

## **Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) Briefing Paper – January 2017**

### **The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:**

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: Psychological, Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Financial.

In responding to these crimes, Stroud District links very closely to the strategic objectives outlined in the Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Commissioning Strategy and Outcomes Framework 2014-2018 (<http://www.glostakeastand.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/DASV-Commissioning-Strategy-October-14-HWBB-Approved.pdf>), which highlights the following key strands:

- Focus on early help programmes (alongside specialist services for victims) for the whole family affected by DASV, taking a risk reduction and recovery led approach to improving health and wellbeing, and reducing crime and disorder.
- Ensure health, social care and other professionals who are in contact with families vulnerable to DASV are confident and competent in their response to support them, creating environments for disclosure.
- Provide a co-ordinated approach across partner agencies, aligning the commissioning and delivery of DASV services to ensure effective and efficient use of resources.

At a local level, Stroud operates a DASV Group which is chaired by the Principal Community and Facilities Officer; the same officer who manages the Neighbourhood Warden Service. This was streamlined in 2016 to encompass Stroud District only, rather than Cotswold DC and Stroud DC. This group reports to the Stroud District Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The Gloucestershire DASV Implementation Group (IG), (which operates at a more strategic level) is attended by both the chair of the Stroud District DASV group and a representative from SDC Housing. At these meetings Stroud representatives are able to input as well as receiving guidance on new and developing protocols.

The purpose of the Stroud DASV Group is:

- To understand the scale, extent and impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence in the Stroud district
- To share information about current activity, future plans and local issues
- To identify gaps in awareness and/or provision and agree action in response
- To identify opportunities for joint working and plan and coordinate activity that meets the group's aims
- To support and contribute to the delivery of the county strategic objectives, as appropriate.

Annually there is a DASV awareness campaign, which Stroud fully supports. In 2016 the '16 days of action' focused on coercive control and took place over November and December. Stroud contributed the following:

- Tweeted advice and support throughout the campaign
- Hosted a presentation by Nick Gazzard from the Hollie Gazzard Trust on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December
- Had an information board with accompanying leaflets in reception throughout the campaign
- Sent information to managers advising them on how to support colleagues
- Highlighted details of the campaign on our website
- Displayed posters throughout Ebley Mill
- Distributed posters to the Sub Rooms, Museum in the Park, The Pulse etc
- Encouraged staff to display a promotional strap line on emails
- Highlighted through the Neighbourhood Warden Service, free home security checks with a personal attack alarm
- Promoted the campaign through our district youth work network

We are partners in a range of accommodation initiatives that support victims of DASV. The Countywide Sanctuary Scheme aims to prevent homelessness by keeping victims and their children safe in their own home and protecting them from further harm. The Sanctuary Scheme is a partnership arrangement between the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire and the 6 district councils in Gloucestershire. Physical security measures are provided to victims' homes which in certain circumstances may include the creation of a safe room within their home. The works are funded 50/50 by the PCC and the authorising Council. We are also working with the other 5 district councils to develop a network of 12 'places of safety' units across the County; this self-contained accommodation provision provides a more suitable alternative to bed and breakfast accommodation and two properties from our own stock are being used in this regard. We also support the Stroud Beresford Group - a local independent charity who provide the only Refuge in the County - through our grant funding programme. In addition, over the last 2 years we have been successful in obtaining two bid awards of £100k from the DCLG which have enabled the Refuge to expand their accommodation provision and increase their support capacity. We are currently awaiting the outcome of a recent bid to the DCLG for £50k which will enable the Stroud Beresford Group to do more work with clients with complex needs.

Further information can be obtained from:

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