

Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) (“the Act”), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give ‘due regard’ to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid ‘due regard’ to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
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Title:	Domestic Abuse Victims/Survivors Support Services
Related EIAs:	EIA Number: EIA0487 Domestic Abuse Support in Dispersed Safe Accommodation (AS22013) Aug 2024
EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Domestic abuse victims/survivors support services
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, local authorities have the duty to provide domestic abuse support for victims/survivors and their children in safe accommodation. This procurement of services will enable support (e.g. through group work and one-to-one outreach and intensive work) for victims/survivors in community settings , safe accommodation settings, and health care settings so that service users' safety and health needs are addressed and they can be supported through recovery. Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, local authorities also have a duty to represent the lived experiences of children, young people, and adults victims/survivors; these services will be informed by these experiences and insights. Services will be available to all ages through the provision of these specialist services.

New/changed service/policy/project	<p>Harm as a result of domestic abuse can have lifelong impacts on physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health. The more severe the abuse, the greater the impact. In the worst cases, domestic abuse can result in homicide and suicide. Nationally, one in five domestic abuse victims at high risk of serious harm or murder report attending an accident and emergency department because of their injuries in the year before getting help. The Hampshire Domestic Abuse Partnership completed a domestic abuse needs assessment. This found between April 2022 and March 2023: - An estimated 21% of the individuals in Hampshire who are estimated to experience domestic abuse have their experiences recorded as a crime by the police - 51,800 individuals (34,100 females and 18,000 males) (aged 16+) were subjected to domestic abuse in Hampshire. - Around 42,600 children and young people in Hampshire have been exposed to domestic abuse during their childhood - The highest number of domestic abuse victims are found within the 35-44 and 45-54 age groups. Risk and rates are highest in the younger age groups (16 to 19 years and 20 to 24 years, for both men and women). An estimated 21% of individuals subjected to domestic abuse in Hampshire are aged above 65. New Forest is the only district where the highest estimated number of individuals are in the 60-74 age group. - It is estimated that 50,770 individuals in Hampshire are of a white ethnic group who were subjected to domestic abuse - It can be estimated that 21,772 individuals in Hampshire who had a disability, long-term illness, or impairment were subjected to domestic abuse - Basingstoke and Deane, Gosport, Havant and Rushmoor had higher rates of domestic abuse related crimes than Hampshire overall - Those in the 20% most deprived areas in England were found to be more likely to be subjected to domestic abuse compared to the average. - 3,220 individuals aged 16 in Hampshire who are bisexual, gay or lesbian have been subjected to domestic abuse in the last year. We know that there is a strong association between being a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse and having mental health conditions (e.g. depression, anxiety, PTSD, eating and sleeping disorders, self-harm, suicidal ideation, using drugs and alcohol). Despite this strong association, domestic abuse often goes undetected within mental health services and domestic abuse services are not always equipped to support mental health problems. The new services will include a diverse range of types of safe accommodation and range of health care settings that will provide domestic abuse support. There will be support offered to address mental health needs e.g. by use of trauma informed approaches, and improving access and support through work with smaller voluntary services who are likely to have specific expertise on issues affecting local communities and people with intersecting needs who are not currently accessing our domestic abuse specialist services.</p>
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Engagement
Engagement is taking place during October and November 2024 involving focus groups, interviews, and surveys with services users, key partners and agencies.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	

Harm as a result of domestic abuse can have lifelong impacts on physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health. Many children continue to experience mental and physical health problems into adulthood and this increases their risk of being either a perpetrator or victim themselves when they are older. Child victims can experience delayed development, reduction in school attainment, and be at increased risk of truancy and exclusion. Risk and rates are highest in the younger age groups (16 to 19 years and 20 to 24 years, for both men and women).

Hampshire is estimated to have 42,520 children and young people who have been subjected to domestic abuse between adults. The highest number of domestic abuse victims/survivors are found within the 35-44 (9,301 or 5.3% population are victims) and 45-54 (8,078 or 4.2% population) age groups. This is related to these age groups being the largest in Hampshire. The majority of Hampshire County Council's workforce is also aged 35-54 and consequently will benefit from this service (Annual Workforce Report 2023-2024). An estimated 21% of individuals subjected to domestic abuse in Hampshire are aged above 65. Age UK reports that one in four victims of recorded domestic homicide are over the age of 60. Older victims aged 61+ are more likely than younger victims to:

- Report poor physical ill health and some form of disability
- Visit their GP more frequently due to more frequently suffering from a range of medical issues that were directly linked to the physical and traumatic effects of domestic abuse.
- Live and remain with their abuser (even after they are engaged with domestic abuse services)
- Be male
- Have an adult family member as the primary perpetrator.

There are many reasons why older people may not disclose domestic abuse e.g. embarrassment, lack of awareness about services and options, and feelings of isolation, less experience of 'self-help' models or disclosing personal circumstances to a stranger. Another common barrier for older people with health and mobility issues is instances where the perpetrator of the abuse is also the carer. Older victims are more likely to be identified and supported as a result of comprehensive domestic abuse services provided from health care settings than through other community-based services.

The service will work in partnership with health care providers e.g. acute hospital, community mental health, and primary care settings to increase capacity and capability to increase opportunities to identify and support more people of all ages who are victims/survivors of domestic abuse. This service will also allow the continuity and stability of dispersed accommodation support which would address the needs of older victims and families with older sons for whom refuge is inappropriate. The service will provide training to key partners and agencies to improve recognition of and response to older domestic abuse victims.

Mitigation

Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Women with a disability are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse than non-disabled women (2023 Crime Survey for England and Wales). An increased risk is also seen for male victims. Compared with non-disabled victims/survivors, this population is also more likely to experience abuse over a longer period, suffer more physical injuries, live with the perpetrator, and report abuse from multiple perpetrators. Based on the 2021 census, it is estimated that around 21,772 individuals with disabilities in Hampshire were subjected to domestic abuse in 2023. There is also a strong association between being a victim of any age and having a mental health condition. In the UK, an estimated one in three women who attempt suicide have experienced domestic abuse and an estimated one in eight of all suicides and suicide attempts by women are due to domestic abuse. Research suggests one-third of mental health service users have experienced domestic, with the majority being historic domestic abuse. We know that in 2023/24 of those victims accessing domestic abuse services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to stay safe in their own homes, 53% had a known or diagnosed mental health issue, 24% had a suspected mental health issue, and 10% had suicidal ideation • in Hampshire's refuges, 73% had a known or diagnosed mental health issue, 17% had suicidal ideation • in Hampshire's hospitals, 98% had a known or suspected mental health issue, 27% had suicidal ideation, 13% self-harmed, 21% had alcohol dependency <p>The Patchwork of Provision Report (2022) by the Domestic Abuse Commissioners highlighted that nationally, 83% of respondents wanted counselling and therapeutic support, but only 45% respondents had received this support. In general, there was a desire for earlier support services, but that often the only services available were crisis focused. We should expect to see 7 times more victims with disability, long-term illness, or impairment than we do accessing victims support services. The development of this service will include a wider variety of health care settings to increase opportunities to identify and support more victims with a disability, long-term illness, or impairment. This service will also allow access to a range of community support services and safe accommodation that is adapted to be accessible for victims/survivors who have disabilities (is compliant with the current Equalities Act 2010). The service will provide training to key partners and agencies to improve recognition of and response to domestic abuse victims with a disability, long-term illness, or impairment and recognition of legal rights and duties under the Care Act 2014, Children Act 1989 and the Children and Families Act 2014 to adult and young carers assessment and extra support for adult and young carers respectively. The service will work with statutory (e.g. mental health NHS partners) and voluntary sector organisations e.g. SignHealth to address the needs of domestic abuse victims.</p>

Mitigation	
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Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>National research found that 72% of transgender / non-binary people will experience domestic abuse in their lifetimes. Though there are still a relatively small number of transgender and non-binary people in the United Kingdom, domestic abuse is still a significant issue that the community are faced with.</p> <p>Currently there is very little research available on the experiences of victims who have had gender reassignment and national and local data is very limited on understanding the prevalence in England and Hampshire. In England, those who identify as transgender were more likely to be subjected to domestic abuse than those who are cisgender, 15.1% (615 individuals) of those who are transgender were subjected to domestic abuse in 2023 compared to 4.4% of those who are cisgender. There is evidence that people who have or are in the process of undergoing gender reassignment are at higher risk of social exclusion and poor mental health, which can lead to increased risk of domestic abuse. The Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment report on Inclusion Health Groups (2023) includes gender reassignment, stigma and discrimination as cross cutting themes associated with poor health and underuse of some services.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse services will be available for all genders through the commissioned service. The service will work with Loving Me which is the only domestic and sexual abuse service in the United Kingdom specifically by and for transgender, non-binary. Staff will undergo training to ensure that they are respectful of people who have undergone gender reassignment. The service will ensure there is an appropriate equality, inclusion and diversity policy in place that includes consideration of people with gender reassignment and that services are promoted to all people who may be facing barriers to access, including people from trans and gender reassignment groups through bespoke, tailored campaigns and development of service offers.</p>
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	

National research shows that domestic abuse has overtaken gestational diabetes and pre-eclampsia as the leading cause of foetal death. Around 30% of domestic abuse begins during pregnancy, while 40–60% of women experiencing domestic abuse are abused during pregnancy. Domestic abuse is a risk factor for post-natal depression which itself can impair social cognitive, and language development of their child. Domestic abuse is also associated with early termination of pregnancy and the association with repeat abortion indicates that there is sometimes a repetitive cycle of abuse and pregnancy. Many women are reluctant to involve the criminal justice system because they fear reprisals. If a woman does not have adequate community support to allow her to protect herself, then arrest and prosecution of her assailant may result in more severe violence on their release.

The Hampshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment highlighted barriers to refuge access particularly for victims with large families, victims with adolescent boys, male victims with children, LGBTQ+ victims with children, victims and children with disabilities, and victims with complex needs who also have children. Our current refuge provision accommodates women who are pregnant or who have children up to a certain age. There is also specialist support within refuge to support children and young people. This service would ensure safe accommodation which could be accessed by women who are pregnant and have children and will meet the needs of families with children who currently cannot access or face barriers to accessing the current refuge provision, as identified through the needs assessment.

In 2023/24, at least 70 pregnant women received domestic abuse support services in Hampshire's Hospitals and were supported to stay safe in their own homes. This positively impacted 1,256 children and young people. The development of this service will include a wider variety of health care settings to increase opportunities to identify and support more victims who are pregnant.

Mitigation

Race

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The crime survey for England and Wales data for the year ending March 2020 suggests that those from a mixed ethnic background were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse within the previous year (7.6%) than those from white (5.7%), black (3.7%), or Asian (3.6%) ethnic backgrounds. However, the presence and impact of additional barriers across all groups, and particularly within ethnic minority communities, may lead to underreporting of abuse. 96% of those who are estimated to experience domestic abuse in Hampshire are of a white ethnic group. This is comparable to the population breakdown in Hampshire with 93% of

Hampshire's population being of a white ethnic group. Awareness of domestic abuse is lower for ethnic communities and those who have recently arrived in the UK. Victims from ethnic minority backgrounds may experience additional barriers to identifying, disclosing, seeking help or reporting abuse. This may include:

- A distrust of the police and other statutory agencies
- Suspicion towards the police due to lack of perceived or real support for their community historically and/or currently
- Concerns about racism and fear of racial stereotyping
- Fears about immigration and/or asylum status and risk of deportation
- Language and cultural barriers
- Being disproportionately impacted by certain forms of VAWG, including forced marriage, staying in a marriage with a perpetrator, 'honour'-based abuse and FGM)
- Feeling ashamed and/or concerned about family finding out
- Fear of rejection by the wider community.

There is a growing understanding amongst wider society about domestic abuse within Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and barriers faced by people within these communities in accessing help. The service will consider victims particular support needs, including language or literacy support arising from disadvantages in relation to education, access to safe accommodation, and helping victims in building other support networks outside the community. Victims from Black or ethnic minority backgrounds are more likely to be identified and supported as a result of a comprehensive domestic abuse services provided from health care settings than through other community-based services.

The service will be available to, and promoted to all who require domestic abuse support and will not discriminate on basis of race. The service will undertake an annual equity audit to include ethnicity, race, language and religion/belief to monitor uptake and identify barriers to access and ensure the network of service user representatives and volunteers proactively gain the views of people from diverse backgrounds to inform service development and improvement. The service will also develop links with local communities and organisations run by and for people of diverse ethnicities.

Mitigation

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Nationally, for the year ending March 2020, those reporting their religion as Buddhist, or an 'Other' religion not listed (9.6% and 9.1% respectively) were more likely to report domestic abuse within the last year. This compares to 6.4% of those with no religion, 4.8% of Christians, 3.7% of Muslims, and 3.2% of Hindus.</p> <p>There is little local data on people using domestic abuse services and their religion.</p>

	<p>This service will seek to understand the varying manifestations of domestic abuse relating to faith and how a mix of culture, religious tradition and holy scripture can be used as tools of abuse by perpetrators.</p> <p>The service will be aware that a lack of understanding of different experiences and needs can lead to silencing victims from faith backgrounds and reinforce barriers to receiving support from agencies such as the police, courts, social care, and housing.</p>
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Statistics from the last ONS bulletin showed that in 2023, women were around twice as likely to have experienced domestic abuse than men. Domestic abuse affects an estimated 1.3 million women each year – 8.2% of the population.</p> <p>In 2022/23 the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that the victim was female in 73.5% of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police, compared with 27% of domestic abuse-related crimes where the victim was male (ONS, 2023). It is estimated that around 34,100 females and 18,000 males aged over 16s in Hampshire experienced domestic abuse in the last year. Of those accessing Hampshire's victim support services, 79% identified as women, 10% identified as men, 0.5% identified as trans, and 0.1% identified as non-binary/intersex. In the CSEW for 2019/20, women experience higher rates of repeated victimisation and are much more likely to be seriously hurt or killed than male victims (ONS, 2023). One in four women (27%) have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 (ONS, 2023). Between April 2019 and March 2022, at least one woman a week was killed by a male partner/ex-partner (ONS, 2023).</p> <p>Men and boys who are victims of domestic abuse may face specific fears of stigmatisation, concerns about being believed, not being recognised as victims and lack of promotion of services to support them. The CSEW (2017/18) shows that only half (51%) of male victims of partner abuse told anyone that they were a victim of partner abuse, compared to 81% of female victims.</p> <p>Our needs assessment highlighted that male victims could not have access to our current refuge provision and there is some evidence that suggests that when victims-survivors are unable to access safe accommodation they may end up in temporary accommodation, become homeless or remain in or return to the abusive relationship. Mankind reports estimate that nationally, around 300 men are sleeping rough because of partner abuse every night. Child-to-parent abuse appears gendered, with the majority of cases being perpetrated by sons against their mothers, although men and boys are victims too.</p>

	This service will ensure that services are provided in a gender sensitive way, women only, men only and trans only spaces will be provided appropriately and proportionately including support led by and for marginalised groups for different sex groups. This will include services working with smaller voluntary services who are likely to have specific expertise on issues affecting local communities and people with intersecting needs who are not currently accessing our domestic abuse services.
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>There is an increased risk of people who are LGBTQ+ of being subjected to domestic abuse. 21.9% of bisexual women and 7.3% of lesbian women compared to 5.1% of heterosexual women had been subjected to domestic abuse in the last year. There is also an increased risk in gay and bisexual men (7.9% and 8.4% compared to 2.9% of heterosexual men). This equates to 3,220 individuals aged 16 and older in Hampshire who are bisexual, gay or lesbian who have been subjected to domestic abuse in 2023. The extent of under-reporting may be higher than for people in heterosexual relationships, since coming forward will require the victim to disclose their sexuality to police or other authorities. Additionally, fear of being involuntarily 'outed' may, in itself, provide a means for an abuser to exert control.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse services will be available for all sexualities through the commissioned service. The service will improve access and support by working with smaller voluntary services who are likely to have specific expertise on issues affecting local communities and people with intersecting needs who are not currently accessing our mainstream services.</p>
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Nationally, there is an increased risk of being subjected to domestic abuse among those who were divorced/legally dissolved partnership (9.5%) and individuals who were separated (12.5%) compared to married (2.4%) and single (7.4%). In Hampshire, there were around 3,000 individuals who were separated and 10,700 individuals who were divorced who were subjected to domestic abuse in 2023. This accounts for 24% of individuals aged over 16 who were subjected to domestic abuse during this time.</p>

	<p>There is a lack of local data on marriage and civil partnership in our services or needs assessment. Services currently collect data on whether partners are current, former, intermittent and living with or separate as these statuses impact more on safety outcomes.</p> <p>Increasing options for service provision in community, hospital, and health settings is positive for all people regardless of their marital or civil partnership status.</p>
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>An evidence review suggests that there may be particular risks associated with having low income, economic strain and benefit receipt in exacerbating interpersonal dependency and compounding wider patterns of vulnerability relating to lack of employment or poor access to social support. Poverty can be a cause and a consequence of domestic abuse. Women in households with low incomes are 3.5 times more likely to experience domestic abuse than women in slightly better-off households (Source: S Walby and J Allen (2004) Domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey. Home Office). Disabled women have even fewer resources due to their lower rates of employment and wider gender pay gaps compared to disabled and non-disabled men.</p> <p>Many migrant women have what's called 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF). This means they cannot use the social security, housing or women's refuge services available to other women. Women with no recourse to public funds by virtue of their migration status are a group that is economically very vulnerable to domestic abuse. Their options on leaving are even worse than for other women, as they cannot access benefits and only a reduced number of refuges and shelters can accommodate them.</p> <p>Based on the Crime Survey for England and Wales (2022-23 data), those in the 20% most deprived areas in England were found to be more likely to be subjected to domestic abuse compared to the average. Those in the 20% least deprived were found to be less likely to be subjected to domestic abuse. While 4% of Hampshire's population live within areas that are among the 20% most deprived in England, this population contributes 6% (2,840 individuals) of those who were subjected to domestic abuse in the last year.</p> <p>Over half (56.1%) of respondents who had left an abusive relationship felt that the abuse had impacted their ability to work. Just under half of all respondents felt the abuse had negatively impacted their long-term employment prospects/earnings. There is variation in the prevalence of domestic abuse based on the employment status of an individual aged over 16. Those who are long term or temporarily sick or ill from</p>

	<p>employment (11.7%), those unemployed (5.2%) and those economically inactive (7.4%) were more likely to be subjected to domestic abuse compared to those in employment at 4.4%. In Hampshire, 32% (14,840 individuals) of the individuals who were subjected to domestic abuse in the last year were not in employment. Those who are retired (6,740 individuals) account for just less than half of those individuals who were subjected to domestic abuse in 2022-23 who were not in employment.</p> <p>The new service in safe accommodation, community and hospital based settings will identify and support finance needs including those with NRPF; they will have expertise in local and national partnerships and pathways in order to provide timely support.</p>
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>It is recognised that in rural communities, victims are more vulnerable to domestic abuse. Exiting abuse for these populations, takes 25% longer as they can be more isolated, have longer to travel in order to leave or to easily access effective support, and police response time is longer, discouraging victims from reporting. In a small community where a new vehicle would be noticed, a victim cannot be safely visited by a support worker on a regular basis, in case the perpetrator is informed that a strange car has been seen at their home.</p> <p>Nationally, rural areas host a disproportionately high percentage of the older population, with 25.4% aged 65 and over, in contrast to 17.1% in urban areas. There is a lack of detailed local data on victims in rural areas and they are likely under represented in services. We know that the New Forest is the only district where the highest estimated number of individuals are in the 60-74 age group.</p> <p>The service will work in partnership with health care providers particularly GP practices in rural areas to increase opportunities to identify and support more people of all ages who are victims in rural settings. This service will also facilitate transport and convenient access to a choice of safe accommodation and will leverage the close-knit nature of rural communities to develop localised outreach models of support. The service will also ensure that services are promoted to all people who may be facing barriers to access, including people living in rural areas through bespoke, tailored campaigns and development of service offers.</p>
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact: All Hampshire

Equality Statement

Additional information:

Hampshire County Council has a responsibility to ensure child and adult victims of domestic abuse have access to support in safe accommodation and that their voices are represented to inform our strategic partnership board priorities for its local population. The service will continue to deliver domestic abuse victims support services across the life course. This will support the delivery of the following Public Health Strategy objectives:

- use a coordinated system approach to prevent domestic abuse and protect and support those affected by it
- work in partnership to ensure inclusive, quality, affordable, and appropriate safe accommodation support is available to all victims/survivors of domestic abuse, including their children.

The new domestic abuse service will be monitored by key performance indicators and through contract review meetings. Outcomes will be continually reviewed through the data provided through the annual statutory return to MHCLG. This includes data by ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality, disability and mental health.

Public data through the Office of National Statistics (ONS), the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), Home Office, Ministry of Justice, and other government departments will be complemented by local provider / system data.

In addition, the service will undertake an annual equity audit to monitor uptake of people with protected characteristics. Any areas requiring further work will be addressed in an action plan and monitored as part of contract management.

Staff sustainability will be a key priority for the service and it will have a staff equality, diversity and inclusion policy in place. As an employer, the provider will have a workforce strategy in place that will ensure appropriate development opportunities for individuals with protected characteristics to enter and remain in the workforce.

The contract will be for a period of at least five years enabling the service to provide stability for workers, development of specialist expertise, career progression and personal development. Employee retention, training and development will be key to ensuring a sustainable and representative workforce.

Overview Statement:

A summary assessment to show that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been paid, which is undertaken when a full EIA is not needed:

EIA reference number: 00713

Date of production of EIA for publication: 24/10/2024