated
- VAWG and extremism research conducted, and recommendations incorporated into Prevent Delivery Plan
- LBTH Council's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace policy reviewed
- Increased funding for female genital mutilation service

- VAWG directory developed and maintained; during Covid 'one page' detailed important contacts for VAWG victims and perpetrators
- Increase in men being involved with raising awareness of VAWG, with male allies' sub-group of LBTH Women's Network, circulation of the 'Good Guys Guide' and communication strategy always including how perpetrators can stop their abusive behaviour
- Beyond the Streets maintained outreach services during Covid and supported Public Health with Covid vaccinations
- Family Nurse Partnership piloted ADAPT2 to improve identification and support to first time mothers experiencing intimate partner violence
- Police introduced a Stalking Prevention Officer
- Drug & Alcohol commissioned service amended data monitoring system to include ability to flag perpetrators of domestic abuse on their system
- Licensing Policy reviewed and consultation includes question on including misogyny and drink spiking
- Modern Slavery Group formed
- Pan-borough funding attained for perpetrator education programme CIFA, WiSER for single women with complex needs, Safe & Together model training for social workers and IDVA provision
- Ongoing development of anti-misogyny campaign with Hackney and City of London.
- Domestic Abuse Best Practice Implementation Group formed with focus on improving criminal justice experience for victims/survivors and increasing perpetrator's conviction.
- DA Criminal Justice training/briefings offered to DA services, Police, CPS, children services, substance misuses services.
- Criminal Justice Operational Partnership further established with Witness Service, police, Solace IDVA service, CPS and probation.
- DAHA Accreditation near complete since dedicated Housing Lead brought in.
- CSC programme of work including THSCP Plan outcomes, REPAIR Model introduced. (Habon will provide finer details if required).

Challenges

- Police no longer referring into 'You Choose' programme to educate buyers of sex
- Pandemic and consequently Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop no longer operational.
- High profile incidents (Sarah Everard, Sabina Nessa and Zara Aleena) have resulted in increased fear for women.
- National and local increase in DA and sexual offences reported.
- Consistently very low sanction detection rates for domestic abuse
- Police not continuing with their operation to target buyers of sex
- Reprioritisation of local authority police officers meant out of court disposal scheme for women involved in prostitution fully ceased
- HMCST not engaging with Specialist Domestic Abuse Court framework leading to it being disbanded
- Domestic Abuse Best Practice Implementation Group agencies engagement not regularly consistent

- Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation has been delayed due to housing priorities
- One of the highest boroughs for domestic homicides
- Schools lack of engagement with the 'anti-VAWG whole school approach'
- Covid causing in-person services to stop, including 'Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop' and outreach activities
- Feedback from service users across all services is difficult to obtain given lack of engagement from residents once case closed