

# Strategy to Combat Domestic Abuse in Orkney

**Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum**

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# **1. Introduction**

It is difficult to know how many people live with domestic abuse, but research shows that it is widespread, under reported and that the level of repeat abuse is high. Domestic abuse is associated with broader inequalities in society; it is part of a range of behaviours constituting abuse of power and is linked to other forms of violence such as rape and child abuse. Abuse is likely to escalate in frequency and intensity over time and may increase at specific events in the person's life such as when trying to leave the relationship, separation or divorce, redundancy, being in debt and, in the case of women, during pregnancy and following the birth of a child. Domestic abuse may have a damaging, sometimes life-threatening impact on the physical and mental well-being of those who experience it.

## **1.1 The nature and characteristics of domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse is a fundamental violation of human rights that crosses all social boundaries. It is not race, religion or class specific, nor is it restrained by wealth or educational attainment. Domestic abuse is committed by all types of people from all walks of life.

Domestic abuse comprises of behaviour that is both socially unacceptable and is often criminal in nature. It is largely hidden and unspoken of, and it generally takes place within the privacy of the home and behind closed doors, making it difficult for those who experience domestic abuse to seek help.

Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal or emotional. Physical and sexual abuse speak for themselves and can be anything from a slap to rape and murder, but among survivors of abuse it is commonly agreed that emotional abuse leaves the deepest wounds and is also the most difficult to see and understand. It is often domination by fear, hidden threats, isolation, humiliation, blame and the destruction of self-esteem. Often the abused becomes so focused on the abuser that fear of reprisal can influence the person's decision to stay and even defend their partner's actions.

Abuse may start with subtle actions such as moodiness and jealousy over minor incidents and frequently intensifies over time until the abused may be constantly watched, monitored and controlled by the abuser. Domestic abuse is one person's need to control and dominate another and while alcohol, drugs or mental ill health may exacerbate the situation, the fact remains that domestic abuse is often, although not always, deliberate, systematic and planned. Sexual stereotyping with the woman as the inferior is a common feature of domestic abuse and is partially condoned by the society in which we live. It protects both male and female abusers.

## 1.2 Purpose of this strategy

The purpose of this strategy is to effectively address domestic abuse within Orkney and to provide consistent and co-ordinated services, to those who experience it.

The strategy is intended to:

- Raise public awareness of domestic abuse and its consequences
- Challenge attitudes towards domestic abuse
- Protect and provide support to those who experience or are affected by domestic abuse
- Provide a co-ordinated and consistent approach by all agencies who provide services which support those affected by domestic abuse
- Support and develop a range of services for those who have experienced domestic abuse.

In tackling domestic abuse this strategy is committed to promoting equality, ending discrimination and social exclusion. Also to recognise and address the specific issues facing those from minority ethnic groups, those with disabilities and other groups facing additional forms of discrimination and exclusion.

All forms of domestic abuse can have a devastating affect on people's lives. There may be a need for more than one agency to be involved, this requires good partnership working between the agencies in order to work efficiently and offer the best support to those who have been affected by domestic abuse.

## 1.3 National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland

In November 2000, the Scottish Partnership on Domestic Abuse prepared the "National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland". The main aim of the strategy is:

*"to take all practicable measures towards the elimination of domestic abuse, including a clear acknowledgement that the responsibility for abuse lies firmly with the perpetrator".*

The National Strategy document focuses on women as it is often women and their children who experience or are affected by domestic abuse.

Although this is widely acknowledged in Orkney, the "*Strategy to Combat Domestic Abuse in Orkney*" is written for the people of Orkney regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

Three key issues are identified to address domestic abuse:

- active **prevention** of domestic abuse.
- appropriate legal **protection** for those who experience domestic abuse
- adequate **provision** of support services for people experiencing abuse

The National Strategy identifies the need for work in four broad areas to support the key issues:

1. **Policy and Legislation** – Clear, consistent policies and guidelines need to be developed between all agencies involved with tackling domestic abuse. Consideration must be given to enforcement of appropriate and effective legislation as well as the need for new legislation.
2. **Access to Services** – There is a need to ensure that all those who experience domestic abuse are aware of, and have access to, a range of appropriate services and support to meet their needs. This should include provision in areas such as, for example, accommodation, finance, health, education, transport and emotional support.
3. **Education and Training** – Attitudes towards and understanding of domestic abuse need to be raised within the general public and within and between agencies.
4. **Data Collection and Information** – Consistent methods of data collection need to be developed between all involved agencies to provide a coherent picture of domestic abuse.

## 1.4 Definitions of Domestic Abuse

Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum has adopted the following definition of domestic abuse which underpins this strategy.

*Domestic abuse can be perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and can include:*

- **physical abuse** - for example, assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour
- **sexual abuse** -for example acts which degrade and humiliate individuals and are perpetrated against their will, including rape

- *mental and emotional abuse for example, threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, undermining self-confidence*
- *other types of controlling behaviour such as withholding money and isolation from family and friends*

It is important to be aware of gender specific elements in different contexts, that underpin relationships in the local and the wider societies.

Domestic abuse occurs in all social and cultural groups. It is not caused by those who experience it. It is not caused by stress, unemployment, poverty alcohol or mental health difficulties. These may be contributing factors in some circumstances but are not a justification.

In terms of establishing priorities, it would appear appropriate to target services specifically, but not exclusively, to meet the needs of women and their children. Local agencies should however consider their capabilities to respond to requests for help from anyone regardless of gender, creed, religion or ability.

To have any significant impact on reducing domestic abuse within our community, it is vital that all local agencies, both voluntary and statutory, consider what their role might be in relation to domestic abuse issues, and embrace this definition to ensure that their organisational policies and procedures reflect the aims and objectives contained within this strategy.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

### Ultimate Goal

The ultimate goal of the Strategy is clearly to take all practicable measures towards the elimination of domestic abuse, including a clear acknowledgement that responsibility for abuse lies firmly with the perpetrator.

### Aims

To:

- Develop a co-ordinated, consistent, effective, multi agency response which focuses on the:
  - a) Prevention of domestic abuse
  - b) Protection for those who experience domestic abuse
  - c) Provision of support services for people experiencing domestic abuse

By:

- Reducing the incidents of domestic abuse through active preventative work.
- Taking positive action against perpetrators, holding them accountable for their actions and offering them help to change their behaviour.
- Ensuring appropriate legal protection for those who experience domestic abuse.
- Ensuring a range of support services are available which meet the needs and preferences of those who have experienced domestic abuse and services which deal with the continuing consequences of abuse.
- Supporting children in families where domestic abuse occurs

### Objectives

More specifically and in keeping with the National Strategy, there are three objectives to the ultimate goal:

1. active **prevention** of domestic abuse
2. appropriate legal **protection** for those experiencing domestic abuse
3. adequate **provision** of support services for those experiencing domestic abuse

Each of these objectives is expanded with a local perspective as follows:

## **Actions**

### **Prevention**

- Seek to prevent domestic abuse incidents from occurring by promoting and developing sustainable education and awareness raising programmes
- 'Mainstreaming of services' - to ensure long term impact
- Develop links between other local strategies and the National Strategy to address domestic abuse in Orkney
- Strive to ensure that abuse does not remain hidden
- Place the responsibility for abuse firmly with the perpetrator
- Encourage community responsibility regarding domestic abuse
- Make it clear that there is never an excuse for it
- Work with children and young people through education to raise awareness about domestic abuse and encourage them to understand that it is unacceptable, whilst at the same time providing support for those who are affected by domestic abuse
- Schools must offer a mainstream curriculum which consciously promotes positive values and at appropriate points addresses relationships, substance misuse, mental health and domestic abuse directly
- Promote attitudinal, behavioural and cultural change as the ultimate preventative objective
- Tackle abuse which is taking place at present
- Commit to a sustained public awareness raising campaign. To be effective such campaigns should:
  - Identify the local problem clearly and unambiguously
  - Analyse why violence occurs
  - Raise awareness that domestic abuse is not just physical, but can also be emotional
  - Change the cultural beliefs and myths which sustain tolerance of domestic abuse



- Include the whole community
- Be evaluated by people experiencing domestic abuse, perpetrators and others affected by domestic abuse to ensure the approach is suitable for the local community

## **Protection**

- Support the development of appropriate and sustainable programmes to change attitudes
- Ensure that all partner agencies develop relevant policies, protocols and training for their staff in tackling domestic abuse (See Appendix 6)
- Assist employers in developing relevant policy and procedure
- Recognise that safety and protection of any individual and their children experiencing domestic abuse is the first priority both in a crisis situation and the long term
- Any intervention must be led by a commitment to protect any individual and their children experiencing domestic abuse and to hold the perpetrator accountable for their abusive behaviour
- Ensure the balance between the perpetrator seemingly benefiting from their actions and the abused potentially losing everything, is addressed
- Society must hold the perpetrators of domestic abuse to account
- Partnerships must demonstrate that they are not willing to condone such action and are serious about tackling domestic abuse in the community
- Ensure a fair, quick and sensitive criminal justice response when dealing with both perpetrators and those experiencing domestic abuse
- Provide appropriate support, including advocacy, for those experiencing domestic abuse in gaining protection and in dealing with court processes
- Promote the use of the "CHANGE" programme for male perpetrators to change their abusive and violent behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate access to civil legal aid representation
- Statutory and non statutory services need to work together to make the process of leaving a perpetrator as safe as possible

- Insensitive delivery of services should not add to an already traumatic and stressful situation
- All agencies will ensure the safety of children and young people at all times and recognise that issues of child protection and protection of vulnerable adults will remain a priority and will be dealt with sensitively
- Ensure appropriate, sensitive intervention from NHS accident and emergency, G.P.s, the Police and other agencies
- Provide safe housing when required
- Recognise the right of the abused person to anonymity and ensure their protection throughout the support process
- All employers should promote awareness of domestic abuse and implement domestic abuse policies as appropriate.

## **Provision**

We aim to improve provision by:

- Identifying needs and developing services which address gaps in current provision
- Improving the distribution of information to service user, the public and professionals seeking advice
- Improving the support offered to those experiencing domestic abuse and specifically, to improve their accommodation options including refuge accommodation
- Improve civil legal aid representation for those experiencing domestic abuse
- Promoting and developing an appropriate, accessible and sustainable range of quality support services for those experiencing domestic abuse and their children
- Ensuring services appropriately reflect the needs of different groups, including those with special needs and those in remote areas
- Developing a single multi-agency information gathering/ sharing format within the agreed confines of confidentiality which avoids the stressful repetitive form filling currently encountered by those experiencing domestic abuse. Reducing the time and bureaucracy involved in obtaining relevant facts and information

- Developing effective multi agency working policies and procedures
- Sharing information
- Providing effective training and improving service delivery
- Ensuring specialist organisations such as Women's Aid Orkney are involved in the development and delivery of local training wherever possible as suggested in the National Strategy
- Identifying, where possible, a single person within the partner agencies to assist and support those experiencing domestic abuse
- Providing a safe alternative for those who are fleeing domestic abuse other than remaining in a situation where the abuser has access to them
- Recognising the need to offer a range of services covering security, safety, support and counselling if required
- Ensuring that the needs and views of those affected by domestic abuse are sought and included in the relevant service planning documents of the local authority and their partners
- Ensuring services adhere to good practice principles and are tailored to meet the needs of the individual in order to be most effective
- Involving community based networks and resources in strategy planning and development
- Recognising the important role of voluntary organisations and ensuring that they have the opportunity to become fully involved in strategic development
- Providing accurate and consistent recording across all partners
- Continuing consultation with service users and providers to ensure the services meet the needs of the users
- Ensuring services cause minimal disruption to education for children and young people
- Providing advisory services which are appropriate to need

## **3. CURRENT SERVICE PROVISION**

### **3.1 BACKGROUND**

Domestic abuse is not just an urban issue but also impacts greatly in rural communities. The reported figures for contacts relating to domestic abuse demonstrate a clear need to take coordinated action to tackle this issue in Orkney. Often people experiencing domestic abuse in rural areas are more vulnerable, isolated, and may experience difficulty accessing help. Such issues are of particular relevance to those living in the outer Isles.

### **3.2 DOMESTIC ABUSE FORUM**

The Domestic Abuse Forum, (originally the Domestic Violence Strategy Group), was convened by Community Social Services late in 1998 to tackle the issues of domestic abuse locally. Representatives from the voluntary sector as well as the statutory agencies are included on the Forum, which takes a strategic approach to tackling domestic abuse in Orkney. The Forum fully accept and support the view that women in our community are most at risk of experiencing domestic abuse. They also acknowledge the issues of men subjected to domestic abuse and domestic abuse within same sex relationships.

The Forum recognises that domestic abuse can impact differently on people according to factors such as gender, race, sexuality, disability and age. It is important to recognise these differences in order to deliver appropriate and responsive services that tackle inequalities and meet individual client needs.

Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum is committed to taking a lead role in raising awareness of domestic abuse in the wider community. All partner agencies need to demonstrate that domestic abuse will not be tolerated or approved of in any way, shape or form.

The Forum, in conjunction with its partners, must also support and work closely with organisations addressing potential underlying factors resulting from domestic abuse. Issues such as alcohol and drug misuse, stress, mental health and gender discrimination, have been anecdotally associated with instances of domestic abuse.

It is also important to recognise that this strategy, although aimed at tackling domestic abuse specifically, is also closely linked with other strategies aimed at promoting wellbeing, equality, social inclusion and ending discrimination. For example, child protection and the protection of vulnerable adults do not come directly under the remit of this Strategy, but it is recognised that there will, at some time, be association between domestic abuse and child protection/protection of vulnerable adults. It is therefore essential that the groups and forums set up for the protection of these groups of people have co-ordinated service provision, clear communications and a thorough understanding of how each related agency works. (See 7.2)

A supportive, non-judgemental service which aims to maximise choices, should be offered to all those who experience domestic abuse. Inter-agency intervention must complement each other and be guided by a set of good practice standards approved by the Forum. The Forum recognises the need to develop services to meet the needs of the most vulnerable that may have the least access to available services.

### **3.3 Multi Agency Working**

**“A multi agency approach to the issue is an essential prerequisite for the provision of appropriate assistance”.**

Home Office 1995 Inter-agency Co-ordination to Tackle Domestic Violence Circular.

There is already a considerable amount of successful work being undertaken in Orkney in relation to tackling domestic abuse. Women's Aid Orkney, Northern Constabulary and the Criminal Justice Team are the main Orkney agencies dealing specifically with domestic abuse. They have a significant annual referral rate. In addition, Victim Support Orkney suggest that around one third of their referrals are from those experiencing domestic abuse. Further to this, Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau, and Orkney Islands Council Community Social Services and the Housing Division deal with many contacts per annum pertaining to domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Forum is responsible for ensuring that Strategy and associated Action Plans are implemented and for monitoring its progress. Local partners are assisted to develop internal systems to identify and meet targets set out in the Action Plan. The Forum ensures that they inform the community planning process and that domestic abuse is included in all relevant plans and strategies.

## **3.4 STATUTORY SERVICES**

### **Local Authority**

The Local Authority is involved through Housing, Community Social Services, Criminal Justice and Education.

In addition to its statutory duties under the homeless legislation, the Housing Division also provides advice and information on the range of options available to those fleeing domestic abuse. People who experience domestic abuse and wish to leave their abusive partner would always be considered to be homeless and would therefore be offered Emergency Accommodation.

The Department of Community Social Services have a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need and can provide advice to children and young people who experience or are affected by domestic abuse.

Orkney Islands Council, along with Orkney Housing Association Ltd and Women's Aid Orkney are providing funding to operate a purpose built refuge for the provision of safe, temporary accommodation for women and their children experiencing domestic abuse.

The recent introduction locally of the nationally evaluated "CHANGE" programme, now available to the courts, for male perpetrators of domestic abuse, emphasises the criminal nature of domestic violence and places responsibility on offenders to change their behaviour and reduce the likelihood of re-offending. Joint training in implementing the programme has been undertaken between the Criminal Justice Team, SACRO, the Northern Constabulary, Women's Aid and Victim Support. The Criminal Justice Team in partnership with SACRO jointly deliver this programme to perpetrators of Domestic Abuse.

Education staff can support children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse and also raise awareness of and challenge attitudes towards domestic abuse.

### **Health Services**

NHS Orkney responds to domestic abuse throughout its full range of services. The Health Board takes a holistic approach to identification and treatment of people affected by domestic abuse, including advice about and referrals to other appropriate agencies. The Scottish Executive has issued "Guidelines for Health Care Workers in NHS Scotland".

## **Northern Constabulary**

The police attend incidents, provide crisis intervention, carry out investigations, report incidents and perpetrators to the Procurator Fiscal as well as responding to breaches of legal orders. In addition, they provide immediate support and information on available services to people experiencing domestic abuse.

The Procurator Fiscal is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of crime. Where incidents of domestic abuse are reported to the police these will often lead to a report being submitted to the Procurator Fiscal who will then have to consider whether there is sufficient admissible evidence of a crime being committed and secondly whether it is in the public interest to prosecute.

Many instances of domestic abuse will be reported to the Procurator Fiscal with the person accused being held in police custody. In these circumstances the Procurator Fiscal will also require to make a decision as to whether or not to oppose bail or seek special conditions of bail (provided there is sufficient evidence to take proceedings).

All cases of domestic abuse are referred to VIA (Victim Information and Advice) who assist in providing such services to 'complainers'.

In 2004 the Police and the Procurator Fiscal Service published a Protocol on Domestic Abuse which regulates how such cases are dealt with (<http://www.copfs.gov.uk/Resourcw/Doc/13545/0000143.pdf>)

## **3.5 Children's Services**

Nationally, the increased volume in cases of children being at risk from domestic abuse has resulted in a significant increase in such cases being referred by the Police to the Scottish Children's Reporter's Administration (SCRA) and to Community Social Services.

Northern Constabulary routinely notify Community Social Services of incidents where children are perceived to be at risk from domestic abuse. The Force and the Child Protection Committee take the view that children effected by domestic abuse may be in need of compulsory measures of supervision as set out in Section 52 (2) of the Children's (Scotland) Act 1995. The particular ground for these referrals is that:

*"a child is likely to suffer unnecessarily, or be impaired seriously in his/her health or development due to lack of parental care".*

The current referral policy adopted by Northern Constabulary is to refer all children who are perceived to be at risk from domestic abuse. This potentially places a strain on the child care systems operated by SCRA and Community Social Services. Until a national risk assessment model is introduced, no change in current practices will take place.

It is important to note that all services working with children in Orkney are potential support providers for those affected by domestic abuse. This provision can cross a broad continuum from psychological therapeutic interventions to more practical/ infrequent support sessions. This can involve working directly and indirectly with children and young people. This spectrum of services is covered by agencies such as:

- Community Social Services Children and Families Team & Integrated New Community Schools
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Integrated Community Schools
- Children's Hearing System
- Dialogue Youth
- Education Services
- Women's Aid Orkney
- Home-Start Orkney
- Family Mediation Orkney
- NHS Orkney
- Orkney Special Needs Toy Library
- Orkney Young Carers
- PHAB Club (Physically Handicapped Able Bodied)
- Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
- Youth Development - VAO

## **3.6 Specialist Services**

### **3.6.1 Women's Aid Orkney**

Women's Aid Orkney is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. They provide safe, temporary accommodation, offer free and confidential information and specialist support services to women, children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse. They also raise local awareness of the issues relating to domestic abuse through education and publicity, with a view to drastically reducing it within the Orkney Islands.

Local research indicates that Orkney is not immune to domestic abuse and unfortunately the results of our research mirror that of national research findings i.e. 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives.



Since the establishment of the service in 2000 there has been a continual increase in the numbers of women and children seeking their help. They have developed their service to suit the requirements of the community, offering support tailored to meet the needs of the individual.

Given Orkney's rural location and many inhabited outer isles, people experiencing domestic abuse in these areas may feel particularly isolated and vulnerable with limited access to services. Women's Aid Orkney's outreach service is aimed to support women within our communities, including the outer isles and this support can be offered at a time and place which suits the woman.

Based in Kirkwall is their drop-in centre, which provides a place where women, children and young people can access help.

Until this year Orkney was the only remaining county in Scotland not to have a refuge facility. Together with Orkney Islands Council and Orkney Housing Association Ltd. we have successfully obtained the funding to open a purpose built refuge for the provision of safe, temporary accommodation for women and their children experiencing domestic abuse. It comprises four self-contained apartments, one of which is structured for disabled access, a communal sitting room, children's playroom and office with on-site support for the families living there. The refuge is called Phoenix House and it opened in December 2005.

Many children and young people are exposed to domestic abuse and often are affected by it. They require additional support, both practical and emotional. Women's Aid Orkney currently employ a children and young people's worker who is based within Phoenix House are currently in the process of working with Integrated Children's Service's Planners after securing funding from the Scottish Executive, to employ another 2 children and young people's workers. The aim is to enhance direct specialist support and will work towards ensuring there is a minimum level of high quality service within Orkney for children and young people experiencing or affected by domestic abuse.

Women's Aid Orkney recognises the need for close partnership working and continues to forge close links with other voluntary organisations and statutory bodies for the ultimate benefit of the service users.

### **3.7 NON STATUTORY SERVICES**

There are numerous other local organisations who offer support to people experiencing domestic abuse. It may not be the main presenting factor, but is often highlighted as a significant issue. The providers as detailed below are often the first point of contact for people experiencing domestic abuse. It is of paramount importance that their staff are suitably trained and are competent to recognise the signs of a person suffering from abuse, as the client may not initially present with an abuse issue, or admit to it if asked.

The following provide their own specialist support those who experience domestic abuse and their families:

- Victim Support
- Couple Counselling
- Advocacy Orkney
- Family Mediation
- OACAS (Orkney Alcohol Advisory Service)

In addition, the following all play their part in supporting people experiencing domestic abuse and tackling the wider issues in Orkney:

- Church groups
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Crossroads
- Benefits Agency
- Substance Misuse Counsellors
- Mental Health Workers
- Orkney Housing Association Ltd.
- Legal professionals
- SACRO
- Orkney Disability Forum

### **3.8 AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Currently, public awareness raising consists of Women's Aid Orkney producing and distributing publicity information and working in partnership with Community Social Services' Community Safety Team. They have facilitated numerous exhibitions and events to raise the profile of services available to the whole community. In addition, awareness raising has successfully promoted the issues involved in domestic abuse eg. definitions, effects and affects on families, criminality.

Education offers the most effective route to influence the attitudes of future generations. Women's Aid Orkney aim to undertake joint work with schools to deliver the Scottish Executive resource, "The Respect Pack". In addition, Women's Aid Orkney work in partnership with Home Link and NHS Orkney to deliver Assertiveness Courses to women on the Isles.

Training will be delivered to all agencies involved in tackling domestic abuse. It is vital that staff of all agencies who may have contact with people who have been affected by domestic abuse learn of the related issues and acquire the appropriate skills to identify signs of domestic abuse. This will enable them to effectively help someone they may come into contact with to access services and support, in a sensitive and sympathetic manner.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

In order to determine its effectiveness, the strategy will be regularly monitored to track the progress made in implementing the strategic Action Plan. Monitoring will take place on an annual basis by the Domestic Abuse Forum. Progress will be reported to relevant partners crucial in assisting the forum to achieve the goals that have been set. The monitoring sequence will be such that the Domestic Abuse Forum will inform the Community Safety Forum who in turn, informs the Community Advisory Group. The strategy will be subject to regular review ensuring the aims and objectives are realistic and achievable.

Information about the services, community networks and support available locally must be made easily accessible for all people experiencing domestic abuse. As far as possible the strategy will ensure that issues of literacy, language and translation will be accessible to all service users. This information will be reviewed regularly and kept up to date. The aim is to raise awareness locally and influence change at all levels. Good communications between all agencies is crucial.

Further to this commitment, services and emergency accommodation for people experiencing domestic abuse who may have additional and more complex support needs will be considered. Developing and delivering imaginative and innovative schemes on a multi-agency basis for the most vulnerable clients will be explored further. This would include people with: -

- Drug, Alcohol and/or Substance misuse issues;
- Mental Health issues;
- Physical Disabilities;
- Learning Difficulties;
- Minority Ethnic Groups.

## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND READING LIST

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Women's Aid Orkney: Library of books on domestic abuse and related topics

Barnardos: Report 'Bitter Legacy – The Emotional Effects of Domestic Violence on Children (2003)

## 6. CONTACTS

### **Members of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum**

- Orkney Islands Council      Department of Community Social Services  
Housing Division  
Department of Education and Recreation
- NHS Orkney
- Northern Constabulary
- Women's Aid Orkney
- Voluntary Action Orkney
- Orkney Housing Association Ltd
- Children's Panel Reporter
- Orkney Alcohol Counselling and Advisory Service
- Procurator Fiscal

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Website: [www.orkneycommunities/womensaid](http://www.orkneycommunities/womensaid)

Domestic Abuse Liaison Officer  
Northern Constabulary  
Police Station  
Burgh Road  
Kirkwall  
KW15 1AH  
Tel: 01856 872241

Victim Support  
Anchor Buildings  
6 Bridge Street  
Kirkwall  
KW15 1HR  
Tel: 01856 877554

Advocacy Orkney  
The Counselling Centre  
The Strynd  
Kirkwall  
Tel: 01856 870111

National Domestic Abuse Helpline:  
Freephone: 0800 027 1234

Homelessness Section  
Housing Division  
Orkney Islands Council  
Council Offices  
School Place  
Kirkwall  
KW15 1NY  
Tel: 01856 873535 ext: 2174

Children & Families Team  
Dept. of Community Social Services  
Orkney Islands Council  
Council Offices  
School Place  
Kirkwall  
KW15 1NY  
Tel: 01856 873535

NHS Orkney  
Balfour Hospital  
Kirkwall  
Tel: 01856 888000

Orkney Housing Association Ltd  
39a Victoria Street  
Kirkwall  
KW15 1DN  
Tel: 01856 875253  
Email: [enquiries@ohal.demon.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ohal.demon.co.uk)

### **Useful Websites**

[www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/womensaid](http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/womensaid)  
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## **7. APPENDICES**

### **7.1 NATIONAL STRATEGY**

#### **THE FOUNDATIONS OF PROTECTION FOR WOMEN/ CHILDREN**

There are a number of relevant policies and legislation which impact upon the response to women or children experiencing domestic abuse, some of which are as follows:

- The United Nations General Assembly has established domestic abuse as a human rights issue;
- The fourth UN World Conference on Women in 1995 adopted a Global Platform for Action to improve the status of women world-wide, committing signatories to the development of plans to address violence against women;
- States have a duty, through the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to take all the appropriate measures to protect a child from physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse;
- States must take measures to protect their citizens and legislation must be compatible with relevant European Human Rights Convention rights (although it has been recognised it is important to ensure that this legislation is used to protect women/ children and not to enable the release of perpetrators of abuse);
- The Council of Europe is drafting a recommendation to member States for the protection of women and young girls against violence;
- Children who experience domestic abuse could be regarded as "children in need" under the Children (Scotland) Act;
- The UK government has expressed a commitment to tackling domestic abuse;
- The Scottish Executive recognises the links between violence and broader gender inequalities and a media campaign focuses on raising awareness of the issue.

## **7.2 LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIES/DOCUMENTS**

To effectively tackle domestic abuse, this Strategy will not, and should not stand alone. It is important that its principles are incorporated into other strategies, policies and service plans

Including:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy
- Child Protection Policy and Guidelines
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy
- Children's Services Plan
- Criminal Justice Strategic Plan
- Domestic Abuse Service Fund Development Plan
- Supporting People Strategy
- Health Improvement Plan
- Homelessness Strategy
- Voluntary Sector Policy
- Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Community Care Plan
- Local Health Plan
- Health & Homeless Action Plan
- Community Safety Strategy



## 7.3 INTERNAL POLICY GUIDELINES

In any workforce there is likely to be both people experiencing domestic abuse and perpetrators of domestic abuse. Particular issues for managers are:

- Ensuring staff understand the seriousness of domestic abuse and operate any safety precautions necessary to minimise the risk
- Acknowledgement that staff who support people experiencing domestic abuse may find it difficult and stressful
- Being alert to the possibility of staff or colleagues experiencing or perpetrating domestic abuse

All partner agencies must develop internal policies and procedures which tackle domestic abuse issues within their own organisation and should be consistent with those of the other partners.

This will be more easily achieved in the public sector where it can be reasonably expected that national policy will influence practice.

Internal policies should include:

- A clear commitment by the organisation to protect people who are experiencing or are threatened with abuse/violence
- A clear commitment by the organisation towards raising the awareness of and changing attitudes towards domestic abuse
- Positive measures to create a supportive and non-threatening culture within the organisation
- An indication of where staff and, where appropriate, service users can obtain relevant information and support
- A link to internal other relevant policies and procedures such as equal opportunities, family friendly policies and policies on violence and harassment in the workplace
- A link to an intervention service for employees who are perpetrators to address their violent behaviour
- Formal training strategy aimed at both general awareness raising and more specifically for those responsible for implementing the strategy
- Monitoring and updating provision