



Domestic Violence and Abuse Breakthrough Project

Annual Report September 2016

Introduction to the breakthrough project

Leeds City Council has established 8 breakthrough projects to support its ambition of a strong economy and a compassionate city.



The breakthrough projects are designed to identify new ways of working within the council and with our partners to achieve the best outcomes for the city.

The human and financial impact of domestic violence and abuse to adults, children, families and our communities is considerable. In addition to the significant harm and disruption it causes to individual lives the cost to public services and economic output are also widely recognised.

The city has a history of working well and innovatively with victims of domestic violence but nevertheless the numbers of incidents, and especially those that are repeats, remains too high. Domestic violence and abuse is a factor in the lives of many of the children the council needs to take into care.

Through the breakthrough project we hope to significantly increase public knowledge and awareness of what constitutes domestic violence and where help is available. We will also work with communities, new and existing partners to further develop a coordinated response and integrated approach to domestic violence for the benefit of the people of Leeds

Cllr Lisa Mulherin

Our Outcome and Priorities

The outcome we are seeking to achieve is:

People in Leeds can lead safer, healthier and happier lives and are free from the risks, threats and harms associated with DV&A

Our **Shared Priorities** are:

*Changing attitudes and perceptions
(individuals and communities)*

*Supporting victims
(adults, children and families)*

*Challenging behaviours
(working with perpetrators)*

*Enabling Effective Change
(workforce & organisational response)*

Breakthrough Approaches

To make a step change in responding to domestic violence will require us to adopt the following approaches.

- ➔ Working together to develop a joined up and co-ordinated response
- ➔ Working at scale, ensuring messages reach a significant proportion of our citizens and workforce
- ➔ Transforming the way we work with families; embedding restorative and family focussed approaches throughout the workforce
- ➔ Developing and implementing earlier and innovative interventions
- ➔ Working with new partners and communities to extend reach and influence

Domestic Violence and Abuse: Facts and Figures

- **17395** incidents were reported to the police in the 12 months up to June 2016
- **37.8 %** of those included a repeat victim
- **41.4%** were verbal incidents
- **31.8%** were incidents of violence
- **80.8%** involved female victims
- **19.2%** involved male victims
- Children are present at a **third** of incidents reported to the police
- DV was a factor in **66%** of babies under age of one becoming looked after children (2013)
- Domestic violence has been a significant factor in **26** deaths in the city since 2011. This includes **5** children and **4** subsequent deaths/suicides of the alleged perpetrator
- **16** Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews since April 2011



Domestic abuse costs the UK an estimated
£1.9 billion
in lost economic output every year



Police in Leeds receive on average
40 domestic violence
and abuse calls every day



1 in 4 women
experience domestic violence
in their lifetime

Domestic Violence Snapshot Count

On Wednesday 25th November 2015, a one day snapshot/count campaign of 'service contact' was undertaken. Statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations were asked to provide unidentifiable information about domestic violence disclosures to their service during the 24 hour period. The aim was to provide information on the scale and diverse nature of the service contacts

- **139** contacts were recorded on the day, relating to 89 females and 13 males. On the same day **34** contacts were recorded by the police.
- Of the **88** victims who indicated they had children, **51** indicated the children were present when the domestic violence and abuse took place
- Children's Centres captured the most contacts on the day (**42**), followed by Police (**34**), 3rd Sector (**17**) and Children's Social Care (**14**)

Progress to date

The **Front Door Safeguarding Hub** is a new and innovative way to respond to domestic violence. The FDSH responds to high risk cases or medium risk cases where a crime has been committed. The FDSH was built on existing arrangements between Children's Services, Police and Health to safeguard children affected by domestic violence. The FDSH saw these arrangements expand to all high risk victims of domestic violence and include a wider range of partners.

The FDSH became operational in April 2015. A daily partnership meeting is a central element of the initiative. The focus of the meeting is to manage risk and the co-ordination of appropriate support. Duplication and multiple contacts to victims are also minimised through this approach. Clear action plans are set with for actions relating to victims, children and perpetrators.



Since April 2016 the work of the FDSH expanded to include the DV MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conference). This has meant that MARAC cases can now be discussed within a few days of referral instead of up to a month under the previous arrangements. MARAC referrals have increased significantly with a wider range of organisations now making referrals.

Partners involved in the FDSH include:

- Adult social care
- West Yorkshire Police
- DISC
- LYPFT (Leeds and York partnership foundation trust)
- Youth Offending Service
- LASBT
- Children's social work service
- Forward Leeds (substance misuse service)
- LCH (Leeds community health, health visitors and school nurses)
- West Yorkshire Fire Service
- Leeds Teaching Hospital trust
- CRC (community rehabilitation service)
- CGL
- LDVS (Leeds domestic violence service)
- Leeds Housing Options
- Third sector housing agencies and refuge
- NPS (national probation service)

Domestic Violence School Notifications

As part of the Front Door Safeguarding Hub arrangements **Domestic Violence School Notifications** were rolled out city wide from April 2016 following a successful pilot. Schools now receive information at the beginning of the school day of any incident where one of their pupils has been present at an incident of domestic violence that the police have attended. Between April and July **674** notifications were made.

The purpose of the notification is not to duplicate or replace any safeguarding interventions that may occur as a result of the police intervention, but to provide information to schools so that they can better support the child both immediately after an incident and longer term in whatever way is appropriate. The process will always be followed in conjunction with current safeguarding procedures and guidelines.

Feedback from schools and parents

"We were able to tell the class teacher to keep an eye on the child."

"We chatted to the child and played alongside her to see if she was ok"

"We were not aware of the DV before and it helped us understand what else might be going on for the family."

One parent said it was a really good idea, they had witnessed DV as a child and this would have helped them"

"I believe the DV notification process is a fantastic resource to enable us to support our children and families."



Over 1/3 of all reported incidents (just under 5,000) had a **child recorded as present**

FDSH Case Study

A member of LHO noticed a MARAC couple attend Leeds Housing Options together. Through information provided through the FDSH the LHO officer knew that the perpetrator was in breach of his restraining order.

LHO called the Police and the perpetrator was subsequently arrested. The staff member was asked to attend court to give evidence.

The perpetrator was later remanded in custody and the Judge and CPS expressed thanks for the staff member's intervention and willingness to assist with the court process.

FDSH Case Study

A high risk case was referred to the Front Door in April because of harassment at the end of a relationship. Leeds Domestic Violence Services were tasked from the meeting to make contact and discuss support options.

Advice was given on safety planning, legal options and child contact, housing and criminal justice issues. Within 2 hours of speaking to LDVS the client attended Leeds Housing Options for assessment.

LHO awarded her Band A priority and arranged for immediate safety measures to be installed at her property through the Sanctuary scheme. LDVS worked with her to develop an individual safety and support plan and continued to support her for the next two months.

At the end of this the client reported that the abuse had ceased and she was beginning to get back on with her life. She felt that support she had received had been great.

Front Door Safeguarding Hub Data

April 2015-16

- **231** Meetings
- **711** High Risk Cases
- **1559** Medium Cases
- **2068** Female Victims
- **274** Male Victims
- **2107** Male Perpetrators
- **276** Female Perpetrators
- **1412** Children were present at incidents and **3379** Children involved in cases
- **53** Pregnant Victims
- **33** Family Group conferences completed from FDSH referrals
- **674** school notifications made (April to July)
- **6830** Actions generated from the meetings
- **80** Band A housing priority awards made or recommended (April to July)
- **642** MARAC referrals April to July
- **506** Cases opened by Families First from FDSH referrals
- **114** Perpetrators assessed in police custody of which **43** are now on caseload for support
- MARAC referrals for April to July (**642**) have nearly doubled compared to the year before (**376**)

Feedback from partners at the FDSH

“The FDSH arrangements mean that we now engage in a more targeted and organised manner. The arrangements in place allow us to receive information in a consistent manner, and where appropriate attempt to deliver interventions. Prior to the FDSH our involvement with DV victims was limited and ad hoc. In addition we have been able to work with the FDSH to develop a bespoke training package which has been delivered to all front line staff so they are more confident in engaging with victims of DV”. **West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service**

“As result of the FDSH arrangement, CGL now have the opportunity to contact DA Perpetrators at the earliest opportunity so that hopefully individuals may be inclined to engage to address and support issues. There are many positive outcomes and examples where perpetrators have agreed to address their offending behaviour and have come onto caseload voluntarily”. **Change Grow Live**

“The meeting arrangements have given Domestic Violence the attention that it deserves. The Front Door has given a clear focus high risk and medium risk DV cases. The multi- agency approach and the special relationships between those partners has assisted strong partnership decision making and accountability. This has been particularly helpful when there are child protection concerns and a strategy discussion is required.

One of the successes of the arrangements is that it takes on a whole family approach. Whilst the safety of the victim and children are a priority, importance is also given to the working with the perpetrator”. **Children’s Social Work Services**

“An example of the benefits of the overlap between Families First and the FDSH were seen in a case where a young girl was subject to a vicious attack from her boyfriend but where there was very little evidence to support a conviction. Due to the relationship the lead practitioner had with the family he was able to obtain vital information which assisted in the conviction of a male party who subsequently received a custodial sentence.

I am also proud to say that when other local authorities have visited they have commented on the fact that the meeting is definitely family focused and adopts a whole family approach” **Families First and FDSH Chair**

“One of the main positives from the daily meetings has been the increase in partnership working. This has been incredibly beneficial and it has contributed towards victims becoming safer.

An experienced IDVA or manager attends the daily meetings in order to ensure that the victim voice is heard by partner agencies and that their ‘journey’ is considered appropriately.

Every action or referral taken from the daily meetings is prioritised for contact by LDVS, and this means sometimes there are times when capacity is at its limit, or overstretched. On those occasions we have had to work closely with partners to look at alternative support options for immediate or long term work. This has been beneficial for all concerned bringing in other organisations that can offer appropriate support”. **Leeds Domestic Violence Services**

Links with other Programmes

Family Valued – Leeds Innovation Programme

As part of the Family Valued programme, an additional Family Group Conference (FGC) team linked to the FDSH has been fully operational since November 2015, enabling a restorative approach to domestic violence to be adopted in appropriate cases. A total of **548** cases from the daily meeting have been considered for FGC. Of these, 89 families have agreed to go ahead with the approach and a further 90 families are considering having an FGC. Evaluation work is underway to understand the impact and outcomes achieved by the FGC offer.

Family Valued commissioned services

Over the past 12 months additional services have been commissioned for families who are experiencing domestic violence, through funding from the Family Valued Programme. These include;

- introducing a dedicated domestic abuse worker for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, as part of the West Leeds Social Prescribing initiative
- a group work programme for children 6-11 who have been affected by domestic violence.

- group work and one to one support with girls and women of all ages who have experienced domestic violence, or whose partner is part of the Caring Dads group work programme, to support them in making positive choices for the future.

Restorative Practice training

A series of one day training sessions have been delivered to support developments around restorative practice and domestic violence. These have been targeted at practitioners linked to the new FDSH arrangements. 175 people from across the domestic violence community have been trained in working restoratively in the last 10 months. We are seeking to build on this work to ensure that all practitioners feel skilled to adopt restorative, family based approaches to working with domestic violence wherever possible.

Leeds Rhinos Domestic Violence Song

Work has been undertaken in six primary schools to write and perform a song about domestic violence. The song, “Turn on the Lights”, was performed by 120 children at Headingley Stadium in April. The song is available to all schools via a website and can also be used for conferences training.

Service User Quotes

‘At the Family Group Conference I finally got to write down my priorities for me and my children, with the help of my friends and family. We discussed things I hadn’t even thought about. I now know who can help with what, and I am reassured that everything will be ok in the end.’

‘The meeting has actually changed the course of my life and knowing that I’ve got a support system means I have to do what needs to be done’

Leeds children performing “Turn on the Lights”



Work with perpetrators of violence and abuse

Caring Dads is a structured multi agency approach to addressing men's abusive behaviours within families. It has been developed in Canada and has been adopted in a number of places in the UK and Europe. The model involves a 17 session group work programme for men, support for women and children and collaborative case management.

Caring Dads works with fathers who have been abusive within their family relationships. A crucial strand of this work involves support for children and children's mothers/partners delivered by Children Making Choices/BARCA (children) and Women Health Matters for female partners.

A number of other local authorities have been in contact and are expressing an interest in Leeds consulting and training staff. This will be an opportunity for skill sharing as well as income

As of July 2016, **16** groups have been delivered with **77** men having completed the programme. Significantly, these men have responsibility for **211** children.

Following a successful pilot in Safer Leeds the service is now based within Children's Services and is funded until April 2017 through the Children's Service's Innovation Programme and Families First.

This has led to an expansion and greater reach. A Project Manager, BME Development Practitioner, Peer Mentoring Development Practitioner and a Project/Admin Worker have recently been recruited. Objectives for next year are to create a culturally sensitive service, to develop peer mentoring interventions and to deliver further programmes for men who have been abusive.

Some Comments from those who have been affected by Caring Dads Leeds –

From the men –

"I've started thinking...I need to do this. It'd be good for my children.. I used to keep quiet, keep it all in...then snap.. I think now rather than react..."

"I've learnt to control my frustrations by allowing negative comments to 'float over my head'".

"I'm learning how to approach problems in a different way, thinking more...I'm talking more to J, kids, about feelings. It's making life easier...'I wasn't able to do that before'".

From (ex)partners –

"He's more loving and patient. He helps out more and helps taking them to and bringing them home from school."

"I'd like to see what he's doing in that group cos there's been a big change for the good at home."

"He's more supportive and tolerant of the children. He now recognises when he's getting stressed and goes for walks, clears his head and is then able to talk about what made him stressed."

Domestic Violence and Abuse Breakthrough Project

West Yorkshire Perpetrator Programme

Choices is a West Yorkshire programme, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner to work with perpetrators of domestic abuse. It is delivered by CGL (Change, Grow, Live) and 42 Leeds clients are currently on the programme. There is capacity for more and work is ongoing to increase referrals.

Integrated Offender Management

Following an initial pilot (Operation Haven) using an Integrated Offender Management approach for selected domestic violence offenders has been mainstreamed. Perpetrators are selected by an intelligence led process or referred via the Front Door Safeguarding Hub.

There are currently 44 offenders on the IOM Domestic Violence cohort, each of which has a designated Police Constable as their Offender Manager. Each individual has a personalised Intervention plan which is designed in partnership with probation and third sector colleagues. The plans include measures to support people in achieving change such as drug/ alcohol and housing interventions alongside actions to deter repeat offending.

The Offender Managers work closely with the Leeds District Safeguarding team to promote safety of victims.

Every month the individuals are discussed a case attended by police and a range of partners including; CGL / DISC / Probation / Housing / Safer Leeds / Leeds Domestic Violence Services. The meetings review progress against the plan and agree amendments or deselection from the programme.

As a new area of work the programme is under constant review and new tactics and processes are being developed. Consideration is currently being given to the use of satellite tagging devices for domestic violence and abuse perpetrators.

Leeds District IOM is hoping to use sat tagging devices (GNSS BUDDI tags) for DA perpetrators in the very near future.

Service User Feedback

"I first came into contact with CRI (now CGL) when I was arrested for a domestic violence incident. I spent several hours in police custody and received a letter from CRI offering support. I had an assessment and was allocated case worker. They helped me with alcohol, bereavement and employment and training issues. I was offered a place on a level 3 information and guidance course and started working as a volunteer. Without the help of CRI I would still be heavily drinking and who know what kind of mess I'd be in now. I would highly recommend CRI to anyone who needs any kind of additional support as they helped my life go from nothing to a real positive"

Work with young instigators of child to parent abuse

PACT is an evidenced based programme which targets the reduction of harmful behaviours associated with child to parent abuse. PACT consists of a twelve session parallel programme for parents and teenagers. The programme addresses the young person's abusive and violent behaviour and reduces the instances of abuse and violence by developing a more effective relationship between parent/carer and young person.

PACT is delivered by Leeds YOS, Family Intervention service (FIS) and Signpost. More recently parent mentors, who have previously been on the programme, have also been involved in running the groups.

Between September 2015 and May 2016 there were **54** referrals from which 33 mums and 11 boys and 7 girls completed the programme.

"I think that PACT is one of the most successful initiatives we run. It is very resource intensive, but there is patently a need for it

I was struck when I went to the DV morning meeting at the FDSH just how many cases had a similar feel with young adults."

YOS Manager

PACT Case Study

"P would steal and get angry if he couldn't get his own way. There was no way of punishing him, as he would become violent if I took his console/phone etc. and would result in me being punched or kicked or damage to doors and walls at home. He would take my bankcards and purchase things without my knowledge. He refused to go to school and was constantly in isolation.

PACT taught me what was acceptable behaviour for a teenager and how to deal with the situation better; not to shout and be clear about consequences.

It has been an absolute breakthrough! Even though P only attended one session, the way I have reacted and dealt with the situation, my feelings, towards him have changed. I now treat him differently and supportively. He even thanked me for talking to him and gave me a hug"

PACT Case Study

"B was violent and aggressive towards me and younger siblings. Throwing things and breaking things. Smashing doors off. In turn I would be angry, shouting and swearing and sometimes responding to the violence. Getting up and going to school was a major issue and a cause of a lot of problems.

PACT helped by giving advice on how to deal with issues to prevent them becoming major incidents.

Life at home has totally changed. Things are much calmer and the relationship between us is now fab."

Developing our workforce

Many people are affected by domestic violence and might seek help from a range of services or organisations. Therefore all front line staff need to have a good understanding of the issue. Leeds has developed a **Domestic Violence Quality Mark** which is a set of minimum standards to ensure good practice and promote a consistent response to domestic violence. The Quality Mark requires staff to give a sensitive, empathetic and knowledgeable response to families seeking help. Effective training underpins the Quality Mark and helps build the confidence and the skills of the workforce to respond effectively.

Over the last year a range of **domestic violence training** has been provided to health professionals, Family Group Conference Teams, the new Choices Team (who work with perpetrators), Adult Social Care staff and a range of organisations working to attain the domestic violence quality mark.

In addition, multi-agency briefings on the lessons learned through **Domestic Homicides Reviews** have been delivered to ensure that themes and issues are well understood.



Training Information July 2015 –July 2016

1328 participants attended training

1044 of participants said the training impacted on their work to a great extent

10 organisations have attained the Leeds Domestic Violence Quality Mark: Adult Social Care (Access and Care), Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour team, Moorfield House Surgery, Community Links, Leeds Housing Concern, Leeds Health for All, SARSVL, Leeds Women's Aid, HALT and Behind Closed Doors.

Feedback from course participants

"This will be so useful in my practice, brilliant informative & well presented...."

"Recognised why it's not always so simple to leave relationship etc. Really useful course that will be used extensively and improve my practice."

"Of most benefit from these two days has been increasing my confidence in talking with men who are abusive."

Children's Social Worker's Training

"This will help a great deal in our work with DV cases, particularly in respect of assessments of families from different cultures."

DHR Lessons Learned Briefing

"Excellent training. Extremely useful for job role. Raised an awareness of how to respond to domestic violence disclosures. Feel more confident to approach this subject in my professional role."

Health Visitor/ School Nurse

GP Domestic Violence Routine Enquiry Pilot

Domestic violence is associated with many health issues including, mental health, drug and alcohol issues, trauma, unwanted pregnancy and sexual health issues. Lessons Learned from DHRs both locally and nationally, identify that health practitioners including GPs can provide a crucial role in averting missed opportunities. Many domestic abuse victims believe their doctor is one of the few people they can disclose violence.

A pilot project, initially running in 4 GPs surgeries has been developed to increase disclosures of domestic violence and abuse through routine enquiry. GPs have received training in how to ask the question and respond appropriately. Support pathways for victims who disclose have also been introduced into the GP practices.



Domestic violence training has been delivered to over 300 GPs in May 2006 as part of the Safeguarding Children Target Training.

Comments from patients

"Very understanding and supportive. When you are in that situation you don't feel you can tell anyone. Being a teacher as well. I felt I couldn't see a way out. Like being in a wood"

"...they should ask regularly. I thought domestic violence was black eyes and broken bones. But he was very clever. The signs were not obvious. But all the time he was in control"

"If everyone got the help I got then it would be good. I feel I have benefitted".

"This work has really increased my awareness of domestic violence and confidence in asking the question and dealing with disclosure. We have picked up a surprisingly large number of historical abuse victims too. We found that all patients wanted to talk and some were still carrying issues from past abuse that was affecting their current physical and mental health."

GP Moorfield House Surgery

"Leeds is leading the way in terms of the great work they are doing about routine enquiry with GPs. This is a great piece of work and one we are considering expanding in the North" **Regional Lead for Safeguarding (NHS England North)**

Developing our workforce: Ambassadors and Champions

With the aim of making LCC a safe and supportive place for victims of domestic violence, whether they are colleagues or customers we are building a network of **Domestic Violence and Abuse Breakthrough Ambassadors**. The Ambassadors are trained to be examples of best practice to their colleagues, be able to disseminate information and signpost colleagues and customers to places of support and help. To date **46** people from across the council have volunteered to be Ambassadors and a training programme has been created specifically for them.

LCC DV Policy and HR Champions

The council has recently refreshed its Domestic Violence Policy. To support the delivery of the policy 20 HR officers have been trained as Domestic Violence HR Champions; to advise managers and to act as contacts for any managers and staff wanting to talk through cases involving employees affected by domestic violence. These Champions are part of a city wide network of Domestic Violence Champions and Ambassadors who will lead on initiatives, public awareness work and promote good practice

At a team meeting I decided to do the presentation on coercive control and older people and domestic abuse. The feedback has been really positive which is great.

DV Ambassador

"Really good in depth information.I would now feel confident that I could support a member of staff to explore support relating to Domestic Violence and Abuse."

HR Champion



The first Domestic Violence & Abuse Breakthrough Ambassadors to complete training

(May 2016)

Locality Working

Work is being piloted in Armley to improve our responses to standard risk cases of domestic violence. This has included piloting a monthly multi agency case conference based on the principles of the FDSH. The meeting involves all partners who may have an involvement with families in the area; including Police, Housing Leeds, Children's Centres, Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care and is Co-Chaired by the Clusters Targeted Services Leader and a Police Inspector. The meeting provides an opportunity for developing action plans to support the victim and their family.

32 cases were discussed during the first 3 meetings with a number of actions put in place. This has included 3 cases being added to the Families First list, referrals made for

drug and alcohol support and visits made by Housing Staff to speak to victims and offer signposting help.

To support the case conference approach a range of other work is being carried out. This has included;

- Training for Armley Housing Office to help staff to be able to spot the signs of domestic abuse and to offer signposting support and advice to local agencies.
- Recruiting DV&A Ambassadors from all of the LCC public facing services in Armley; The One Stop, Library, Housing Office and Leisure Centre.
- Ensuring Information on how to access help and support is available in a variety of community venues such as Play Gyms, Tower Blocks and schools.

Smart City: using Digital Solutions

Working with survivors of domestic violence, professionals involved in domestic violence and digital technologists proposals are being developed for a Smart Phone app that will help a victim living with domestic violence and abuse to safety plan, document the abuse and enable them to access help and support. The App, once operational, will be promoted on a word of mouth basis through the GP pilot and support services.

A screenshot of a mobile application interface. At the top, there's a red header bar with a white 'Close' button and a small 'x' icon. Below the header, the title 'New Incident' is centered. There are two columns of radio button options: 'Physical assault', 'Sexual assault', 'Controlling', 'Frightened me', and 'Other' (which is selected with a green dot). To the right of these options is a 'Details' section with a checkbox labeled 'Was a child present?'. Below the options is a grey 'EDIT TIME' button. At the bottom of the form area is a blue 'SAVE' button. Below the form area, there's a dark blue section with the text 'Need to phone someone?'. It provides the helpline number '0113 246 0401 (24 hours)' and states 'If you are in immediate danger: 999'. At the very bottom is a pink button labeled 'VIEW LOG'.

Leeds Domestic Violence and Abuse Website

A new website has been created at Leedsdomesticviolenceandabuse.co.uk

This website is being developed as a one stop shop of information for anyone affected by domestic violence with information for people experiencing abuse, people perpetrating abuse, children and young people, family and friends, employers and professionals. The web site has over 2000 page views per month and over 30% of visits per month are from new visitors.

The site also links to the **Get Comfortable talking about it campaign site**. The campaign was launched in November 2015 to encourage people to think, talk and ask questions about domestic violence and abuse and to increase awareness and understanding of support available.

Website feedback

"Can you please pass on my appreciation to everyone who was involved in developing this brilliant website? Absolutely excellent. Really clear, helpful information and advice...."

"This website is superb. I'm delighted to see such useful information in one place - and awareness raising is so important too, because I find that people just don't know what to do, and feel afraid to "interfere" in case they make matters worse. I'm really proud of Leeds for doing this!



In one month the campaign reached 1.44million people on **Twitter**, 39,750 via the council **Facebook** page and had over 3,000 page views on the **Website**. This level of engagement led us to continue the campaign with a series of blogs detailing people's personal experiences and service responses to domestic violence. A second phase of the campaign is being planned.

Safer Leeds Executive- getting comfortable talking about it...

Get
comfortable
talking
about it

Campaign feedback

"I saw an article about the Get Comfortable project and was thrilled to see such an important discussion taking place in Leeds' public spaces.....We all think it's a fantastic project and would love to get involved....."

Domestic Violence Specialist Services

Leeds Domestic Violence Services are commissioned to provide a range of specialist support and advice to victims of domestic violence is provided by a number of organisations in Leeds. LDVS includes the following organisations: Leeds Women's Aid, HALT, and Behind Closed Doors. The services provided include;

- Independent Domestic Violence Advisory (IDVA) to provides support and advocacy including legal advice on a range of civil remedies available to clients (women and men), and supporting clients through the criminal justice system.
- Resettlement services to support to women leaving refuge and emergency accommodation, or clients who require a planned move to ensure their safety.
- Outreach support to women, men and children affected by domestic violence, enabling them to keep themselves safe, rebuild their lives and make informed choices about their futures.
- Domestic Violence Telephone 24 hour Helpline (in conjunction with the Stonham Refuge service)

Service Data 15/16

2,827 referrals to LDVS

895 received case work support

4,500 calls to the helpline

206 Admissions to refuge service

125 using the drop in

225 supported through group work

Stonham Home Group are commissioned to provide the Leeds Refuge Service. The service provides an emergency short stay accommodation service to women and families who have experienced domestic violence. The service focuses on high risk cases where there is an urgent need for refuge accommodation to ensure safety.

Women's Health Matters are commissioned to run domestic violence groups and **Leeds Women's Aid** to run drop in clinics and provides support and advice to professionals on domestic violence issues.

In addition to the commissioned specialist services a range of support is offered by other frontline services and through other funding streams accessed by 3rd sector services and organisations.

Changes to the specialist services will be made following a commissioning review. The new service provision will be in place by April 2017 and key differences will include. Better integration of service through pooled funding arrangements

- Specified support for the FDSH arrangement and other breakthrough projects
- Joining up resettlement and emergency accommodation services
- Additional support and training for the wider workforce
- Additional activity around peer and volunteer support to promote sustained recovery
- Increased accessibility for all communities
- Focus on whole family approach

Service user feedback

"Through the help I have received from BCD I have felt supported to pick up the pieces of life and make a fresh start and this was done not only with professionalism but with sincere kindness and CARE. Always a listening ear and shoulder to cry on. I'm not sure how I would have coped otherwise."

"I can't tell you how very grateful I am for the support on the day at court and everything you have done for me on the lead up to it. It's been such a horrible period of my life and I've been terrified, but it's such a relief now and your support has been great help in how safe I feel now. I couldn't have done it without you at all"

"I was at breaking point, now I can live my life"

Next Steps

Whilst much progress has been made over the last 12 months more remains to be done. We will continue to work with all relevant boards and partnerships to ensure strategic commitment to support and develop our city's response to domestic violence.

The next period of time will see a particular focus on the following;

- Mobilising and embedding the recently commissioned domestic violence services.
- Reviewing the FDSH operational processes including the potential to move to a 7 day per week process.
- Implementing a GP notification process at the FDSH
- Disseminating and embedding learning from the Leeds Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- Developing work to ensure that all members of our community are able to access appropriate help and support.
- Launching the second phase of the Get Comfortable Campaign.
- Developing work with new partners such as the Faith and Business Sectors.
- Developing our responses to perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse.