

Domestic Abuse

Introduction

Domestic violence and abuse can be experienced by anyone regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, or religion. The Home Office define domestic abuse as:

“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 sexual orientation. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, economic and emotional forms of abuse.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape, and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten a person.”¹

Domestic abuse presents a public health concern due to the long-term health and wellbeing consequences for the victims or survivors and children who witness it. Domestic abuse also has societal costs, such as costs to economic productivity, impacts on the criminal justice system and the National Health Service. Domestic abuse is also recognised as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and when witnessed may have an impact on childhood development, indicating a potential long-term effect of domestic abuse into later life.

Summary

During the year ending 31 March 2018 Norfolk Police recorded **16,794** domestic abuse related incidents and crimes² – an average of **46 per day**.

1 in 4 women and **1 in 6 men** will experience abuse in their lifetime³.

1 in 7⁴ children and **1 in 4⁵** LGBT will have been exposed to domestic abuse.

293 women and **107 men** between year ending March 2015 to 2017 were killed as a result of domestic abuse nationally⁷.

The risks of experiencing Domestic Abuse increase if a person⁶;

- is female
- is aged 16-24
- has mental health difficulties (40% of high-risk victims of abuse report mental health difficulties)
- is separated / in process of separation
- is pregnant or has recently given birth (30% of domestic violence and abuse begins during pregnancy)
- has a perpetrator with a previous conviction whether or not it is related to domestic abuse
- has a higher rate of drug and/or alcohol abuse

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-consultation-response-and-draft-bill>

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesappendixtables>

³ https://www.norfolkscsb.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/150112_NeedsAssessment_ExecutiveSummary_DomesticViolenceAbuse_ChildrenYoungPeople_Final.pdf

⁴ <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/what-is-domestic-abuse/impact-on-children-and-young-people/>

⁵ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph50/evidence/report-4-broken-rainbow-uk-national-lgbt-domestic-violence-service-pdf-430408045>

⁶ <http://www.safelives.org.uk/policy-evidence/about-domestic-abuse/who-are-victims-domestic-abuse>

⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesappendixtables>

Headlines

Nationally, the Crime Survey England and Wales⁸ estimated that 4.2% of men, and 7.9% of women between the ages of 16 and 59 experienced some form of domestic abuse between April 2017 and March 2018.⁶

Norfolk had 16,794 domestic abuse related incidents and crimes recorded in the year ending March 2018. This is equivalent to 19 incidents and crimes for every 1000 people. Of these, 8,118 were recorded as crimes, equivalent to 9 domestic abuse related crimes for every 1000 people. 48% of domestic abuse related incidents were subsequently recorded as crimes in Norfolk in the year ending March 2018.⁹

In Norfolk, 14% of all crimes recorded were classified as being related to domestic abuse in the year ending March 2018.⁹ For every 100 domestic abuse related crimes committed in Norfolk in the year ending March 2018, 39 arrests were made. There were 4 domestic homicides recorded between April 2014 and March 2017 in Norfolk, all of which were female. For comparison, in the same period there were 8 non-domestic homicides, 2 victims were female and 6 male. Domestic homicide is defined in the homicide index as any homicide where there is a relationship such as spouse or relative between an adult victim and a perpetrator¹⁰. According to police data, the proportion of domestic abuse incidents and crimes in Norfolk (number of incidents and crimes divided by the total population of the county) in 2016 was 1.85%, this only marginally changed to 1.88% in 2017, but increased to 2.03% in 2018, however, this does not account for repeat incidents involving the same suspect or survivor.

There were 1,221 domestic abuse related prosecutions in the year ending March 2018. This makes up approximately 15% of all prosecutions in Norfolk during that year compared to 17% nationally. In the same year, there were 1,005 domestic abuse related convictions recorded in Norfolk. 82% of domestic abuse related prosecutions resulted in a conviction, compared to 76% nationally.^{6,9}

In response to the issue of domestic abuse, Norfolk has numerous national and local strategies to support survivors of domestic abuse. Norfolk is a beacon site for National Domestic Abuse charity SafeLives¹¹ which will bring opportunities for learning from national experts and innovation into the county. The operation Encompass¹² scheme, an information sharing partnership between the police and schools, is active in Norfolk with 95% of schools signed up to the initiative. The domestic abuse change champion network¹³ is operational in Norfolk with 1,700 champions trained. Leeway, Norfolk's largest provider of domestic abuse support¹⁴ operate seven refuges across Norfolk. The aim of these refuges is to provide survivors of domestic abuse overnight accommodation and support with issues such as housing, safety planning, and health.

Influences on Health and Wellbeing

Domestic abuse incidents and crimes have a significant impact on health services. The East of England (EoE) Ambulance Service report that on average in Norfolk between June 2018 and May 2019, they make an average number of 42 safeguarding referrals per month for adults aged 18 and over, and 27 per month for children aged less than 18 years.¹⁵ Figure 1 shows the number of safeguarding referrals made by the East of England Ambulance Service for domestic abuse in Norfolk for adults and children between June 2018 and May 2019. There are increased numbers of referrals made around the Christmas and New Year period, which is consistently reported nationally.¹⁶

Domestic abuse is an ACE. The more adversity a child experiences during their childhood the more likely it is to impact upon the child's mental and physical health.¹⁷ Research has shown that domestic violence is a good predictor of high (4+) ACE scores¹⁸, suggesting that children with experience of domestic violence are more likely to experience other forms of adversity and have poorer health outcomes.

⁸ <https://www.crimesurvey.co.uk/en/index.html>

⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesdatatool>

¹⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>

¹¹ <http://www.safelives.org.uk/>

¹² <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

¹³ <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/domestic-abuse/information-for-professionals/domestic-abuse-change-champions>

¹⁴ <https://www.leewayssupport.org/>

¹⁵ <https://www.eastamb.nhs.uk/about-us/safeguarding-reports.htm>

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/domestic-violence-support-at-christmas>

¹⁷ https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Children-and-families-services/Early-Years/ACES_and_social_injustice_DCP_SW.pdf

¹⁸ Lian McGavock, Trevor Spratt, Children Exposed to Domestic Violence: Using Adverse Childhood Experience Scores to Inform Service Response, *The British Journal of Social Work*, Volume 47, Issue 4, June 2017, Pages 1128–1146, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcw073>

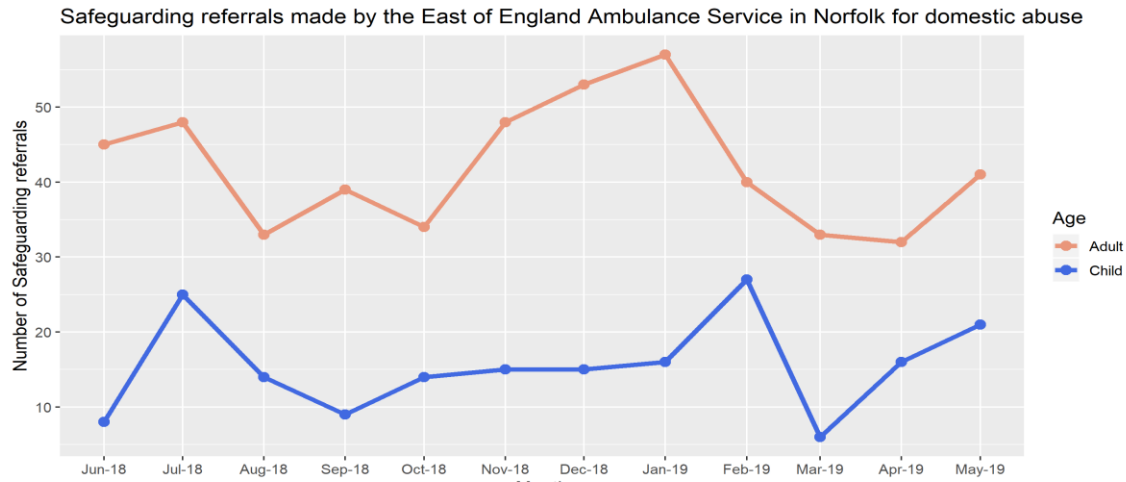


Figure 1: Number of safeguarding referrals made by the EoE ambulance service in Norfolk for domestic abuse

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have published a review and guidelines on domestic abuse for planning and delivering services.¹⁹ The recommendations cover the spectrum of domestic violence and abuse, and recommend working in multi-agency partnerships as the most effective way to approach the issue both operationally and strategically.

Social, environmental, population context

There are no social, economic or demographic boundaries for domestic abuse. However, it is known that the risk of experiencing domestic abuse increases if the person is²⁰;

- female,
- aged 16-24 (women) or 16-19 (men),
- has a long-term illness or disability,
- has a mental health problem,
- is separated or in the process of separation,
- is pregnant,
- has recently given birth or experiencing postnatal depression,
- if the perpetrator is under the influence of alcohol and/or illicit drugs.

Although women are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse, 30.7% of men aged 16 to 59 and 26.9% of men aged 60 to 74 also experienced abuse from a partner within the past 12 months according to findings of the Crime Survey for England and Wales²¹. The survey also reported that 52.1% of people aged 60 to 75 that have a long-standing illness or disability have experienced partner abuse in the 12 months to taking part in the survey. Members of the LGBT community are also reported to have the same risk of domestic abuse as women (1 in 4)²². Norfolk has the most domestic crimes occur in the 25-34 age band compared to other ages, which might reflect underreporting in the younger age groups (Figure 2).

¹⁹ <https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/PH50>

²⁰ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph50/chapter/3-Context>

²¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>

²² <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph50/evidence/report-4-broken-rainbow-uk-national-lgbt-domestic-violence-service-pdf-430408045>

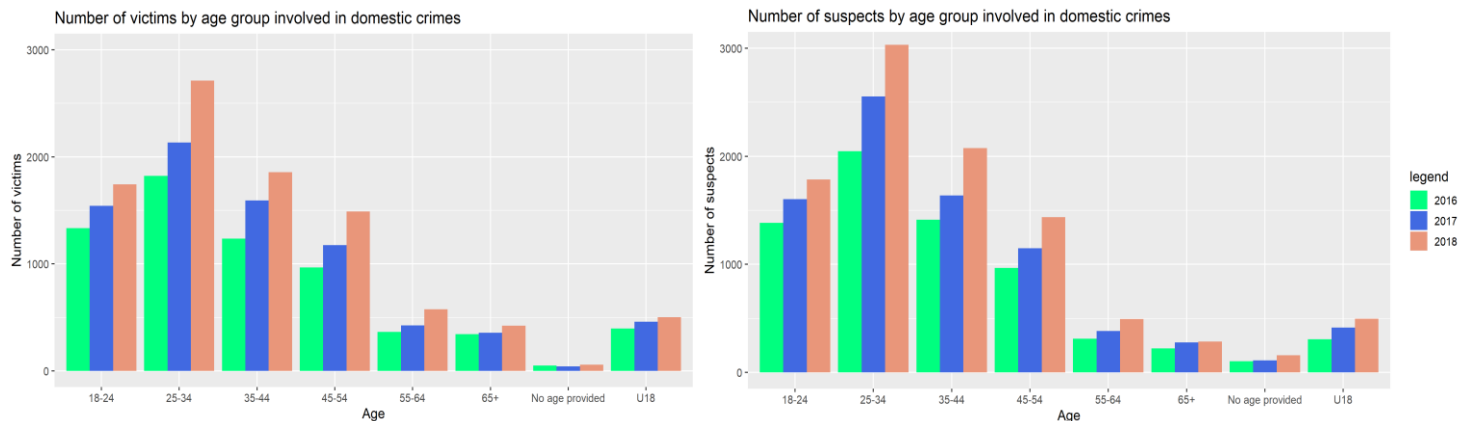


Figure 2: Number of victims and suspects involved in domestic crimes recorded by Norfolk police between 2016 to 2018

According to police data, in the first 6 months of 2019 there were 9392 recorded domestic incidents and crimes in Norfolk (Figure 3). Norwich had the highest number of recorded events with 2380 recorded incidents and crimes, followed by Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn and west Norfolk with 1712 and 1415 incidents and crimes respectively. According to police data, the proportion of domestic abuse incidents and crimes in Norfolk in 2016 and 2017 was similar but increased slightly in 2018. This slight increase could be due to better recording of domestic abuse related incidents and crimes.

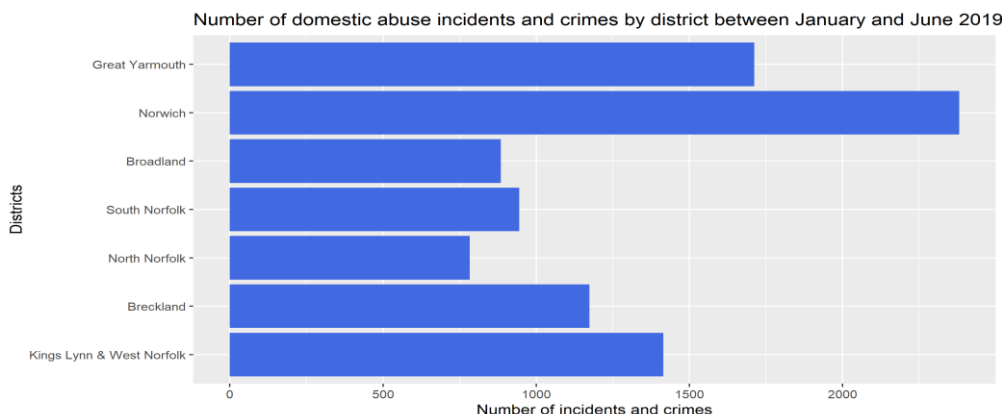


Figure 3: Number of domestic abuse incidents and crimes by Norfolk district between January and June 2019

Year	Victims	Suspects
2016	819	1018
2017	1048	1279
2018	1445	1681

Table 1: Number of repeat victims and suspects in Norfolk between 2016-2018:

Figure 3 does not consider repeat incidents involving the same people (survivors or perpetrators). Nationally and in Norfolk, there are many incidents and crimes that involve repeat victims and suspects. The number of repeat victims and suspects has been increasing each year as with number of domestic incidents and crimes in general (Table 1).

Current services, local plans and strategies

Learning from Norfolk's Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) highlights the role health has as a universal service in contact with both those suffering and perpetrating domestic abuse. Therefore, it is important for health staff to have a good knowledge of domestic abuse so they can better understand the possible underlying causes of the presenting issue, and are able to spot the signs and take appropriate action. Funding provided for raising awareness of domestic abuse has been received through the OPCCN, Children's Services, Public Health, and the Home Office violence against women and girls transformation fund. As a result, approximately 1,700 domestic abuse champions being trained. The health sector continues to be a focus for improving awareness of domestic abuse through the DA Champions programme. The programme has held 29 network events and 2 conferences to raise awareness and promote their domestic champion initiative.

Operation Encompass is an early information sharing partnership between the police and schools which enables schools to offer immediate support for children who witness, are present, or are involved in domestic abuse incidents.²³ Norfolk shares all domestic abuse incidents reported to the Norfolk police involving children with the schools who are signed up to the initiative. As of July 2019, 95% of schools are signed up to the initiative in Norfolk. As with the overall number of domestic abuse incidents and crimes, Norwich has the highest number of incidents involving children, with Great Yarmouth the second highest number of incidents. However, the data in Figure 4 below does not report the number of repeat incidents involving the same children.

Notifications per Localities, per month													
Locality	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Summer Holidays	Total
Breckland	19	35	46	31	35	34	26	26	38	37	32	53	412
Broadland	35	47	43	41	41	85	42	54	48	54	42	77	609
Norwich	46	69	57	81	73	103	62	67	80	94	69	116	917
Great Yarmouth	45	70	52	57	37	50	57	45	49	43	53	95	653
KL & West Norfolk	35	41	23	38	19	55	29	45	42	34	27	81	469
North Norfolk	29	22	28	38	39	43	30	35	42	36	27	54	423
South Norfolk	14	30	34	36	25	52	36	49	35	30	28	55	424
Total	223	314	283	322	269	422	282	321	334	328	278	531	3907

Figure 4: Number of domestic abuse notifications made by Operation Encompass to schools by district in Norfolk for the 2018/19 academic year.

Leeway, Norfolk's largest provider of domestic abuse support²⁴ operate seven refuges across Norfolk, providing survivors of domestic abuse overnight accommodation and support where needed. There are 54 beds across the seven refuges and on average the refuges operated at 96% occupancy between April 2018 and March 2019, housing a total of 169 clients. The refuges house survivors of domestic abuse as well as children who are also involved. Between 1st October 2018 and 7th April 2019, the Norfolk refuges housed 100 children. Clients are considered children if they are less than 18 years of age, however the average age of children in the refuges between October 2018 and April 2019 was 4.8 years.

Professionals working with people at risk of domestic abuse can assess the situation with a Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour (DASH) assessment tool to determine the level of risk that individuals face from domestic abuse²⁵. Police also complete a DASH assessment for every domestic abuse crime they attend. Between March 2017 and April 2018, the police completed 14922 DASH assessments. There are 3 levels of risk: standard; medium; and high. Assessments indicating a high-risk level are automatically referred to a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs).

MARACs aim to reduce the risk of serious harm or homicide in cases of domestic abuse²⁶. MARACs bring together local agencies to discuss high risk victims of domestic abuse in an area to create a risk management plan. In Norfolk, there were a total of 1925 MARACs in 2018 calendar year. 398 (20.7%) of these were repeat

²³ <https://www.operationencompass.org/>

²⁴ <https://www.leewayssupport.org/>

²⁵ <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/domestic-abuse/information-for-professionals/risk-assessment>

²⁶ <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/domestic-abuse/information-for-professionals/multi-agency-risk-assessment-conference-marac>

victims. In Norfolk, 1730 children aged 17 or under were involved in domestic abuse cases that were referred to a MARAC (Table 2).

Area	Number of MARACs	Number of Repeat cases	Number of children aged 17 or under involved in incidents referred to MARACs
Central	1025	201	894
Eastern	466	122	399
Western	434	75	437
Total	1925	398	1730

Table 2: Number of MARACs by area in Norfolk during 2018 calendar year

There is currently limited provision of behaviour change interventions for perpetrators of domestic abuse. However, the strategic partnership board for domestic abuse in Norfolk has a perpetrator subgroup that is exploring this gap in provision, as well as some charities which are beginning to work with perpetrators to help change their behaviours.²⁷

References and information

National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 200 0247

<https://www.leewaysupport.org/>

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk>

<http://www.safelives.org.uk/>

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/domestic-abuse/information-for-professionals/domestic-abuse-change-champions>

<https://www.leewaysupport.org/>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/PH50>

<https://www.operationencompass.org/>

<https://www.spurgeons.org/norwichconnect/>

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/safety/domestic-abuse/information-for-professionals/risk-assessment>

Key contacts

Send us your query or feedback online using our online feedback form at

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²⁷ <https://www.spurgeons.org/norwichconnect/>