



# **Telford and Wrekin Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board Annual Report**

**April 2022 - March 2023**

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# Introduction from the Chair

**Domestic abuse is unacceptable, yet it continues to be a serious issue for many of our residents, damaging lives and devastating families resulting in long term impacts on adults and children.**

It is that estimated one in four women, and one in six men experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives. While women are significantly and disproportionately affected by domestic abuse which is perpetrated by men, we also recognise that there are male victims and survivors and females that also pose a risk of harm. Domestic abuse in same sex relationships is also a serious issue and we recognise people who are lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender (LGBTQ+) can be significantly affected.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 sets out statutory duties, for local councils and the Police, but the key to reducing domestic abuse and its impacts lies in the hands of broader partnership working. The Telford & Wrekin Domestic Local Partnership Board (DALP), established in 2022, is supported by the Council, the Police and Probation services, the NHS and our Domestic Abuse Forum – a network of community organisations, providers of services and support and crucially local victims and survivors. The DALP oversees delivery of our statutory duties and steers joint working, needs assessment strategy development and implementation, commissioning and service improvement.

The review of domestic abuse services and support in Telford and Wrekin, carried out by the national charity SafeLives in 2021, found some good local practice – including highlighting our strong authentic local survivor voice. During 2022 and 2023 a range of statutory, community and voluntary partnership organisations have been working together through the DALP to improve the services and support on offer in Telford and Wrekin to tackle and better respond to domestic abuse.

I am delighted to introduce the first annual report of the Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, which describes the significant progress made during 2022-23.



**Jo Britton**

**Telford & Wrekin Council Executive Director: Children's Services and  
Chair of Telford and Wrekin Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board**

# Who is part of the (DALP) Board and what does the Board do?

Membership of the SAB is drawn from:

- Domestic Abuse Forum (which in itself is made up from the organisations shown below)
- Telford & Wrekin Council
- Cranstoun
- West Mercia Women's Aid
- Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- West Mercia Police
- Probation Service
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Lived experience community



## Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Forum

Collectively the DALP and the Forum have the responsibility for developing and delivering our Telford and Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy, which is intelligence-led and based on local needs gathered through needs assessment. They oversee the development of “needs analysis” and performance framework which has informed the development of the Domestic Abuse Strategy and to understand the impact of its delivery.



# Domestic abuse – definition, language and terminology

## The Domestic Abuse Act states that:

- the person carrying out abusive behaviour and the person directly receiving the abusive behaviour must be over 16
- Children/young persons who see, hear or otherwise experience the abuse are defined victims or survivors of the abuse
- in the case of adolescent to parent violence, domestic abuse occurs when both parties are over the age of 16. It is recognised that adolescent to parent violence can involve children under 16 but that responses to this group may be different from responses to adults perpetrating abusive behaviours.

## Domestic abuse includes:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic or financial abuse
- Forced marriage or honour-based violence
- Psychological, emotional or other abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Child to parent and carer abuse.

## The Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse partnership recognises that domestic abuse:

- happens across different types of relationships, and is not limited to people who are or have been in an intimate personal relationship, or who live together
- occurs across household and family relationships, those with parental relationships, and between relatives and includes ex-partners
- disproportionately affects women more than men, given their experience of repeat victimisation, violence and nonphysical abuse, while acknowledging that there is not one type of victim/survivor and that needs are individual
- male domestic abuse is underreported by male victims for many reasons including shame, denial, fear, to protect children, religious beliefs and lack of resources.

# Domestic abuse facts

Telford & Wrekin Council worked with SafeLives to undertake a needs assessment to understand our residents.

## What the needs assessment tells us



We estimate there are **25,680** adult victims in Telford and Wrekin who have experienced domestic abuse at **some point in their lives since the age of 16.**



An estimated **15%** of these adult victims will have experienced **both partner and family abuse.**



Of the total estimated adult victims **17,130 67%** are estimated to be **female.**



Of the total estimated adult victims **8,550 33%** are estimated to be **male.**



We estimate there are **7,020** adult victims in Telford and Wrekin who have experienced domestic abuse at **some point in the last year.**



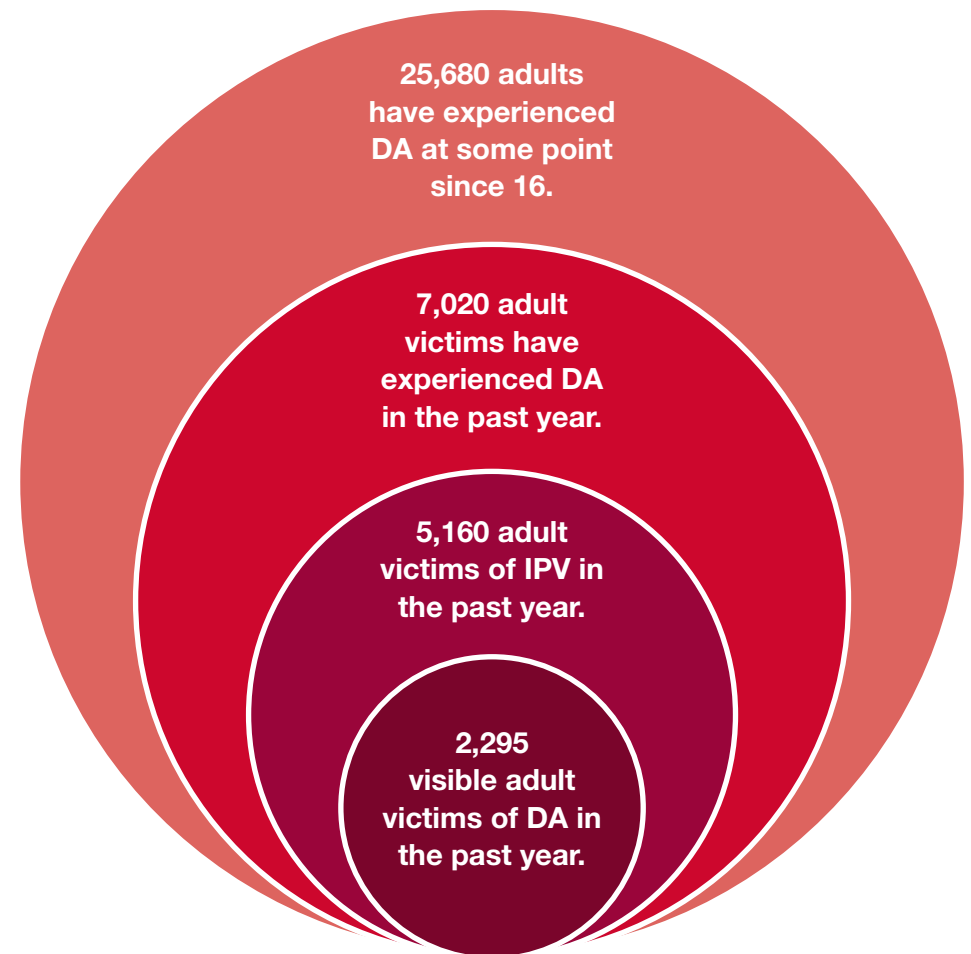
We estimate that around **8%** of those adult victims will have experienced **both partner and family abuse.**



Of the total estimated adult victims in the past year **4,470 (68%)** are estimated to be **female.**



Of the total estimated adult victims in the past year **2,280 (32%)** are estimated to be **male.**



## What the needs assessment tells us



We estimate there were 1,740 young victims aged 16-24.



We estimate there were 1,110 older victims aged 60+.



We estimate there were 510 Black, Asian and racially minoritised victims.



We estimate that there were 3,700 Disabled victims.



We estimate that there were 850 LGBTQ+ victims.



We estimate that there were 5,160 adult victims in the local area who have experienced partner abuse in the past year.



We estimate that there were 3,914 children living in a household with partner abuse in the past year.



We estimate that there were 4,130 people using abusive behaviours in their intimate partner relationships in the past year in the local area.



Of those 20% are estimated to be serial perpetrators of domestic abuse.

## Survivors experiences

*"Six years of him dictating to me how to do things, six years of feeling so low I just didn't want to be there, six years being void of emotions no highs no lows. I had to put up with him coming in to my work causing a scene in front of everyone because I was a few minutes late leaving or I had spoken to a male customer or staff member. This would be in the supermarket in front of everyone it was so embarrassing."*

*"You just couldn't talk to him - he just made no logical sense at all, he would argue day was night and would get so wrapped up in his lies that he believed he was telling the truth."*

*"If I can think back there were warning signs that I did not see - they cheated on me several times, but they would convince me they had not, and I would believe them. They were very paranoid and possessive and always wanted to know where I was and what I was doing. They did not like my friends that I did have or the family that I did speak too. Years went on, the marriage turned into years of abuse and I become dehumanised and programmed to the way they wanted me to be. I did not speak until spoken too. I had poor physical and mental health. I had no self-confidence, the abuse escalated when I tried to leave them..."*

*"His behaviour began to change, he became more controlling. He wanted to know everything I was doing and everywhere I was going. He claimed that it was all about the baby, at first, I believed him, but it just continued to get worse. I remember being scared of him for the first time, he had got himself really angry that I had taken so long to get my nails done. He was really aggressively shouting at me and was in my face whist gripping his fists. After that he went into complete 'persuader' mode, constantly apologising and saying that it would never happen again..."*



# The Telford and Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy

**Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Strategy** was developed across the partnership during 2022 through strong engagement with partners, professionals, survivors and families.

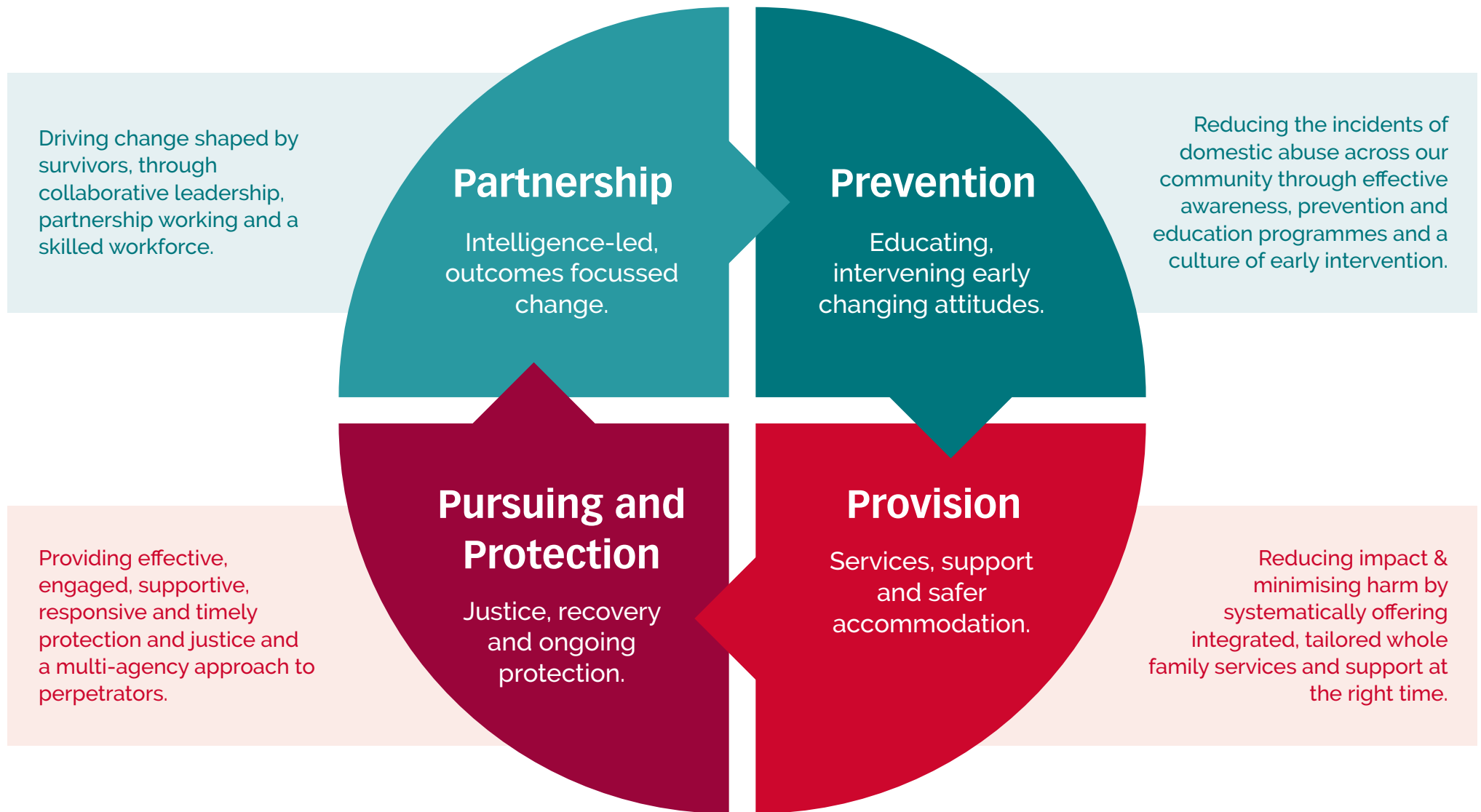
The SafeLives engagement activities culminated in a workshop in May 2022, where 50 people, including local victims and survivors, shared their views and experiences. This insight has been used to shape our proposed strategy commitments and commissioning processes.

**Pictured below:** Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board and SafeLives Workshop 24 May 2022 Park Lane Centre Woodside

***“Telford and Wrekin are committed to the survivor voice – supporting the local independent survivor group and instigating and assisting survivors speaking and being present in such an integral way in the workshop” Lucy Giles, SafeLives***



The Strategy is based around the four interlinking pillars:



Working together to end domestic abuse in our communities in all its forms, ensuring that everyone who is affected can access the help and services they need.

## What support do we have in place for victims and survivors?

Telford & Wrekin Domestic Abuse service is commissioned by the council and provided by Cranstoun in partnership with West Mercia Women's Aid. It is an integrated service for victims and their families that delivers support throughout Telford & Wrekin. The aim of the service is to ensure that everyone who is affected by domestic abuse can access the help and support they need, when they need it, and to reduce the incidence of domestic abuse in our communities.

The service includes telephone, web based and text helplines which are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Specialist support services include one-to-one support and counselling, evidence-based group work programmes and support throughout civil and criminal justice processes. The service is also working to expand the range of safe accommodation units available for local victims.

Age-appropriate support is also available for children and young people to understand their experience of domestic abuse and build their resilience and confidence into teenage years and into adulthood. This is complimented by a universal offer across schools in the borough delivered by Loudmouth Theatre Company so that children understand and can have and maintain healthy relationships by addressing the root cause of domestic abuse.

The service also provides programmes to tackle perpetrator behaviour.

## What have we achieved in the last 12 months?

**An essential objective of this report is to demonstrate the impact of the DALP and the delivery of the Strategy. The following section takes a month-by-month look at the activity of the partnership and the impact that this has had between April 2022 and March 2023.**



Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 20 clients who reported domestic abuse.

An updated Domestic Abuse Policy was provided for all schools by Severn Training and Schools Alliance.

Schools with a Children's Safeguarding Board attended a training session on how to support children and young people's understanding of healthy relationships and domestic abuse. This included updated information for staff on the the Expect Respect teaching resource.



Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 15 clients who reported domestic abuse.

Domestic Abuse Strategy development workshop took place which was attended by 50+ people with feedback from SafeLives following their needs assessment activity.



Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 14 clients who reported domestic abuse.



Domestic Abuse Local Partnership (DALP) Board meeting took place where the creation of Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Decision Making Panel was approved.

Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 12 clients who reported domestic abuse.

The tendering process for a new Integrated Domestic Abuse Service for Telford and Wrekin commenced with a market engagement event to consult with potential service providers on a proposed service model, integrating a single point of contact, specialist support for victims/survivors and children and young people affected by domestic abuse, safe accommodation and a behaviour change programme for people who pose a risk of harm.



Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 13 clients who reported domestic abuse.



Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 19 clients who reported domestic abuse.



Training was delivered to school children across Telford and Wrekin by Loudmouth. Loudmouth Education and Training is a highly respected and innovative theatre in education company. The company has been delivering Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) since 1994 and has reached over 1 million children, young people, professionals and parents. Loudmouth provides a range of programmes and formats that can support your safeguarding and relationship education. Loudmouth's work aims to ensure a future where all children and young people are healthy, happy, safe and resilient.



Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 22 clients who reported domestic abuse.



Daphne Franks predatory marriage seminar was delivered to all partners across Telford and Wrekin. Daphne is the daughter of a lady with severe dementia and terminal cancer who married a much younger partner. Registry Office changes followed to ensure prior marriages both parties are spoken to separately to ensure no one is under duress or unclear as to the decisions they are making. The tendering process for the new Domestic Abuse Integrated Service commenced and bids were evaluated during December and January 2023.

Telford & Wrekin Council, as a White Ribbon accredited town, ran a **16 Days of Action campaign** to raise awareness of male violence against women, highlight **11 traits which men and boys can nurture to help create a world of equality and safety for women** and to encourage them to stand up to domestic abuse by taking the White Ribbon promise. Many chose to wear a white ribbon to highlight the fact they have made this pledge, hence the name.

Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 24 clients who reported domestic abuse.





**Domestic Abuse leaflets** were updated in consultation with our lived experience experts to include information about **Clare's Law** and circulated to all leisure centres in Telford and Wrekin. This will raise awareness of domestic abuse and provide details of where to go to find help and support for people in Telford and Wrekin, allowing them to be better equipped to speak out and free themselves from an abusive relationship.

Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 4 clients who reported domestic abuse.



Bids to deliver the new Integrated Domestic Abuse Service were evaluated by the panel which included representatives from Telford and Wrekin's Public Health Team, Housing Options Team, Strengthening Families Team, Adult Social Care, Independent Chair of DA Forum and also the Shropshire and Telford Integrated Commissioning Board, West Mercia Police and a local survivor of domestic abuse. By the end of January 2023, Haven training had been delivered across the year to over 300 individuals (as detailed in table).

	Delivered	Booked
DA Awareness	261	119
Ambassador	50	11
Champion		6

Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 20 clients who reported domestic abuse.



The New Domestic Abuse Strategy was launched following Cabinet approval and extensive consultation with partners and survivor groups who actively shaped the strategy and commissioning process for the new service. The new strategy commits to hearing and taking on board the voices and expertise of people who have experienced domestic abuse to ensure services meet the needs of those experiencing domestic abuse, whether young or old, parent or child.

Telford & Wrekin Council became the first local authority in the UK to sign the Child to Parent Abuse Covenant, developed by a local social enterprise known as Parental Education Growth Support.

Further promotion of Loudmouth productions on healthy relationships for primary and secondary schools which are free of charge or have a reduced rate per child.

Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 24 clients who reported domestic abuse.



The new domestic abuse service contract was awarded to Cranstoun and West Mercia Women's Aid.

The Chair of Domestic Abuse Forum appeared at the lived experience expert panel at the national **Festival of Practice 2023 - Domestic Abuse Commissioner.**

Domestic abuse and suicide prevention training sessions were delivered to GPs, Suicide Prevention Action Group partners and ICS mental health learning disabilities and autism board and the Domestic Abuse Forum.

Housing solutions provided 4 dedicated spaces at the Women's refuge for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse, as well as dispersed units with support (where required). The service provided advice, support and safe accommodation (where required) to 30 clients who reported domestic abuse.



## Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)

**The Governance for Domestic Homicide Reviews is also overseen by the DALP and a new DHR panel has been established. The Vice Chair of the DALP is the Chair of the DHR Panel.**

The **Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Decision Panel** seeks to ensure that the processes in Telford and Wrekin to determine when a case meets the DHR criteria and the ensuing actions necessary to complete the review meet the standards within the Home Office Multi-agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews 2016 (referred to as the statutory guidance)<sup>1</sup>. The Domestic Homicide Review Decision Panel is responsible for making a recommendation to the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership about whether a DHR should be commissioned or not.

DHRs also include circumstances “where a victim took their own life (suicide) and the circumstances give rise to concern, for example it emerges that there was coercive controlling behaviour in the relationship, a review should be undertaken, even if a suspect is not charged with an offence or they are tried and acquitted.”

During April 2022 and March 2023 the DHR Decision Making Panel received four referrals for consideration with one progressing to a full review being led by an independent reviewer who has been tasked to review the case to identify learning for all partners involved.

## Thank You

The Telford & Wrekin DALP Board members would like to issue a big thank you to the wide range of people who have supported the development and implementation of the DALP strategy in the past year – especially our domestic abuse survivors, the Chair and members of the Forum, all the front line staff across multiple council teams, our local providers of services and support and wider partner and community organisations. This annual report strongly demonstrates the power of our local partnership work in tackling domestic abuse in Telford and Wrekin.