



domestic
abuse
commissioner

Domestic Abuse Commissioner submission to the HM Treasury Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2024

Role of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner

The Domestic Abuse Act establishes in law the Office of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for the purpose of providing public leadership on domestic abuse issues and to play a key role in overseeing and monitoring the provision of domestic abuse services in England and Wales. The role of the Commissioner is to encourage good practice in preventing domestic abuse and improve the protection and provision of support to people affected by domestic abuse, by holding agencies and Government to account.

Intersectionality

Domestic abuse does not exist in a single form. It is unique to each person's situation and history. Different forms of domestic abuse, including controlling and coercive behaviours, coexist in most contexts and it is important to understand how power and control manifest in these situations. 'Race'/ethnicity, age, gender, religion, sexuality, socio economic status, immigration status, disability status and other ways in which victims/survivors identify plays a crucial role in their experience of abuse, its impact and their ability to access pathways of support and recovery. Specialist pathways of support as well as any attempt to understand victim/survivor needs should be responsive to the multiple contexts of oppression and vulnerabilities that they experience.

Summary

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner fully supports this Government's overarching commitment to halving VAWG in ten years. This is, rightly, a hugely ambitious commitment, which must be matched by equally ambitious funding and investment. The Government's first Spending Review provides a critical opportunity to demonstrate the strength of its commitment and set the tone for its coming term.

To halve VAWG, we must be clear on the fundamental requirements of multi-agency working and a coordinated community response to domestic abuse. This must then be rigorously monitored to move away from crisis response towards early intervention – the only way to truly prevent harm.

The cost of not doing so is too high.

National Funding Proposals	2025/26 Cost
Community-based domestic abuse support services	£303.8m
Safe accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse	£240.5m

<i>Of which (community-based support and safe accommodation): Ring-fenced funding for specialist 'by and for' support for black and minoritised, deaf and disabled, and LGBT+ survivors</i>	£187.8m
Dedicated funding for survivors with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) status	£57m
Behaviour change and intervention programmes for those who perpetrate domestic abuse	£32.8m
Increased investment into DAPO pilots	£10m
Full review of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences	£250,000
Community-based domestic abuse support services for children (<i>initial reinvestment</i>)	£11m
Development of principles of evaluation of interventions that support children affected by domestic abuse	£300,000
Specialist support to help children bereaved by domestic homicide to include long term input, support for care givers and access to peer support.	£100,000
Develop robust and universal training for social workers on domestic abuse and controlling and coercive behaviour	£100,000
Pilot enhanced safeguarding response in schools through recruiting a dedicated full-time safeguarding lead in every school	£5m
Continuation of the Pathfinder Family Courts roll-out	£20m
Non-means tested legal aid for survivors of domestic abuse and private law family proceedings (<i>median estimation</i>)	£114m
Expanded roll-out of a whole health approach to preventing and tackling domestic abuse	£2.65m
Continuation of the Institute for Addressing Strangulation	£452,500
Continuation of the Flexible Fund	£2m
Research project into domestic homicides carried out during episodes of psychosis	£70,000
Total cost of domestic abuse interventions	£800m¹

DAC Office Funding Proposals	Cost
Deliver DA Commissioner's current work programme	£1.7m
National roll-out of the Domestic Abuse Related Deaths Oversight Mechanism	£540,000
Family Court Reporting and Reviewing Mechanism	£200,000
Increased Victim Voice Engagement	£240,000
Enhanced Local Engagement and Accountability	£350,000
Enhanced national engagement and accountability	£780,000

¹ Initially submitted in error as £987.8m, due to double counting of ringfenced 'by and for' funding

Children & Young People’s Festival of Practice	£350,000
Total cost of DA Commissioner’s proposals to enhance delivery	£4m

Impact and cost

The impact and costs of domestic abuse to individuals and to society is vast – affecting an estimated 2.1 million adults and costs society £85 billion in a single year. One in five children also experience domestic abuse, and the Domestic Abuse Act (DAA) 2021 took the landmark step of recognising these children as victims in their own right.

In its 2019 report, *The economic and social costs of domestic abuse*², the Home Office estimated that domestic abuse costs society approximately £66 billion in a single year, equating to around £85 billion in July 2024 prices.³ Work is underway at the Home Office to update these figures, including reflecting the costs associated with child victims which are not included in the original figures. It is fair to assume these additional costs will be significant. Recognising the challenges of a tight fiscal environment, **it is imperative to remember that investment in reducing domestic abuse represents an investment to save.**

Criminal justice

Domestic homicides account for at least one in five homicides each year. Domestic abuse makes up almost 1 in 6 crimes recorded by the police, and a third of violence against the person crimes. Yet we know that currently only one in five victims of domestic abuse report to the police, and just 5% of police-recorded domestic abuse results in a conviction. As important work progresses to raise awareness of domestic abuse, build faith in the criminal justice system, and improve criminal justice outcomes for victims who do report – including through the Government’s manifesto commitment to relentless pursuit of perpetrators – reports, charges and convictions will, and should, only increase.

Analysis undertaken by my Office estimates that, if the number of victims reporting to the police increased from one in five to one in three, even with the current low levels of conviction (5% of police recorded domestic abuse), we could see up to 10,000 additional convictions for domestic abuse every year. If returning to the 2016 high of 18% of police-recorded domestic abuse resulting in a conviction, this would be considerably higher. **Our criminal justice system must be prepared, and funded, to respond.**

Domestic abuse service provision and funding

The independent specialist domestic abuse sector is the backbone of support for victims and survivors across England and Wales. Its expertise, experience and dedication is unrivalled and has driven forward so much of the life-saving change we have seen over recent decades. Its services provide vital support to victims and survivors of domestic abuse, including counselling, refuge, safety planning and advocacy. Organisations made herculean efforts in the most challenging of circumstances to provide a lifeline for survivors when their services were needed

² [The economic and social costs of domestic abuse - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

³ Using the [Bank of England inflation calculator](#)

more than ever during the pandemic⁴. This includes national domestic abuse helplines, which experienced soaring demand in this period⁵. Statutory services such as social care and policing rely on these specialist services to function effectively and prevent serious further harm, as part of a coordinated multi-agency response to domestic abuse. When specialist domestic abuse service and statutory services work together in effective partnership, victims and survivors feel better supported and better understood⁶.

Despite this, the Commissioner's 2022 mapping of specialist domestic abuse services, *A Patchwork of Provision*⁷, identified a postcode lottery of support for victims and services, with services struggling to meet need. This was particularly acute for those services led 'by and for' minoritised communities. Today, the sector remains under-funded and undervalued, with funding piecemeal and services struggling to retain expert staff⁸. The Local Authorities financial crisis⁹ now further threatens the specialist domestic abuse sector. The rise of Section 114 notices, whereupon Local Authorities strip funding of anything without a statutory duty, risks massive cuts to community-based services, which are essential to support victims and survivors and prevent escalation of harm. Many services currently face a funding cliff-edge post March 2025, and need urgent clarity on and confirmation of future funding in order to continue their work.

While provision of safe accommodation is rightly a statutory duty, to solely fund this represents a false economy and fails to cover the vast majority of victims and survivors who access support in the community. Community-based support for victims and survivors, alongside perpetrator interventions, prevent future harm and the significant costs incurred by that harm. **Investment in long-term, sustainable funding, which doesn't leave services and survivors at the mercy of crisis after crisis, represents real value for money and a saving on future costs.**

'By and For' services

The Commissioner's mapping report also found that 67% of Black and minoritized ethnic (BME) survivors, 68% of LGBT+ survivors, 55% of disabled survivors, and 16 of 62 Deaf respondents wanted to access specialist support delivered 'by and for' by their communities – although many were unable to do so. Victims and survivors from marginalised communities want to receive this support because specialist 'by and for' organisations are better able to understand the context and complexity of abuse they face and build the trust critical to effectively assess risk and provide the right support. These organisations are also able to understand the intersecting layers of discrimination faced by victims and survivors from marginalised communities. This is starkly reflected in the outcomes¹⁰ of these survivors – of the Black and marginalised survivors who accessed 'by and for' services, 78% felt safer and 76% felt more in control of their lives compared to 48% and 55% of those who had accessed another kind of service. Just 30% of Black and marginalised survivors who had not accessed any support felt safer than they had previously.

⁴ [Domestic abuse and Covid-19: A year into the pandemic \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/news-and-analysis/2020/12/16/domestic-abuse-and-covid-19-a-year-into-the-pandemic)

⁵ [A year of lockdown: Refuge releases new figures showing dramatic increase in activity](https://www.refuge.org.uk/news/a-year-of-lockdown-refuge-releases-new-figures-showing-dramatic-increase-in-activity)

⁶ [In Search of Excellence — Standing Together](https://www.refuge.org.uk/news/in-search-of-excellence-standing-together)

⁷ ['A Patchwork of Provision' - Domestic Abuse Commissioner](https://www.refuge.org.uk/news/a-patchwork-of-provision-domestic-abuse-commissioner)

⁸ [Recruitment-Retention-in-the-VAWG-Sector-Recommendations-Final-2024-1.pdf \(womensaid.org.uk\)](https://www.refuge.org.uk/news/recruitment-retention-in-the-VAWG-sector-recommendations-final-2024-1.pdf)

⁹ [Letter to Communities Secretary on local authority financial crisis - Domestic Abuse Commissioner](https://www.refuge.org.uk/news/letter-to-communities-secretary-on-local-authority-financial-crisis-domestic-abuse-commissioner)

¹⁰ ['A Patchwork of Provision' - Domestic Abuse Commissioner](https://www.refuge.org.uk/news/a-patchwork-of-provision-domestic-abuse-commissioner)

However, capacity within these services is a significant issue, with 'by and for' services often disadvantaged in their funding arrangements. The Commissioner's mapping report found these services were six times less likely to receive statutory funding than other specialist domestic abuse/VAWG organisations, and nearly twice as likely to have had to cease services due to lack of funding. **A dedicated, ring-fenced 'by and for' funding pot would ensure there is provision of specialist services for everyone who wants it, enhancing provision and ensuring the needs of all victims and survivors are met.** It would increase the capacity of 'by and for' services to support marginalised communities and help to abolish the postcode lottery by commissioning 'by and for' organisations at a national level. It would help develop a sustainable market of 'by and for' organisations and build their capacity to improve the quality and quantity of their provision.

TEIDA Fund

The previous government announced in the 2023 Autumn Statement¹¹ £10 million of funding from 2024 to 2025 for the Tackling Economic Impacts of Domestic Abuse (TEIDA) fund for projects that aim to understand the impacts of domestic abuse on the labour market, support victims of domestic abuse in the workplace or prevent victims experiencing further abuse. The Commissioner welcomed this funding, noting that victims and survivors often need long term support to recover from abuse and find the stability they need to reach their potential in the workplace and beyond. Her 2022 survey of survivors of domestic abuse found that a third wanted help to stay in work or get a new job¹².

The 2024 General Election announcement resulted in Government being unable to move forward with decisions as to bids to the Fund. However, it is critical that this funding commitment is honoured, and work is undertaken as soon as possible with the specialist domestic abuse sector to understand the most sensible way for this money to be spent in the remaining time available. **TEIDA funding will not only be important to the Government's missions to kickstart economic growth and break down barriers to opportunities, but will also crucially support the Government to deliver its commitment to halve VAWG in a decade.**

DAC Office: forthcoming work

There are a number of live projects and workstreams across the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office which will culminate in reports and recommendations to Government and other bodies. The Commissioner anticipates these will be important for both funding and policy decision-making relating to domestic abuse over the Government's term. Whilst it is too early to include full findings and analysis in this submission, ongoing work has been used to inform initial funding proposals for the 2024/25 funding cycle in the sections below, with fuller details to follow for the Spring 2025 Comprehensive Spending Review.

Key DAC Office work to be aware of:

1. Criminal justice policy report – December 2024:

¹¹ [Autumn Statement 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

¹² ['A Patchwork of Provision' - Domestic Abuse Commissioner](#)

The Criminal Justice System is critical, and operates at the sharpest end of our response to domestic abuse. While the number of victims coming forward to the police has increased, charge and conviction rates have dropped significantly since 2016, and remain unacceptably low. Vital protections such as Clare's Law (DVDS) and domestic abuse protection orders are applied and policed inconsistently and ineffectively. Revelations of horrendous abuse perpetrated by serving police officers have left victim trust in the police at an all-time low, and poor data curtails efforts to hold police forces to account in their response to domestic abuse.

The Commissioner's Office is therefore currently developing a criminal justice policy report, to explore these issues and set out how to transform the criminal justice response to domestic abuse. Development of the report to date has included direct engagement with those with lived experience of domestic abuse, as well as those working in relevant statutory agencies and specialist domestic abuse services, a call for evidence, and a police survey on force-level responses to police perpetrated domestic abuse. A preliminary briefing paper with initial findings will be published in the autumn, before the full report is laid before Parliament in December 2024.

2. Children and young people policy and service mapping report – January 2025:

Support for children and young people remains one of the Commissioner's top priorities. Her Office is currently embarking on an ambitious research, policy and practice report that will map provision of services, understand best practice, offer policy solutions, and reflect the voices of children themselves. Front-line workers have been extensively engaged to ensure recommendations are practicable and based in the reality of operational work.

Despite the Domestic Abuse Act's landmark step forward of recognising children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right, to date, little has been done to support or guide agencies locally to address a chronic lack of awareness or clarity as to what this means in practice. Children's legal status as victims has brought little tangible change.

It has been well established in research that experiencing domestic abuse can have many developmental, behavioural and emotional impacts on children, starting from as early as conception and continuing through to adulthood in some cases. Across all stages of child development, the impacts can include post-traumatic stress symptoms, children themselves exhibiting abusive behaviour, typically towards siblings or their mother and increased levels of fear, inhibition, anxiety and depression compared to their peers. Meltzer et al found that children who had experienced domestic abuse had almost three times the likelihood of having conduct disorders, such as repeated anti-social behaviour, compared to peers.¹³ Childhood exposure is serious, consequential and not only comes at a cost to the wellbeing and outcomes of children, but at a huge cost to society.

Whilst the full report will be published in January 2025, work to date highlights the alarming prevalence of domestic abuse cases in the social care system. Children's Social Care assessments record domestic abuse in around 50% of cases, which is the most common adverse background factor listed for children deemed in need of support. This figure is widely believed to be underestimated. Despite this, social workers reported, during roundtables held by the Commissioner's Office, only receiving a day of training on domestic abuse, and difficulty spotting the signs of controlling and coercive behaviour. Similarly, teachers and Designated Safeguarding

¹³ Meltzer, H., Doos, L., Vostanis, P., Ford, T. and Goodman, R. (2009) 'The mental health of children who witness domestic violence', *Child & Family Social Work*, vol. 14(4), pp. 491–501.

Leads also reported a lack of training and confidence in effectively handling disclosures and conversations around domestic abuse.

This is compounded by a lack of specialist support services for children who have experienced domestic abuse, with the Commissioner's previous mapping finding that just 29% of victims who wanted support for their child were able to access it¹⁴. As a result of this fractured system, children are falling through the cracks and not receiving the statutory and non-statutory support which they deserve.

3. Family Court Review and Reporting Mechanism (FCRRM) pilot report – Spring 2025

As requested in the Ministry of Justice 2020 Harm panel report¹⁵, the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's office has undertaken a pilot study – Family Court Review and Reporting Mechanism (FCRRM). In Spring 2025 the Commissioner will be publishing findings from this research. The project has two main aims. The first, to test the methodology as recommended in the Harm panel report to determine an ongoing mechanism for effective oversight of the Family Court which can be rolled out across England and Wales. The second, better understand how domestic abuse, in all its forms, is identified and responded to in private family law proceedings. When published, the research report will shine a light on the information key agencies such as HMCTS and CAFCASS are currently collecting (and considering) in relation to domestic abuse, the views of the Judiciary, as well as hearing the voices of families who have been through Family Court proceedings.

4. Domestic Abuse Related Deaths Oversight Mechanism (DARDOM) pilot report – June 2025

In order to halve VAWG in a decade, we must learn the lessons from where systems have failed with the most devastating of consequences. Following a domestic homicide or suicide, Domestic Abuse Related Death Reports are conducted, and recommendations and action plans developed with the aim of preventing similar tragedies from ever happening again. However, too often, agencies are not held to account in implementation – and continuation – of the recommendations made to them. Therefore, the Commissioner established an independent Oversight mechanism, and has piloted this approach since early 2023.

The Commissioner will next year publish her first report from the pilot in 20 local areas. This report will provide analysis of common themes in DARDR recommendations and action plans, and, crucially, report on progress in implementation of these recommendations. The report will examine how recommendations are brought in at a local and national level, including identifying common barriers to effective implementation. The report will also act as an opportunity for wider national learning from these critical reviews, and set out options for how the mechanism could be rolled out nationally. Every death due to domestic abuse is preventable, and it is vital that lessons are learned from every tragedy so that we can stop failing victims and prevent future deaths.

¹⁴ ['A Patchwork of Provision' - Domestic Abuse Commissioner](#)

¹⁵ [Assessing Risk of Harm to Children and Parents in Private Law Children Cases \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Funding Proposals: National

Intervention	Projected Costs	Impact/Comments
Community-based domestic abuse support services	£303.8m per annum, of which £105.5m¹⁶ to be ringfenced for 'by and for' services.	Services such as counselling, therapeutic support, and advocacy are vital for survivors to help them find safety and cope and recover from abuse. Greater investment is critical to intervene earlier and support survivors before they reach crisis point and are forced to flee their homes and seek refuge. These services can also be essential in preventing domestic abuse and can enable a survivor to remain in their home, avoiding potential disruption to their children's schooling or their work. Women's Aid Federation England's research shows that with the adequate provision of specialist support services, the domestic abuse sector could save the public purse as much as £23 billion a year. Every pound invested in domestic abuse support services will see a saving to the Exchequer of at least £9.
Cost-benefit	<p><i>The provision of community-based services will have paid for itself if it is able to prevent just 3,328¹⁷ It is expected that comprehensive provision of support services in the community would reduce violence through providing protection and support to victims and survivors and intervening earlier before harm is done.</i></p> <p><i>For domestic abuse overall (not just violence with injury), full provision of community-based services could prevent 2607 people from experiencing domestic abuse, or 0.3% of the estimated 2.1m victims annually.¹⁹</i></p>	

¹⁶ This is based on Women's Aid Federation England's assessment that £516m is needed by the specialist domestic abuse sector in England for specialist 'by and for' services. This is calculated using their estimate that [£427m is needed](#) to support specialist domestic abuse services and the funds recommended by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office for the 'by and for' sector. The Barnett formula was then applied to this.

¹⁷ Based on 2019 Home Office analysis on the economic and social costs of domestic abuse, one incident of violence with injury cost £1,000.

¹⁸ ONS estimate that 491,000 individuals experienced violent domestic abuse ('Domestic abuse – force'), so a reduction of 2607 represents 0.5% of the total.

¹⁹ Based on [Home Office analysis](#) estimating a unit cost of £42,221 per individual

	<p><i>Illustratively, if comprehensive provision of support is able to reduce victimisation by just 2% (42,000 victims), society would see net economic benefits of £1,469,439,140²⁰ Considering just the costs incurred by public services and in lost economic output (lost output, health services, police costs, criminal legal, civil legal and other) net economic benefit would be £202,089,140. ²¹ Given the Government's stated aim to reduce Violence Against Women and Girls by half in a decade, a very conservative reduction of 2% already demonstrates considerable net economic and societal benefits, as well as potential financial savings to the public purse.</i></p> <p><i>Equally, comprehensive provision of community-based domestic abuse support services and earlier intervention is likely to reduce the need for refuge provision, currently estimated at £31,059 per place per year.²²</i></p>		
<p>Safe accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse (Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021)</p>	<p>£240.5m per annum, of which £82.3m should be ringfenced for 'by and for' services</p>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Act placed accommodation-based services on a statutory footing and requires Tier 1 Local Authorities to provide safe accommodation for victims and survivors who need it. While a significant step forward, implementation varies and progress must be maintained and built upon. There remains a lack of local transparency about how funds are spent, and concerns raised by the domestic abuse sector about any removal of the current Section 31 grant arrangements which nominally protect this funding locally. The existing £125m Part 4 funding should be restricted to specialist women's refuges and 'by and for' services and delivering an additional £64m to make up the shortfall.</p>	<p>Nowhere-to-Turn-2024-Report-PDF.pdf (womensaid.org.uk)</p> <p>Funding safer futures - Women's Aid (womensaid.org.uk)</p>
<p>Cost-benefit</p>	<p><i>Safe accommodation is lifesaving for victims and survivors forced to flee their homes in order to find safety.</i></p> <p><i>The provision of safe accommodation would need to prevent 2634 incidences of violence with injury to pay for itself. ²³</i></p>		
<p>Ring-fenced funding for specialist 'by and for' support for black</p>	<p>£187.8m per annum (<i>included within above calculations</i>)</p>	<p>The support delivered through 'by and for' services is more effective in meeting the specific and intersecting needs of survivors. The DAC mapping report found a stark difference in the outcomes of marginalised survivors</p>	<p>Wider briefing paper to be published on DAC website (Briefings - Domestic Abuse Commissioner)</p>

²⁰ Based on a unit cost of £42,221 per individual, and reduction of 2% from 2.1m victims (42,000 victims x £42,221) which comes to £1,773,282,000. Minus the cost of comprehensive community-based support (303.8m pa), this comes to £1,469,439,140 net benefit.

²¹ONS Crime Survey of England and Wales estimates 2.1m people experience domestic abuse each year. If this was reduced by 2%, 42,000 fewer individuals would experience domestic abuse. The Home Office published research in 2019 showing that domestic abuse cost £34,015 per individual, which has been adjusted for inflation to £42,221 in July 2024 prices. Therefore, a 2% reduction in domestic abuse would be 42,000 x £42,221, which comes to £1,773,282,000. Removing the £303.8m estimated to be needed for community based services, this would represent a net societal and economic benefit of £1,469,439,140. If only incorporating the direct costs to the public purse, (in lost economic output, health costs, victim services, police costs, criminal legal costs, civil legal costs and 'other') the unit cost of domestic abuse is £12,046. A 2% reduction in domestic abuse would represent £505,932,000 in economic costs to the public purse alone, and so incorporating costs of community based services, a net economic benefit of £202,089,140.

²² [4 -wha-refuge-services.pdf \(dahalliance.org.uk\)](#)

²³ Based on 2019 Home Office 'Economic and Societal Cost of Domestic Abuse', which found that 'Violence with Injury' cost £73,560. Adjusted for inflation, this is £91,306 in 2024 prices.

<p>and minoritised, deaf and disabled, and LGBT+ survivors</p>	<p>Breakdown:</p> <p>BME - £95m</p> <p>LGBT+ - £59.1m</p> <p>Disabled inc. deaf - £33.7m</p>	<p>depending on whether they had accessed a 'by and for' service or not, with those who had demonstrating considerably better outcomes. These organisations can provide additional support such as welfare advice, language interpreters, specialist counselling, and will often work with victims and survivors for much longer periods of time.</p>	<p>'A Patchwork of Provision' - Domestic Abuse Commissioner</p>
<p>Cost-benefit</p>	<p><i>Survivors from marginalised and minoritised communities face additional barriers to accessing support, and often require a higher degree of intersectional advocacy and complex case-working in order to meet their needs. The specialist 'by and for' domestic abuse sector is uniquely placed to provide for this, and respond to the complexity of marginalised survivors' experiences.</i></p> <p><i>Using the same logic as set out above, the comprehensive provision of specialist 'by and for' support would need to prevent just 4,448 individuals from experiencing domestic abuse in order to pay for itself. This represents 0.6% of the total estimated victims and survivors from minoritised communities.²⁴</i></p> <p><i>Illustratively, if comprehensive provision is able to reduce domestic abuse in minoritised communities by just 2%, net societal and economic benefits would total £426,059,35125</i></p>		
<p>Dedicated funding for survivors with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) status</p>	<p>£57m</p>	<p>Migrant victims and survivors of domestic abuse face some of the most significant barriers to accessing support simply because of their immigration status.</p> <p>Enabling all victims and survivors of domestic abuse – including migrants – enables them to access life-saving refuge support, as well as support that will enable them to recover from the abuse and reach their full potential.</p>	<p>Safety-before-status-The-Solutions.pdf (domesticabusecommissioner.uk)</p> <p>Safety-Before-Status-Report-2021.pdf (domesticabusecommissioner.uk)</p> <p>Evaluating the Support for Migrant Victims (SMV) Pilot - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
<p>Cost-benefit</p>	<p><i>Research from London School of Economics and Oxford Migration Observatory estimates that there are approximately 32,000 victims and survivors in England and Wales who would choose to come forward for support but are prevented from doing so as a result of their NRPF</i></p>		

²⁴ Estimates of the number of victims and survivors from marginalised communities are drawn from analysis of ONS Crime Survey data and ONS demographic data. This is likely to be a considerable underestimation of the costs that would be saved if victimisation is reduced - as the average 'unit cost' of domestic abuse is likely to be higher for victims from marginalised communities who often face complex barriers to support and recovery. Full explanation of the methodology can be found in the 'By and for' annex.

²⁵ Estimated number of victims and survivors of domestic abuse from BME, LGBT, disabled or Deaf communities is 726,945 (see Annexed By and For methodology). Two percent of this total represents 14,539 survivors. The unit cost of domestic abuse (Home Office, 2019) is £42,221, so gross economic and society benefit of £613,851,119. Removing the £187.8m cost of provision brings net economic and societal benefits of £426,059,351.

	<p><i>status. Of these, about 7,700 might require refuge or other accommodation. Investing £57 million a year to support these victims – by extending the migrant victims domestic abuse concession (formerly the destitution domestic violence concession) and the domestic violence indefinite leave to remain provisions- would generate £2.3bn social gains over 10 years.²⁶</i></p>		
<p>Behaviour change and intervention programmes for those who perpetrate domestic abuse</p>	<p>£32.8m for 25/26</p> <p>Breakdown:</p> <p>£27.5m rollover of Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Intervention Fund²⁷</p> <p>£5.3m per annum (£15.8m over 3 years) to roll out high harm, high risk perpetrator management (e.g. MATAC and Drive) to the 1/3 of PCC areas currently without provision</p>	<p>Specialist responses to perpetrators of DA are alarmingly piecemeal, with some areas offering no or scant provision. The DAC mapping exercise in 2022 found that only 7% of survivors who wanted their perpetrator to receive support to change their behaviour were able to get it. Hardly any services have provision tailored to meet the needs of those from marginalised or minoritised groups and there is a particular gap in meeting the needs of children and young people who cause harm. Funding is precarious and insufficient, and commissioning practice is variable, including common use of short-term contracts.</p> <p>Rollover of existing Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Intervention funding for 2025/26 will allow for stability of existing services, avoiding the instability of a March 2025 funding cliff-edge. Additionally, expansion of high-risk, high-harm programmes to the 1 in 3 PCC areas currently without provision would ensure a minimum level of consistency of provision at the highest end of the risk/harm spectrum.</p> <p><u>This would need to be built on comprehensively in the following multi-year Spending Review</u>, using an in-depth assessment of the full need of investment required across the risk/harm spectrum and all perpetrator cohorts²⁸. This investment must be transformative, in order to help achieve the Government’s ambition of halving VAWG in a decade.</p>	<p>A Call for Further Action: Strengthen The Response to Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse – The Drive Partnership</p> <p>Stopping Domestic Abuse: The Respect Manifesto</p> <p>‘A Patchwork of Provision’ – Domestic Abuse Commissioner</p> <p>Evaluation-of-the-Drive-Project-Executive-Summary.pdf (drivepartnership.org.uk)</p>
<p>Cost-benefit</p>	<p><i>The response to perpetrators – and changing their behaviour to reduce risk and the harm they pose – is crucial in order to halve VAWG in a decade.</i></p> <p><i>There is good evidence on the ability of quality-assured perpetrator interventions to change or disrupt behaviour and prevent further abuse. The evaluation of the Drive programme found that of those service users who accessed the intervention, physical abuse reduced by 82%,</i></p>		

²⁶ [Safety-before-status-The-Solutions.pdf \(domesticabusecommissioner.uk\)](#)

²⁷ £75m 2022–25 (£25m p.a.), adjusted for inflation to £27.5m p.a.

²⁸ Respect estimates this could require spending at levels of up to £437m per annum

	<p>sexual abuse by 88%, harassment and stalking by 75%, and jealous and controlling behaviour by 73%. This represents remarkable value for money given that the cost per place at the time of the analysis was £2,400.²⁹</p> <p>If the provision of perpetrator interventions is able to prevent 777 victims from experiencing abuse, it will be cost-neutral. The number of perpetrators whose behaviours would change and risk would drop is likely to be significantly higher, based on evaluations of Drive and other quality-assured perpetrator interventions.</p> <p>Alternatively, intervening with perpetrators to prevent serious harm could reduce pressure on prison places, currently costing an average of £51,742 per place per year. ³³ If provision of perpetrator behaviour change interventions prevents 634 places, it will have paid for itself.</p>		
Increased investment into DAPO pilots	£10m per annum	<p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs), capable of enforcing positive requirements as well as restrictions, and yet three years on the pilot is yet to formally launch and is inadequately resourced. Further investment must be made into positive requirement programmes and a referral pathway triage model to ensure the pilot can be delivered safely and at the necessary scale to inform a national roll-out.</p>	<p>Domestic Abuse Protection Notices / Orders factsheet - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
Cost-benefit	<p>The roll-out of enhanced new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders is an important part of the overall response to perpetrators of domestic abuse, and should be a critical tool in protecting victims, preventing further harm and reducing the demands on the criminal justice system overall.</p> <p>With an enhanced pilot, costing £10m pa, the pilot would need to prevent 237 individuals from experiencing further domestic abuse, or save 193 prison places, to be cost-neutral.</p>		
Full review of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences through a whole-systems lens	£250,000	<p>The Coordinated Community response to domestic abuse is critical to truly prevent domestic abuse, and all interventions that seek to halve VAWG will need to be considered through this lens.</p> <p>The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference was established to reduce risk for victims at risk of homicide or serious harm, but needs urgent review.</p> <p>The DAC office developed potential roadmap for a MARAC review lasting one year. The review would then inform funding for the future of MARAC and multi-agency risk management. The mechanism for delivering this review could be developed in consultation with the DA Commissioner's Office, sector and statutory partners.</p>	<p>Learn more about the Marac - SafeLives multi-agency risk assessment conferences _marac - support services - uk.pdf (europa.eu)</p>

²⁹ [University of Bristol's Drive evaluation](#), January 2020

Cost-benefit	<p>MARACs were initially developed as a mechanism for preventing and reducing homicides and serious harm through domestic abuse.</p> <p>However, evidence suggests wide variation in the effectiveness of MARAC, and a review of multi-agency risk assessment processes are well overdue.</p> <p>If MARACs effectiveness is improved due to this review, and one homicide is prevented over 8 years, then the review will have paid for itself.</p>		
Community-based domestic abuse support services for children	Reinvest £11m funding previously allocated to the Reducing Parental Conflict programme	<p>DAC Office CYP service mapping and policy report are currently under development (publication due Jan 2025) and will inform Spring CSR. At this stage, funding redirected from the Reducing Parental Conflict programme funded by the DfE and DWP should be used to uplift local budgets for existing community-based domestic abuse support services for children.</p> <p>The Commissioner’s report ‘A Patchwork of Provision’ found that of those who wanted support for their children, just 29% were able to get it. Mapping of specialist services for children taking place this year will include information on types of intervention, target populations, locations, funding, and demand.</p> <p>Support for children is desperately needed; even in the absence of a clear figure for the total need, funding must be increased to support children affected by domestic abuse.</p> <p>The publication of the Commissioner’s CYP report, as well as information received through Joint Strategic Needs Assessments from the Victims and Prisoners Act, should enable the Government to assess the total funds needed to support children affected by domestic abuse.</p>	<p>The economic cost from childhood exposure to severe domestic violence (probonoeconomics.com)</p> <p>The cost of domestic violence: Sylvia Walby</p>
Cost-benefit	<p>Probono economics found that the cost of exposure to ‘severe domestic abuse’ represented a cost of between £480-£1,400 million for children up to the age of 28.</p> <p>The Home Office is currently undertaking economic analysis that would include the costs to children in updated Economic and social costs of domestic abuse research. This research will be critical to fully cost the impact of domestic abuse on children, and be able to calculate the cost-benefit analysis of supporting children and preventing further harm to them.</p> <p>It is also worth noting that evidence suggests a link between domestic abuse in childhood and experience of domestic abuse in adulthood – as either a victim or a perpetrator. If children are sufficiently supported this could prevent abuse in future generations. Parents model behaviours for their children, and in cases of domestic abuse, abuse can be normalised as a way of dealing with difficulty and conflict. There</p>		

	<p><i>is some evidence that this can lead to perpetration in adulthood.³⁰ However, this is highly gendered and experiencing domestic abuse as a child does not make perpetration in adulthood inevitable. Where domestic abuse is experienced in adulthood, either as a victim or perpetrator it should be considered alongside the impact of other Adverse Childhood Experiences.³¹</i></p> <p><i>If support for children reduces harm experienced by them, and reduces the impact on other life outcomes, including future victimisation or perpetration of abuse, the economic benefits could be considerable.</i></p> <p><i>If repurposed Reducing Parental Conflict funding supports children such that it prevents 260 cases of domestic abuse in adulthood, it will have paid for itself.</i></p>		
<p>Development of principles of evaluation of interventions that support children affected by domestic abuse</p>	<p>£300,000 to develop and then trial different evaluation methods.</p>	<p>Given the importance of supporting children, and the need for significant public investment in this, it will be important that interventions are evidence based and represent value for money.</p> <p>Recognising that Randomised Control Trial is not always appropriate, external experts and the specialist domestic abuse and children's sectors should be commissioned to co-produce best practice principles on evaluation of interventions with children. The outcomes of this work should then inform funding decisions on interventions for children in the next SR period.</p>	<p>An Integrated Approach to Evidence for those working to improve outcomes for Children & Young People, Dartington Service Design Lab</p>
<p>Cost-benefit</p>	<p><i>Given the potential for considerable economic and societal benefits to supporting children affected by domestic abuse, it will be critical to ensure that interventions are effective. Not all methods of evaluation will be effective, or deliver value for money. Initial development funding is needed to trial different evaluation methods, co-produced with researchers as well as service users, in order to support wider roll-out of national funding for support for children. This will support long-term economic and societal benefits.</i></p>		
<p>Specialist support to help children bereaved</p>	<p>£100,000³²</p>	<p>Children bereaved by domestic homicide deserve and need specialist support to enable them to cope and recover from unimaginable trauma at</p>	<p>Professional Support for Children Bereaved by Domestic Homicide in the</p>

³⁰ Herbert, Annie and Barter, Christine and Szilassy, Eszter and Heron, Jon and Fraser, Abigail and Barnes, Maria and Yakubovich, Alexa and Feder, Gene and Howe, Laura D., The Impact of Parental Intimate Partner Violence and Abuse (IPVA) on Ipva in Young Adult Relationships Up to Two Decades Later: A UK General Population Cohort Study. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4902604> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4902604>

³¹ [Safe Young Lives - Young People and Domestic Abuse](#) ; [For Baby's Sake: Intervention Development and Evaluation Design of a Whole-Family Perinatal Intervention to Break the Cycle of Domestic Abuse](#)

³² Based on supporting approximately 100-150 children per year, for at least 15 one-to-one sessions with a specialist support service. [Analysis of Domestic Homicide Reviews](#) considered by the Home Office from October 2019 to September 2020 found that there were 89 children living in the home in 124 homicides, but acknowledged that this did not include children who were not living in the home at the time, but would still be affected.

<p>by domestic homicide to include long term input, support for care givers and access to peer support.</p>		<p>a critical time in their development. Research with children bereaved by domestic homicide highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) lifelong experiences of stigma and silencing, b) the absence of child-centred approaches, c) a deep impact on home life, with support for caregivers being rare, d) only partially realised potential for trauma-informed care within the school context, and e) a lack of coordinated and evidence-based (mental health) support for children and young people bereaved due to domestic homicide. 	<p>UK Journal of Family Violence (springer.com) Children and young people bereaved by domestic homicide A focus on Australia</p> <p>Kurdi, Z., Devaney, J., Houghton, C. et al. Applying a Socio-Ecological Model to Understanding the Needs of Children and Young People Bereaved by Intimate Partner Homicide across their Life Course. J Fam Viol (2024). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-024-00721-z</p>
<p>Cost-benefit</p>	<p><i>It is well evidenced that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) affect children in a myriad of ways and have consequent economic and societal costs Children bereaved by domestic homicide can be some of the most vulnerable and traumatised children, responding to the death of one parent and often the imprisonment of the other. These children are also likely to have been victims for many years as homicide can be the culmination of years of abuse.</i></p> <p><i>Specialist and adequate support for these children bereaved by domestic homicide must be funded in order to support children to cope and to recover from their trauma, and reduce the longer-term consequences.</i></p>		
<p>Develop robust and universal training for social workers on domestic abuse and controlling and coercive behaviour</p>	<p>£100,000</p>	<p>The social care education curriculum has limited content on DA and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training is also far from adequate for the scale of incidence and skills required. Where specialist training (such as Safe and Together) is available, feedback from DAC Office roundtables with social workers highlighted that they found it hugely supportive of their caseloads.</p> <p>The DAC Office recommends the DfE fund the development of training in the year covered by this Spending Review, with a view to rolling out to all social workers in future years.</p> <p>This training should complement the DfE’s upcoming Early Careers Framework, and be embedded into Social Work England’s standards for how the Early Careers Framework is delivered in Universities to new Social Workers. This training should also be used for Continuous Professional Development refresher training.</p>	<p>Briefing-Paper-Childrens-Services-Domestic-Homicide-Oversight-Mechanism-2023.pdf (domesticabusecommissioner.uk)</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Commissioner responds to consultation on children’s social care - Domestic Abuse Commissioner</p>

Cost-benefit	<p>As set out above, the impact of domestic abuse on children is considerable, and Home Office analysis should shortly enable a more robust cost-benefit analysis to be done about support for children.</p> <p>Social workers in particular play a critical role, and specifically play a role in decisions over whether a child is taken into care. Where social workers place accountability and responsibility for abuse on perpetrators, and support non-abusive parents, working closely with specialist domestic abuse organisations, they can support a child to remain safely with their non-abusive parent. The average annual cost of a child in residential care is £310,000, with a high number of these children in care due to domestic abuse.</p> <p>Training for social workers should go some way in supporting families such that children do not need to be taken into care, representing significant savings to the public purse.</p>		
Pilot enhanced safeguarding response in schools through recruiting a dedicated full-time safeguarding lead in every school	£5m (consisting of piloting across 100 schools in 3 local authority areas ³³)	DAC Office held roundtables with teachers and school staff in May 2024 to understand what works and what challenges they face in identifying and responding to children as victims of domestic abuse, as well as understanding what might help them to strengthen their response. Feedback highlighted that Dedicated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) currently cover multiple roles as standard and aren't specialists in risk management and safety planning. Yet the reported proportion of cases DSL's managed related to domestic abuse was between 20-100% of their caseload. A clear recommendation emerged that, in order to improve schools' response to domestic abuse, there must be DSL role in every school, funded to ensure they have no other portfolio and are solely responsible for safeguarding.	<p>Domestic-Abuse-Commissioner-Insights-Briefing-Children-and-Young-People-Subject-to-Domestic-Abuse-Oct-2023.pdf (domesticabusecommissioner.uk)</p> <p>Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance consultation response - Domestic Abuse Commissioner</p> <p>FINAL-About-Time-WSA-report-140723.pdf (endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk)</p>
Cost-benefit	<p>Identifying and supporting children affected by domestic abuse at an earlier stage will enable earlier intervention with children and young people, preventing escalation of harm.</p> <p>As initiatives rightly increase awareness of domestic abuse and seek to identify and intervene earlier, disclosures from children and young people in schools are likely to increase. Teachers already report to the Commissioner that they are ill-equipped to respond to disclosures, due to lack of capability and capacity. The recruitment of dedicated safeguarding leads in schools will free up time for teachers to focus on the school curriculum, and allow for children's disclosures to be immediately met with a more expert response. This represents significant value for money, particularly given current DSLs are usually senior teachers taking on additional roles, with much higher hourly costs.</p> <p>When the costs of domestic abuse to children are estimated through the Home Office's ongoing research, a better calculation of cost-benefit of this intervention will be possible. Meanwhile, better and earlier identification of children subject to domestic abuse will also enable</p>		

³³ Assuming approximately £50,000 per designated safeguarding lead, consisting of approximately £40,000 in salary costs and £15,000 in on-costs.

	<i>support to be offered to the parent victim, as well as the child, and the impact this could have longer term on that child. If this intervention is able to prevent ongoing or future abuse in 118 individuals, it will be cost-neutral.</i>		
Continuation of the Pathfinder Family Courts roll-out	£20m for pilot expansion 25/26	<p>Re-traumatisation and re-victimisation in the Family Court are consistent and deep concerns, with many survivors reporting that their experiences were as – if not more – traumatic, distressing and invasive than the abuse itself.</p> <p>It is crucial that survivors of domestic abuse feel safe during proceedings and that other victims are not silenced in raising their concerns over domestic abuse for fear of the response. There is emerging good practice – a pilot court model ‘Pathfinder’, specialist in domestic abuse, has been established in four court areas in response to these concerns; engaging children at the outset of proceedings and bringing in specialist domestic abuse support throughout. All of these provisions align with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and are to be commended. Whilst the informal feedback from the Pathfinder courts is positive, in particular, the court’s ability to take a trauma-informed lens. The Pathfinder Courts pilots must be robustly evaluated to inform sustainable, properly resourced national roll-out, prioritising trauma-informed understanding and underpinned by ongoing support from the domestic abuse sector in the form of a national working group. Equally, the current model has no formal referral process or support commissioned for children and young people as part of Pathfinder, which must be included.</p>	<p>DAC Family-Court-Report-2023_Digital.pdf (domesticabusecommissioner.uk)</p> <p>Assessing Risk of Harm to Children and Parents in Private Law Children Cases (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Pioneering approach in family courts to support domestic abuse victims better - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
Cost-benefit	<p><i>The Family Court is, unfortunately, a key way in which perpetrators of abuse are able to continue to abuse their victims post-separation. Equally, a poor response can result in children being put in harm’s way and having unsafe contact with an abusive parent.</i></p> <p><i>If the Family Court is able to identify abuse and keep victims (adults and children) safe from the start, it will be able to prevent further abuse and ongoing revictimisation.</i></p> <p><i>The roll-out of Pathfinder Courts would need to prevent 474 victims from experiencing ongoing abuse in order to pay for itself.³⁴</i></p>		
Non-means tested legal aid for survivors of domestic abuse and	£91m–137m per annum	The removal of state funding for many private family law cases was implemented in April 2013 and has had a significant effect on how family law cases have been conducted since.	Response to the Review of Civil Legal Aid – Domestic Abuse Commissioner

³⁴ Based on 2019 Home Office analysis, adjusted for 2024 prices, of £42,221 individual cost of domestic abuse.

<p>private law family proceedings</p>		<p>Given the prevalence of domestic abuse in family law cases, the cuts to legal aid have resulted in those without financial resources having to self-represent during complex proceedings. Indeed, there is likely to be Domestic Abuse in upwards of 60% of private family law proceedings³⁵. In the 12 months to 31st December 2023 there were 50,806 Children Act private law proceedings³⁶, which means there were an estimated 30,484 cases where Domestic Abuse was present. During a similar 12-month period, April 2023 to March 2024 there were only 12,148 Legal Aid applications received via the domestic violence and child abuse gateway and only 10,420 applications were granted.</p> <p>There is a substantial body of research to support the risks heightened in relation to protection and the re-traumatisation of self-representing in such proceedings. The onus on the family justice system as a whole has been felt in terms of considerable delay and increased workload for the judiciary who are tasked with more litigants in person than ever before.</p>	
<p>Cost-benefit</p>	<p><i>Legal aid is a crucial opportunity for victims and survivors to seek legal redress and legal protection for themselves and their families.</i></p> <p><i>If access to legal aid was able to prevent between 2,155 – 3,245 individuals from continued abuse then it will have paid for itself.</i></p>		
<p>Expanded roll-out of a whole health approach to preventing and tackling domestic abuse</p>	<p>£2.65m per annum, over 3-5 years</p> <p>Breakdown:</p> <p>Crossing Pathways project interventions - £2m</p> <p>Producing an evidence-based accreditation scheme to benchmark the whole health</p>	<p>The critical role of the health system in responding to domestic abuse has long been recognised, including through the existing 10-year plan for the Women’s Health Strategy. Victims and survivors are more likely to disclose abuse to health professionals than any other profession, and health services serve a vital role in prevention, early identification, and the provision of support for victims. A holistic, ‘whole health response’ to domestic abuse is desperately needed, as demonstrated by the Pathfinder programme, led by Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse. The Crossing Pathways project, which includes including victim support and professional training, builds upon the Pathfinder Toolkit; full evaluation is due early 2025, with emerging insights highlighting the crucial need to invest in a ‘whole health’ approach and sustainably fund health and domestic abuse interventions.</p>	<p>Crossing Pathways – Standing Together</p> <p>Health – Pathfinder – Standing Together</p> <p>Women's Health Strategy for England – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Briefing-Paper-Health-Services-Domestic-Homicide-Oversight-Mechanism-2023.pdf (domesticabusecommissioner.uk)</p>

³⁵ As referenced in the 2020 [Ministry of Justice Harm Panel Report](#), a range of 49-62%.

³⁶ [Family court - Courts data - Justice Data](#)

	<p>approach - £600,000</p> <p>Development of policy, practice, research and evaluation - £90,000</p>		
<p>Cost-benefit</p>	<p><i>Evaluation of the Pathfinder project, on which Crossing Pathways is built, found that health interventions were able to reach a wider range of victims and survivors and provide support, as well as identifying abuse at an earlier stage. Pathfinder's evaluation showed that 91% of clients felt safer, 95% had improved wellbeing and 85% reported a higher quality of life. In terms of the abuse, 75% reported that the physical abuse had stopped, 50% that the physical abuse had stopped, and 38% that the jealous and controlling behaviour had stopped.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, there is good evidence that project interventions through health represent a significant opportunity for early intervention and prevention of domestic abuse.</i></p> <p><i>If this intervention were to prevent 63 individuals from abuse, it would be cost-neutral.</i></p>		
<p>Continuation of the Institute for Addressing Strangulation (IFAS)</p>	<p>£452,500</p>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Act created the standalone offence of Non-Fatal Strangulation, in recognition of the seriousness of the offence, the harm caused, and the common under-investigation and under-charging of this form of abuse. While a critical step in the recognition of this form of abuse in law, much upskilling is required by both the Criminal Justice System and health partners to make the changes in law a reality for victims.</p> <p>IFAS have played a critical role in doing this since being funded by the Home Office in 2022, although their funding comes to an end in March 2025. From the data referenced, we know that non-fatal strangulation is common and seems to be on the increase. While the introduction of stand-alone legislation was a huge step forward, the Institute needs to continue its work to fully integrate best practice guidance, develop clear pathways for victims, and continue its research programme. To develop an evidence-based response, IFAS needs the resources to conduct important research which will inform a scoping exercise to consider the measures required to address strangulation in the UK and the impact on the system-wide response.</p>	<p>UK Prevalence of strangulation and suffocation - Institute for Addressing Strangulation, March 2023</p> <p>"I thought he was going to kill me": Analysis of 204 case files of adults reporting non-fatal strangulation as part of a sexual assault over a 3-year period. White C, Martin G, Schofield AM, Majeed-Ariss R. Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine 79 (2021)</p> <p>1 in 4 women accessing domestic abuse services - The-Domestic-Abuse-Report-2022-The-Annual-Audit.pdf (womensaid.org.uk)</p> <p>1 in 2 women aged between 18-24 have been strangled during consensual sex. (BBC 5 Live, Women's Poll 2019.)</p>

Cost-benefit	<i>The standalone costs of Non-Fatal Strangulation specifically are not yet available, as the Home Office's 2019 analysis was conducted before it was a standalone offence. But if the work of the institute is able to prevent further harm and reduce the longer-term impact of non-fatal strangulation, it will represent an overall cost benefit.</i>		
Continuation of the Flexible Fund	£2m per annum	Despite its impact and success, the Flexible Fund is only guaranteed until March 2025. We recommend guaranteeing funding for the Flexible Fund for 2025/26 and beyond, at a minimum of £2m, specialist sector delivery partners, to ensure survivors can access vital funds to flee and increase their independence and stability, and to access vital advocacy support from specialist services.	Emergency_fund_evalaution_2023.pdf (womensaid.org.uk)
Cost-benefit	<p><i>The Flexible Fund is crucial to allow victims and survivors to access emergency funds that enable them to leave an abusive perpetrator and overcome the financial barriers to doing so.</i></p> <p><i>The Fund will need to have prevented just one homicide a year or 22 cases of violence with injury in order to pay for itself.</i></p>		
Research project into domestic homicides carried out during episodes of psychosis	£70,000	<p>The Home Office Domestic Homicide Review Library holds 109 reviews that mention perpetrator psychosis.</p> <p>However, research is limited in understanding how best to prevent homicides carried out during episodes of psychosis. The Commissioner recommends that a review is conducted that considers all psychosis-related homicides, identifies key themes and makes recommendations that would prevent future deaths.</p>	Chantler et al (2020) Health and Social Care.pdf (homeoffice.local)
Cost-benefit	<i>If the research contributes towards preventing one homicide within 31 years, it will have paid for itself.</i>		

Funding Proposals: Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner and her Office holds a unique position within the statutory landscape – independent of Government, statutory agencies, and voluntary sector partners while maintaining strong and trusting relationships with them all. This independence and expertise brings considerable benefits, not least the ability to delve into local practice without any indication of conflict of interest or political interference. She has direct and trusted connections with victims and survivors of domestic abuse, and uses this to stand up for victims and survivors on the national stage. Her unique statutory position and small team of experts allows her to truly hold local and national government, as well as operational statutory agencies, to account. But with additional resource, she could do so much more.

The Domestic Abuse Act sets out ambitious aims for her role, but with current budget allocation is limited in her ability to meet the requirements as set out in Law. Her budget was originally set in 2019 at her appointment as Designate Commissioner, and has increased neither in line with increased public sector pay costs nor as responsibilities have been added to her role.

Set out below are options for how the Commissioner could better meet the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act, and go a considerable way in supporting the Government's aim to halve Violence Against Women and Girls in a decade.

The following proposals could be delivered for between £1.7m – £4m, depending on the scale and ambition Government has for the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's work.

Proposal	Detail
Cost of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office with current levels of output	<p>Since the Commissioner was appointed as designate in 2019, her budget has changed from £1m annually to £1.05m. This neither reflects inflationary costs (including civil service pay rises) nor increased interest in, and expectations of, the Commissioner. Just as national and local government have increased their activity on domestic abuse, so too must the Commissioner in order to effectively hold them to account. Approximately £500k above her current baseline budget is needed in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflect pay increases agreed by HMT and civil service unions; - Re-instate wellbeing support for staff, who regularly interact with victims and survivors in person, including bereaved families, and risk burnout or vicarious trauma; - Ensure Lived Experience Engagement work is ethically funded, including through funding dedicated resource within the team and remuneration of victims for their work; - Continue the work of the Family Court Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, a commitment made by the Ministry of Justice in their 2020 Harm Panel Report; - Support learning events across England & Wales and with local government and statutory agencies to better fulfil the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's role in promoting best practice. - Enable the Commissioner to fulfil her duty as a Statutory Consultee to the Online Safety Act. <p>If the current work of the domestic abuse commissioner is able to prevent 40 individuals (0.002% of overall prevalence) from experiencing abuse, it will be cost-neutral.</p>
Domestic Abuse Related Deaths Oversight	The Commissioner has piloted the Domestic Abuse Related Deaths Oversight Mechanism in 20 local areas; piloting two different approaches.

<p>Mechanism national roll-out</p>	<p>There are over 300 Community Safety Partnerships, who are responsible for Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews. So to adequately resource a national model, and make best use of the Commissioner's unique status and powers, the Commissioner recommends resource that would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable local agencies and national Government to be held to account on implementation of recommendations from DARDRs, on an ongoing basis to ensure recommendations remain in place long-term; - Establish local roadshows and learning events to feed back on lessons learned from Domestic Abuse Related Deaths, including through working with statutory agencies, sector partners and local commissioners, supporting learning across a larger geographical area; - Provide regular, and robust, quantitative and qualitative analysis of DARDRs as they are published and as they are implemented, on an ongoing basis; - Report quarterly on themes, and report annually with recommendations to best reduce domestic abuse related deaths; <p>If the mechanism is able to effectively share learning and support accountability in implementation of recommendations and prevents just one domestic abuse related death every five years, it will be cost-neutral.³⁷</p>
<p>Continuation of the Family Court Reviewing and Reporting Mechanism (FCRRM)</p>	<p>Due to the timing of the current pilot project, we are unable to calculate the costs of national roll-out of the Family Court Reviewing and Reporting Mechanism, a recommendation from MoJ's 2020 Harm Panel Report.</p> <p>We therefore suggest continuation of funding to cover analytical work by two Senior Research Officers, management oversight, and remuneration costs for victims and survivors who have supported the work. The budget would also cover publication of the pilot report.</p>
<p>Victim Voice engagement</p>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Commissioner has begun work to implement a mechanism for lived experience engagement, and has established the 'Voices at the DAC' online network.</p> <p>This network currently makes use of limited resources (£70k pa) to link survivors with engagement opportunities, bring together professionals working on victim voice to share experiences, and conduct some lived experience engagement to support the Commissioner's reports.</p> <p>With additional resource, this offer could be expanded considerably and make strides in better amplifying victim voice on a national stage, capacity building across local government, and better linking up decision makers with survivors.</p> <p>If the expanded survivor voice work is able to influence policy and practice change such that there are six fewer individuals who experience domestic abuse, it will be cost-neutral.</p>
<p>A full programme of local engagement and accountability work</p>	<p>The response to domestic abuse remains unacceptable in its variation across England and Wales. The Domestic Abuse Act requires the Commissioner to 'promote good practice' and consistency in the response to domestic abuse, including the provision of services and prevention of domestic abuse.</p> <p>The response a survivor receives from statutory agencies, as well as their ability to access specialist support, depends very much on who they are and where they live. Only through strong multi-agency working can survivors receive the support they deserve, the risk</p>

³⁷ Based on one domestic homicide costing society £2,768,775, using the Home Office's 2019 'Economic and social costs of domestic abuse' publication, adjusted for inflation to 2024 prices.

	<p>posed by perpetrators be managed, and we prevent further harm. This is all needed to halve VAWG in a decade.</p> <p>Therefore, the Commissioner proposes using her unique powers and independent status to implement in-depth rolling assessments of local multi-agency responses to domestic abuse, benchmarking against established blueprints for best practice. This will make use of robust measures and enable the Commissioner to more effectively hold local agencies to account. The Commissioner would also be able to proactively engage with local areas in the process of transformation – including through the service provision commissioning process – to bring greater consistency to the local response.</p> <p>If this programme were to improve practice locally such that there were 8 fewer victims of domestic abuse each year, it will be cost neutral.</p>
<p>Expansion of proactive workstreams through project teams and expert reports commissioned twice annually, through enhanced research and policy capacity</p>	<p>Through enhancing the research and policy capacity with the DA Commissioner’s Office, the Commissioner will be able to develop and deliver additional specialist reports, through robust use of evidence and independent policy advice.</p> <p>This would enable proactive workstreams to fill gaps in understanding and support Government in the delivery of its ambition to halve VAWG in a decade.</p> <p>This additional resource would need to enhance understanding and develop policy on a national scale such that it prevents 19 individuals from experiencing domestic abuse to be cost-neutral.</p>
<p>Children and Young People National Festival of Practice</p>	<p>Following on from the success of the Commissioner’s ‘Festival of Practice’ two-day event, the Commissioner recommends delivering a two-day conference specifically on support for children and young people.</p> <p>The introduction of children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right through the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 has been crucial in recognising the impact it has upon children. However, local agencies, as well as front-line services, can struggle to understand what this means and how to implement this change in practice.</p> <p>A two-day conference, delivered through the DA Commissioner’s office, and free for participants, will promote considerable learning in an issue that frontline services and local commissioners have been calling out for. Webinars delivered by the DA Commissioner’s Office in this topic have been hugely over-subscribed, with many hundreds of sign-ups. A full two day conference will enable this cross-sector and cross-country learning and collaboration, and should go some way in fundamentally improving the local response to children and young people affected by domestic abuse.</p> <p>If learning and collaboration fostered by the conference enables the prevention of 8 individuals from experiencing abuse, it will be cost-neutral.</p>
<p>Total cost of all increased delivery options from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner</p>	<p>All together, if the Domestic Abuse Commissioner is fully resourced to deliver all of the proposals listed above, the work of the office would need to prevent 95 individuals from experiencing domestic abuse to be cost neutral. ³⁸</p>

³⁸ [The economic and social costs of domestic abuse - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/research-data-and-analysis/publications/the-economic-and-social-costs-of-domestic-abuse)

