

# Leeds Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy 2023 – 2028

**Domestic violence and abuse is a serious and prevalent issue, both nationally and here in Leeds. It has a drastic, negative, and long-lasting impact upon the safety, health and wider life chances of individuals, children, and families, and creates wider crises such as homelessness and financial exclusion.**

This strategy sets out a vision of hope for victims-survivors of domestic abuse in Leeds. It recognises the challenges faced, and the plan to improve outcomes. I know from speaking to them, that victims-survivors welcome this approach.

To deliver this strategy, we need a joined-up and coordinated response, involving the council, the police, the voluntary and community sector, other partners, people with lived experience and the wider community. Our vision is for Leeds to lead the way as a beacon city where domestic violence and abuse is not tolerated and where victims-survivors and their children know how and where to get the help they need. The implementation of this strategy will be underpinned by a robust action plan that will secure real change for our residents.

We all have a responsibility to help put an end to domestic violence and abuse and I thank everyone involved in writing this strategy for their continued dedication to preventing all forms of domestic violence and abuse in our city, safeguarding our residents, and supporting victims-survivors to recover. It is vital work in which I hope we will all play our part.



**Councillor Debra Coupar**  
Deputy Leader and  
Chair of Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board

**Being a victim-survivor of Domestic Abuse is a journey we did not choose. Having good services to work alongside us, makes the confusion and pain of the experience less so, enabling us to recognise what is happening, plan how we wish to deal with it and recover from the trauma it causes.**



As victims-survivors we have embraced the opportunity to help improve services in Leeds. We continue to highlight good practice and share learning with the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, statutory and non-statutory agencies. We have given feedback on the LDVS services, developed a podcast for frontline workers to help and encourage them in their roles, explaining they are vital to enable us to be safe when leaving and recovering.

As victims-survivors we are proud of our achievements to overcome and move on from domestic abuse. We would like you to know we feel safer, happier, can now plan for our future, and want to be involved in helping other victim/survivors. We are proud to be part of the Voices project; if you're someone with lived experience of domestic abuse and you want to join us to shape the future, please get in touch via email to the Safer Leeds Safeguarding and DV Team at [SaferLeedsSafeguardingandDVTeam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:SaferLeedsSafeguardingandDVTeam@leeds.gov.uk)

We hope to continue to work with services to help them to improve and as people with lived experience, we hope to inspire victims-survivors to make the right decisions for them with the support of services in Leeds. As victims-survivors who have used services in Leeds, we now can make changes.

## The Women's Victim-Survivor Forum



 There was one time the police came to my house and there was so much else that was going on, there were things happening to me, by others in the family and I hadn't told anyone. It was hard to keep it straight in my head - to make sure I didn't say too much about the other things and at the same time to tell them about what had just happened and why I called the police. they must have thought I was crazy, but really, I was just trying to keep safe and tell as much of the truth as I could. 





## Our promise to you

- ✓ We will always treat you with respect and compassion
- ✓ We will make sure that your views and choices are respected
- ✓ We will make sure that you are kept informed about what we're doing

## Statement of intent

*Through this strategy we will continue to improve the immediate and long-term support available to all those living with domestic violence and abuse. We will actively listen to victims-survivors to ensure good practice is shared and lessons are learned. We will challenge and support those who are causing harm. We will build on the work done with children and young people to improve how we keep them safe and supported.*

## What are we going to do?

### Awareness, prevention and early intervention

- Make sure there are lots of places to talk about and be asked about whether you're living with abuse, and then get help and support.
- Have campaigns so the public can better understand domestic violence and abuse.
- Provide information to people about services including financial support.
- Make sure employers understand and can support those affected by domestic violence and abuse.
- Raise awareness of honour-based abuse and forced marriage and make sure services can recognise and respond well.

### Responding to risk and harm

- Listen to those with lived experience to improve what we do.
- Look for additional funding and resources, and make sure our current services are striving to be the best to meet needs.
- Make sure that you get help with housing, using the law, immigration advice, and access to emotional support for you and your children.

### People causing harm (perpetrators)

- Increase support for those who want to change their behaviour.
- Make good use of control measures like arrests and injunctions to reduce risk.
- Make sure those people causing most harm are well managed by services.
- Have a clear vision of what needs to change and make sure staff are trained to make those changes.
- Increase the number of charges and convictions through a robust criminal justice response.

### Children and young people

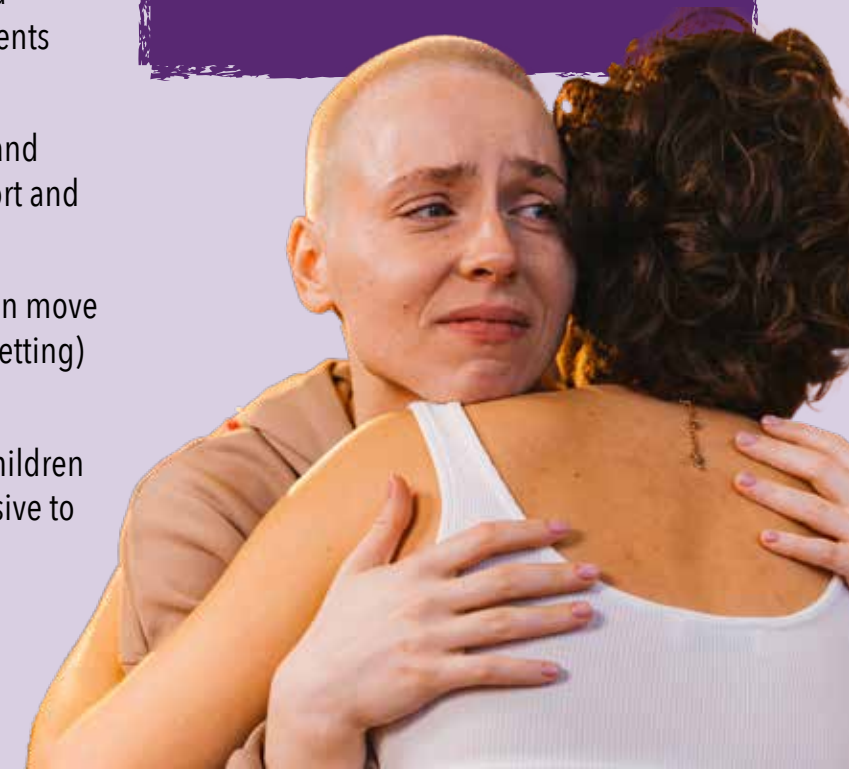
- Develop ongoing support for children and young people for as long as they need it.
- Ensure that siblings can discuss their experiences with each other in a separate environment from parents and carers.
- Listen to the voices of children and young people to develop support and services.
- Share information when children move from one school (or education setting) to another.
- Support those families where children or young people are being abusive to parents/carers.

### How will we know it's making a difference?

We will:

- Continue to work with and listen to those with lived experience.
- Gather feedback from service users and use it to improve what we do.
- Monitor the numbers of arrests, charges, and convictions to make sure they're making people safer.
- Promote our services so that more people will access support sooner.

 Support needs to be flexible – sometimes you feel ok and like you don't need it, but then something happens and you're right back where you started. 



# Accessing support



If you need support now, this can be accessed by calling:  
Leeds Domestic Violence Service 24-hour helpline  
on **0113 2460401** or by visiting [LDVS website](#)

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[Leeds City Council website](#) with a range of services including those providing support to specific communities and to those experiencing honour-based abuse and forced marriage.

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If you are in immediate danger, please call **999**. If it is not an emergency, you can contact West Yorkshire Police using telephone number **101**, visit your local police station or use the online reporting service [Report Domestic Abuse | West Yorkshire Police](#)

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**women's aid**  
until women & children are safe

**Respect**  
Men's advice line

**childline**  
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

You can also contact the Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge on **0808 2000 247** or the Men's Advice Line on **0808 801 0327** or **Childline 0800 1111**.

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If you have any thoughts or suggestions about this strategy or our response to domestic violence and abuse in Leeds please email the and DV Team [SaferLeedsSafeguardingandDVTeam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:SaferLeedsSafeguardingandDVTeam@leeds.gov.uk)



Scan to view the full version of the Leeds Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy