



# South West Surrey **Domestic Abuse Service**

*We listen, believe, support.*



## IMPACT REPORT

**1 APRIL 2024 TO 31 MARCH 2025**

# ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE



## Year at a Glance

**2,027** adult referrals



**94%** of survivors supported through casework were female

**94%**

of survivors who engaged with the service, felt that support increased both feelings of empowerment and space for action.

**239**



one to one sessions provided to children and young people

**247**

cases supported through Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)



**40**

women supported through group work

**1,064**



professionals trained

**86%**

of children and young people supported via group support work have improved mental health and wellbeing.

Children's Service feedback forms

**21,927**



Various actions generated (e.g., face-to-face meetings, phone calls, texts, and professional meetings).

- For survivors completing a programme of support, 38% accessed the service for **20 weeks+**.
- \***91%** of survivors have an improved ability to 'deal with problems well' after support through casework.

# ACHIEVEMENT AND DELIVERY OF SERVICE

## Community Outreach Services

These services provide comprehensive support to individuals experiencing domestic abuse across the boroughs of Guildford and Waverley. We offer both emotional and practical assistance, using a trauma-informed, needs-based approach. Survivors are provided with a safe environment to share their experiences and explore options to enhance their safety and well-being. We work to our core principles: we listen, we believe, and we support.

## Referrals and demand

In the period from 2024 to 2025, we received a total of 2,027 referrals, representing a 12% increase compared to the previous year. Of these, 726 were categorised as high-risk, indicating a significant threat of serious harm or death.

Referrals originated from a variety of sources, including:

- Surrey Police
- Social Services (Children and Adults)
- Health professionals
- Other statutory and voluntary organisations
- Educational institutions
- Self-referrals via our website, telephone line, or the Surrey Domestic Abuse helpline

*“Thank you, You saved my life”*

## Collaborative Working

We are an integral member of the Surrey Domestic Abuse Partnership (SDAP). This is a coalition of four charities providing domestic abuse services across Surrey. SDAP is commissioned by Surrey County Council (SCC), the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey (OPCC) and Surrey Police, to provide community outreach services and specialist roles. Our work is further informed and enhanced by DA SEEN (Surrey Expert By Experience Network) comprising individuals with lived experience of domestic abuse who influence policy and good practice within the sector.

## OUTREACH AND SUPPORT SERVICES

We continue to deliver our outreach support through a range of channels: face-to-face, telephone, text and online. Our support includes:

- Risk and Needs Assessments
- Safety Planning
- One-to-One Support
- Emotional and Practical Assistance
- Advocacy
- Group Work
- Court Support (Family and Criminal)
- Referral and Signposting

We deliver recovery programmes (Freedom) by group sessions in the daytime and evening. These are followed by a wellbeing offer in our local area. We run 3 coffee mornings per month easily accessible for clients to drop in and receive both outreach and peer support. We continue to host One Stop Hubs, targeted at more vulnerable communities, enabling them to access multiple professionals under one roof with face-to-face problem solving in a comfortable and supportive environment.

### **MARAC**

In the last year, we advocated for more than 247 clients at MARAC meetings. These fortnightly meetings bring together various agencies to develop personalised, multi-agency safety plans for survivors at the highest risk. Our service represents the voice of the survivor at the MARAC meetings ensuring bespoke and meaningful safety planning for each individual.

*“I have been someone who has been massively helped by your team. I have gone through counselling, a domestic violence course and trauma therapy. Without the support of your team, I cannot guarantee I would be here today.”*

## **SPECIALIST SERVICES**

### **INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVISORS (IDVAs)**

We employ five qualified IDVAs in specialised roles. We actively support our staff in achieving this qualification. Over the past year some staff have added to this qualification taking extra modules as ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Advisor) and YPVA (Young Person Violence Advisor) ensuring our staff base is knowledgeable and confident in all areas of domestic abuse.

### **POLICE ADVOCATE**

Embedded within the Guildford Police Domestic Abuse Team, this role provides advice to officers, supports survivors during Clare's Law disclosures, and enhances the police's understanding of domestic abuse. The Police Advocate also works on particularly complicated high-risk cases alongside Police Investigation teams and will ensure they are the survivors advocate in this process. Our Police Advocate received The Borough Commander's Award last year for her exceptional work on a high-risk case.

### **COURT IDVA**

Our Court IDVA collaborates with the Crown Prosecution Service at Magistrates' Court to assist survivors in obtaining protective orders., reporting back to survivors around sentencing and court orders.



## **STEPS TO CHANGE IDVA**

This role advocates for the survivor as part of the Surrey Steps to Change Hub, a safe space where individuals can benefit from localised, specialist support to increase survivor safety and reduce harm from perpetrators of domestic abuse and stalking.

## **BRIDGE THE GAP WORKER**

This worker supports survivors facing multiple disadvantages such as mental health challenges, domestic abuse and homelessness. This intensive work achieves significantly positive outcomes for individuals most at risk of falling through service gaps. The programme has enabled the survivors to move forward with their lives.

## **LGBTQ+ ADVOCATE**

This team member advocates for inclusivity, providing tailored support and raising awareness of the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ survivors. They have attended university freshers fairs, colleges, and young people's events, promoted the inclusivity of our service in the community and trained staff at the Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust as well as local businesses and other agencies.

## **HOSPITAL INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVISOR (HIDVA)**

The HIDVA from our team is embedded within the Safeguarding Team at the Royal Surrey County Hospital, providing a vital in-house service for patients who disclose domestic abuse. Positioned to respond rapidly, the HIDVA attends wards, the Emergency Department and routine appointments, ensuring that support is offered during the often brief window of opportunity in which patients may feel able to engage.

This immediate availability enables hospital staff across all departments to contact the HIDVA for prompt intervention and tailored signposting for those most at risk. In addition to direct client support, the HIDVA plays a key role in strengthening organisational safeguarding practice by delivering Level 3 safeguarding training and providing bite-size, ward-based sessions for small staff groups, thereby enhancing awareness, confidence and consistency in identifying and responding to domestic abuse.

## **HOUSING AND SANCTUARY SCHEME**

Our Housing specialist manages the Sanctuary Scheme across Guildford and Waverley, enabling survivors to remain safely in their homes through the following services:

- Property security assessments
- Installation of safety measures
- Provision of panic alarms, ring doorbells and safety watches

This enhances the survivor's sense of safety and freedom. Last year we supported 99 clients through this scheme.

## **DISABILITY ADVOCATE**

The Disability Advocate is a Surrey wide role dedicated to raising awareness of the additional barriers faced by survivors living with disabilities. The role provides specialist, trauma-informed support while also delivering training to partner agencies, charities and community organisations to strengthen their understanding of disability-related needs within the context of abuse. Working closely with local forums on mental health, carers' support and a range of disability networks, the Disability Advocate promotes access to our service through targeted signposting and advocacy. Awareness of the specialist support available is further enhanced through attendance at workshops, community events and public forums, enabling effective networking with professionals, partner services and the wider public to ensure that disabled survivors are better recognised, understood and supported.

## LEGAL AND PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE

Our outreach team provides the following services:

- Assistance with protective orders and legal aid applications
- Connections to pro-bono legal support
- Access to interpreters
- Support for clients without recourse to public funds
- Coordination of volunteer court support
- Signposting to McKenzie Friends and legal support services

We actively maintain our signposting directory with knowledge of services offered (for example legal aid) and encourage survivors to research themselves to obtain the best legal representation for their needs.

## DIRECT FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT

Thanks to funding from Waverley and Guildford Borough Councils, as well as Surrey County Council, we were able to provide the following forms of assistance over the past year:

- Food parcels and supermarket vouchers
- Essential household items
- Support for school uniforms, winter clothing, and utility bills

This support has been especially critical given the rising cost of living. Thanks also go to Cook for providing a regular supply of frozen meals which our team distribute to survivors throughout the year.

## COUNSELLING SERVICES

We partner with two counsellors who offer trauma-informed counselling services either via video link or in person. Last year, they supported 39 survivors by providing tailored mental health support for a dedicated period.

## SURVIVOR INVOLVEMENT: DA SEEN

We collaborate closely with the Surrey Expert By Experience Network (DA SEEN) which consists of individuals with lived experience who drive service improvements, contribute to policy consultations, and provide strategic direction both locally and nationally. This independent group is unique in the country and serves as an invaluable asset to our work.

*"I just wish to say how much I truly appreciate the support given to me by [team member]. She has a good mix of empathy and sorting out the wood from the trees. She has given me clarity in my situation and has helped me to be more confident in myself. [She] has pointed me in the right direction to get further help and support."*

## DROP IN COFFEE MORNINGS

These informal support sessions are held once a month in three different locations across Guildford and Waverley. They provide access to outreach workers and volunteers and the opportunity to be in a safe space and get some advice, signposting and peer support or just have a chat.

## ONE STOP HUBS

One-Stop Hubs were held in 2024-2025 in rural areas with significant populations of disadvantaged families facing multiple needs.

These hubs offer access to:

- Outreach Workers
- Housing Officers
- Citizens Advice Advisors
- Surrey Police
- Medical Professionals
- Local Educational Services
- Youth and Children's Workers
- Mental Health Workers
- Family Support Workers

We also distributed food vouchers, community fridge and hygiene bank items, and provided immediate face-to-face support.

*“[the work] show[ed] dedication and commitment to the partnership aims in Surrey in how we respond to and support survivors, and focus accountability onto those that perpetrate abuse and violence”*

## TRAINING AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

We actively raise awareness of domestic abuse within the community by:

- Hosting training sessions for local businesses, schools, and services
- Participating in local events and forums
- Supporting the development of Domestic Abuse Champions in workplaces
- Engaging in statutory and non-statutory meetings to advocate for the needs of survivors and the services they need
- Engaging with local partners and communities to raise understanding and awareness

*“You had already actioned all of the safety advice we would give to a survivor on their way to us, which meant that the survivor was prepared. It was a very quick turn around which we would not have been able to do without your help.”*

*“I just wanted to share that [staff] delivered the session with amazing nuanced expertise and perspective.*

# CHILDREN'S OUTREACH SERVICE

Our Children's Outreach Service delivers one-to-one and group therapeutic support for children and young people affected by domestic abuse. Using a holistic, trauma-informed approach, we work with both the child and the non-abusive parent to help create a safer, more supportive environment for recovery.

The service is designed to educate children about healthy relationships, challenge harmful beliefs around abuse, and provide a safe, non-judgemental space where they can express their feelings and fears. Our interventions focus on building self-esteem, restoring a sense of control, and helping children understand that the abuse they experienced is never their fault.

Through tailored therapeutic interventions, we help children process traumatic experiences and begin the journey toward healing with greater confidence and self-worth.

Through this support, children begin to make sense of their experiences, develop emotional resilience, and feel less isolated. They also learn to identify abusive behaviours, make informed choices, and build practical safety plans in case of future risk.

All support is child-centred and tailored to individual needs, ensuring each young person receives the care and tools they need to move forward with confidence and hope.

BETWEEN APRIL 2024 AND MARCH 2025, WE SUPPORTED **53 CHILDREN.**

*"Overall I must say that I saw a big difference in how the children perceived their emotions and I could see a boost in their self confidence and mood. I'm filled with gratitude for these sessions. I think you've done amazing and the children have come on leaps and bounds. They say such positive words about you and themselves."*

**PARENT**



## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

With continued funding, we have successfully delivered another impactful year of our Youth Engagement Programme. Over this period, we have successfully delivered a range of interventions including targeted workshops to around 750 students, group work, one-to-one support, and community awareness initiatives.

This work is designed to support young people in recognising and understanding abuse within their own intimate relationships and plays a crucial role in the early prevention of domestic abuse among young people. Through our engagement, it has become clear that many young people do not initially identify abusive behaviours as domestic abuse. Increasingly, their understanding of relationships is shaped by online influences and social media, which often normalise or even glamorise unhealthy and controlling behaviours. We aim to offer young people a safe space to talk about their views around these topics and how social media is putting unrealistic expectations on young people and their relationships.

*"I'm really grateful that I was able to be at this workshop! I feel this really helps raise awareness and spread information; I feel more people should listen to this!"*

Our sessions help young people explore how unhealthy relationships can affect their self-esteem, mental health, and overall wellbeing. The programme also equips them with the knowledge and confidence to seek help and stay safe. As a result, participants demonstrate improved engagement and progress in school and college, alongside making more informed and positive choices about their relationships and future.

This year through the youth engagement programme we piloted tailored group sessions with boys aged 14-15 which proved to be an incredibly valuable space for young men to openly discuss their feelings, particularly around relationships and emotional wellbeing. It offered a safe and supportive environment where they could explore how they express emotions, communicate with partners, and navigate the pressures that often come from peers, media, and wider society.

Through guided discussions and activities, the group helped challenge stereotypes and unrealistic expectations about masculinity and relationships, encouraging the boys to reflect on what healthy, respectful, and empathetic behaviour looks like. By normalising open conversations about emotions and self-awareness, the boys group played a key role in promoting emotional intelligence, respect, and positive relationship values among its members.

Feedback after attending healthy relationship workshops:

**96%**

know more about  
healthy  
relationships

**&**

**92%**

know more about  
where they can get  
support

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS PREVENTION AND ENGAGEMENT WORKER (VAWG)

In the final year of funding, the VAWG Prevention and Engagement Worker has played a pivotal role in strengthening the response to violence against women and girls through comprehensive training and awareness-raising initiatives across multiple sectors.

This work has underscored the importance of prevention and multi-agency collaboration, emphasising the need for sustained cross-sector engagement to address VAWG effectively. Their proactive involvement with schools, organisations, and community partners has been central to creating safer environments and offering support to individuals affected by violence and abuse.

Through specialist trauma training with RASASC and WISE, PSHE Champion cohort training with Surrey Healthy Schools and individual school trainings we have reached over 60 schools this last year.

Through the prevention work carried out in schools, educators have reported an increasing awareness of rising misogyny, incel culture, and harmful gender narratives among students. The project has enabled participating services to support children and young people in a strengths-based, trauma-informed, and preventative way.

As a result of this work, teachers and professionals in the community reported feeling better equipped to have constructive discussions with young people and to intervene effectively when harmful narratives emerge. They also have an increased understanding of how to manage disclosures and provide appropriate support. This enhanced awareness among educators and community members is likely to contribute to long-term prevention of VAWG.

*"It was so helpful to get a proper insight into what domestic abuse can look like for victims, whether adult or children. Crucially, it was also excellent to develop an understanding of how to open up conversations with possible victims and what effective support looks like."*