

Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership Strategy

2025-2028

Contents

Introduction	3
Prioritising prevention; Supporting victims; Pursuing perpetrators; A stronger system	4
Our vision	5
Outcomes and Principles	6
Local Focus	7
Strategic Outcomes	10
1. Cheshire East has a culture that challenges misogyny, promotes healthy relationships, and prevents abuse before it starts.....	10
2. All victims of abuse and those who harm in Cheshire East, have access to a range of safe, appropriate support options that support recovery and independence, including safe accommodation.	12
3. Services seek to continuously improve, based on learning from those with lived experience, anyone affected by abuse and all serious incidents.....	15
4. Cheshire East has a coordinated, trauma-informed, and data-driven system that supports victims, holds perpetrators accountable, and prevents abuse.....	17
What will we do?	18
Conclusion.....	20

Introduction

It can be difficult to quantify the prevalence of domestic and sexual abuse, (due to people not disclosing or reporting abuse, not recognising coercive and controlling behaviour and re-victimisation), but the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) in November 2023 found that around 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have experienced domestic abuse in their lifetime.

According to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the behaviour of a person personally connected¹ to another, is abusive, if it consists of the following:

- a) physical or sexual abuse
- b) violent or threatening behaviour
- c) controlling or coercive behaviour
- d) economic abuse
- e) psychological, emotional or other abuse

Domestic abuse is very common and can happen regardless of social group, class, age, race, disability or sexuality of the individuals involved. Domestic abuse can affect men, women and those who identify as non-binary. It can occur in any relationship – heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, at any age. However, it is important to acknowledge that domestic abuse is a gender related issue and whilst both men and women may experience incidents of inter-personal violence and abuse, there are important differences between male violence against women and female violence against men, namely the amount, severity and impact. Women experience higher rates of repeated victimisation and are much more likely to be seriously hurt (Walby and Towers, 2018; Walby and Allen, 2004) or killed than male victims of domestic abuse (ONS, 2023a).²

The World Health Organisation provides a broad definition of Sexual Violence as: “Actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.”

The definition of “coercion” is wide: apart from physical force, it may involve psychological intimidation, blackmail or other threats including the threat of physical harm, sexual control, financial restriction, controlling access to children, isolation, harm to pets, threat of self-harm, destroying property, threats to discredit, threat of being dismissed from a job or of not obtaining a job that is sought. It may also occur when the person is unable to give consent while drunk, drugged, asleep or mentally incapable of understanding the situation.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021³ placed statutory requirements on all Local Authorities. The table below shows the main requirements, with a summary of Cheshire East Council’s current status:

² [Domestic abuse is a gendered crime - Women’s Aid](#)

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

Cheshire East Council - Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2025-2028

DA Act 2021 Part 4 Statutory Requirements	Cheshire East Council Status
Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board which it must consult as it performs certain specified functions.	The Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership Board meets this requirement.
Assess the need for domestic abuse support in their area for all survivors and their children who reside in relevant safe accommodation, including those who come from outside of their area.	A Needs Assessment was completed in 2021/22 as part of the Whole Housing Approach development work. The needs assessment in this review updates that for 2022/23.
Develop and publish a Safe Accommodation Strategy having regard to the needs assessment.	Completed through publication of the Whole Housing Approach Strategy 2021-23.
Implement the strategy through commissioning / de-commissioning decisions.	Commissioning decisions will follow the completion of this review.
Monitor and evaluate local delivery and effectiveness of the strategy.	The Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership board is responsible for this.
Report back to central government annually.	The Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership board is responsible for this.

The Government published its Domestic Abuse Action Plan⁴ in March 2022, with the following priorities, which can also be found in the Government's National Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2021-24⁵:

Prioritising prevention; Supporting victims; Pursuing perpetrators; A stronger system

The Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2025-2028 will seek to ensure that all partnership agencies work towards addressing these priorities, whilst focussing on the specific needs of Cheshire East residents.

In 2024, the Victims and Prisoners Bill was enacted into Law and became the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024. Part One of the Act places a duty on all public sector bodies to work together to provide relevant support services for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence:

“Relevant victim support service” means a service, other than accommodation-based support, provided to support victims of criminal conduct which constitutes:

- a) domestic abuse,*
- b) conduct of a sexual nature, or*
- c) serious violence.⁶*

As well as the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024, it is important to understand the links between this strategy and several other national

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-domestic-abuse-plan>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

⁶ [Victims and Prisoners Act 2024](#)

Cheshire East Council - Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2025-2028

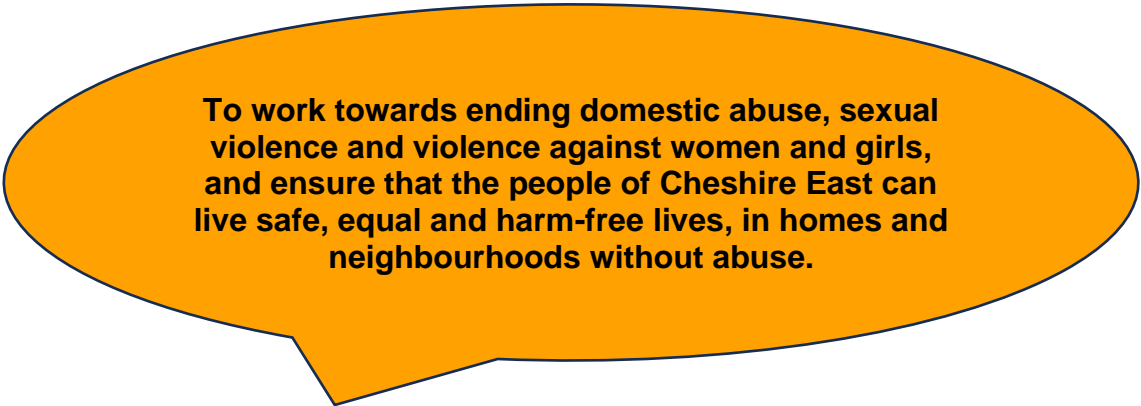
and local strategies and policies, as the effect of domestic and sexual abuse are cross cutting and wide ranging. The list below is not exhaustive:

- *Children Act 1989*
- *Housing Act 2004*
- *Sexual Offences Act 2003*
- *The Care Act 2014*
- *Serious Crime Act 2015*
- *Criminal Justice and Courts Act 20*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2024*
- *Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024*
- *Cheshire Serious Violence Strategy 2024-2029*
- *Cheshire East Substance Misuse Strategy*
- *Cheshire Police and Crime Plan*
- *Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy*
- *CE SEND Strategy*
- *CE Dementia Strategy*
- *CE Suicide and Self Harm Strategy*

The Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership Board is formally accountable to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board also works closely together with Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP), the Local Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safer Cheshire East Partnership. Any decisions relating to statutory duties under the Domestic abuse Act 2021 are the responsibility of Cheshire East Council.

Our vision

The Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership have a long-term commitment:



To work towards ending domestic abuse, sexual violence and violence against women and girls, and ensure that the people of Cheshire East can live safe, equal and harm-free lives, in homes and neighbourhoods without abuse.

The Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership is working together to support all residents of Cheshire East to live safe and violence-free lives, through

identifying gaps in provision, and working together to provide a robust and meaningful response for victims, perpetrators and their families.

This strategy sets out the commitment of the partnership to challenge the values, attitudes and behaviours that enable all aspects of violence against women and girls.

The strategy will focus on building a stronger system to ensure:

- A focus on prevention
- Trauma-informed service provision for victims, children and perpetrators
- Partnership and collaboration
- Accountability and Learning

Outcomes and Principles

There are four main strategic outcomes that we are hoping to achieve:

- Cheshire East has a coordinated, trauma-informed, and data-driven system that supports victims, holds perpetrators accountable, and prevents abuse.
- Cheshire East has a culture that challenges misogyny, promotes healthy relationships, and prevents abuse before it starts.
- All victims of abuse and those who harm in Cheshire East, have access to a range of safe, appropriate support options that support recovery and independence, including safe accommodation.
- Services seek to continuously improve, based on learning from those with lived experience, anyone affected by abuse and all serious incidents.

The CEDSAP Strategy is underpinned by the following principles:

Trauma-informed practice: All services will be designed and delivered with an understanding of trauma and its impact.

Co-production: Services will be shaped with those who have lived experience.

Equality and inclusion: A commitment to addressing the needs of marginalised communities and those with protected characteristics.

Prevention-focused: Emphasis on early intervention and education to stop abuse before it starts.

Partnership and collaboration: Multi-agency working is central to delivering effective support and systemic change.

Accountability and learning: Continuous improvement through learning from reviews, data, and feedback.

Local Focus

As of the year ending March 2024, around 2.3 million people between the ages of 16 and 74 reported experiencing domestic abuse. This includes 1.6 million women and 757,000 men, highlighting that while anyone can be affected, women remain disproportionately impacted.

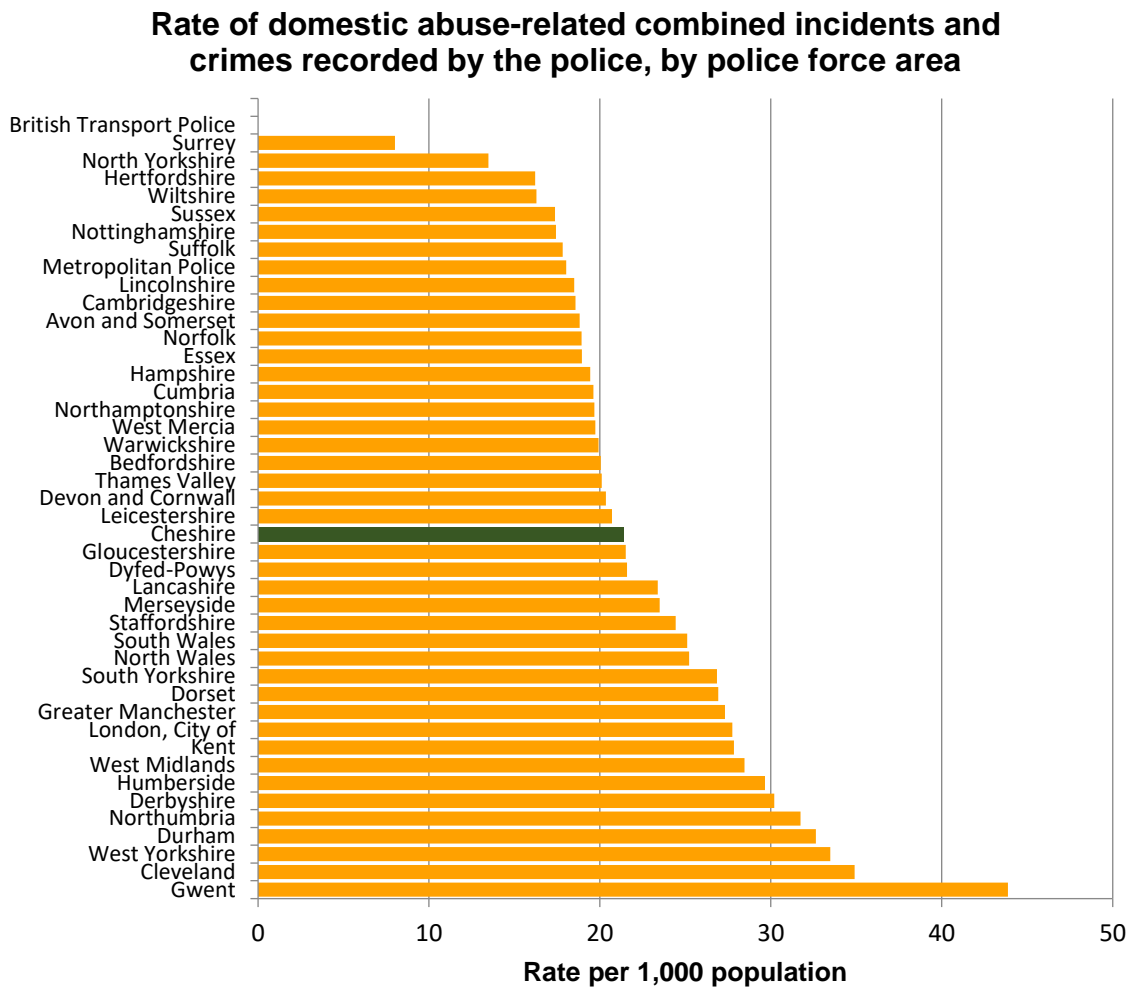
The police recorded 1,350,428 domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes in England and Wales in year end March 2024; 851,062 of these were recorded as domestic abuse-related crimes.



In Cheshire (which includes Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, Halton and Warrington), 23,730 domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes were recorded in the year ending March 2024.

The average percentage of all domestic-abuse related incidents and crimes which were classified as domestic abuse-related crimes for the year ending March 2024 was 63% across England and Wales. This compares with the much higher, 73% for the North-West and slightly higher 65% for Cheshire as a whole.

The national percentage of all recorded crimes classified as domestic abuse-related was 16% during this period, but in Cheshire, this was 20%.



In Cheshire East, during 2024/25 there were 4540 domestic abuse incidents reported to Cheshire Constabulary and 1043 sexual offence incidents (450 of these were offences of rape).

This compares with 4584 in Cheshire West and Chester, 2626 in Warrington and 2334 in Halton.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right, not just as dependants of the victim/perpetrator and the Victims and Prisoner’s Act 2024 allows the court to remove parental responsibility from a parent if they have killed the other parent.



Cheshire East Council - Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2025-2028

20% of children in the UK have lived with an adult perpetrating domestic abuse.⁷ Experiencing domestic abuse in childhood is a form of child abuse and many parents experiencing abuse at the hands of an intimate partner are concerned about their child's safety and wellbeing, describing children becoming withdrawn, sad, timid, emotional and in some cases displaying aggressive behaviour themselves.⁸

Children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of both short and long-term physical and mental health problems. Every child will be affected differently to the trauma of domestic abuse.⁹

Operation Encompass is a partnership between police and schools in the UK, which aims to reduce the long-term impacts of domestic abuse on children by early identification and providing early intervention and support. The roll out of the national pilot of Operation Encompass (now given statutory standing under the 2024 Act) means that schools have timely information about police attendance at incidents of domestic abuse involving children, ensuring schools are well placed to support the children with their experiences. In Cheshire East, during September 2024, there were 192 occurrences with 348 referrals (i.e. number of children) of which there were 9 occurrences relating to 21 children who were homeschooled.

This strategy is tailored to the specific needs of Cheshire East, with a focus on:

- Addressing high rates of domestic and sexual abuse in Cheshire East.
- Providing quality, trauma-informed support for all those experiencing abuse.
- Supporting children as victims in their own right.
- Focussing on prevention.
- Tackling workplace harassment and abuse.
- Ensuring safe accommodation and housing stability.
- Reaching marginalised communities through culturally competent services.
- Strengthening governance and joint commissioning across agencies.

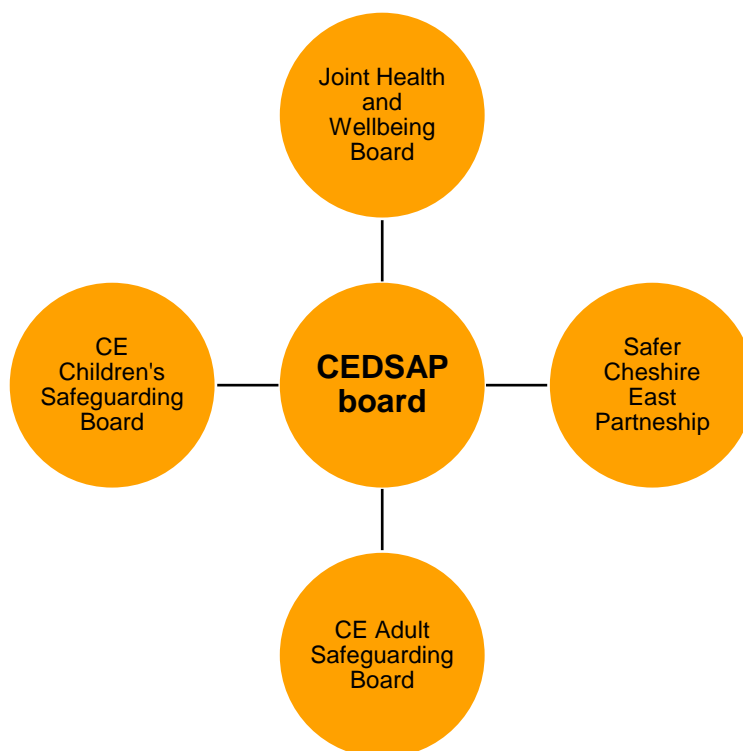
The Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership Board is formally accountable to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board, although the safe accommodation aspect remains a statutory duty for the Local Authority (Cheshire East Council). The Board also works closely together with Safer Cheshire East Partnership (Community Safety Partnership), Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership (CESCP) and Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board (CESAB).

⁷ [Facts and Statistics - Refuge](#)

⁸ [Helplines briefing: The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people from the voices of parents and carers](#)

⁹ [Effects of domestic abuse on children | Barnardo's](#)

The Board supports Cheshire East Council in reporting back to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Ministry of Housing and Communities and other funding partners.



Strategic Outcomes

1. Cheshire East has a culture that challenges misogyny, promotes healthy relationships, and prevents abuse before it starts.

What does this mean?

Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ('the 2021 Act') recognises children as victims of domestic abuse for the purposes of the Act if the child sees, hears, or experiences the effects of the abuse, and is related to, or falls under "parental responsibility" of, the victim and/or perpetrator of the domestic abuse. A child might therefore be considered a victim of domestic abuse under the 2021 Act where one parent is abusing another parent, or where a parent is abusing, or being abused by, a partner or relative.¹⁰

¹⁰

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1089015/Domestic_Abuse_Act_2021_Statutory_Guidance.p

CEDSAP will ensure that local agencies understand the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people and that there are appropriate interventions in place to safeguard them, support them to understand and unpack their experiences, as well as recovery programmes to manage the longer-term effects of experiencing abuse. We will make sure that children and young people are given the opportunity to access services separately from their parents/carers/guardians, but also that there is support for children and families to work together to rebuild their relationships (where appropriate and safe to do so).

The National Education Union (NEU) has long argued for the need for high-quality Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in every school. These subjects are critical for keeping children happy and healthy, and they provide a host of positive and protective outcomes for children and young people.¹¹ All schools in England now have a statutory duty to teach Relationships and Sexuality education, from primary age through to the end of secondary, with age-appropriate subject matter. However, schools have a significant amount of flexibility in the delivery and little resource has been given to support schools to embed the new curriculum. It is important that pupils and parents feel empowered to challenge unequal power dynamics, “banter” and misogynistic ideas and that teachers have the time and space to have these important discussions. An ethos of openness and support needs to run throughout the school, avoiding a reliance on individual sessions from outside agencies, but rather ensuring frank and open discussions during all appropriate lessons. The partnership will ensure that all teachers and staff are given the resources they need to feel able to provide positive challenge.

During 2022, a number of social media influencers became a focus for the concern of parents, the media and education leaders, as their misogynistic attitudes and values were promoted as ‘aspirational’ for boys and young men. They promote the idea that women are men’s property and bear the responsibility for rape and sexual assault. “Tate plays on boy’s fears about their economic futures and place in the structures of masculinity while styling himself as a maverick, but authentic figure.”¹² These tactics promote an inequality between the sexes and gendered misinformation, which can lead to young men questioning what it means to be a ‘man’ and a dangerous acceptance of male violence towards women. It is vital that the Partnership work with education and youth work colleagues to effectively challenge these values and attitudes and give young people the space to discuss these concerns and challenge each other.

¹¹ [How safe are our children? 2020: an overview of data on abuse of adolescents](#)

¹² [Mainstreaming the Manosphere’s Misogyny Through Affective Homosocial Currencies: Exploring How Teen Boys Navigate the Andrew Tate Effect - Craig Haslop, Jessica Ringrose, Idil Cambazoglu, Betsy Milne, 2024](#)

A great deal of research has been done around the impact of preventative work, especially in schools and within education settings, with only 52% of young people believing that their current RSE classes gave them a good understanding of toxic and safe relationships. To build stronger, more resilient communities, we will focus on children and young people and giving them the tools they need to make positive choices when forming relationships, as well as feeling empowered to challenge behaviour they are not comfortable with.

The partnership will look at all aspects of preventative work, looking at any gaps in provision. Health-based partners will consider what information and training is available to primary-care services and ensure that the “routine enquiry” process is being adhered to within all relevant areas of provision.

The Cheshire East Partnership are committed to increasing visibility for all Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse services, through public campaigns and wider media outreach. There will be a coordinated approach to education with children and young people, around all aspects of healthy relationships, including coercive controlling behaviours, consent and use of technology. Availability of resources for residents and professionals working in the sector will be increased, and include wider aspects of DA, including child to parent abuse, financial abuse and post-separation abuse. We will work with all partners to support safe parenting in domestic abuse contexts.

2. All victims of abuse and those who harm in Cheshire East, have access to a range of safe, appropriate support options that support recovery and independence, including safe accommodation.

What does this mean?

Cheshire East has worked with ‘Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse’ to develop a Whole Housing Approach model, to support victims of domestic abuse and their families. This model has been evaluated by the University of Central Lancashire¹³ and in summer 2025, Cheshire East was awarded DAHA Platinum Accreditation for ensuring that survivors of domestic abuse in Cheshire East get the best possible response around their housing needs.

The model was based on meeting the Local Authority’s responsibilities to assess safe accommodation needs and develop a model to deliver on these needs.¹⁴ The model supports the early identification of housing needs and aims to reduce homelessness and support victims to remain in their own homes, where safe to do

¹³ [UCLan Interim Report WHA Evaluation December 2024.pdf](#)

¹⁴ [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

so. This may be through additional target hardening and appropriate support with funding, safety planning and ongoing recovery.

Cheshire East absolutely recognise that some victims must be offered safe accommodation away from the perpetrator and according to Women's Aid England, "a refuge service includes a range of accommodation types - which can encompass shared houses, self-contained units and dispersed accommodation. Whilst most accommodation offered by refuge services is in shared accommodation where families live 'communally', the national network of refuges also includes self-contained units with communal areas, or dispersed accommodation within the community. This combination of accommodation types enables refuge services to provide support to those women with additional support needs such as drug/alcohol use, or a larger family size, which can mean communal living is unsuitable."¹⁵

The Cheshire East model will focus on models of good practice and offer the widest possible choice for all victims and their children.

Cheshire East Safe Accommodation will enable the widest possible access to support through a mixed model of provision, ensuring those with multiple and complex needs are able to access support. We will seek to address specific barriers to accessing safe accommodation, such as larger families, disabilities, pets etc and aim to ensure the model contains short and longer-term options, based on individual needs.

Cheshire East victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse require access to education and information, to support them to make informed decisions about their future. Information should be available in all public spaces and resources available to enable anyone fleeing abuse to know where they can access support. A victim-focussed, single point of access to services enables a smooth and timely transition into the correct support for an individual, depending on where they are on their journey.

For those at the point of recognising the abuse, but still in a place of safety, support will be available to unpick their experiences and work through their next steps, be it accommodation support, provision of early support or recovery programmes.

For those at a higher risk of harm, immediate support will be provided for safety planning and emergency accommodation, including a fully resourced IDVA provision. Emergency accommodation, supported by qualified and experienced staff is available, with immediate access for Cheshire East residents. If this is not available due to lack of space, the UK-wide Routes to Support process will be followed to access support outside of Cheshire East. Specialist IDVA provision, with expertise in

¹⁵ [4 -wha-refuge-services.pdf](#)

safety planning, risk mitigation and partnership working is vital to ensure high risk victims have access to the individualised support package they require.

The MARAC within Cheshire East is widely supported by the partners, but this will be strengthened to ensure they are providing all measures appropriate to keep the person safe and that action is taken in a timely manner to mitigate risk.

If there has been sexual abuse and the victim wishes to go through the criminal justice process, they will also have access to high level quality support from an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA).

For those who have had the immediate risk managed, support will be provided to ensure long-term stability and recovery. This 'step-down' support from high risk to longer term management is vital in supporting a family to progress and grow together safely. The partnership will offer a strong and integrated approach to recovery work, utilising and expanding on current services, to ensure survivors and their children have a strengths-based programme of support to enable them to move forwards together.

Support for victims (including children) will be trauma-informed and survivor-led, based on individual needs. All services will reflect the individual needs of clients, and their diverse experiences of abuse. The Partnership will continue to work with all local and regional 'By and For' organisations to ensure those from culturally diverse communities are represented and supported. Services will be available to support victims of all aspects of domestic abuse, including coercive controlling behaviour, financial abuse and child to parent abuse.

Children are legally accepted as victims of domestic abuse in their own right and as such are entitled to support separate from that offered to their parents. Children in Cheshire East will have access to dedicated, age-appropriate support to understand their reactions to their experiences and have the opportunity to unpack these issues in a safe and inclusive environment.

To properly safeguard victims/survivors and their families, it is imperative that we pursue perpetrators and effectively challenge and seek to change (where appropriate) their behaviour. All statutory agencies – from policing, probation and the courts, to health services, children's social care and housing and many others too – have a responsibility to respond to perpetrators to prevent them causing further harm as part of a comprehensive multi-agency approach.¹⁶

In Cheshire East we will provide a full suite of interventions, aimed at targeting a perpetrator wherever they are on their individual journey. This will include support to

¹⁶ RESPECT Strategy *Stopping the Harm* 2023-28

change their behaviour, values and attitudes where appropriate, through appropriate relationship modelling, group work and one to one interventions. For those causing significant harm, agencies will work together to pursue and disrupt harmful behaviours.

The work with perpetrators will be truly trauma-informed and recognise the links with substance misuse, mental health and suicidality for victims and perpetrators. There will be clear accountability mechanisms if the perpetrators fail to engage with behaviour change interventions and/or continue to perpetrate abuse either with their current family or future partners.

3. Services seek to continuously improve, based on learning from those with lived experience, anyone affected by abuse and all serious incidents.

What does this mean?

Cheshire East has had 9 Domestic Homicide Reviews (changed to Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews in the Victim and Prisoners Act 2024) since 2019, with a number of these still ongoing. They range in scope, from direct perpetrator to victim homicide, to suicide and substance overdose, but all have a number of themes running through them.

The victims have endured long periods of coercive controlling behaviour, which has had significant effects on their mental health. For some this has been coupled with misuse of substances, either due to the influence of the perpetrator directly, or in order to manage the effects of the abuse.

A study in 2022 showed that people with a lifetime history of IPV (intimate partner violence) were 3 times more likely to have made a suicide attempt in the past year than those without any experience of IPV.¹⁷

The risks of suicide of a victim of coercive control are now recognised by the National Police Chiefs' Council¹⁸ but the dissemination of this knowledge and understanding and cascading of appropriate training has been limited until recently.

The sharing of information and understanding of the risk posed to the victims appeared to have been understated or misunderstood by some agencies and this has led to missed opportunities to intervene. This includes the understanding of the 8

¹⁷ [Intimate partner violence, suicidality, and self-harm: a probability sample survey of the general population in England - The Lancet Psychiatry](#)

¹⁸ [Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme \(VKPP\)](#)

stages of domestic homicide timeline¹⁹ as well as the increased danger of non-fatal strangulation.²⁰ The impact of domestic abuse on older people and the difficulties of dealing with those with caring responsibility and victims with dementia has been identified as well as working more closely with perpetrators and understanding how to manage counter allegations.

The Cheshire East Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Boards have done a huge amount of work to build a training programme for professionals, as well as specific toolkits to assist practice in these areas, but this needs to be an ongoing process and built into inductions for all professionals working with potentially vulnerable people.

The Partnership work closely with a group of Survivor consultants, to support the development of services to meet the needs of local people. They have spoken about the need for more preventative work and awareness raising with children and young people, as well as the problems of a coordinated approach and the lack of training that some agencies have in understanding domestic abuse, especially around coercive control:

“I didn’t know what coercive control was until is ended”

“things might have been different if someone planted the seed...”

“it should be so open, that everyone can talk about it”

“the young lads might not even have a clue that it is controlling behaviour”

“there can be no connection between services, one professional might think that his parenting is ok, and another can see it is domestic abuse”

Clients from a range of services across Cheshire East have engaged with the consultation process and development of the Strategy and the Partnership will continue to consult with survivors when developing the Delivery Plan. As part of the structure of the Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership Board, a Lived Experience subgroup will feed into all aspects of development and planning.

¹⁹ [What is the Homicide Timeline | Homicide Timeline](#)

²⁰ [Strangulation and suffocation - GOV.UK](#)

4. Cheshire East has a coordinated, trauma-informed, and data-driven system that supports victims, holds perpetrators accountable, and prevents abuse.

What does this mean?

Cheshire East recognises the need to move towards a public-health approach to ending domestic and sexual abuse. We need to understand our communities and the impact of their socio-economic environment, recognise their risk and protective factors, at the same time as developing and trialling new approaches to tackle violence and putting preventative measures in place.

The governance of the domestic abuse and sexual violence agenda will be strengthened in Cheshire East, through best practice quality improvement approaches, a better understanding of multiagency communication and practice and exploring the use of new technology and systems across the partnership.

In Cheshire East, we will bring partners and stakeholders together, look at needs, identify gaps, agree how we will address the needs effectively and then invest in appropriate services. These services will be continually monitored and evaluated to ensure impact and joined-up approach to services.

Intelligence-led commissioning relies on the regular review of combined and collated information from co-production and working with those with lived experience, data, best practice, evidence-based research and professional expertise and insight. The partnership will work with local organisations, as well as partners offering support with a wide range of complexities, including mental health, substance misuse, homelessness. Working directly with current and previous co-production and working with those with lived experience.

Cheshire East Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership will take a practical and robust partnership approach to commissioning, with a Joint Commissioning Subgroup under CEDSAP, made up of all stakeholders (including providers and those with lived experience), to provide continuous data and analysis of provision, demand and effectiveness. Linked to this will be a Partnership Decision-making group to review funding opportunities and make final funding decisions, made up of commissioning leads from all partners.

This joined-up approach to the commissioning process will help to ensure that not only are we confident that we are commissioning quality provision, and maximising our collective investment to achieve shared outcomes, but we can also ensure that interventions are implemented at the right time in a client's journey of support. The partnership will implement a shared Outcomes Framework to ensure that all

commissioned services have a shared focus and enable a greater degree of quality assurance.

The partnership will work towards more sustainable joint-commissioning, with the opportunity for longer term funding (with a focus on continuous monitoring and improvement). This will promote stability and enable innovation and development, alongside maintaining high quality provision of services.

What will we do?

1. Cheshire East has a culture that challenges misogyny, promotes healthy relationships, and prevents abuse before it starts.

Key deliverables:

- Deliver interventions tailored to children and young people.
- Support family recovery where safe and appropriate.
- Embed Operation Encompass in all schools.
- Provide separate and joint support options for children and families.
- Support schools to deliver high-quality RSE and challenge harmful gender norms.
- Work with youth services to counteract online misogyny and influencer culture.
- Expand preventative work in primary care and community settings.
- Empower young people to recognise and challenge abuse.
- Develop and roll out a domestic abuse awareness training package for all public sector agencies and frontline services.
- Promote bystander intervention and community responsibility.
- Ensure accessible information for all residents, including hidden and marginalised groups.
- Embed domestic abuse education in Family Hubs and health settings.
- Develop and implement workplace policies across sectors.
- Train employers to support victims and challenge perpetrators.
- Promote trauma-informed workplace cultures.

Indicators for success:

- % of schools implementing Operation Encompass.
- % of schools delivering Relationships and Sexuality Education that meets and/or exceeds national standards.
- Pre/post surveys on young people's understanding of healthy relationships.
- Number of professionals trained in domestic abuse awareness.

- Number of professionals trained in specific areas of abuse, such as child to parent abuse, financial abuse and the effects of domestic abuse on children and young people.
- Number of employers adopting workplace domestic abuse policies.
- Reduction in reported incidents of misogynistic behaviour in schools and youth settings.

2. All victims of abuse and those who harm in Cheshire East, have access to a range of safe, appropriate support options that support recovery and independence, including safe accommodation.

Key deliverables:

- Implement the Whole Housing Approach model.
- Provide refuge and dispersed accommodation options.
- Support victims to remain safely in their homes where appropriate.
- Ensure housing services are accessible to all, including those with complex needs
- Maintain a single point of access for victims.
- Provide IDVA/ISVA support and emergency accommodation.
- Strengthen MARAC processes.
- Expand recovery and step-down support services.
- Deliver a full suite of perpetrator interventions.
- Embed trauma-informed approaches in perpetrator work.
- Disrupt harmful behaviours through multi-agency action.
- Address links with substance misuse and mental health.

Indicators for success:

- % of victims accessing safe accommodation within 24 hours.
- Number of households supported to remain safely at home.
- % of MARAC cases with safety plans implemented within target time.
- Number of perpetrators completing behaviour change programmes.
- Victim satisfaction with support services (via surveys).
- Reduction in repeat victimisation rates.

3. Services seek to continuously improve, based on learning from those with lived experience, anyone affected by abuse and all serious incidents.

Key deliverables:

- Work with 'By and For' organisations to reduce barriers.

- Train professionals on intersectionality and cultural competence.
- Address specific needs of older people, LGBTQ+ individuals, and those with disabilities.
- Embed findings from reviews into training and practice.
- Raise awareness of coercive control and suicide risk.
- Improve multi-agency understanding of risk indicators.
- Establish regular forums for engagement with survivors.
- Use feedback to shape strategy, commissioning, and delivery.
- Promote survivor-led awareness and education initiatives.

Indicators for success:

- Number of professionals trained in cultural competence.
- % of service changes informed by survivor feedback.
- Number of survivor-led initiatives or campaigns.
- Reduction in service access disparities across demographic groups.
- Number of Domestic Homicide Review recommendations implemented.

4. Cheshire East has a coordinated, trauma-informed, and data-driven system that supports victims, holds perpetrators accountable, and prevents abuse.

Key deliverables:

- Strengthen governance through CEDSAP and its subgroups.
- Implement a shared Outcomes Framework for all commissioned services.
- Improve multi-agency communication and use of technology.
- Embed trauma-informed principles across all services.
- Monitor and evaluate service effectiveness through continuous quality improvement.

Indicators for success:

- % of commissioned services aligned with the Outcomes Framework.
- Frequency of data-sharing and joint decision-making meetings.
- Number of services rated as effective through evaluation.
- % of staff trained in trauma-informed practice.
- Increase in joint commissioning initiatives.

Conclusion

Domestic abuse (sometimes referred to as 'domestic violence' or 'intimate partner violence') can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time in a relationship.

Cheshire East Council - Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2025-2028

Domestic abuse isn't always physical. Any type of threatening, controlling or coercive behaviour is abuse – whether it's physical, psychological, sexual, economic or emotional.

Domestic abuse can affect anyone, from any background and of any age. It occurs in a range of relationships, including with an intimate partner, a child, a sibling, an ex-partner, a casual partner or a family member. And it can happen at any point in a relationship, whether you live with the person or not.²¹

Domestic abuse is complex and wide-ranging. We cannot do this work alone. In Cheshire East we want to bring families, communities and services together to tackle this issue and work towards eradicating domestic abuse completely.

We will work together, and we will make a difference.

²¹ [What is domestic abuse? - SafeLives](#)