

HERTFORDSHIRE DOMESTIC ABUSE PARTNERSHIP: CHAMPIONS UPDATE

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1. Work Streams and Sub-Groups

1.1 Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)

1.1.2 Hertfordshire has had a total of 20 DHRs occurring within the county boundaries, since April 2011.

1.1.3 Of the total occurring in Hertfordshire, an overview of these is listed in the table below.

1.1.4 Total Number of Hertfordshire Domestic Homicide Reviews (April 2011-End February 2019):

Calendar Year	No. of Hertfordshire DHRs / Proportionate*	Number of deceased (16+yrs)	Number of Children (under 16) at time of incident	CSP areas
2011	0			
2012	4	5	8	East Herts , Dacorum, Stevenage, Watford
2013	1	2	0	Broxbourne
2014	3	3	7	East Herts, Watford , Welwyn Hatfield
2015	1*	1	0	Broxbourne
2016	3	3	2	Dacorum, North Herts, North Herts
2017	4	5	5	Broxbourne , Hertsmere, North Herts , Welwyn Hatfield
2018	2	3	3	Dacorum , Broxbourne
2019 (to end Feb)	2	3	0	Dacorum , North Herts
	20	25	26	

NB:

CSP Names in **BOLD** = Murder-Suicide

CSP Names in **BOLD** = Non-(ex)partner/familial cases

CSP Names in **BOLD** = Suicide

- 1.1.5 We have now created and uploaded a DHR section, along with related Herts published reports, to the Sunflower Website here: <https://www.hertssunflower.org/information-for-professionals/domestic-homicide-reviews.aspx>

A great step forward and of course an area that we will continue to develop and grow – with newsletters, learning and guidance/DHR related news.

- 1.1.6 Activity to implement a locally commissioned pool of trained report writers and chairs is underway. The County Team are working with colleagues in children's commissioning to move forward and a meeting is due to take place later this month.
- 1.1.7 The DHR Sub-Group are also continuing work to improve and set a local framework for the quality Assurance process for Herts DHRs, a proposal for this was discussed at this month's DA Partnership Board and is being further developed by the Strategic Partnership's Team (Sarah Taylor) and Sub-Group Chair (Tracey Cooper).

1.2 Honour-Based Abuse Sub-Group

- 1.2.1 The group has continued to revise its work plan which is now being fully implemented by group members.
- 1.2.2 A small Task and finish group are meeting on 14th June to agree this year's communications in respect of the school holidays and July's National day of Remembrance.

1.3 Perpetrators and Courts Sub-Group

- 1.3.1 The group now revitalised and refocused with its new Chair and are considering the groups plan priorities for the coming year, and beyond. The Domestic Abuse Partnership continues to explore – through this group - how best to move this priority area forward. The Strategic Partnership's Team continue to work closely with the Partnership and Executive Boards, and the OPCC, in reviewing and determining the preferred way forward. In underpinning the Sub-Groups priorities and work plan, the exploratory and benchmarking project which the Strategic Partnerships Team undertook to revise and update the basis from which to build a Hertfordshire 'offer' in the provision of related community-based programmes, is being revisited with a view of identifying an 'offer' and resources..
- 1.3.2 Strong links have also been established with the Family Courts with discussions and activity relation to the training of court staff, use of LiveLink, increased information for those attending and ways in which information can safely when communicating with victims and survivors. The Countywide IDVA service is now organising training for court staff and users across the local court system.

1.4 Hertfordshire Sunflower

- 1.4.1 The last year has been a busy and exciting period for the Hertfordshire Sunflower Partnership, with the continued development of the Hub, the caseworker offer and Champions network.
- 1.4.2 Much of the groups focus and work is on the Sunflower Hub developments, and as we enter the second year of the two-year Government funding, evaluation and sustainability are a key focus.
- 1.4.3 The Strategic Partnership's Team have worked with the County Council's web-team in the development of the specific Champions area of the Sunflower website and are now focussing on the framework for populating and managing this. This includes finalising with data protection colleagues,

the detail needed to formally open the closed champions Yammer group/discussion forum to help support and update each other. More detail will be posted and continually updated from w/c 17th June; <https://www.hertssunflower.org/information-for-professionals/sunflower-champions/sunflower-champions.aspx>

1.5 MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

Number of cases and repeat cases referred to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) as at Q4 2018/19 (Rolling Year)

MARAC/BCU Area	No. of Cases	No. per 1,000 head of population	No. of Repeats	% Repeats	No. of Children Involved	16/17yr Old Victim	16/17yr Old Perp
St Albans and Dacorum	299	1.04	80	26.76	426	1	1
East Herts and Broxbourne	271	1.16	78	28.78	387	7	8
North Herts and Stevenage	312	1.46	90	28.85	477	2	3
Watford and Three Rivers	174	0.96	44	25.29	229	1	5
Welwyn, Hatfield and Hertsmere	287	1.35	95	33.10	398	3	6
Total	1343	1.19	387	28.82	1917	14	23

District	No. of Cases	No. per 1,000 head of population	No. of Repeats	% Repeats	16/17yr old Victim	16/17yr old Perp
Broxbourne	141	14.93	39	27.66	4	6
Dacorum	179	12.21	51	28.49	1	0
East Herts	130	9.29	39	30.00	3	2
Hertsmere	104	10.34	33	31.73	1	2
North Herts	161	12.55	46	28.57	1	1
St Albans	120	8.46	29	24.17	0	1
Stevenage	151	1.78	44	29.14	1	2
Three Rivers	73	0.82	17	23.29	1	2
Watford	101	1.10	27	26.73	0	3
Welwyn Hatfield	183	1.63	62	33.88	2	4
Total	1343	1.19	387	28.82	14	23

Total Domestic Abuse reports to Herts Constabulary (crime and non-crime), at year end 31st March.

- 2018/19 = 19,858
- 2017/18 = 19,648

- 2016/17 = 18,352

Total Number of Children recorded as present (in the house / witnessed), at year end 31st March. (Via police attendance records).

- 2018/19 = 4,754
- 2017/18 = 5,623
- 2016/17 = 5,030

Total number of MARAC Cases and Children Involved, rolling year to 31st March

- 2018/19 = 1,343 cases; 1,917 children involved; 14 = 16/17yr old victims; 23 = 16/17yr old perpetrators
- 2017/18 = 1,238 cases; 1,908 children involved; 22 = 16/17yr old victims, 9 = 16/17yr old perpetrators

2. Commissioned Services for Domestic Abuse Victims

2.1 Identifying & Supporting Victims from Marginalised Communities

2.1.1 The two specialist domestic abuse workers recruited to work with the BAME and traveller communities and based within local Voluntary and Community Sector organisations– Watford Women’s Centre and St Albans and Hertsmere Women’s Refuge – continue to make advancements in engaging and building trust and confidence within the local communities, and raise the profile amongst professionals.

2.2 Independent Domestic Violence Advisor Service (IDVA)

2.2.1 The IDVA service in Hertfordshire is delivered by Refuge, with their contract commencing on 1st October 2016. The service offers high risk victims a risk management service: that provides effective referral pathways and is personalised and outcomes focused, delivered in partnership with other agencies, and that positively addresses risk assessment and safety and support planning, and responds to a victim’s practical needs as well as empowerment . Although the service does not work directly with children under the age of 16, it is required to make referrals and liaise with the relevant agencies to safeguard children at risk of harm, as appropriate.

2.2.2 The service received a total of **2,134** referrals and provided short or longer term support to 1,099 clients (51% of those referred), from various agencies and self-referrals, in 2018/19.

2.2.3 The co-location of IDVAs within the Acute Trusts, Children’s Services, and DAISU continues to demonstrate value. IDVAs remain co-located within Hertfordshire Community Trust Safeguarding Adults & Children’s Teams, the safeguarding team at Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust, and the Family Safeguarding Teams. The service continues to provide training and awareness input to a variety of settings and is embarking on training the awareness of Court staff across Hertfordshire.

2.2.4 The service has seen some recent staffing changes as the Service Manager, Louise Bayston, left the service to take Maternity Leave and will not be returning to the Herts area upon return to work. Carrie-Ann Taylor has taken up the role of Service Manager and will continue to drive the service forward.

2.3 Domestic Abuse Community and Safe Accommodation Services

- 2.3.1 As well as providing much needed services across the county, led providers Safer Places became the lead consortium provider for the training element of the Hertfordshire Sunflower Domestic Abuse Champions Network and have introduced the Community – J9 – champion initiative into Hertfordshire as part of the countywide Champions programme. More than 140 staff across the Job Centre Plus network throughout Hertfordshire are now Hertfordshire Sunflower J9 domestic abuse community champions, and other community based services and businesses will follow.
- 2.3.2 Safer Places have also recently embarked on the launch of the county ISAC (Stalking) service – providing 6 trained and dedicated Independent Stalking Advisory Caseworkers, and the opening of our first dedicated Complex Needs safe accommodation provision – Hope House.

2.4 The Hertfordshire Sunflower Network & Champions Network

- 2.4.1 With leadership, oversight and support provided by the Strategic Partnerships Team and Network Manager, the Champions Network Consortia have during Q3 and Q4 delivered – or expected to deliver - the following Champions Training:
- **Strategic Leads** – This training was delivered on 15th November and as a result there are now 16 trained and in place across the County. This list is expected to grow throughout 2019/20
 - **Lead Champions** – training for Lead Champions began on 5th December 2018, with further training delivered on 13th December 2018, 23rd January 2019 and 30th January 2019. By Early February 2019 there were a total of 45 trained Lead Champions across the County, with a further 44 pending awaiting training. Dates for training of those pending is being scheduled with a view to completion by end of Q1 2019/20. This cohort continues to grow; currently a total of 77 have been trained and received their electronic resource pack and certificate. Further training plans are currently being finalised for the 2019/20 period.
 - **J9 Community Champions** - This is the key development area; there is currently a small waiting list. The first training day took place in Hemel on 6th February 2019 which saw 17 of those trained. Further dates scheduled at this time are 6th March 2019 (Hertford) and 11th March 2019 (Watford). This will continue throughout 2019/20, and a training schedule to take us through 2019/20 is currently being finalised. Already the model introduced by Safer Places has been successful in training more than 140 staff across the Job Centre Plus network throughout Hertfordshire. This brings the overall figure for Hertfordshire J9 champions to just over 250 after adding the number of newly trained J9 Champions who have by now also received their electronic resource pack and certificate. (113).
 - The Strategic Partnership’s Team - with the HCC web-team – have put in place the Champions area of the Sunflower website and related content to improve user experience and responses via the website, which is live. Work to develop this area continues with recent agreement to progress the Yammer Group and improve the information presented.
<https://www.hertssunflower.org/information-for-professionals/sunflower-champions/sunflower-champions.aspx>
- 2.4.2 The Network was officially launched at the overwhelmingly successful Countywide Partnership Conference held on 28th November 2018 (as part of wider annual 16 days of Action campaign). The Conference was underpinned by the activities and key partnership messages of the local campaign, entitled ‘Breaking the Cycle; then, now and the future’ #BreakingTheCycleHerts; reflecting on the current local strategy. The Network Manager and Partnership’s Manager hosted two Sunflower Workshops to provide update on all related priorities, developments and focus on

promotion of the Champions Network. Feedback from which has been extremely positive and helpful.

2.4.3 **Champions Network Events:** fixed for 2019: after a meeting with the consortia lead agency in February, the 2 days set in March were rescheduled to take place in June. Unfortunately logistical reasons prohibited the events taking place but the consortia and Strategic Partnerships Team are committed to ensuring they are reorganised as soon as possible – so watch this space and look out for news via email and website.

These events will bring together the lead agencies and all champions to share emerging and best practice along with providing opportunity for learning and service development – roles, responsibilities, barriers, progress, pathways and overall awareness and understanding – for individual champions, organisations and the wider partnership.

2.4.5 **The Sunflower Website** has continued to be reviewed and developed, with support from the HCC web team. A number of user testing opportunities have been completed and some of the key issues and opportunities emerging from this include;

- Lack of internet access – either after fleeing or as part of the abuse; access via community resources also not realistic for many
- Lack of trust or poor experiences of National Helpline
- Blockers / barriers - Lack of access to own resources (money), place of safety, service responses (Police, Social Care, Housing)
- Varied experiences of local authority (housing) responses
- Use of social media for peer support
- Lack of recognition or understanding of abuse or being a victim
- Lack of knowledge of Herts services and Sunflower
- Website needs to be eye-catching, with 'at a view' / 'quick view' function (golden opportunity), and info about rights/education/advocacy/housing options

2.4.6 Recent developments include focus on the professionals and champions area of the Sunflower website.

2.4.7 Such developments completed include revamping and development of the new Professionals and Sunflower Champions page, within which are specific sections containing a Sunflower Champions page specific information and support, news updates/feeds and DHR related information, templates and reports.

2.4.8 This then includes links to a closed Yammer group that has been created with limited access currently – just to test. We are working with the Data Protection Team to complete the Data Protection Impact Assessment and all other related requirements to enable this to launch ahead of formally inviting champions to join.

2.4.9 **The Sunflower Sub-Group** next meeting scheduled for 3rd July will be used to facilitate discussion and agreement of delivery activities and plans for evaluation and KPI outcome reporting needed for the local Board and the Home Office, along with looking forward at sustainability and development, post March 2020. This meeting will be for the Sunflower Champions Training Consortia members, the Strategic Partnership's Team and the Helpline.

3. National Points of Interest

3.1 Draft DA Bill

- 3.1.1 Officially published in January, the Government have set out their 120point plan for change; the biggest overhaul in domestic abuse responses and with it a number of proposed legislation changes including the first legal definition of Domestic abuse that formally recognises economical abuse.
- 3.1.2 Published alongside it was a report into the current costs of domestic abuse which is now estimated to cost the county £66bn a year.
- 3.1.3 As part of the draft Bill, the Government are currently consulting on changes to the way in which safe accommodation is commissioned and funded. The consultation is open until 2nd August and the Strategic Partnerships Team are currently coordinating a response with partners and arranging an event to help to do this. The event is taking place in Welwyn Garden City on 18th July; invites will be circulated from 24th June.
- 3.1.4 The consultation and supporting documents can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-unveils-new-support-for-survivors-of-domestic-abuse>

To highlight a few key points of the announcement:

- Councils will be legally required to provide vital life-saving support in secure accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse and their children
- Local authorities will also be required to work together with neighbouring councils to ensure domestic abuse services reflects the needs of local people – including targeted groups/needs (LGBT, BME etc.)
- Local authorities will also be required to develop and publish strategies which set out in detail the range of support services available for survivors and their children – including refuge accommodation and specialist support from safety through to independence.
- Funding will also be provided to place these vital services on a long-term, sustainable footing. What this will look like will be determined.

And finally. Thanks to a successful internal bid, the Strategic Partnership's Team is expanding. Securing funding for two-years we will soon be joined by a further Development Manager, a Senior Development Manager and a Contract Monitoring Officer.

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