

Taking action to end Violence against Women and Girls in Redbridge

Strategy 2012-15

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Executive summary

Gender based violence is extremely detrimental to women and girls' mental, physical and emotional wellbeing. It is an unacceptable form of behaviour and should not be tolerated in our communities. However every year up to three million women in the UK experience gender based violence; and many more are living with the legacies of abuse experienced in the past. In Redbridge we want to prevent this violence from taking place and support victims when it does occur.

Violence Against Women and Girls is an umbrella term which includes domestic violence, rape and sexual violence, sexual harassment, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, crimes in the name of honour, trafficking and sexual exploitation. In line with the Mayor's strategy, Redbridge also considers street prostitution to fall under this term.

The Redbridge Safer Communities Partnership has developed this strategy in order to agree to a multi-agency approach to tackling violence against women and girls locally. The strategy focuses on the following priorities:

Priority A: Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls from happening and intervening as early as possible when it does

- a. Ensure that statutory and voluntary sector partners have the goal of preventing Violence Against Women and Girls through changing negative attitudes and behaviours embedded in their policies and practices
- b. Increase understanding of violence against women and girls and challenge negative perceptions – amongst staff and the community
- c. Ensure that early intervention systems are in place

Priority B: Providing adequate levels of support where violence does occur

- a. Improve our intelligence regarding violence against women and girls in Redbridge
- b. Improve access to support for all women and girls
- c. Improve existing support
- d. Respond to the needs of children and young people witnessing violence

Priority C: Protect women, girls and families at risk

- a. Continue to co-ordinate risk management interventions, including:
 - i. Redbridge MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Centre)
 - ii. MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements)
 - iii. Redbridge Victims Panel
 - iv. Victim protection options

Priority D: Getting tougher with perpetrators

- a. Continue to develop and strengthen a co-ordinated approach to the detection, arrest, conviction and effective sentencing of perpetrators

The Redbridge Safer Communities Partnership will be responsible for the strategy, and the Business Support Group (BSG) will be made accountable for its delivery and implementation. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Local Safeguarding Adults Board and the Redbridge Health and Wellbeing Board will also have oversight of this strategy. Actions to progress the strategy will be monitored and co-ordinated by the Business Support Group.

1. Introduction

Why do we need a strategy?

Every year up to three million women in the UK experience gender based violence, and many more are living with the legacies of abuse experienced in the past¹. It significantly affects the mental, physical and sexual health of survivors and their families, including children who witness the violence. Violence Against Women and Girls is an umbrella term which includes domestic violence, rape and sexual violence, sexual harassment, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, crimes in the name of honour, trafficking and sexual exploitation. In line with the Mayor's strategy, Redbridge also considers street prostitution to fall under this term.

The Redbridge Safer Communities Partnership is committed to tackling violence against women and girls locally. This will be done through realising the following integrated priorities by working in partnership:

- 1) Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls from happening and intervening as early as possible when it does
- 2) Providing adequate levels of support where violence does occur
- 3) Protecting women and their families from the long-term negative impacts of gender-based violence
- 4) Ensuring that perpetrators are brought to justice

This strategy is in line with the national "Call to End Violence against Women and Girls" strategy² and the Mayor of London's strategy³. It contributes to the Mayor's long-term ambition to change attitudes in order to end tolerance of violence against women, so that women do not have to live with the fear and reality of violence.

Given the hidden nature of violence against women and girls, obtaining an accurate picture of its prevalence is challenging, both in Redbridge and more widely. The Safer Communities Partnership is committed to working hard to improve data collation in order that we can develop a better understanding of gender based violence in Redbridge.

What about men and boys?

Women are 7 to 10 times more likely to be injured by a partner in a relationship than men (*University of Rhode Island Family Violence Research Program, 1995*)

In the UK, every minute the police receive a call from the public for assistance for domestic violence, of which 89% are calls by women being assaulted by men (*Women's Aid, 2009*)

¹ <http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/about-violence-against-women>

² Home Office (2010) 'Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan'

³ Mayor of London (2010) 'The Way Forward: Taking action to end violence against women and girls: Final Strategy 2010-2013'

This strategy primarily focuses on women and girls because of the significant bias towards them as victims of these forms of violence. While men are more likely to experience physical assault than women, they are less likely to experience rape, domestic violence or partner abuse, forced marriage or so-called 'honour' crimes⁴. The objectives of this strategy are however applicable to men and boys affected by gender-based violence, and the respective services will be able to signpost men and boys to relevant services. Additionally, a review will take place towards the end of the strategy in order to consider activity required to address any violence affecting men and boys. The Equalities Impact Assessment, undertaken by the Greater London Authority for London-wide Violence Against Women and Girls strategy, is applicable to this local document. This assessment finds that no service reductions for men and boys are anticipated, and that much of the strategy is relevant to men and boys experiencing gender based violence.

Realising our priorities

Following endorsement of the strategy by relevant partners, actions to progress the strategy will be monitored and co-ordinated by the Business Support Group. The strategy will be ultimately accountable to the Redbridge Safer Communities Partnership. It will also be overseen by the Redbridge Health and Wellbeing Board, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Local Safeguarding Adults Board.

⁴ <http://www.cawn.org/assets/Booklet%20GADN%20web.pdf>

2. Violence against women and girls: definition, prevalence and impact

Did you know?

'Around three million women across the UK experience rape, domestic violence, forced marriage, stalking, sexual exploitation and trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM) or crimes in the name of 'honour' each year'⁵

The direct cost to the economy of domestic violence alone in England and Wales in one year is £6 billion⁶

In the UK, more than one in four women will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, often with years of psychological abuse⁷

In England and Wales, two women a week, on average, are killed by a partner or violent ex-partner⁸

2.1) Definition

Violence against women and girls is a gender-based crime which requires a focused and robust multi-agency approach, underpinned by a single agreed definition. It is for this reason that, in line with the Home Office and Greater London Authority, we are using the United Nations (UN) definition of Violence Against Women and Girls to guide our work⁹:

'Violence directed at a woman because she is a woman or acts of violence which are suffered disproportionately by women'

This violence can include:

'Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation'

2.2) Financial cost

According to research¹⁰, domestic violence (which is taken to include physical force, sexual violence and threats that cause fear, alarm and distress) costs the state around £3.1 billion and employers around £1.3 billion per year. The cost of the human and emotional suffering is estimated to be around £17 billion per year. **The**

⁵ Coy, Lovett & Kelly (2008) 'Realising Rights, Fulfilling obligations: a template for an integrated strategy on violence against women for the UK'

⁶ <http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/about-violence-against-women>

⁷ Home Office (2010) 'Call to end violence against women and girls'

⁸ Home Office (2005)

⁹ <http://www.un.org/rights/dpi1772e.htm>

¹⁰ Walby, S (2004) 'The cost of Domestic Violence' Women & Equality Unit, University of Leeds

total cost is estimated to be around £23 billion. Since this research does not include all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls, the overall cost is likely to be significantly higher again for gender-based violence.

It is estimated¹¹ that **the cost of domestic violence (not including the human and emotional costs) pro rata by population for Redbridge is £29.9 million.** The hidden costs to NHS Redbridge in responding to domestic violence (its immediate and the long term impacts) are estimated to be £9 million a year. This figure includes the costs of visits to GPs and A&E, treatment for injuries, use of ambulances, prescriptions, referral to services for treatment, mental health and rehabilitation.

Research shows¹² that each high risk case of domestic violence discussed at the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) costs **£20K per victim.** It is estimated that MARACs deal with around 10% of all domestic violence reported incidents. These are the most serious and high risk cases and should be seen as the “tip of the iceberg”. It is estimated that the **170 high risk cases of domestic violence discussed at the MARAC in Redbridge for 2010/2011 cost the borough £3.4 million and health services £850,000 million** (this includes visits to GP, A&E, prescriptions and other health services such as sexual and mental health)¹³. It is estimated that MARACs save at least £6,100 of these costs per victim.

2.3) Forms and prevalence of violence against women and girls

Violence Against Women and Girls is a blanket term used to include the forms of violence described below. Many of these forms take place in conjunction with each other. Whilst the existence of Violence Against Women and Girls in Redbridge is undeniable, more reliable data is needed for an accurate picture of its prevalence. As such an improved data collection and monitoring process is a priority in this strategy. The majority of the data below is based on Police reports and therefore it does not show the true picture of prevalence. It is also important to note that since the data comes from different sources at different times, a direct comparison in relation to Redbridge, London and national data cannot always be made.

a) Domestic violence

The government currently defines domestic violence as ‘any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality’¹⁴. Domestic violence severely impacts upon children and young people as witnesses of the abuse. It should be noted that following consultation by the government¹⁵, it is possible that the cross-

¹¹ Trust for London and Henry Smith Charity (2011) ‘The cost of domestic violence’

¹² Caada (2010) ‘Saving lives, saving money: MARACs and high risk domestic abuse’

http://www.caada.org.uk/policy/Saving_lives_saving_money_FINAL_REFERENCED_VERSION.pdf

¹³ Redbridge Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2012)

¹⁴ Home Office (2004)

¹⁵ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/definition-domestic-violence/dv-definition-consultation?view=Binary>

government definition of domestic violence will be widened to include coercive control, 16 to 17 year olds or all those under 18.

| Nationally: | In London/ Redbridge: |
|--|---|
| Accounts for 18% of all violent incidents in the UK ¹⁶ | London has a higher rate of domestic violence than the average in England and Wales |
| Over one million female victims in 2010/11 | Domestic Violence accounts for around 25% of all violence in Redbridge |
| More than one in four women experience domestic violence in their lifetime ¹⁷ | Between April 2011 and April 2012, 1261 domestic violence crimes were reported in Redbridge - a 3.6% increase from the previous year |
| Research suggests that under reporting is very high, with the police unaware of 81% of domestic violence victims ¹⁸ | Between March 2008 and March 2009, 53,069 domestic violence crimes were reported in London – this puts Redbridge below an average of 1,658 reports in London boroughs each year |

b) Sexual violence including rape

Sexual violence and abuse can be defined as ‘any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted and takes place without consent or understanding’¹⁹. It includes but is not limited to rape, which is when someone has penetrative sex with another person against their will. Sexual assault covers any other sort of sexual contact or behaviour that is unwanted.

A survey carried out by YouGov found a high level of tolerance of violence against women amongst young men and the wider population that related to sexual control; indeed 36% of people in a recent Home Office survey believed that a woman should be held wholly or partly responsible for being sexually assaulted or raped if she was drunk²⁰.

| Nationally: | In London/ Redbridge: |
|---|--|
| Every year around 400,000 women are sexually assaulted and 80,000 women are raped ²¹ | Between August 2010 and July 2011, 230 sexual offences were reported in Redbridge, 86 of which were reported rapes. This is a decrease of 8.7% from the previous year. |
| 23% of women and 3% of men | |

¹⁶ Crime in England and Wales 2010/11 (British Crime Survey)

¹⁷ Figures derived from (British Crime Survey (BCS) 2010/11)

¹⁸ Redbridge CSP Strategic Assessment 2011 - 12

¹⁹ <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/sv-definition>

²⁰ <http://www.avaproject.org.uk/our-resources/statistics/society%E2%80%99s-attitudes-to-violence-against-women.aspx>

²¹ BCS 2010/11

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>experience sexual assault as an adult</p> <p>The Police remain unaware of 87% of serious sexual assault victims</p> <p>5% of women and 0.4% of men experience rape</p> <p>Around 21% of girls and 11% of boys experience some form of child sexual abuse²²</p> <p>The rape conviction rate in England and Wales is 6.5%. This is the second lowest conviction rate in Europe after Scotland²³</p> <p>On average only 10% of rapes are reported to the police²⁴</p> | <p>This number is slightly lower than the average London borough which received approximately 104 recorded rape offences between March 2011 and March 2012²⁵</p> <p>Redbridge have higher proportions of knife and domestic violence related rape than the MPS average in London.</p> <p>Redbridge has a higher percentage of BME victims and victims of less than 20 years²⁶</p> <p>Prosecutions for rape increased by 69% from 16 to 27 between 2008/09 and 2010/11. During the same period attrition also rose from 50 to 63%; higher than the London average of 48%.</p> |
|--|--|

c) Trafficking, prostitution and sexual exploitation

Trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation and exploitation of women and children for the purposes of prostitution and domestic servitude. Sexual abuse and rape of trafficked workers is common but often goes unreported²⁷. It is important to remember that this activity takes place in response to demand not just for sexual services but also for work in the domestic, construction and agriculture industries.

Regardless of whether they have been trafficked, women involved in prostitution are violated and sexually exploited. Nearly half of all women involved in prostitution were victims of childhood sexual abuse, and 75% of women in prostitution became involved before they were 18 years²⁸. Research shows that women in prostitution have higher mortality rates, are at greater risk of physical and sexual violence, and may suffer the same mental health consequences as survivors of torture²⁹.

Sexual exploitation ranges from women and girls being given accommodation in exchange for sexual activities through to more formal forms. Often those who are subject to exploitation are reluctant to accept that they are being exploited.

²² Cross Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse 2007

²³ Lovett, J. & Kelly, L. (2009) 'Different systems, similar outcomes? Tracking attrition in reported rape cases in eleven countries' Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit.

²⁴ Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. & Roe, S. (2009) 'Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/8.

²⁵ Metropolitan Police Statistics (March 2012) <http://www.met.police.uk/crimefigures/index.php>

²⁶ Redbridge Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

²⁷ GLA (2010) 'The Way Forward: Taking action to end violence against women and girls'

²⁸ GLA (2010) 'The Way Forward: Taking action to end violence against women and girls'

²⁹ GLA (2010) 'The Way Forward: Taking action to end violence against women and girls'

| Nationally: | In London/ Redbridge: |
|---|---|
| <p>Between 1,000 and 10,000 women and girls are trafficked into the UK each year for sexual exploitation – many are trafficked to or through London³⁰</p> <p>It is estimated that around 80,000 people are involved in prostitution in the UK³¹</p> | <p>It is estimated that there are around 39 brothels based in Redbridge; this is thought to be the seventh highest number of brothels in a London borough³².</p> <p>Redbridge has a visible street scene of prostitution, primarily in the South Ilford area. Although some information has been gathered about the women involved in prostitution it has proved difficult to develop and maintain an accurate picture of their needs.</p> <p>Between January and April 2012 a series of enforcement activities were carried out by Redbridge police and the following took place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 women involved in prostitution were arrested; • 14 kerb crawlers were arrested; • 185 Prostitute Cautions were issued; • A total of 7 known street-prostitutes were given Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) prohibiting them from entering specific areas; • Intervention work with the on-street prostitutes took place. |
| <p>Since the term sexual exploitation covers a range of acts, it is difficult to ascertain an accurate picture of its prevalence, both nationally and locally.</p> | |

d) Female genital mutilation

Also known as “female circumcision” and “female genital cutting”, these terms include all procedures which partially or totally remove the external female genitalia or any other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons³³. It is carried out on young girls between infancy

³⁰ GLA (2010) ‘The Way Forward: Taking action to end violence against women and girls’

³¹ Kinnell, H. (1999) ‘Survey of Sex Work Characteristics and Policies in the UK, Netherlands, Belgium, France, Ireland & Luxembourg. EUROPAP.

³² Eaves (2009) Big Brothel Report

³³ Female Genital Mutilation: A Joint WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Statement. Geneva, World Health Organisation 1997.

and the age of 15. Due to its harmful health consequences, it is illegal across much of the globe. Reasons for this practice generally relate to custom and tradition, religion, social acceptance, family honour, hygiene, and a sense of belonging.

It is particularly difficult to gather data on this form of violence however it is assumed to be an issue in both Redbridge and London more widely.

| Nationally: | In London/ Redbridge: |
|--|---|
| <p>It is estimated that up to 24,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of female genital mutilation³⁴</p> | <p>In 2004 it was estimated that 498 pregnant women in Redbridge had been subjected to FGM. This estimate was based on a study which estimated that 4.6% of pregnancies in outer London are to women with FGM. More reliable data is needed in order to develop appropriate support for women subjected by FGM.³⁵</p> <p>There is no more recent local data regarding FGM in Redbridge. This is a gap that needs to be addressed by all agencies, particularly children’s social care, domestic violence services and health. Furthermore a clear clinical pathway which links to community intervention and preventative work is lacking.</p> <p>BHRUT midwives have been trained to be able to respond effectively to women affected by FGM, and are improving their data capture process regarding pregnant women who have been subjected to FGM.</p> |

e) Honour based violence and forced marriage

Honour based violence can be defined as “Violence committed to protect or defend the ‘honour’ of a family or community. Women, especially young women, are the most common targets, often where they have acted outside community boundaries or perceived acceptable feminine/sexual behaviour. In extreme cases the woman may be killed”³⁶. The violence can include control of sexual activity, domestic abuse, rape, kidnapping, assault and harassment.

Forced marriages differ from arranged marriages because they are conducted without the explicit consent of one or more of the parties. People forced into

³⁴ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/female-genital-mutilation/>

³⁵ Statistical Study to Estimate the Prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation in England and Wales.

³⁶ <http://www.niaendingviolence.org.uk/definition/index.html>

marriage may be misled into going abroad, physically threatened and/or emotionally blackmailed to enter into the marriage³⁷.

| Nationally: | In London/ Redbridge: |
|--|--|
| <p>There are around 12 so-called 'honour' murders a year³⁸</p> <p>Research found that more than 2800 incidents of 'honour' based violence were reported across the UK during 2011³⁹</p> | <p>There is no available information about the prevalence of honour based violence in Redbridge. The London Metropolitan Police recorded 256 incidents linked to 'honour' in the year 2008/09⁴⁰, and in 2010/11 local voluntary sector agencies in Redbridge identified 5 cases of honour based violence⁴¹. This information suggests that at least some degree of honour based violence is taking place in Redbridge.</p> |
| <p>In 2011 there were 1468 instances where the Forced Marriage Unit gave advice or support related to a possible forced marriage. Of these instances, 78% were female and 22% were male⁴²</p> <p>Where the age was known, the oldest victim was 87 and the youngest was 5 years old. 10% of calls involved victims below 15 years</p> | <p>There is currently no recorded data regarding the prevalence of forced marriages in Redbridge. However, in 2010/11 local voluntary sector agencies in Redbridge identified 12 cases of forced marriage which suggests that at least some degree of forced marriage is taking place in Redbridge.</p> |

f) Sexual harassment and stalking

There is no strict definition of the term sexual harassment, but it is commonly understood to describe unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature. It can take place anywhere, including the workplace, schools, streets, public transport and social situations. It includes flashing, obscene and threatening calls, and online harassment.

Stalking can be defined as repeated (i.e. on at least two occasions) harassment causing fear, alarm or distress. There are many forms of harassment ranging from unwanted attention from someone seeking a romantic relationship, to violent predatory behaviour. The most common forms of stalking include telephone calls

³⁷ www.forcedmarriage.net

³⁸ GLA (2010) 'The Way Forward: Taking action to end violence against women and girls'

³⁹ <http://ikwro.org.uk/2011/12/03/nearly-3000-cases-of-honour-violence-every-year-in-the-uk/>

⁴⁰ BBC news Monday 7 December 2009 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8399448.stm>.

⁴¹ Redbridge Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

⁴² Forced Marriage Unit <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/forced-marriage/>

and text messages, following or watching the victim, sending letters or unwanted gifts to the victim and physical and/or sexual assault.

| Nationally: | In London/ Redbridge: |
|---|--|
| <p>Close to 10,000 women are sexually assaulted every week⁴³</p> <p>1 in 2 women experience sexual harassment in the workplace in the UK⁴⁴</p> | <p>There are no statistics regarding the prevalence of sexual harassment in Redbridge</p> |
| <p>It was estimated that 1.2 million women were subjected to stalking during 2003 in the UK⁴⁵</p> <p>18.1% of women aged 16-59 and 9.4% of men aged 16-59 say they have experienced stalking since the age of 16⁴⁶</p> <p>Stalking is one of the most common types of intimate violence, with the 2010/11 British Crime Survey showing that 4.1% of women aged 16-59 and 3.2% of men aged 16-59 having experienced stalking in the last year⁴⁷</p> <p>The most common perpetrator in incidents of stalking is a partner or ex-partner (39%)⁴⁸</p> | <p>Stalking was a feature in 40% of those domestic murders reviewed by the London Metropolitan Police and has also been especially identified as a shared feature of murders where there have not been previously recorded incidents of violence⁴⁹</p> <p>In Greater London, 40,208 stalking incidents and 37,825 crimes took place in 2010⁵⁰</p> <p>10,213 incidences of stalking were recorded between 2011-12 in Redbridge⁵¹</p> |

⁴³ BCS self-completion questionnaire July 2008)

<http://www.saswingchun.com/blog/general/women%E2%80%99s-safety-4-u-course-saturday-22nd-1-30-3-30pm/>

⁴⁴ EOC 2000

⁴⁵ Walby & Allen, 2004 BCS 2002

⁴⁶ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/stalking-consultation/consultation?view=Binary>

⁴⁷ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/stalking-consultation/consultation?view=Binary>

⁴⁸ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/stalking-consultation/consultation?view=Binary>

⁴⁹ <http://www.domesticviolencelondon.nhs.uk/1-what-is-domestic-violence-/26-stalking.html>

⁵⁰ MPA Violence against women and girls report 2010- data from 12 months to November 2010

⁵¹ Redbridge Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

2.4) Impacts of sexual violence on women and girls' psychological and physical wellbeing

Violence Against Women and Girls has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of victims and their children, as well as a financial impact on agencies and services. It is a major public health concern and is a priority safeguarding issue for children and adults.

| Psychological impacts | Physical impacts |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Shame • Guilt • Panic attacks • Anger • Fear • Self-injury • Problems establishing trusting relationships • Low self-esteem • Suicidal ideation • Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) | <p>Sexual violence often results in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brutal physical injury to the vagina and anus • Broken bones • Bruising • Gynaecological problems • Risk of unwanted pregnancy • Transmission of sexually transmitted diseases <p>Women who have undergone FGM often have physical problems ranging from ongoing urinary infections to difficulties during labour and birth</p> |

3. The way forward in Redbridge

3.1) Strategic priorities: the four Ps

Violence against women and girls is a major cause of female death and disability, and therefore not only impacts the victim, but has wider reaching consequences for families, communities, the public purse and society as a whole.

In line with the Home Office vision and the Greater London Authority's strategy, our strategic priorities attempt to address VAWG holistically through prioritising prevention, provision, protection and tackling perpetrators:

- a) Prevention and early intervention:** prevent such violence from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early where possible;
- b) Provision:** provide adequate levels of support where violence does occur;
- c) Protection:** work in partnership to obtain the best long-term outcomes for victims and their families; and
- d) Perpetrators:** take action to ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

Priority A: Prevention and early intervention

We want to change the attitudes and behaviours which contribute to Violence Against Women and Girls in order to prevent it from happening in the first place. The causes of these attitudes and behaviours are complex, and changing them is a long-term process with efforts required at local, national and international levels.

The Redbridge Safer Communities Partnership will work hard to ensure that people are aware of the unacceptability of gender based violence. We want to contribute to the Greater London Authority's commitment to making London a safer place for women and girls.

When violence does happen, we want to make sure that professionals are able to identify victims at the earliest stage possible and provide them with the support they need.

How will we achieve this priority? We will:

a) Ensure that statutory and voluntary sector partners have the goal of preventing Violence Against Women and Girls through changing negative attitudes and behaviours embedded in their policies and practices

b) Increase understanding of violence against women and girls and challenge negative perceptions

- Raise awareness of Violence Against Women and Girls for **front-line staff and other professionals** so that they are able to:
 - a) Influence negative attitudes, behaviours and beliefs regarding women and girls – including a focussed response to the increased sexualisation of women and girls in British society; and
 - b) Identify victims at the earliest stage possible and provide them with the support they need.

For example:

- Training courses e.g. on FGM for BHRUT staff, on safeguarding for Housing staff, for NHS district nurses and health visitors;
 - Domestic Violence conference facilitated by the Local Children's Safeguarding Board for the children and young people's workforce;
 - Launching a Domestic Violence forum for Redbridge;
 - Report being developed which analyses domestic violence incidences which are recorded in A&E departments. This gives a greater understanding of some of the victims who do not report the violence to the police and about the number of repeat victims in Redbridge.
- Raise awareness in the **community** about Violence Against Women and Girls through targeted work in order to overcome cultural barriers and address stereotypes and stigma. This includes:
 - a) Putting children and young people at the heart of prevention in order to ensure that acceptable views and behaviours are set out early on;
 - b) Ensuring that young people feel confident to talk about abusive relationships;
 - c) Working with young men to prevent them from perpetrating;

- d) Educating parents to ensure that they are able to support their children and identify risks.

For example:

- Public events including White Ribbon week and the London Tigers football tournament are being held to raise awareness about domestic violence;
- The Respect Phone line is a confidential helpline for domestic violence perpetrators⁵²;
- The RU Ready? Programme is a methodology that equips young people with the skills and information to delay early sex and supports them to make healthy choices for their romantic and sexual relationships. The R U ready message is delivered through training for those who work directly with young people. There is also an educational resource that has been developed with local young people;
- Aanchal Women's Aid provide training and awareness raising in order to challenge community attitudes and prevent Violence Against Women and Girls;
- The Youth Offending and Targeted Prevention Service (YOTPS) held in house training to support staff in addressing young people who are perpetrators of domestic violence;
- The Youth Offending and Targeted Prevention Service (YOTPS) run group work and one to one sessions that support young people who struggle in managing their anger or emotions, forming relationships and who commit violent offences e.g. 'Managing emotions for young men' and the 'Violent Offenders Programme';
- Hainault Youth Centre have delivered workshops on domestic violence and forced marriage for young women; and
- A Parenting teenagers course is ran by the Early Intervention and Family Support Team, and an accredited Speakeasy training course is ran by the Teenage Pregnancy Team.

c) Ensure that early intervention systems are in place

When violence does occur, it is paramount that services are able to intervene as early as possible in order to prevent the violence from continuing and/or escalating. In Redbridge we will continue to ensure that early intervention systems are in place, and consider where additional systems could be developed. This includes:

- Ensuring that systems are in place to support teenage mothers:
A connection has been identified between violence and teenage pregnancy. Ensuring that teenage mothers are receiving adequate support to be protected from domestic violence is therefore a priority of the borough.
- Ensuring that children in care are safeguarded if they are at risk of exploitation:
An ongoing inquiry by Ms Berelowitz⁵³ has highlighted evidence that children in care are particularly vulnerable to child sexual exploitation, with some residential homes being specifically targeted by abusers.

⁵² <http://www.respect.uk.net/pages/get-help.html>

For example:

- The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) ensures that agencies are sharing information about children and young people effectively;
- Visits are made by Children's Services to a household if a second call is made regarding gender based violence;
- In partnership with BHRUT (Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust), Connexions and the Children's Centres, a clinic is run from Cranbrook Children's Centre to provide young mothers with supportive services in order to avoid the isolation associated with domestic violence;

⁵³ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/warning-over-care-home-sexual-abuse-7905466.html>

Priority B: Provision

A range of services exist in Redbridge to support victims of Violence Against Women and Girls. We are committed to maintaining and improving our provision of these services, to ensure that they are both accessible and meet the needs of victims.

How will we achieve this priority? We will:

a) Improve our intelligence regarding violence against women and girls in Redbridge

As is the case for the rest of the UK, we are lacking in information about all the forms of Violence Against Women and Girls taking place in Redbridge, particularly those forms which are not considered to be domestic violence. This is because it is difficult to collect information on these areas. An improved picture of the prevalence of these forms of violence, however, is crucial to ensuring that we are providing adequate services to all victims. We need to develop a vision regarding how we will improve our intelligence, and every organisation in the partnership will commit to recording the effects of Violence Against Women and Girls more effectively. A major improvement will be the introduction of MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) which will bring together all organisations into one room to ensure the sharing of information regarding victims of gender based violence, and its storage in one accessible location.

b) Improve access to support for all women and girls

Ethnicity, age, disability, sexuality, religion/belief, gender identity and social class all influence a woman's experience of violence. Understanding how these aspects intersect with gender-based violence is crucial to developing appropriate service responses. Statutory and voluntary organisations need to work closely in order to make sure that women's needs in Redbridge are understood and met. Furthermore, these services need to be effectively promoted so that they are easily accessible.

For example:

- Anchaal Women's Aid provide a range of support services for women experiencing domestic violence, which are particularly accessible for Asian women;
- The Safer Communities Partnership team are working with a range of statutory services to ensure that they are accessible for women involved in prostitution, in order that they are able to exit safely from prostitution should they wish to do so. This work is part of the South Ilford Prostitution Strategy;
- Multi-agency training has been provided for statutory and voluntary sector agencies on disability awareness, disability hate crime and the experience of disabled victims of domestic violence;
- The Sunshine project works to empower Muslims against domestic violence in Redbridge.

c) Improve existing support

We are committed to ensuring that our services are as good as they can be. A multi-agency approach is needed to ensure that organisations are working together.

For example, we will:

- Explore the development of borough wide joint commissioning for Violence Against Women and Girls services;
- Develop and implement domestic violence positive outcomes targets for contracts, to support a maintained response to domestic violence and a procedure to improve referrals by all services ;
- Engage with GPs and the Clinical Commissioning Group;
- Continue to ensure holistic and joint-up support from all agencies through the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) for high-risk victims;
- Explore the possibility of expanding the One Stop Shop service;
- Maintain the Domestic Violence maternity service;
- Continue to commission the East London Rape Crisis Service;
- Facilitate the evaluation of Redbridge MARAC by CAADA (Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse).

d) Respond to the needs of children and young people witnessing violence

Witnessing violence against women and girls can have hugely negative consequences on children and young people. Furthermore there is a strong link between child physical abuse and domestic violence, with estimates ranging between 30 to 60% depending on the study⁵⁴. It is therefore vital that adequate services are in place to ensure that these victims are safeguarded and supported. In 2002, nearly three quarters of children subject to a child protection plan lived in households where domestic violence occurs⁵⁵.

⁵⁴ http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/supplementary_procedures/

⁵⁵ Department of Health (2002)

Priority C: Protect women, girls and families at risk

Some victims of Violence Against Women and Girls require on-going support in order to help them to lead independent and safe lives which are void of violence. This requires the co-ordination and input of multiple organisations including adult social services, children's services, housing, the police, probation, community safety and the voluntary sector. In Redbridge we will continue to lead a series of High Risk intervention work which has proven successful in safeguarding women and girls at risk.

How will we achieve this priority? We will:

a) Continue to co-ordinate risk management interventions

High-risk intervention is crucial to the safeguarding of women and girls at the highest risk of violence. In Redbridge a number of intervention processes are managed:

- 1) Identification of women and children at risk
Following the provision of multi-agency training through the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) we are receiving referrals from all services. We will continue to provide this training to ensure that women and children at risk are both identified and referred appropriately.
- 2) Management of identified women and children at risk
 - a. Risk panels
 - i. The Redbridge Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) (high risk) combines up-to-date information sharing between organisations with an assessment of a victim's needs and links those directly to the provision of appropriate services for all those involved in the case – victim, children and perpetrator. Redbridge MARAC will continue to provide effective delivery, build upon its success in reducing repeat victims, and maintain the support from all statutory organisations involved;
 - ii. The MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) (high risk) co-ordinates the management of high risk offenders including those who have committed gender based violence. It aims to put procedures in place which ensure public safety;
 - iii. The Redbridge Victims Panel (RVP) (medium risk) identifies victims of hate crime and anti social behaviour and co-ordinates a multi-agency response to ensure that victims are supported adequately and not 'missed' by agencies. Women and girls at medium risk of gender based violence may be supported through the Victims Panel.

b) Victim protection options

In Redbridge systems are in place to ensure that multi-agency safety plans are implemented for women at risk of gender based violence. The following agencies contribute to these plans:

- Housing;
- Probation;
- The Police;
- Children and adults safeguarding;

- NHS;
- Specialist support agencies; and
- Migration advice and support.

Priority D: Getting tougher with perpetrators

A key element of this strategy involves ensuring that perpetrators of Violence Against Women and Girls are held accountable according to the law. Research has found that the majority of perpetrators of this violence never come to the attention of the criminal justice system. More work is needed to ensure that perpetrators are identified, and when they are, that interventions are available.

Community based interventions are important in relation to preventing and changing abusive behaviour and some good work is being carried out by the voluntary sector in relation to this. Unfortunately due to resource constraints this form of intervention is not a priority for this strategy; resources will however be sought in order to expand on this work in future.

How will we achieve this priority? We will:

a) Continue to develop and strengthen a co-ordinated approach to the detection, arrest, conviction and effective sentencing of perpetrators

For example:

- The Borough criminal justice group;
- Positive arrest policing and sanction detection rates;
- The Safer Communities Partnership are seeking to reduce on street prostitution by focussing on those profiting from the sexual exploitation of women and girls and those purchasing on-street sex;
- The IOM (Integrated Offender Management) process ensures the robust management of identified offenders;
- The MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) ensures that high risk perpetrators are dealt with effectively by the Police and Probation;
- The Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) ensure that perpetrators are dealt with effectively and that their partners are offered support through MARAC;
- The IDAPA programme is available for those who receive appropriate sentences;
- The Council Tenancy Agreement means that if a tenant perpetrates they can be at risk of eviction.

4. Monitoring progress

4.1) Governance

How can we make the strategy work?

The Redbridge Safer Communities Partnership will be responsible for the strategy, and the Business Support Group (BSG) will be made accountable for its delivery and implementation. The Redbridge Local Safeguarding Children Board, Local Safeguarding Adults Board and Health and Wellbeing Board will also have oversight of this strategy.

Moving towards an integrated strategy

This strategy falls under the remit of the Local Authority, Metropolitan Police, NHS, Criminal Justice system, Education and third sector. All Partner agencies have a role to play in the delivery of this integrated strategy.

