



Angus Violence Against Women Partnership

Annual Report
April 2022 - March 2023

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Foreword by Independent Chair of Angus Violence Against Women Partnership

As Independent Chair of the Angus Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP), I am delighted to introduce the Partnership's annual report from April 2022 – March 2023.

This report summarises the work of the Partnership and the key agencies that operate across Angus in dealing with the unacceptable criminality against women and girls. Unfortunately, gender based violence (GBV) continues to be reported to both the statutory agencies and Third Sector partners across Angus. The work of all partners is to be commended despite this continuing trend of violence and exploitation.

Much reactive and proactive work has been undertaken during this reporting period, and various examples of this are set out in the report below. Whilst robust investigation is conducted into cases of criminality that are reported to Police Scotland, considerable work has been undertaken to further the preventative agenda, and the success of this work is critical to reducing the levels and impact of violence and exploitation being suffered by women and girls. Online exploitation continues to be a developing trend in respect of gender based violence, and education and public awareness strategies must continue to be developed to address this very impactful form of criminality and intimidation positively.

AVAWP partners work incredibly hard to support the needs of women and girls who have experienced some form of gender based violence. Whilst innovative work continues to develop across Angus to ensure the safety and well-being of women and girls, a positive response and proactive action from all is still required to ensure that a sustained reduction in violence reported against women and girls is achieved.

As Chair of AVAWP, I remain confident that structured partnership working supported by an Angus-wide Preventative Strategy will help to ensure that there are fewer victims of gender based violence in the years ahead. Much additional work is required to achieve this objective. However, I can reassure readers of this report that all key partners continue to deliver a professional, determined and coordinated approach, which will hopefully improve the well-being and safety of women and girls living and working in Angus.

Ewen West

Independent Chairperson, Angus Violence Against Women Partnership

Chief Officers Response

Angus Chief Officers are pleased to receive the third annual report of the Angus Violence Against Women Partnership. We have seen an increased visibility of the issue of gender based violence in the reporting period. There has been continued multi-agency awareness raising and training through 16 days of action and other partnership activity this year.

The Safe and Together model has continued to grow within Angus, with more multi-agency partners receiving training in this topic and embedding it into their practice and responses to women and girls.

We recognise the considerable efforts all partners are making to eradicate gender-based violence and understand that changing our culture across the multi-agency workforce and in broader society will take time.

Angus Chief Officers fully support the work of this Partnership under the leadership of the Independent Chair and are confident that the right steps are being taken to influence and deliver change.

We once again thank partner agencies for their work and thank the Independent Chair Mr West, for his continued leadership on this important area of work.



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Claire Pearce
Executive Director of Nursing
NHS Tayside



Phil Davison
Chief Superintendent
Divisional Commander
Police Scotland

Introduction

This is the third Annual Report by the Angus Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP) and will cover the period April 2022 – March 2023. This report provides an overview of both the national and local context and focusses on progress towards the outcomes identified in the strategic plan 2021 – 2024.

The National Context

[Equally Safe](#) is the joint strategy of the Scottish Government and The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls. The vision of Equally Safe is *“A strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it”*.

AVAWP is the multi-agency forum to deliver on Equally Safe at a local strategic level. No single partner alone has the resource, skill or reach to achieve the aims of Equally Safe and it is only through strong partnership working that this can be achieved.

The [National Violence Against Women Partnership Guidance](#) is designed to promote an effective and strategic approach to reducing violence against women and girls and its negative impact on individuals and communities and support local partnerships to develop effective local strategies and activities in keeping with Equally Safe to tackle violence against women and girls in all its forms. The guidance notes 6 minimum standards that Local Violence Against Women Partnerships (VAWPs) are expected to work towards and identifies the core activities that all VAW partners will be expected to undertake.

Angus Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP)

AVAWP is a strategic partnership which forms part of [Protecting People Angus](#). The partnership meets quarterly and is attended by strategic and operational partners involved in working with women, families, and perpetrators of gender based violence (GBV).

AVAWP is led by an Independent Chair and reports on progress towards its aims to the National Improvement Service and Angus Chief Officers Group (COG). The partnership also benefits from a Lead Officer, two Development Officers and a Workforce Development Officer who support the work of four Protecting People Partnerships. During the reporting period, the team have taken over the support to the Angus Community Justice Partnership (ACJP), which will allow for closer alignment of work between services for survivors and perpetrators.

In addition to the quarterly AVAWP meetings, several subgroups meet regularly to progress actions identified in the AVAWP strategic plan. The AVAWP subgroups are Prevention, Practice Development, Self-Evaluation and Continuous Improvement (SECI). AVAWP is also represented at the Protecting People Angus Workforce Learning and Development subgroup.

The [current strategic plan covers the period 2021-2024](#) and is reviewed annually. The AVAWP strategic plan has four key priority areas which provide direction to the partnership and subgroups. The priority areas are outlined below. Within each area, there are number of identified actions which are progressed by the subgroups.

PRIORITY AREA 1

Angus residents embrace equality and mutual respect, and reject all forms of violence against women and girls

PRIORITY AREA 2

Women and girls thrive as equal citizens in Angus: socially, culturally, economically and politically

PRIORITY AREA 3

Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people in Angus.

PRIORITY AREA 4

Men in Angus desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response

AVAWP subgroups

Prevention Subgroup

During the reporting period the Prevention Subgroup had a change in Chair and membership. They have come together regularly to progress key areas of prevention work across both the workforce and wider community. Some of the main areas of focus have been:

- Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) working group
- White Ribbon Scotland Campaign
- 16 Days of Action
- Gender Based Violence and Learning Disabilities

Protecting People Angus Workforce Learning and Development Subgroup



The ethos of the Protecting People Angus Workforce Learning and Development subgroup continues to be to utilise nationally or regionally available resources wherever possible, enabling local resource to focus on providing specialist and bespoke learning, tailored to the needs of the multi-agency workforce.

Both the [PPA Learning and Development Framework](#) and the [PPA Learning and Development Newsletter](#) continue to be utilised as tools to make learning more readily available across the workforce.

A new [“Language Matters” resource](#) was developed for use across the workforce. The aim of this is to create a common language across the Angus workforce which supports the reduction of stigma, minimises sensationalism and supports individuals in a positive way. The resource highlights language which should be used and language which should be avoided. It will be updated six monthly to ensure it remains current and reflective of societal changes.

An evaluation process for all PPA learning has been developed and introduced. The process comprises of:

- An immediate evaluation, which is completed either at the end of the course or shortly thereafter. It evaluates the quality of the course and information shared.
- A longitudinal evaluation will also be conducted three months following each event. This focusses on gathering data on the impact of the learning from the event (i.e. how practice has changed, what the individual has done differently).

Outputs from the evaluations are considered by the subgroup on a rolling basis to identify any thematic trends and to respond to the learning needs of the local workforce.

There continues to be some concern about the capacity the multi-agency workforce has for undertaking learning and development whilst managing ever increasing workloads. Going forward, the subgroup will continue to look at how learning is made available to reduce barriers to access.

Practice Development Subgroup

At the start of the reporting period the Practice Development Subgroup met monthly to gain momentum and regular representation from across partner agencies.

Feedback from representatives indicates both practice and team culture is changing using the Safe and Together principles, which continue to be embedded across all multidisciplinary settings. Several new tools to support practice have been developed including a 7-minute multiagency briefing and a perpetrator pattern chronology. These support professionals to identify and respond to multiple, co-existing needs which will offer a more holistic, coordinated response to survivors. These tools are available for use by the multi-agency workforce.

Angus Integrated Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services (AIDARS) and the Angus Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) have few trained champions, however, have demonstrated a commitment to raising awareness, introducing the Safe and Together prompt tools, and making changes to practice culture.

The subgroup devised a workforce questionnaire to identify what areas of practice are working well, gaps in current practice and outstanding practitioner learning needs in relation to gender based violence. 82 responses were received, with 71% answering they are fairly to very confident when responding to GBV. There was a desire (51%) for further training in relation to gender based violence to enhance knowledge and skills. A shared resource bank, shadowing opportunities, complex case discussions and support to engage with perpetrators were also requested.

A Protecting People Angus website is currently under development, with a launch scheduled for 2024. This new site will serve as a platform for all related resources.

Further practice development needs were identified from the questionnaire responses which have been included in the Practice Development Subgroup Action Plan for October 2023 – October 2024.

Self-evaluation and Continuous Improvement Subgroup (SECI)

During 2022/23 the SECI subgroup has focused on ensuring there is a core membership and towards the end of the reporting period the group has seen a more stable attendance. The tasks of this group in relation to data have continued to be a challenge. The key actions from last year, to establish a core membership of suitable representation and to establish a core dataset has been achieved. However, the dataset has not yet been tested as planned. The first test phase will be from April to September 2023, with the first data gathering being in November 2023.

The lack of nationally agreed datasets to draw upon has impacted the progress and has made interpretation of local data complex. It is difficult to establish if data should come from the referring service or the service referred to. There is also a lack of data recording across multi-agency partners around referrals made for gender based violence.

It is hoped that the refresh of the Equally Safe return for 2023/24 will provide some guidance around data gathering and streamlining what is collected nationally to allow for comparison.

Police Scotland have committed to providing AVAWP with local data around GBV within Angus and this will be available in the next reporting period.

Progress towards priority areas

The work taken forward by AVAWP and member organisations is noted below. These have been listed under the most relevant priority area; however, it is widely recognised that the work is cross cutting and at times meets multiple priority areas. A development area for AVAWP in the next reporting year is to consider how we present these within the annual report to reflect the cross-cutting themes.

PRIORITY AREA 1: Angus residents embrace equality and mutual respect, and reject all forms of violence against women and girls

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence (16 Days) 2022

The Angus Violence Against Women Partnership led on [16 Days of Action](#) within the Angus area. Each year from November 25th to December 10th people across the world come together to raise awareness and remember those who have lost their lives to gender based violence.

During the '16 Days of Action Against Gender Based Violence', a series of learning and awareness raising events were organised, with the aims of raising awareness of GBV issues in the community and upskilling the workforce in best practice around GBV.

17 learning sessions took place which were aimed at staff, volunteers, carers or anyone who supports people in Angus.

Sessions were facilitated by a range of AVAWP members and other local partners including:

- Protecting People Angus
- Angus Safe and Together Champions
- Angus Women's Aid (AWA)
- NHS Tayside
- Alternatives Counselling
- Glen Clova and Glen Isla Projects
- WRASAC (Dundee and Angus Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre)

A total of 142 people attended these sessions and participants were asked to evaluate each session. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 94% of all participants noting they would recommend the learning session to colleagues.

Feedback from those attending learning sessions included:

- *"I am going to pass this information on to my team. I will ensure that in my line of work I consider any warning signs"*
- *"So informative. What a well told but shocking tragic story"*
- *"It was online which made it possible for me to attend. The length of the session was good as its about as long as I can concentrate online. The content was excellent! and delivered really well. Thank you"*

The focus of 16 Days in 2022 was on the multi-agency workforce with little community involvement. The events for professionals were successful, however in the next reporting year AVAWP will strive to engage with the wider community around the topic of eradicating gender-based violence.

PRIORITY AREA 2: Women and girls thrive as equal citizens in Angus: socially, culturally, economically and politically

Angus Council – Equally Safe at Work

[Equally Safe at Work](#) is a national employer accreditation programme, developed by Close the Gap, Scotland's expert policy advocacy organisation working on women's labour market equality. It supports employers to improve their employment practice to advance gender equality at work and prevent violence against women.

Angus Council successfully applied to take part in the initiative in 2022. New procedures and data collection requirements were put in place, and some policies were reviewed to take cognisance of gender equality. An initial submission to achieve bronze level accreditation will be submitted by Angus Council in July 2023.

AVAWP Employers Pledge

The AVAWP Employers Pledge was developed in 2019 and went through a launch process. There was very limited uptake from local businesses and during covid this was paused. The working group has been re-established and a timeline is being developed for promotion and relaunch in the 2023/24 reporting period.

Police Scotland – Strategy to tackle violence against women and girls



[Police Scotland's strategy to tackle violence against women and girls](#) has now been published. Police Scotland engaged extensively with survivors, stakeholders, partners and the public to develop the strategy which sets out a vision for Scotland where women and girls live free from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation, and harassment.

Police Scotland's approach to tackling domestic abuse is recognised as an exemplar world-wide, as is the perpetrator focused approach to prevention epitomised in the ground-breaking 'That Guy' campaign which ran for the second year in November 2022 which urged men to be part of the solution, by promoting that having a quiet word with a friend at the right time could stop sexual offending before it starts. The campaign will run again in 2023, and although progress is being made, there continues to be more work to do to support culture change and the rights of women and girls to feel safe.

Police Scotland's strategy sets out 4 Strategic Outcomes to deliver change. These are;

- 1. To support women and girls - Police Scotland has a duty to keep people safe; provide services and support to meet their needs - We will work with our justice partners to deliver integrated, person-centred and trauma informed services which recognise people's experiences and respect their needs and views.*
- 2. To prevent harm and secure justice - We will maximise our police powers to effectively target men who harm women. We will work with partners to prevent men's violence against women and girls from continuing, escalating, or occurring in the first place.*
- 3. To create safe spaces - Violent, threatening, and inappropriate conduct by men leaves women and girls feeling fearful within their own homes, as they go about their daily lives or interact online. We will coordinate our data and resources to target and challenge these behaviours online and in public.*
- 4. To uphold trust and confidence - Sexism and misogyny do not belong in our organisation. We will take every opportunity available to us to deliver a robust response, ensuring we eradicate from policing those who demonstrate discriminatory beliefs or have committed acts of violence or other forms of harm.*

By working nationally and locally with key stakeholders and partners, Police Scotland will continue to deliver effective services to keep people safe.

Police Investigations

A critical component of the local delivery of Police Scotland's national strategic objectives relates to the quality and speed of investigations. Police Scotland see each report as a crucial opportunity to safeguard women and girls who have been subject to violence. This involves ensuring that each investigation is victim-centred, sympathetic to the needs of the individual's circumstances, holistic in the sense of exploring the full range of offences which may have been committed and cognisant of the impact those offences may have had on other family members. It is understood the courage it takes to report domestic abuse offences and seek to ensure we are accessible, responsive, and robust.

Police Scotland maximise all investigative opportunities including the in-depth analysis of offender behaviour, understanding that perpetrators have often been abusive within the context of a range of previous and current relationships.

Domestic Abuse investigations are subject to daily review by the Local Area Commander, ensuring that investigations are progressed quickly, enforcement opportunities are maximised, offenders arrested quickly and all opportunities to prevent further offending are explored. This involves the use of both criminal and civil legislation, such as prohibitive bail conditions and non-harassment orders.

Every high-risk victim and offender receive additional pro-active contacts to ensure safeguarding remains robust, women and their families are safe and to ensure perpetrators are adhering to the conditions of court orders.

Police Scotland – Community Education

Educating young people and seeking to support positive attitudes in young men are key to Police Scotland's national strategy. The Preventions Interventions and Preventions Unit (PIP) are actively involved with several national and local programmes addressing violence and crime prevention. This includes the prevention of domestic abuse and gender based violence and supporting survivors of abuse. During the reporting period this has included collaborative work with Angus Women's Aid around Mentors in Violence Prevention and the development of a future positive masculinity young men's group within Angus.

Locally, Police Scotland are committed to the Mentors in Violence (MVP) Program Angus steering group. MVP is a national program operated by Education Scotland which creates mentors from S5 and S6 pupils from the secondary schools around domestic abuse, gender based violence and

bystander theory. In turn, they facilitate classes to S1 and S2 pupils, effectively being positive role models within the schools.

A [Youthlink Scotland](#) product called "Imagine a Man" was shared with all Angus secondary schools with a view to implementing the sessions in the next school year. Imagine a man encourages positive masculinity to change the attitudes and thought processes of young men who are perpetrators, victims, and bystanders of men's violence.

Police Scotland Cyber-Enabled Crime

In addition to Angus Police focus on domestic offending, Police Scotland understands the emerging threat posed by on-line offenders seeking to exploit young people, through be-friending them online prior to seeking to obtain compromising sexualised images. This crime type is typified by those offenders going on to demand money from victims using threats, often threatening to or actually circulating the images received online to the victim's family and friends.

This crime type is particularly harmful and can leave victims feeling a sense of shame, isolation and embarrassment leading to a fear of reporting the offences or seeking help. These crimes are known to have had a significant impact on the mental health of those who have been targeted. These offences are often perpetrated by offenders who are located out with the United Kingdom making bringing offenders to justice extremely challenging.

Police Scotland is committed to engaging those most vulnerable to becoming a victim of these offences, in order to build and promote a range of support networks, whilst reducing the likelihood of local young people being targeted on-line. Empowering young people to make positive choices and stay safe is a central component of tackling this emerging national trend.

Angus Council Education and Lifelong Learning

All eight Angus secondary schools have registered with [Equally Safe at School](#).

A questionnaire seeking information on learning in relation to gender based violence was developed and sent to all Angus schools. Almost all completed the survey. The information will be used to ensure that learning is consistent across all schools. Work is ongoing to ensure that third sector partners are involved in the delivery of areas of the curriculum.

'Brave Lassies Blether' is a new campaign led by a group of young women and girls in Angus which aims to tackle peer sexual abuse, encourage healthy relationships and break down barriers to seeking support. The initiative is being delivered by the NSPCC and The Young Women's

Movement, in partnership with a group of senior pupils. Work is continuing with a launch planned for Autumn 2023.

PRIORITY AREA 3: Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people in Angus.

Domestic Abuse and Child Protection Registration

The risk to children caused by domestic abuse is fully reported in the Child Protection Committee annual report however it is important to note the significant relationship between domestic abuse and harm to children. There has been a year on year increase for domestic abuse recorded as a risk factor, while emotional abuse has declined. During the period April 2022 to March 2023, 47% of all children recorded on the Angus Child Protection Register had domestic abuse noted as a significant risk factor. Analysis of this change in trend highlights that multi-agency professionals across Angus are more confident in naming domestic abuse and addressing this with families (both with victims, survivors and perpetrators). The investment across Angus in rolling out Safe and Together training and embedding this into practice together with strong leadership and a clear stand against domestic abuse has had an impact on this.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

MARAC is a local meeting where representatives from statutory and non-statutory agencies meet to discuss individuals at high risk of serious harm or homicide because of domestic abuse. The meeting provides a safe environment for agencies to share relevant and proportionate information about current risk and develop a coordinated action plan.

The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim. However, the MARAC will also make links with other agencies to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator. Ensuring that the victim is supported throughout, and their needs represented at the MARAC is crucial to managing risk, improving, and maintaining safety, and reducing repeat victimisation.

The number of cases discussed at MARAC during the reporting period within Angus was 74. This is a slight decrease compared to the same period in 2021/22 where 87 cases were discussed.

Overall, there has been an increase in MARAC discussions across Tayside Division; there were 468 case discussions for the reporting period, compared to 372 case discussions for same period in 2021/2022.

Domestic Abuse Liaison Officers (DALOs) in Angus assess every report of domestic abuse in terms of risk and safety planning, ensuring that victims fully understand and are offered access to advocacy services. As the lead agency, Police Scotland work with MARAC partners to ensure that all domestic crimes and incidents are subject to robust quality assurance processes to ensure that Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 offences are correctly identified and investigated.

Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS)

The aim of the Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland is to provide a way of sharing information about a partner's abusive past, with a potential victim. It gives people at risk of domestic abuse the information they need to allow them to make an informed decision whether to continue the relationship.

The Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland has two main triggers for disclosure - Right to Ask and the Power to Tell.

Right to Ask - is open to anyone who has concerns about a new partner's abusive past or has concerns about another person's new partner.

The concerned relative or friend will not, under normal circumstances, receive any information on the person causing concern. If a disclosure is deemed necessary, lawful, and proportionate, the person potentially at risk, or person best placed to safeguard that individual, will receive the information.

Power to Tell - enables Police to make a public interest disclosure when receiving information or intelligence about a relationship/developing relationship which may otherwise leave a person at avoidable risk of harm from a violent partner.

[Anyone can make a DSDAS application via the Police Scotland internet page.](#)

During the reporting period there have been 288 DSDAS applications within Tayside Division, 45 of these were in the Angus area. Police Scotland rely heavily on local partners to support disclosure through the scheme and will often visit potential victims jointly to ensure support can be offered once any disclosure has been made.

Dundee and Angus Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (WRASAC)



Women's Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre

Dundee & Angus

WRASAC provides a range of services to survivors of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation.

The Women's Support service provides support to self-identifying women (over 18) in Angus who have experienced rape, sexual abuse and/or exploitation. Support can include 1:1 sessions in the centre or on outreach basis, advocacy support and signposting to other organisations for support. demand for this service is ever growing.

They also have the Dundee and Angus Young Survivor (DAYS) Service where support is given to young people of any gender aged between 8-18 who live in Dundee and Angus and have experienced any type of sexual abuse through 1-1 and group work.

There is a dedicated Prevention Worker who works in schools, colleges and youth settings in Dundee and Angus delivering the Rape Crisis Scotland Prevention Pack.

WRASAC aims to continue to strengthen and develop the Angus service and are about to launch their first Angus office space in Forfar in Summer 2023.

WRASAC Angus Funding

Adult Services

WRASAC currently receive funding for two adult support roles in Angus:

1. The Women's Family Safety Worker (WFSW)

The purpose/aim of this role is to provide support to women who are survivors of gender based violence and whose partners or ex partners are subject to reports, risk assessments, or perpetrator programme interventions being delivered by, or on behalf of, Angus Justice Service. This role is a Full Time (F/T) post of 35 hours.

This is funded by justice services. It was funded last year as a trial and has now been refunded for a further year.

2. Angus Outreach Women's Support Service (WSS) Worker

This role solely works with women from the Angus area and is on an outreach basis, providing 1:1 support for survivors of sexual violence. This is a full time (F/T) post of 35 hours.

The Angus Outreach WSS role has also been funded on and off through Justice Services funding. Since 2020 partial funding was received which WRASAC have sought match funding for or top up through organisational reserves.

WRASAC aim to keep the funding for the Angus WFSW and to seek to find permanent funding for the Angus Outreach worker role.

Evidence shows that with the referrals and support that WRASAC provide, there is sufficient work to employ two Full-time Outreach Workers. Other workers would still have capacity to carry online cases from the Angus area.

Dundee and Angus Young Survivors - DAYS

This service and its name were set up after consultation with young people across Dundee and Angus in 2018. It was initially funded for one fulltime role through Children in Need funding, and WRASAC have built upon this with funding from Big Lottery and Scottish Government Funding over the last three years.

WRASAC continue to seek funding for a permanent fulltime DAYS worker within Angus.

"WRASAC helps us extinguish the anger we feel, the upset and destruction we feel upon ourselves."

-CD,survivor

The full case study for CD can be read at appendix 2.

WRASAC Statistics April 2022 to March 2023

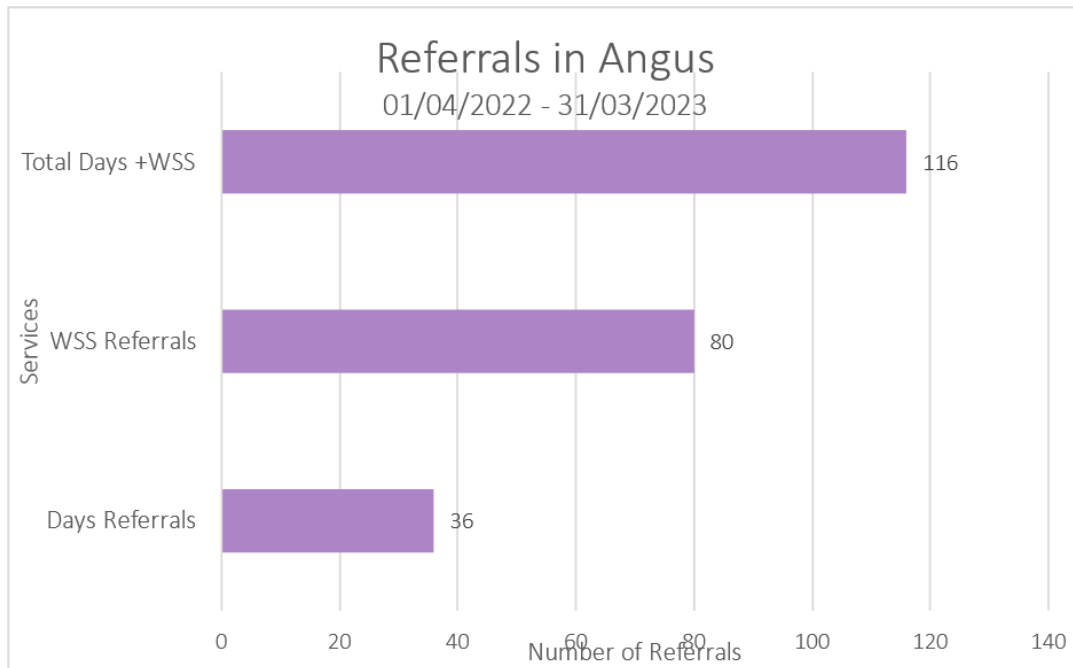


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows 116 referrals were made across all WRASAC service in Angus for the 2022/23 period. This was an increase on numbers from last year and continues to show the need for rape and sexual abuse services within Angus.

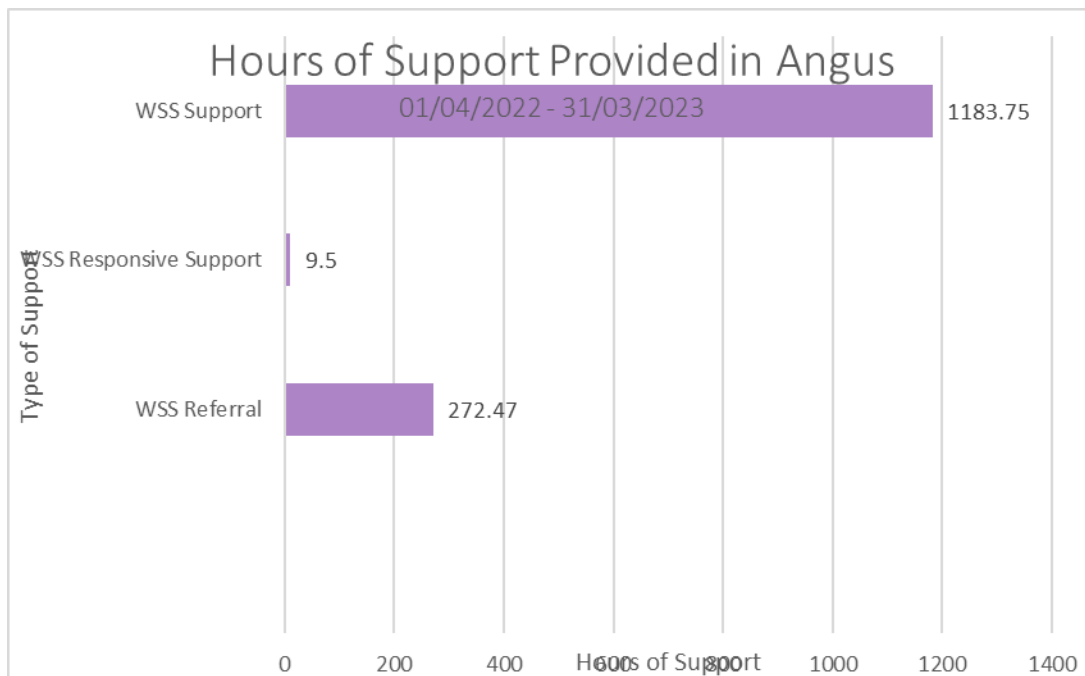


Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the breakdown of hours of support provided by WRASAC to women across Angus during the 2022/23 reporting period.

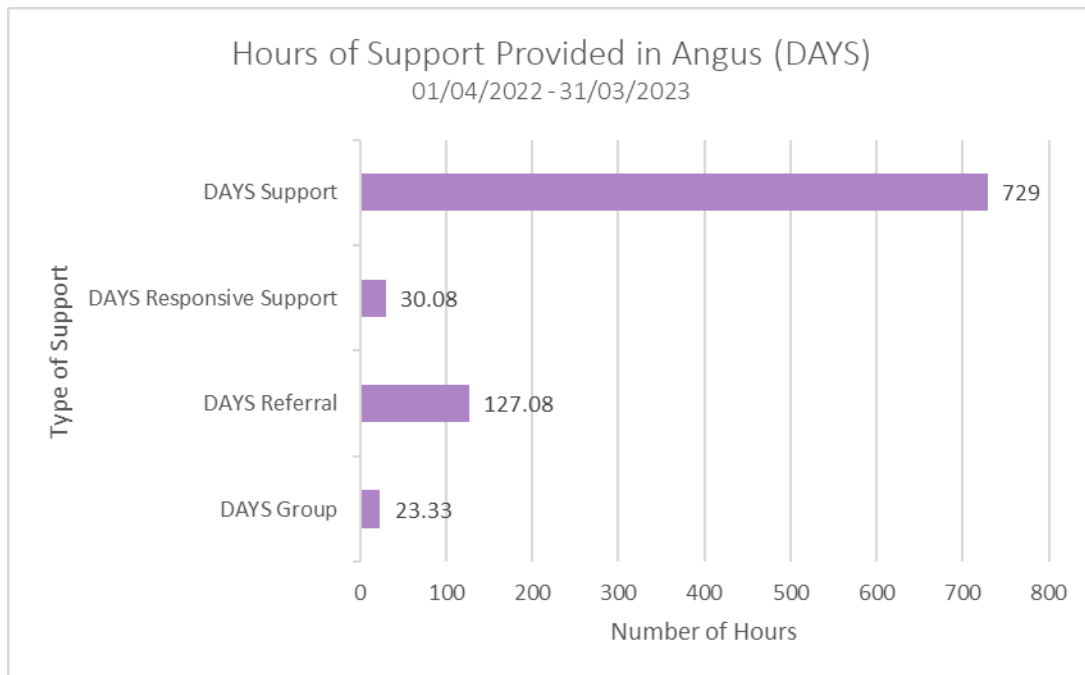
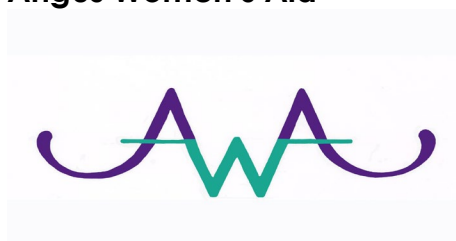


Figure 3

Figure 3 shows the breakdown of hours of support provided by WRASAC to young survivors in Angus during the 2022/23 reporting period.

The AVAWP SECI will prioritise working with specialist services over the next reporting period to understanding the trends in their statistics and any changes that can be evidenced between reporting years.

Angus Women's Aid



[Angus Women's Aid \(AWA\)](#) is a specialist domestic abuse service offering a range of services to women, children and young people in Angus who have experienced domestic abuse / coercive control. In addition to one to one support AWA offers groupwork programmes to women, children and young people.

During the period April 2022 to March 2023 AWA was successful in securing additional funding to develop a new domestic abuse court advocacy service, which will support women and children before, during and after any court proceedings. AWA also secured funding for a test of change

counselling project where AWA was able to purchase counselling hours for women within their office spaces, thereby considerably shortening the time women were having to wait to access counselling services in Angus to around 6 weeks. AWA are seeking funding to further develop this into a full-time service. Based on the development of this service AWA has now to been approved to offer counselling student placements in addition to social work student placements.

Partnership working with statutory and third sector colleagues has continued to develop and expand. AWA now offers use of their resource base within and out with office hours to police in order to have an informal setting to take statements from women, whether or not they are accessing AWA services.

One of the key developments in 2022 was the moving into new office premises in Arbroath. Along with the office in Forfar, the increased office space, counselling and meeting spaces have given them the capacity to run more groups and also to offer space to a range of professionals from both statutory and non-statutory services across Angus. AWA note particularly the close working partnership with WRASAC which enables women who have experienced different forms of GBV to seamlessly access the services they need at the time they need them.

The MIA (Multi-agency Independent Advocacy) service continues to support women who have been assessed as at the highest risk, focussing on safety and multi-agency safety planning. MIA workers will meet women where it is safe to do so, often piggy backing on appointments with other services.

AWA have further developed their community service and offer a range of groupwork programmes in addition to one to one support for women. The Domestic Abuse Recovery Programme and the recovering From Childhood Adverse Experiences Programme are particularly favoured by women.

Refuge is and will continue to be a core service offering temporary safe accommodation for women and children fleeing domestic abuse. Women in Angus spend a shorter time in refuge than women in other areas in Scotland thanks to the policies adopted by Angus Council Housing Service. This shows effective multi agency partnership working to ensure that women are being offered appropriate, safe housing.

The AWARE service offers support service to children and young people up to the age of 18 who have lived in a domestic abuse situation.

In addition, AWA have secured funding for a specialist service for young women who have experienced domestic abuse in their own relationships. This service was named "Limitless" by young survivors – they said that their futures should not be limited by the domestic abuse they experienced. The need for such a service was highlighted by a variety of factors, highlighted as

a need by girls when delivering prevention sessions in schools and the number of teenage girls, as young as 16, who were being referred to MARAC.

“Anne says she is loving life and “living her own life”. That is exactly what Limitless was set up to enable” – AWA

The full Case Study from Limitless can be found at appendix 3.

CEDAR Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery Programme is a concurrent mother and child programme which focuses on validating the child's experiences, enabling the child's recovery and rebuilding relationship between mother and child. AWA secured funding to develop CEDAR in Angus and this project is in its early days, but programmes are running in different area in Angus.

AWA statistics April 2022 to March 2023

During the reporting period 709 referrals were made for AWA women's services and 313 children. 98% of referrals for women were accepted.

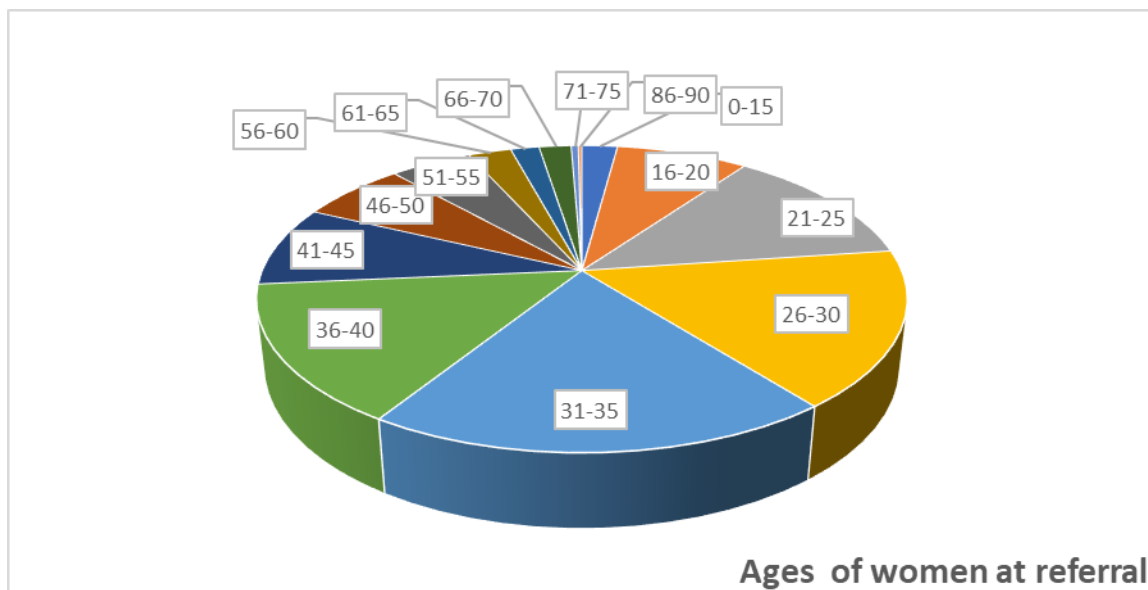


Figure 4

Figure 4 shows the age of women at the time of referral to Angus Women's Aid. Women aged 31 to 35 have the highest number of referrals. As the AVAWP local dataset begins to be embedded the SECI group will look to analyse the referral ages against age of the Angus population to look for any trends.

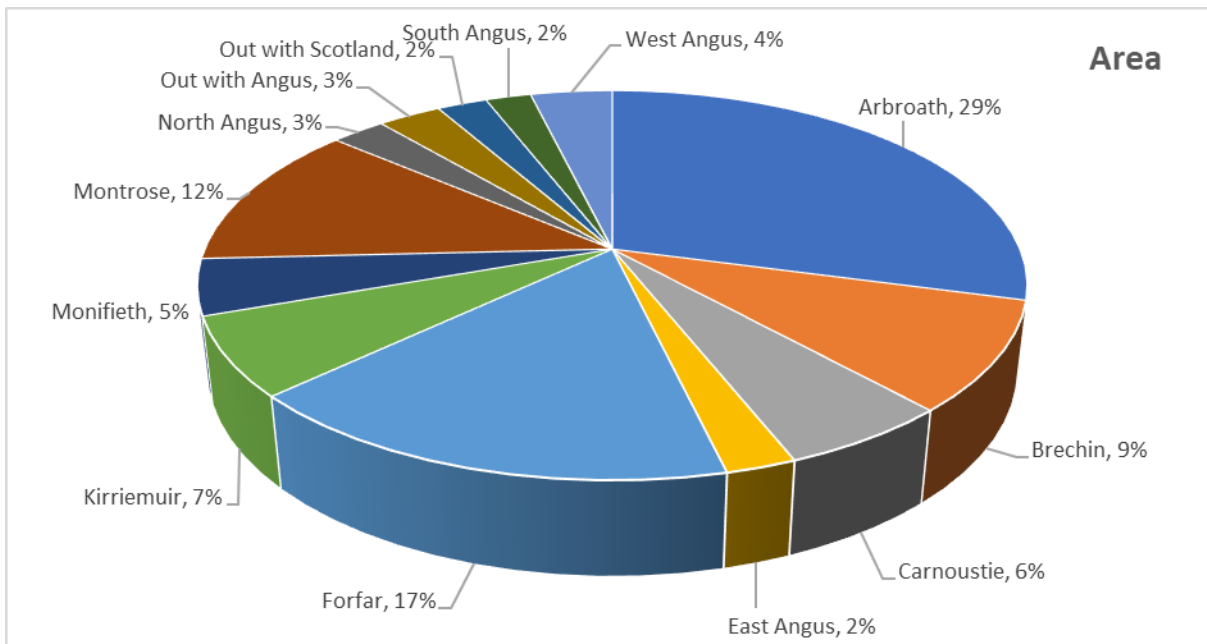


Figure 5

Figure 5 shows the area of Angus where women referred in Figure 4 reside. This shows that Forfar and Arbroath have the highest percentages of referrals per area. In future reporting years the SECI will aim to support further breakdown around population and if areas that are more populated see higher referral numbers.

NHS Tayside

NHS Tayside (NHST) acknowledges the fundamental role health services have in the identification, intervention and prevention of gender-based violence. By adopting a public protection approach to gender-based violence, NHS Tayside has committed to providing an evidence based and trauma informed response to survivors of gender based violence within Tayside. Specialised gender-based violence advice is available to all NHS Tayside staff through the NHST adult protection team, where information and advice is easily accessible to staff through the daily advice line, NHST intranet site and bulletins. Advice, guidance and support is also available for clinicians within their routine practice and for managers supporting staff who have been affected by gender-based violence through the 'NHS Tayside Gender Based Violence Workforce Policy'.

Work continues to be undertaken on the 'Gender Based Violence Action Plan (2023-2024)'. The delivery group reviews progress made on a quarterly basis and respond to the organisations legislative duties in providing an appropriate, safe and consistent response to those who have experienced domestic abuse or gender-based violence. Quick tools and a gender based violence policy are under development to facilitate an appropriate, safe and consistent response to those accessing health services who have experienced domestic abuse or gender-based violence.

NHS Tayside continues to deliver and develop a rolling programme of gender based violence training that can be accessed by all NHS Tayside staff, to ensure a confident and competent response can be provided to facilitate and respond to any disclosure of gender-based violence within health care settings and during healthcare contact. Embracing a public protection approach, training encompasses both adult and child protection considerations and introduces the Safe and Together Model within healthcare teams.

Partnership working is recognised within NHS Tayside as being essential in achieving the priorities as set out within the Equally Safe Strategy (2018). A consistent and active Health contribution to VAWG interventions such as MARAC have been instrumental in facilitating positive partnership relationships with statutory and VAWG specialised services. NHS Tayside has representation and actively contributes at national and local level; strategic and operational; committees, steering groups and development groups to achieve partnership objectives identified within the equally safe strategy.

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)



Safety. Teamwork. Respect. Innovation.

The Angus Watch Commander has been working with other AVAWP members to produce an employer handbook for guidance on how to approach gender-based violence issues in the workplace. Within the handbook there are hints on processes, along with how to support an individual who is subject to gender-based violence in their home or at work. SFRS also support wider work around GBV and 16 Days of Action.

Angus Council Housing Service

Housing Domestic Abuse Policy

Angus Council's Housing Division made a commitment as part of the Chartered Institute of Housing's (CIH) ['Make a Stand' campaign](#) to implement a domestic abuse policy. The policy was drafted based on the recommendations from the [Change, Justice, Fairness](#) research, the CIH Domestic Abuse Guidance for Social Landlords and following discussions with key stakeholders.

The policy supports the aims set out in the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) by focusing on preventing homelessness wherever possible and maximising other opportunities for those experiencing domestic abuse to access settled accommodation. It sets out how the Housing Division will

provide a proactive housing response to preventing and addressing domestic abuse by:

- Providing a confidential, sensitive, and supportive response to victims/survivors, whether that be women, children, or men.
- Working collaboratively across the organisation and with partners to provide a coordinated response to enable victims/survivors to access a range of housing options, advice, information and support.
- Holding perpetrators to account – domestic abuse is the responsibility of the perpetrator and action will be taken, where possible, to support victims/survivors to remain in the family home.

The policy was approved in September 2020 and was implemented alongside guidance and training for staff. Since the policy and guidance were implemented, homeless applications resulting from people experiencing violence or abuse within the household have reduced by 37% from 105 applications in 2018/19 to 66 applications in 2022/23.

A review of the policy is underway, with a focus on stakeholder engagement to highlight areas of good practice, examples of effective partnership working and any gaps in service provision.

Homelessness Service

Homelessness is not a standalone issue and needs much more than a purely housing response. ['Hard Edges Scotland'](#) brought together separate datasets to reveal how some harms interconnect in the lives of people in Scotland. It mapped the key drivers of severe and multiple deprivation – homelessness, domestic abuse, mental health, substance use, and offending.

It is recognised that both housing and homelessness support services have a role in preventing and responding to homelessness in Angus, however the services currently work independently of each other and the roles and activities are not closely aligned. In response to this, a new homelessness / housing options service has been established to sit alongside the homelessness support service within the Angus Health & Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) with the aim of making better use of resources to respond more effectively to homelessness and the additional homeless prevention requirements. The Homelessness, Prevention and Solutions Team will sit alongside other AHSCP services, which will encourage better collaboration with other services, increase access to support for homeless households and help to deliver a multi-disciplinary approach to addressing homelessness in Angus. Work is currently ongoing with a phased approach to establish the service which it is anticipated will be fully implemented by October 2023. In phase one of the transfer, all applications from those experiencing violence or abuse within the household will be referred to the new Homelessness team to ensure consistency of service.

Violence Against Deaf Women Project - DefiniTAY



Deaf Links is a Tayside-wide charity based in Dundee, providing support to people who experience sensory loss through a wide range of services, activities and learning opportunities.

In partnership with Women's Aid in Dundee, Angus and Perth, Deaf Links have developed the DefiniTAY Project to support Deaf women who use BSL as their first language and have or are experiencing any form of gender-based violence.

Project workers are fluent in British Sign Language and provide a dedicated advocacy service to deaf women across Tayside who have or are experiencing any form of violence, abuse or coercive control. Working directly with deaf women, their children and young people by offering crisis intervention, information, advocacy services and support to enable equal access to mainstream support services. The project also provides information and peer support workshops for deaf women and girls to increase their knowledge and understanding of Gender Based Violence to empower them.

The 1:1 advocacy service empowers, informs, and enables deaf women and girls in a variety of settings, liaising closely with statutory and other voluntary organisations.

The DefiniTAY Workers also provide awareness sessions on Deaf Culture and the specific access needs of deaf women with mainstream service providers.

PRIORITY AREA 4: Men in Angus desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response



Angus Safe and Together

The Safe and Together model has continued to be embedded within Angus, with further services and agencies signing up to working to the S&T principles.

Champions within Angus complete the [four day Safe and Together CORE training](#). During this they learn about the model, reflect on their practice and plan how they can shift their practice towards the three principles of Safe and Together. These are:

- 1 – Keeping the Child Safe and Together with the non-offending parent
- 2 – Partnering with the Survivor
- 3 – Intervening with the perpetrator to reduce harm

Safe and Together infographic information



Angus roll out began 2017 and by July 2023:
81 trained Champions
CFJ - 57
AHSCP - 4
Health - 3
Education - 6
Housing - 5
Third Sector - 6



- Champions completed
- Safe and Together Institute 4 day
- CORE training
- Day 1 – Assessment
- Day 2 – Interviewing
- Day 3 – Documentation
- Day 4 – Case Planning



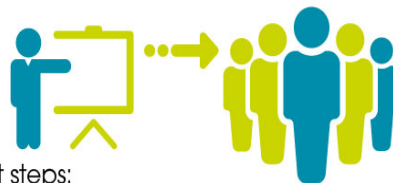
Domestic Abuse Prompt Tool designed by champions

Good Practice in Domestic Abuse Sessions have been delivered to the multi-agencies with the following feedback:

- “ Increased awareness of pressures families can be under from coercive behaviour
- “ Changing the language used in my own practice and encouraging the development of relationships and partnering with the protective parent
- “ Deeper assessment needed of potential harm impact of perpetrator behaviour
- “ Useful to hear from other agencies and collaborate with peers
- “ Interesting to hear how attitudes towards survivors of DA are changing
- “ Interactive, thought provoking, informative and useful



13 sessions designed and delivered by Champions – topics include: Typologies, The Role of Housing, Risk Assessment, The Impact of Language, S&T Report Writing, Mapping Perpetrator's Behaviour, Partnering with the Survivor



Next steps:

- Holding preparators of DA, to account for their behaviour and highlight the impact for children and families
- Holding father's to the same parental accountability as mother's
- Improving the use of professional language in DA

Angus Council Justice Services

During 2022/23, Angus Council Justice Services have continued to engage with perpetrators and survivors of domestic abuse.

The Glen Clova and Glen Isla projects continue to offer support to local women with Glen Isla working with women via statutory measures and Glen Clova via voluntary measures. During this time, small group work sessions have continued, allowing for women to benefit from valuable peer support, supported by staff who are skilled in trauma informed practice.

Justice services have adopted a Safe and Together approach to working with perpetrators of domestic abuse and this has resulted in close links with children and families' services to ensure a whole family approach is taken. Around three quarters of the services Social Workers and Community Justice Assistants have now completed the Safe and Together CORE training and staff continue to deliver training to multi-agency audiences in Angus around 'Engaging with Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse'.

Several new Social Workers joined Justice Services over the reporting period and all have completed the specialist Spousal Assault Risk Assessment [SARA V3] training, to enable robust risk assessments with domestic perpetrators to be undertaken.

Justice services continue to deliver programmed interventions including focussed 2:1 work with perpetrators and through group work: the Fergus Programme.

The Fergus Programme has been developed to support men in Angus to desist from domestically abusing women and children through intense offence focussed intervention. The purpose of this programme is to provide an integrated service to men, women and children who have been affected by, and involved in, the experience of domestic abuse.

Under Equally Safe, Action for Children receive money to fund Women and Families Safety Support Workers. One full time post is allocated to the Angus area, supporting women and children who are survivors of domestic abuse.

Justice Services has also funded an additional Women & Families Safety Support Worker via WRASAC to support women and children affected by domestic abuse and sexual abuse within a domestic setting.

In effect Angus Justice Services have two women and families safety support workers: one funded directly from Scottish Government to Action for Children; and one they fund directly to WRASAC.

Justice Services continues its collaborative working with Angus Women's Aid, Action for Children and WRASAC, ensuring support is available across Angus.

Justice Services also work closely with Sheriffs sitting at Forfar Sheriff Court, to monitor the engagement and progress of high-risk domestic abuse perpetrators open to the service via statutory measures, by reviewing many cases at the Court's monthly held 'Domestic Perpetrator Review Court'.

Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC)

Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) meetings were introduced nationally by Police Scotland in 2013, in accordance with Priority 4 of the Scottish Government Equally Safe strategy, which seeks to ensure perpetrators 'receive a robust and effective response'.

The aim of MATAC is to effectively tackle offending by perpetrators who present the greatest risk of harm, to achieve positive outcomes for victims and their families through coordinated partnership work to identify and investigate domestic abuse perpetrators using relevant and legitimate police tactics.

MATAC takes place in all 13 Police Scotland Local Policing Divisions and is held on a four weekly basis. MATAC referrals have continued to be received across Angus during the reporting period. This has shown to be a robust process and has proven successful outcomes where perpetrators generally receive significant custodial sentences where convicted.

White Ribbon Campaign



The White Ribbon Scotland (WRS) Campaign work continued in this reporting period. There had been a pause in work due to staffing changes, however an extension to the assessment period was agreed with WRS for achievement by summer 2024.

The steering group has met several times and have plans for awareness raising over summer 2023.

Pledges continue to be made both in paper format at events and online through the [Angus White Ribbon Pledge page](#). WRS are working on a process

to allow pledges collected in paper format to be shown on the website and a combined total to be gathered.

Self-Evaluation and Performance

Police Scotland Data

Previous reports have included annual data from Police Scotland showing the numbers of Domestic Abuse incidents and Sexual Offences in Angus.

The statistics for this reporting period have been delayed due to development work by the Scottish Government. The statistics for 2022/23 will be published in Spring 2024.

The AVAWP report for 2023/24 will reflect both years data.

Annual National Data Return

Each year, every Violence Against Women Partnership in Scotland is asked to complete a return to the National Improvement Service, detailing progress made towards the Equally Safe Quality Standards.

As part of this return, each partnership must state if they 'meet', 'partially meet' or 'do not meet' each of the quality standards.

In 2022/23, AVAWP met or partially met 38 of 40 standards, and did not meet two quality standards. AVAWP did not meet standards:

- 3.11 "The VAW Partnership works to ensure that adequate levels of funding are available for specialist VAWG services, that contribute to the local outcomes and activities that have been identified by members of the Partnership."

As AVAWP are not a funding body and cannot commission services it has no control of funding into the local area and therefore cannot meet this standard.

- 5.7 "The VAWP has undertaken a self-assessment of its partnership in the last 3 years using the VAW Partnership Self-Assessment Checklist and developed an improvement plan in response to the strengths and areas for improvement identified by its members."

Due to staffing changes with the Protecting People team who support the work of AVAWP, a self-assessment was not possible during the reporting

period. This has been noted as a development area for AVAWP and has been planned for Spring 2024.

Initial feedback received from the [Scottish Government Improvement Service](#) about the return has been positive. They have indicated the national report will include the Angus Justice Services 'Engaging with Perpetrators' training as a good practice example.

The way Equally Safe collect data is being consulted on and will change for the next reporting period of 2023/24. There has been no indication of what this will look like. The SECI group supported by the Lead Officer will look at how to achieve this when further information is released.

Learning from the Data

AVAWP continue to strive towards learning from both national and local data. As referred to previously in this report, there is now a local dataset in place and timeline to test this.

The AVAWP vision would be to learn from our data as to where our collective efforts should be targeted. This will also be easier with the local information that will be available from Police Scotland in the next reporting period.

AVAWP learns from national trends and responds to these. For example, with the recognised rise is young people dying by suicide due to gender based violence in their relationship, there was an event organised for local leaders to hear from the [Emily Test charity](#). Emily was a young girl who took her life in a neighbouring authority and AVAWP was keen that multi-agency partners had the opportunity to learn from this. The event was successful and as such is being rolled out to frontline staff as part of 16 Days 2023.

Key priorities for 2023-2024

AVAWP will continue to be a responsive partnership, acting on trends and need as they arise. However, priority will be given to the following areas:

- Continued work towards achieving the strategic plan via the subgroups
- The current strategic plan comes to an end in March 2024 so work will begin towards drafting a new plan
- 16 Days of Action 2023 and engaging the Angus community around gender-based violence
- Achieving White Ribbon Scotland status
- Preparing for the new Equally Safe return format
- To continue to build on the Safe and Together model across multi-agency partners within Angus
- Redesign the presentation of annual reports to better reflect that work undertaken cuts across multiple priority areas
- Relaunch of the Angus Gender Based Violence Employer Pledge
- Stronger links across PPA agenda including the Community Justice Partnership and services who support perpetrators of GBV
- Police Scotland local area data will be available to AVAWP on a quarterly basis
- Complete a multi-agency self-assessment as per Equally Safe standard 5.7
- Hearing the voices of survivors to inform the work AVAWP undertake
- Police Scotland will have a refresh of Domestic Abuse Champions in the Angus area
- Continue to focus on Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) via the short life working group

Appendix 1 – Glossary

| | |
|--------------|---|
| ACPC | Angus Child Protection Committee |
| AAPC | Angus Adult Protection Committee |
| ADP | Alcohol and Drug Partnership |
| AVAWP | Angus Violence Against Women Partnership |
| AWA | Angus Women's Aid |
| CLOG | Chairs and Lead Officers Group |
| COG | Angus Chief Officer Group |
| CP | Child Protection |
| CPC | Child Protection Committee |
| CPO | Child Protection Order |
| CYP | Children and Young People Subgroup |
| DA | Domestic Abuse |
| DASA | Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act |
| GBV | Gender Based Violence |
| GCP2 | Graded Care Profile 2 (Neglect assessment tool) |
| GIRFEC | Getting It Right For Every Child |
| ICR | Initial Case Review |
| IRD | Inter-Agency Referral Discussions |
| L&D | Learning and Development |
| LNA | Local Needs Analysis |
| LO | Lead Officers |
| MAPPA | Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements |
| MARAC | Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference |
| MATAC | Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination |
| NQSW | Newly Qualified Social Worker |
| PD | Practice Development Subgroup |
| PPA | Protecting People Angus |
| P&P Subgroup | Practice and Policy Subgroup |
| PRAM | Pre-birth Referral Allocation Meeting |
| S&T | Safe and Together Model |
| SCR | Significant Case Review |
| SCRA | Scottish Children's Report Administration |
| SECI | Self-Evaluation and Continuous Improvement Subgroup |
| SMART | Specific – Measurable – Attainable – Relevant – Time Bound |
| SSSC | Scottish Social Services Council |
| TIP | Trauma Informed Practice |
| TRIC | Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative |
| TRIC PG5 | Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative Priority Group 5 |
| VAW | Violence Against Women |
| VAWP | Violence Against Women Partnerships |
| VPD | Vulnerable Person Database |

| | |
|--------|---|
| WA | Women's Aid |
| WLD | Workforce Learning and Development Subgroup |
| WRASAC | Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre |

Appendix 2 - Case Study CD

"WRASAC helps us extinguish the anger we feel, the upset and destruction we feel upon ourselves."

-CD, survivor

CD (not real initials) is a forty-eight-year-old woman living in Angus. She was referred into service by another organization, following an incident which occurred between a member of their staff and CD while she was receiving support from them. She had previously worked with WRASAC (Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre) and expressed feelings of gratitude towards the service, speaking highly of her previous worker and the way in which WRASAC support survivors.

The work CD completed an initial session of support over the phone but moved on to five more sessions on an outreach basis at Angus Women's Aid, Arbroath.

Upon starting support, CD was extremely upset, expressing feelings of anger and frustration around recent events and her experience of support from another service. We used the anger iceberg to unpack her anger, what may be underneath it and who/where it was directed. She opened up about her feelings of betrayal, of pushing herself to try and trust a male despite her previous experiences and feeling immensely let down in return. CD identified her main goal of support as asserting her own needs in her current relationship. She described herself as being an extremely empathetic person and being fearful of hurting others feelings. CD spoke of the loss of control that she felt in the above incident, and those previous to it, and how important it felt to her to find her own voice. We explored what boundaries looked like for her and how she could implement them in different aspects of her life.

Moving through sessions, CD identified the feeling of being trapped in her relationship. We explored different attachment styles and she learned more about why she acts in different ways in a relationship. The more we explored this idea, the more she felt empowered and explored the need to leave her partner as it wasn't making her happy anymore. She spoke of feeling this way for a long time but struggled to find the courage to do so. CD began to think about her own interests, what she likes to do and how she envisioned her future.

As well as the above, CD described feelings of shame and disgust towards herself and the voice of her inner critic. We delved deeper into these and discussed ways of gently challenging her thoughts and feelings. We spoke about the way she shows others such care and compassion and whether this was something that she could show herself.

Over the next few sessions, we focused on what was important to her in building the future that she wanted for herself – her own space, interests, friends and family. During this time, CD made the choice to separate from her partner and said that she felt extremely empowered in doing so, acknowledging that it was not a good connection for her anymore. She spoke about her future in a positive light and with immense motivation to gain employment in helping others who have experienced trauma.

During a review, she said she felt she achieved a lot during our time together and was able to see that she deserves a happy future. She acknowledged that she still felt angry and let down by the organisation involved with her reason for referral but was in the process of finding peace with it. CD was self-aware, knowing that there are still things she would like to work on in the future regarding working through her trauma. She spoke of her experience of support as being 'a journey' and being happy with where she is right now.

We spent CD's final session celebrating her wins, what she had planned in the weeks and months ahead and all of the things that she had learned about herself throughout the process of separating from her partner. She spoke with real determination about an upcoming trip to Sweden to visit family and how this will be challenging for her but she felt equipped to push through and do it for herself. In regard to continuing her journey of working through trauma, I shared the online Bloom resource for CD to work through which she was extremely interested in.

Once ending support, CD sent the following email about her experience:

"Firstly thank you for being insightful, thoughtful and kind throughout, WRASAC ladies - both those giving support and those receiving it, are the most wonderful ladies. For all of those who give support this is for you all, firstly you give us some level of power back, you help us straighten or messed up little heads out and see clearer times ahead, you help remove the blame we burden ourselves with and you never make us question our memories, you listen and you believe, even when we can't believe ourselves. I know in myself that I would not be at 'this level' of clarity if it wee not for WRASAC. The system though improving is not currently giving women like myself time, attention and most importantly justice, putting myself through a police

interview was a horrific experience, and yes, unfortunately a waste of my time and there's, WRASAC helps us extinguish the anger we feel, the upset and destruction we feel upon ourselves, the self hatred we experience and although I know this is me now, this is where my mental health is, this is likely where it will stay, I can accept that, I can accept that the 'bad' men who were once in my life have shaped me in many ways, they have shaped my brain to work at unimaginable levels... some would say making me take ridiculous steps to ensure safety.... But, I can live with that.

To you and all the wonderful caring ladies at WRASAC, thank you, you have no idea of the positive impact you continue to make for women like myself. From the bottom of my heart.... THANK YOU 🙏❤️"

Appendix 3 – Case Study Limitless

Anne was 18 years old when she was referred to Limitless. Police had assessed Anne as high risk, and she was referred to and discussed at MARAC. Anne had a young baby.

Anne was involved with Limitless on and off for 12 months. After the first referral from police, all subsequent re referrals were made by Anne herself. Throughout this period Anne was living with the perpetrator.

Throughout her involvement with Limitless Anne disclosed high levels of physical and sexual assaults as being commonplace in the relationship. She had been completely isolated from all family and friends. Her partner, who did not work, had convinced Anne to give up her job so that “they could always be together”. Prior to becoming involved in this relationship Anne had been learning how to drive but he convinced Anne to stop taking driving lessons. Her partner displayed ongoing emotional manipulation, gas lighting and constant psychological abuse. A number of other professionals were also involved with Anne including social work and family nurse practitioner.

Given the ongoing abuse and levels of violence, Limitless focussed on safety planning and execution with Anne, for herself and her child. Limitless went through safety planning for the different stages:

1. Planning to leave
2. Still living with perpetrator
3. Leaving the perpetrator
4. After leaving the perpetrator

Highlighting the different actions needed for each stage. Limitless issued Anne with personal alarms, Ring Doorbells, and other safety equipment. Anne herself decided when she wanted to end her involvement with Limitless although she was still living with the perpetrator. At exit Anne was asked for permission to contact her in 6 months, which we ask all women, to just check in on her and how she was doing.

6 months after exiting Limitless Service Anne was contacted and revealed the following:

- She had put all sections of her action plan into place.
- She had reconnected with her parents, and they helped her execute her leaving plan.
- On a set date, Anne told her partner that she wanted him to leave her flat and that the relationship was over, she gave him a period to pack

his belongings and leave, she had written everything she wanted to say down and read from this so he could not talk her into changing her mind. Anne had arranged for her father to be outside her flat at this time and she had the personal alarms issued by Limitless on her. Anne told partner that if he took or damaged anything that was not his personal property, she would call the police (she had compiled inventory). Anne then left with her father for 2 hours. When she returned the partner had left and 15 minutes later, as arranged, a locksmith came and changed existing locks and added additional security measures.

- In the six months Anne had restarted her driving lessons and had passed her driving test, she had a job that she loved, she was in regular contact with her parents who were helping with childcare and she had reconnected with friends.

Limitless was set up to support young women who were experiencing domestic abuse in their own relationships. The service was designed by young survivors, including all paperwork and of course the logo. Teenage girls chose "Limitless" as a name for the project because they said their future should not be limited by domestic abuse. And chose a Celtic symbol for infinity as the logo. Limitless strives to ensure that teenage girls regain and maintain control of their own lives and shape their own futures. Anne's story exemplifies everything that we try to do.

Anne says she is loving life and "*living her own life*". That is exactly what Limitless was set up to enable.