



Safety in Neighbourhoods

Wednesday 29th April 2020

in association with

wardhadaway
lawfirm

wardhadaway
lawfirm



Housekeeping

Domestic Abuse, Housing, and COVID-19

29th April 2020

Brandy Hubbard

We are SafeLives

We are SafeLives, the UK-wide charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse, for everyone and for good.

We work with organisations across the UK to transform the response to domestic abuse. **We want what you would want for your best friend.** We listen to survivors, putting their voices at the heart of our thinking. We look at the **whole picture** for each individual and family to get the right help at the right time to make families everywhere safe and well. And we challenge perpetrators to change, asking '**why doesn't he stop?**' rather than 'why doesn't she leave?' This applies whatever the gender of the victim or perpetrator and whatever the nature of their relationship.

Last year alone, nearly 11,000 professionals working on the frontline received our training. Over 65,000 adults at risk of serious harm or murder and more than 85,000 children received support through dedicated multi-agency support designed by us and delivered with partners. In the last three years, over 1,000 perpetrators have been challenged and supported to change by interventions we created with partners, and that's just the start.

Together we can end domestic abuse. **Forever. For everyone.**

Ending domestic abuse

About SafeLives



- We are SafeLives, the UK-wide charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse, for everyone and for good.



- We are independent, practical and evidence-led, with survivor voice at the heart of our thinking.



- We work with organisations across the UK to transform the response to domestic abuse.

We want what you want for your best friend:



- Action before someone is harmed or harms others



- Harmful behaviour identified and stopped
- Increased safety for everyone at risk



- The ability for people to live the life they want after harm has happened

Ending domestic abuse

Domestic abuse: **The scale of the problem**

Understanding Domestic Abuse

- Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.
- The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:
 - psychological
 - physical
 - sexual
 - financial
 - emotional

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Coercive and Controlling Behaviour

- **Controlling behaviour** is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
- **Coercive behaviour** is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.
- These is not a legal definitions.

Domestic abuse in the UK

Every year, **over 2 million adults aged 16-59 in the UK** suffer some form of domestic abuse.



85% of victims of domestic abuse seek help **five times** on average before they get effective support.



Only **one in five victims** of partner abuse calls the police



On average, **victims wait three years** before getting the support they need.

Two women a week are killed by a current or ex-partner in England and Wales.



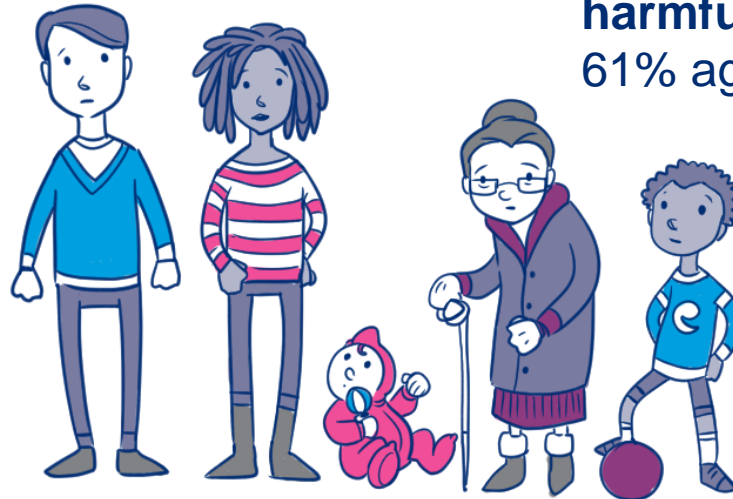
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Many people experiencing domestic abuse have multiple needs and many are 'hidden' from services.

32% of homeless women said domestic abuse **contributed to their homelessness.**

Almost a quarter (23%) of young people exposed to domestic abuse are also **demonstrating harmful behaviour** themselves, 61% against the mother.

Disabled women are **twice as likely** to experience domestic abuse as non-disabled women.



On average, older victims experience abuse for **twice as long** before accessing help as those aged under 61.

Victims with mental health needs were more likely to have **problems with drug and alcohol use.**

LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse are more than **twice as likely to have self-harmed** and are almost twice as likely to have **attempted suicide.**

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Domestic abuse affects the whole family - children do not just 'witness' domestic abuse, they are victims in their own right

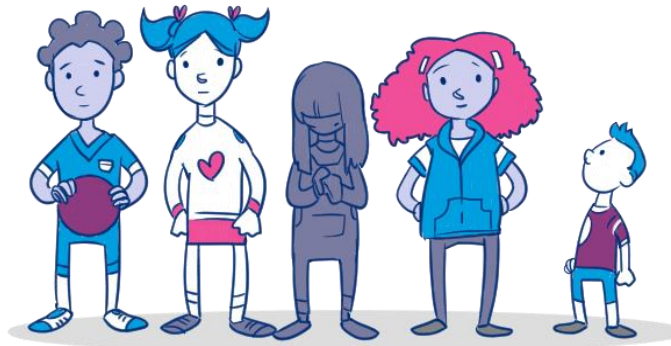
At the time they start school at least **one child in every classroom** will have been living with domestic abuse **since they were born.**

Contact visits were identified as an **opportunity for ongoing abuse** for 20% of children and young people supported by services.

Around 30% of children in households supported by an Idva **were not known to children's services.**

A third of children living with domestic abuse reported **mental health impacts.** Just under half have anxiety, 28% have problems sleeping, and 23% have feelings of shame or responsibility for the abuse.

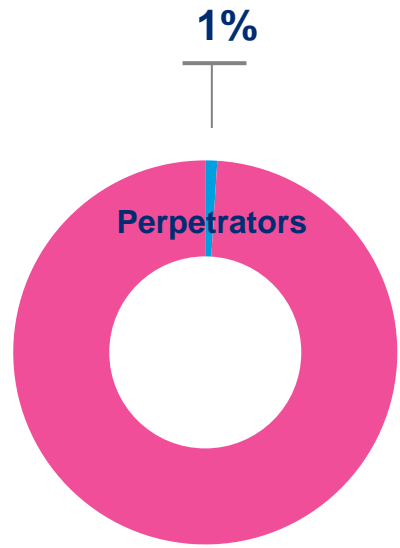
13% of children supported by domestic abuse services admit to **doing things they know are dangerous.** Almost 9% have exposure to **'harmful associates'**



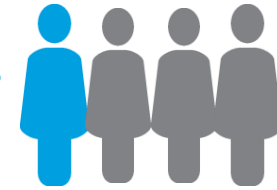
In a fifth of cases (20%) **the child tried to intervene** to stop the abuse.

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Perpetrators often remain unseen in the response to domestic abuse



1 in 4 perpetrators are **repeat offenders**.
Some have as many as six different victims.



Currently only **1%** of perpetrators receive any **specialist intervention** to be challenged or change their behaviour.

80% of survivors said they thought perpetrator programmes were a **good idea**.



Ending domestic abuse

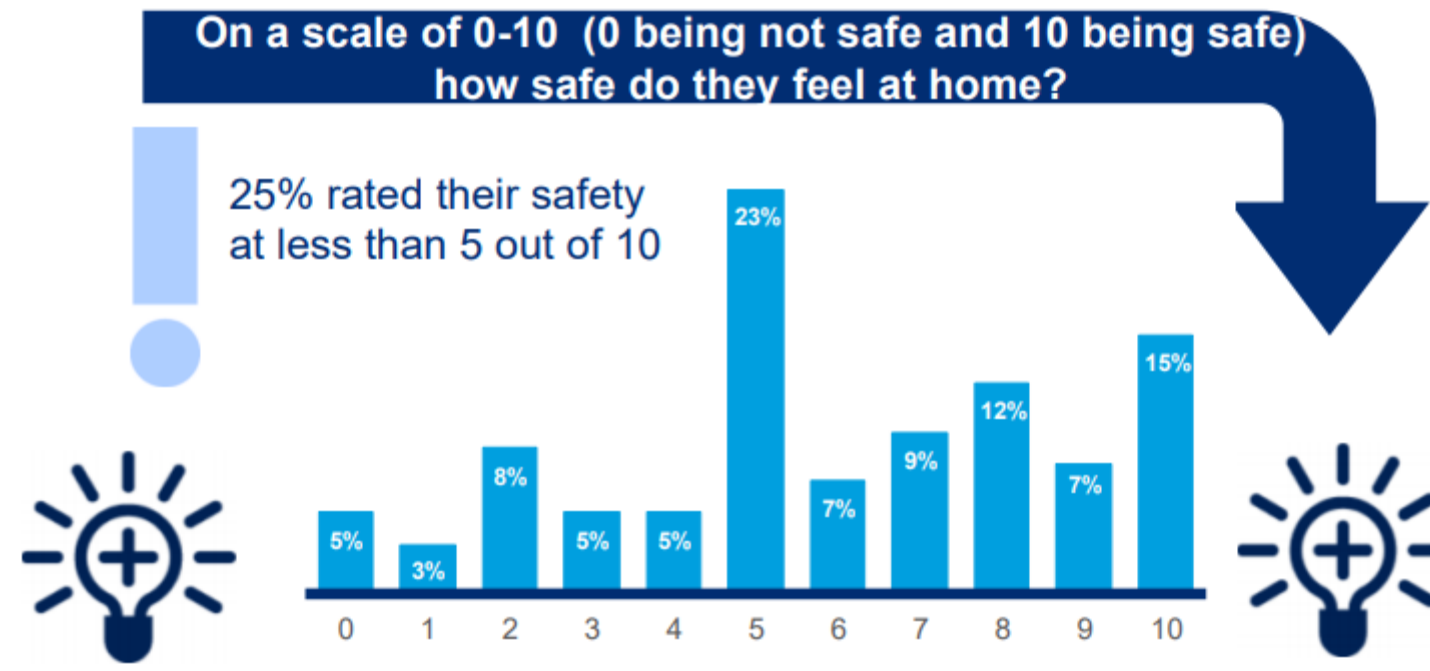
Safe at Home Survey: **What victims/survivors** **are saying during COVID-** **19**

Safe at Home Survey



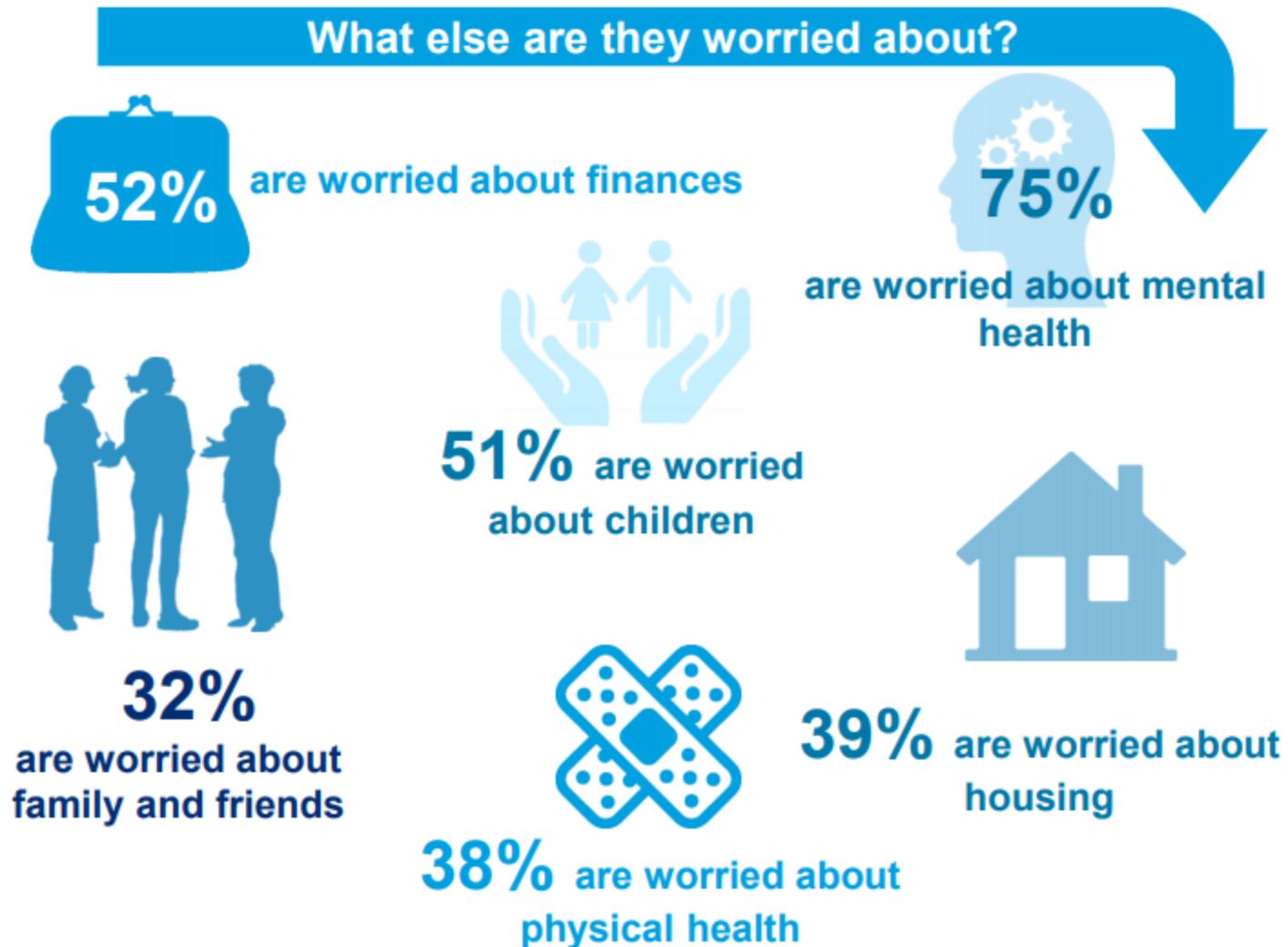
Ending domestic abuse

Safe at Home Survey



Ending domestic abuse

Safe at Home Survey



Ending domestic abuse

Safe at Home Survey

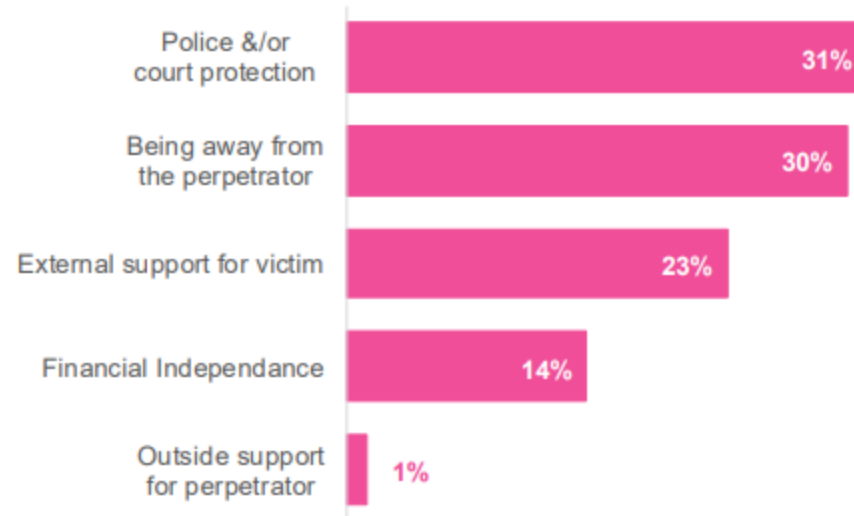


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Safe at Home Survey:

Making people safer

Respondents were asked what they felt could make them feel safer at home during this time. If their answers covered more than one topic it was split into multiple comments. This led to 83 comments in total. The comments were split into five categories.



Ending domestic abuse

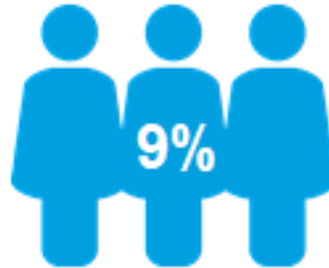
Safe at Home Survey: Practitioner Survey

Ending

Practitioner Survey



Of those who discussed remote working were concerned about client safety whilst using phone or online services



One in ten said they have unsafe staffing levels at present.



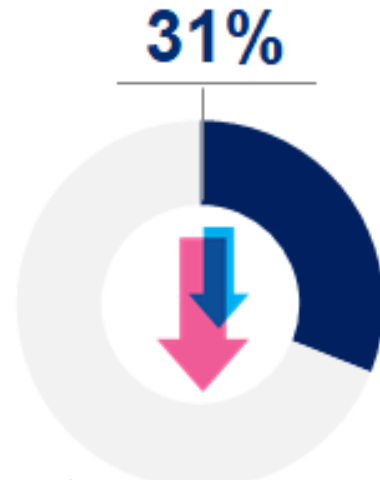
Of services said they were experiencing financial difficulties.

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Practitioner Survey



Of those who discussed remote working cited IT and tech challenges in delivering services remotely



A third of services have had a decrease in staff due to COVID-19.

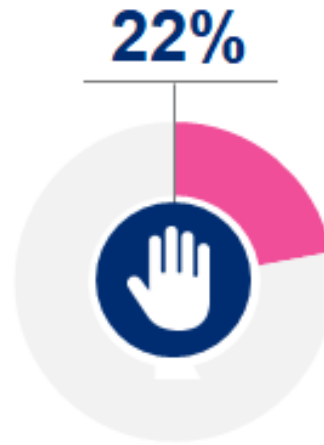


Of those who raised further issues were concerned about the increased risk their client faced

Practitioner Survey



Three quarters (76%) of respondents said they have had to reduce service delivery due to COVID-19.



Just under a quarter of services say they are not currently able to effectively support adult victims



22%

Just under a quarter of services have seen caseloads increase due to COVID-19

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What do survivors need?

Survivors tell us they want professionals to see the whole picture for the whole family

“They lost a huge part of their childhood due to the fear I faced. They encountered scary situations that no family should ever have to face.”

“Escaping a perpetrator can take months of precision planning, like an army exercise. Imagine making your escape, only to find yourself homeless. You have left behind your entire home, your belongings and a part of yourself.”

“The perpetrator is the problem. Why is it that the victim is the one who has to move and seek refuge, when the perpetrator carries on as normal? If we don’t deal with them – then they just move on to the next victim. We have to at least try and change their mindsets.”

Ending domestic abuse

Survivors tell us they want professionals to see the whole picture for the whole family

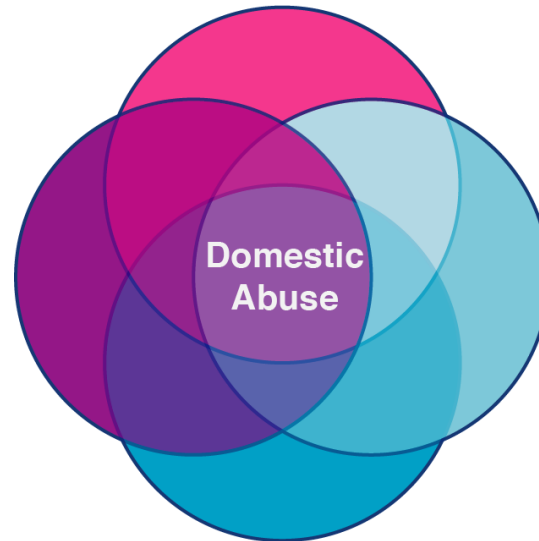
“I had an Idva down there, I had a social worker, then for the children I had my health visitor, the school nurse, then one of the family officers in the school...And then I had...a lady from housing, like the homeless department, I had her...so it was quite a lot of different agencies to be involved with each week.”

“I’m a person. I don’t fit in to one of your categories.”

“I wasn’t offered any help at the time but I’ve had nightmares about what I saw and heard. I think because mum and dad weren’t together anymore and mum was getting help they thought I didn’t need any.”

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The Whole Picture



The whole person:
domestic abuse is never
all of someone's
experiences or situation.

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COVID-19 Specific Resources

- [Dedicated SafeLives webpage for Domestic abuse and COVID-19 specific resources](#)
- [Guidance for practitioners working with those who harm](#)
- [Guidance for multi-agency forums \(including Marac\)](#)
- The Domestic Abuse and Housing Alliance (DAHA) have produced [guidance and resources for housing providers](#) on responding to domestic abuse during the current crisis.
- Standing Together have created [domestic abuse and sexual violence guidance for homelessness settings](#), created in partnership with St Mungo's, SHP and FLIC and supported by Homelesslink.

Keep in touch



www.safelives.org.uk



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Ending domestic abuse



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Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

A partnership between 3 agencies leading change for cohesive policies and strategies for tackling domestic abuse and housing in the UK

Kelly Henderson – Business Manager (Domestic Abuse)
DAHA Co-founder



Aims of this webinar

- Consider the unique position that housing providers are in to spot the signs of domestic abuse via repairs, ASB, rent arrears, welfare calls.

AND

- Leave with tips and considerations for offering a helpful response – do no harm



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Supporting tenants through Corona Virus & recognising Domestic Abuse

- Across the sector CV has meant a change in housing provider delivery models – we have gone from having a very physical presence in supporting tenants to adapting to new ways of working that still allow us to provide support.
- This has included some staff undertaking different roles – all hands on deck! Detailed **DAHA Guidance is available to assist all.**
- Isolation – the current situation has reduced many avenues and opportunities to seek support as housing professionals we are in a **unique position to recognise domestic abuse** in daily tasks.
- **Femicide Census** found that **68%** of domestic homicides had taken place **inside the home** with **5%** immediately outside.
(Nia and Women's Aid England Femicide Census, 2018)



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Is it Noise Nuisance or DA?

How can your customers report DA and ASB?

Check all other information to create a picture of what is actually happening before approaching and always consider domestic abuse.

Tenant recorded what he thought was noise nuisance and was actually the murder of his next door neighbour, Natasha Bradbury. He recorded what he considered was noise nuisance.

*Timothy Down said he thought it felt '**better to stay away**'*



Gentoo Rise in Domestic Abuse Referrals

- **From 1 April to 20 April Gentoo** saw an increase in referrals – **63** to our Victim Support Team of which **28** were **domestic abuse**
- For the same period last year – **9 referrals**
- The **28** domestic abuse referrals came from:
 - Cause for Concern – 5
 - Homehunt – 3
 - MARAC – 8
 - Police - 4
 - Safety & Support - 8



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Covid – 19 Tenancy Breaches

- Many housing providers have introduced a Covid Tenancy Breach to cover the cases whereby social distancing is not observed.
- We have all seen such cases in the media. Whilst the breach will be a useful tool it is **crucial** we investigate any breaches fully and consider the possibility of coercive control – where the victim may be coerced and have no control over what is happening.
- Increase in requests for Noise Apps – Gentoo



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Recognising Domestic Abuse Via Repairs

- Only emergency repairs and gas servicing are currently being undertaken by providers.
- This presents an opportunity to observe anything that may cause concern to a trades operative while undertaking repairs – encourage reporting via ‘**something not quite right**’ where an appropriate person can investigate sensitively.
- **Routine repairs** – although not being carried out until it is safe to do so should also be **monitored**. i.e. routine repairs are still being reported.
- Repeat repair to bathroom door for example all adds to **creating a picture** flagging potential abuse and should be investigated.



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Gentoo / SafeLives Repairs Analysis

344,280 Repairs = **£39.2m**

43,470 potentially DA = **£8.4m**

(21% of all repairs)

Non-DA avg.

10 repairs

£860

DA avg.

13 repairs

£1200



Recognising Domestic Abuse Via Rent Arrears

- We already know that after DA Incident – a victim is likely to go into arrears and if already in arrears – the arrears increase and continue to increase (SafeLives / Gentoo).
- In the current situation whilst suspending rent arrears evictions how can you **support customers to maximise** their income and feel they can seek your support with this and provide room for disclosure
- Example: Gentoo have added more resource to the economic abuse trained Money Matters Team to support customers with UC advice / claims.
- Excellent range of advice and support materials from **SEA**



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Make a plan for responding to need

- Many providers contacting customers to check if they have any support needs – this should also include where you may **suspect** domestic abuse and those where a case may have been **closed** in the **last 6 months**.
- **Make a Plan** on how to make contact safely, **who** is best placed to have the conversation, gather as much info as possible on circumstances and use their mobile where possible and consider using a script:
- Agree a plan in advance of how you will **monitor possible DA** including where you were not able to speak to the victim
- Have weekly check ins with callers to discuss cases where there are ongoing concerns



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Making Contact with Customers

- Gentoo have contacted **24,000** customers as of last week to check on welfare.
- Believe Housing approach is to ask all customers '***Do you feel in your home?***' on every contact
- How easy is it for our customers to find help and information on what support we and specialist domestic abuse organisations offer?
How many clicks?



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Welfare Calls

Prepare for the reality that some perpetrators will be listening in on calls and may instruct victim/survivors to put calls on speaker phone. Encourage staff to trust their gut instincts and report if they are concerned this has happened.

Social distancing is likely to negatively affect some people which is why we're contacting all of our tenants to check in on them and to make sure they are safe and have what they need.

- Are you self-isolating? Is anyone in your household considered to be in the high-risk/vulnerable category?
- Of those in your household, has anyone shown any symptoms?
- Is there any COVID-19 related support that you need that we can look into for you?

Are you alone at home right now? Is there anyone else with you?

Is it safe for you to talk?

It is important that callers do not press victim/survivors for information



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When it is safe to talk

If you know or suspect that violence or abuse is taking place, take action:



Trust your gut if something doesn't feel right, and always call **999** in an emergency.

- **Ask** your client about what is happening when it is safe to do so
- **Validate** that the abuse is not their fault and ask what support they need
- **Support** your client to be safe and connect them with specialist services
- **Report** the violence or abuse to the police, safeguarding, and/or MARAC

A note on support -

Q. What practical advocacy can you offer? Especially if needing to flee? Accommodation / refuge / support with welfare benefits?

Q. How can information be shared with safety at the forefront so not to make the situation worse? Our websites will be crucial.



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When it isn't safe to talk

- *'If your situation changes and you're no longer safe to talk, please say "**thanks but I'm not interested**" and I'll know you have to go. I will then try to call you back at another time'.*
- Advise of opening / working hours and your website information.
- You could suggest that they call back when they are on their own, when alone at home or when they are out for a walk or buying food. If you can, find out when the perpetrator is likely to be out.
- It is vital that you follow up on any agreed call back times as the survivor could be depending on this moment
- More information in detail in DAHA Guidance – <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/resources/>



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Make Yourself Heard

In danger, need the police, but can't speak?

1 Dial
999



2 Listen to the
questions from the
999 operator



3 Respond by
coughing or tapping
the handset if
you can



4 If prompted, press **55**
This lets the 999 call operator
know it's a genuine emergency and
you'll be put through to the police.



Support for perpetrators to address abusive behaviour

Respect's new campaign has been very successful.

Support for perpetrators to address abusive behaviour.

Monitoring data from **16 March**, when Covid-19 measures were introduced, until **19 April**, Respect found that:

- Calls to the Respect phone line increased by **97%**
- Emails by **185%**
- Website visitors by **581%**



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Respect

Phoneline

0808 8024040

www.respectphoneline.org.uk

When the world feels
unsafe, don't make
your home unsafe.



There is no excuse for abuse.

Respect

Free to call from landlines, mobile phones and BT payphones
The Respect Phoneline is operated by Respect. Charity number 1141636

Help
lines
STANDARD

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ousing Alliance

Awareness & Partnerships

- Staff contacting customers need to have some **understanding** of DA and know how to support / signpost a customer to access specialist support – add **local specialist agencies** to the DAHA list in the Guidance so staff have all relevant information.
- **Clear messaging is crucial** - websites / social media should contain info on domestic abuse along with your organisation's support on DA as victims may not be able to easily access specialist organisations' sites.
- It should contain the helpline number for Respect (perpetrators).
- Police sharing notifications when a **DVPN/O** is served.
- Knowledge of **accommodation** for victims and perpetrators



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Further Information

- DAHA Guidance <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/media/10691/daha-covid-housing-guidance-v5-uploaded-010420.pdf>
- LGA Guidance <https://www.local.gov.uk/tackling-domestic-abuse-during-covid-19-pandemic>
- Respect website <https://www.respect.uk.net/>
- Women's Aid <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>
- SafeLives <https://safelives.org.uk/about-us>
- Refuge <https://www.refuge.org.uk/>



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Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

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Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance



Torus approach to Domestic Violence during COVID-19

Northern Housing Consortium

27th April 2020

Catherine Murray-Howard – Chief Operating Officer

www.torus.co.uk

Today's session...

- Torus – a bit about the organisation
- Domestic Violence – our offer
- Recent trends
- Covid-19 – strategic response
 - Continuity of service
 - Increased capacity
- Result

But first...imagine...

Torus Group

38, 000 properties

Liverpool, Warrington and St Helens

1. Great Homes
2. Strong Communities
3. Ambitious Developments
4. Commercial Contracting
5. Corporate Core

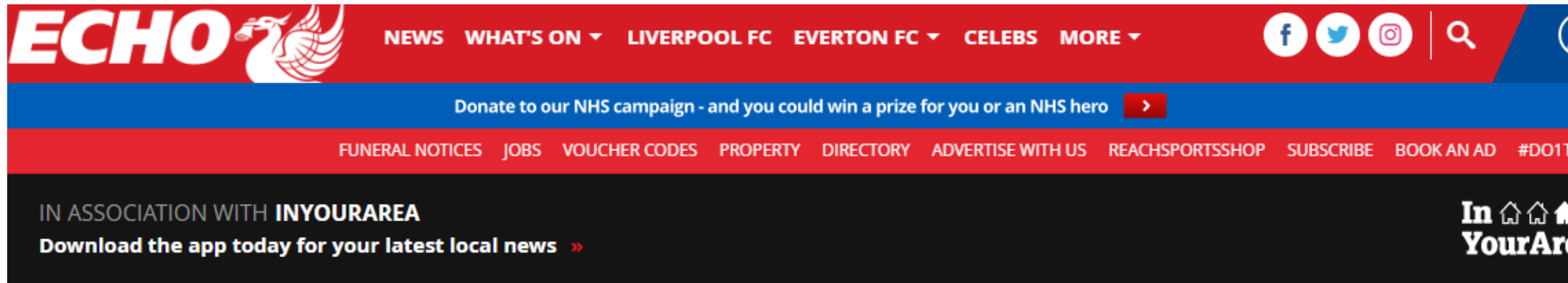



Services Provided

- 24 hour response
- Refuge – St Helen's
- Safe2Speak
- Independent Domestic Violence Advisory Service
- Hostel – Liverpool and Warrington

And our own experience...

At the end of March...



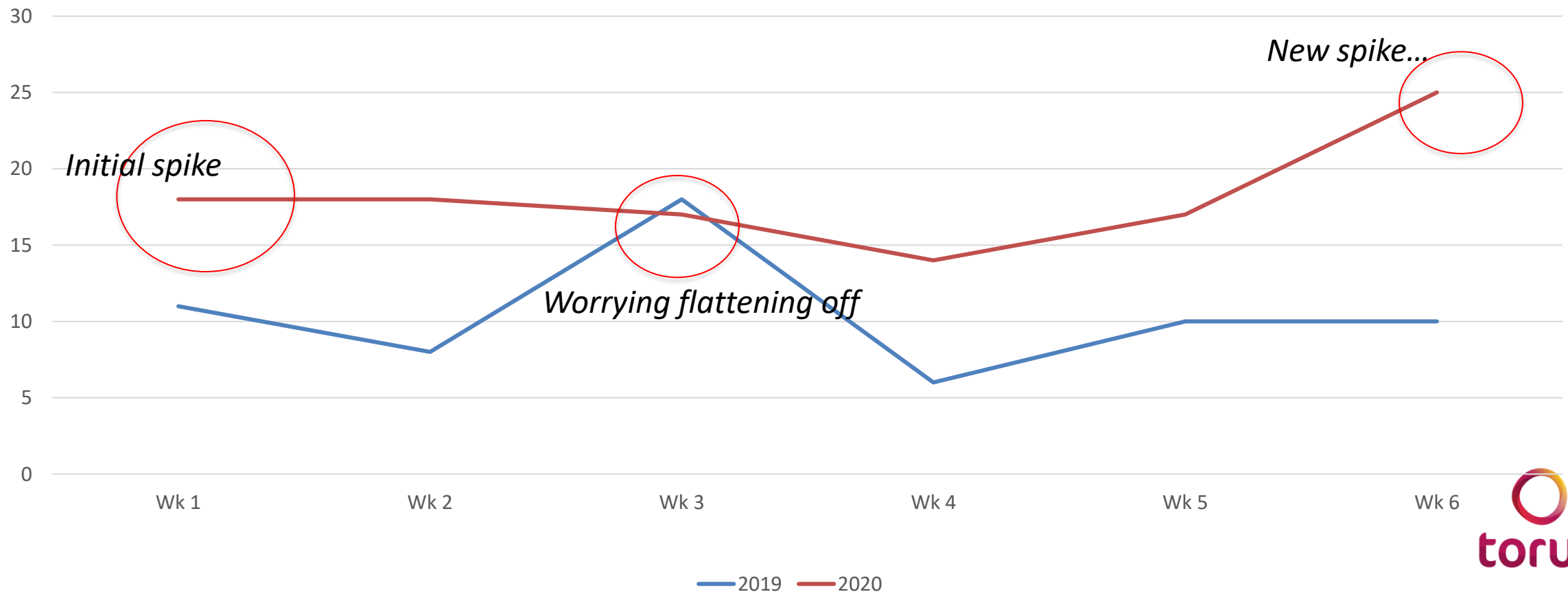
 News ▶ Liverpool News ▶ Crime

Man arrested for murder released after woman's body found

Results of a post mortem examination are being withheld after the woman, in her 50s, was found dead

What we're seeing...

DV reporting trends



Our Approach...

- 1. Continuity of service**
- 2. Add capacity if required**

Continuity of Service

We needed to keep going

- Balance keeping colleagues and victims safe
- 24-onsite support
- Extra promotion of Safe2Speak
- MARAC – online virtual
- Refuge full

Extra Capacity

Making best use of our model...

- Partners in Local Authority – identify properties
- Assets – Surveys – safe systems of work
- Contractor – HMS – Carrying out works – 1 man per property
- Charity – Torus Foundation – ‘Liveable’ not just ‘lettable’

Torus Group

Any Questions?





Any Questions?

www.torus.co.uk



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Legal questions with John Murray
Partner, Property Litigation, Ward Hadaway

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lawfirm



Roundtable discussion