

**Violence Against Women
Action Plan 2019-22
(revised December 2020)**



Introduction

This document supplements Fife VAW Partnership's Shared Understanding. An Action plan was agreed in 2019 following a development session that reviewed priorities in Fife alongside national priorities identified within [Equally Safe - Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls](#). FVAWP action plan is structured round the 4 priorities identified within Equally Safe.

Throughout 2020, Covid-19 has hugely impacted on those with lived experience of violence against women and the way services have been offered. In recognition of the particular risks for women and children the Scottish Government, CoSLA, Public Health Scotland and the Improvement Service published [Covid-19 Supplementary VAW Guidance](#) in June 2020 and an updated version in September 2020. This Guidance recognises:

The COVID-19 pandemic has, and will continue to, place women, children and young people experiencing all forms of VAWG at increased risk of harm for the foreseeable future. This includes women and children experiencing domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault, commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), trafficking, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. This is due to a number of factors including (but not limited to):

- *women, children and young people having less opportunity to seek support from their normal social networks such as friends and family while restrictions are in place;*
- *a perception that both universal and specialist services are under pressure creating a reluctance to seek support;*
- *perpetrators of VAWG potentially using COVID-19 social restrictions as an additional tool of exerting control, abuse and exploitation;*
- *increased financial challenges and dependencies if women are not able to work due to redundancy,*
- *caring responsibilities,*
- *illness or other factors.*

The Guidance identifies a range of specific increased risks:

1. During periods of lockdown and other social restrictions
2. During recovery and renewal planning
3. As partners build back better

The guidance also identifies 25 actions that local partners should consider to mitigate against those risks. FVAWP has considered the first 20 actions that are identified in phases 1 and 2 above. These have been incorporated into our action plan (with the numbers prefixed by SG = supplementary guidance and colour coded as follows:

[SG 1 to 10 - during periods of lockdown and other social restrictions,](#)

[SG 11 to 20 - during recovery and renewal planning.](#)

Some link closely to actions already in our action plan, others are additional.

Equally Safe Priority 1 - Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls

- a. Positive gender roles are promoted
- b. People enjoy healthy positive relationships
- c. Children and young people develop an understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships from an early age
- d. Individuals and communities recognise and challenge violent and abusive behaviour



Planned Activity	Key actions	Lead	Timescale/ Progress
<p>1.1 Work in partnership with schools, colleges and university to raise awareness of all forms of VAWG, aligning to Scottish Government led strategies and pilot projects.</p> <p>Ensure a strong focus on prevention including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raising awareness of positive healthy relationships • supporting children and young people to identify 'unhealthy relationships' at an early stage. 	<p>Develop a primary prevention strategy to raise awareness of gender-based violence and support the delivery of inputs across schools aligned to Curriculum for Excellence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years • Primary schools • Secondary schools <p>University of St Andrews to work with partners to raise awareness of VAWG focusing on prevention including Mentors in Violence Programme</p> <p>FVAWP to support this prevention work, recognising the key role of specialist services.</p>	<p>Education Service / Prevention WG</p> <p>University of St Andrews</p> <p>FVAWP L&D officer and specialist partners</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<p>1.2 Work in partnership with youth work groups to ensure a consistent approach to raising awareness and tackling tolerance of VAWG</p>	<p>Identify priority groups of children and young people to learn about healthy relationships and those who need additional support to cope with the impact of Covid and VAW</p>	<p>FVAWP / CLD</p>	<p>ongoing</p>
<p>1.3 Engage with the local community to raise awareness of Violence Against Women, the causes and consequences and the role they can play in tackling it</p>	<p>Link with national prevention campaigns such as 16 days</p> <p>FVAWP to promote services and where to get help (see priority 3, action 8 and priority 2, action 19)</p>	<p>Communication Service / FVAWP team & partners</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Planned Activity	Key actions	Lead	Timescale
2.4 Ensure women and children with lived experience of VAWG are able to support and shape future work being taken forward by Fife VAW Partnership, including those who may find standard consultation / engagement difficult.	Service user consultation WHIR (women's health improvement research) service user group to comment on changes to Housing policy and procedures	FVAWP and Specialist agencies	2022 2022
SG1. Ensure Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments are undertaken when developing any new policies/ responses to COVID-19, to reduce any unintended negative consequences to WCYP experiencing VAWG and ensure they meet the specific needs of people with protected characteristics	EqIAs undertaken in line with the public sector equality duty. SEG to highlight impact of Covid-19 on women children and young people experiencing VAWG and share Supplementary guidance.	SEG	2022
SG11. Undertake local strategic needs assessments to understand the impact the pandemic has had on women, children and young people experiencing VAWG and ensure this learning is used to shape local recovery and renewal plans	Share and discuss supplementary guidance with Community Managers to support local partnership recovery and renewal plans	FVAWP / Community Managers	2021
SG12. Ensure specific risks to women and children affected by VAWG are included in relevant integrated risk registers being developed by relevant Chief Officer Groups (COGs) to support wider recovery and renewal planning	VAW data to be shared with COPSG Share and highlight Supplementary Guidance with COPSG. Highlight Supplementary Guidance to those redrafting Plan 4 Fife	FVAWP / COPSG/ Fife Partnership	
SG20. Ensure that the inequality of outcomes that women have experienced during the pandemic are recognised and addressed in local recovery and renewal strategies, as well as in specific strategies relating to employability and economic recovery and poverty and welfare	Revised Equality and Diversity Scheme to reflect impact of Covid -19 including identifying inequality of outcome and disadvantage on women, children and young people. Share and highlight Supplementary Guidance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities Fife Partnership • Community Managers • Communities and Wellbeing Partnership • Child Poverty Group 	SEG / FVAWP	

Equally Safe Priority 3 - Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people

- a. Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent and co-ordinated
- b. Women, children and young people access relevant, effective and integrated services
- c. Service providers competently identify violence against women and girls and respond effectively to women, children and young people affected

Planned Activity	Key actions	Lead	Timescale
<p>3.1 Improve funding arrangements for VAW services to ensure high quality, sustainable services are available locally for women and children affected by all forms of VAWG</p> <p>SG6. Consider how to support and enhance capacity of specialist services. Wherever possible, this will include ensuring that any local funding and contractual expectations are flexible to support service delivery and the changing needs of WCYP</p> <p>SG17. Work in partnership with specialist VAWG services and universal services to identify anticipated levels of demand for crisis, recovery and other support in the coming year, and ensure resources are available to meet these.</p> <p>SG18. Explore opportunities to lever additional resources to support systems and services to respond to increased levels of demand.</p>	<p>Regular reports to FVAWP Executive to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends • Waiting Lists • Alternative delivery methods <p>Continue to consider resources at FVAWP Executive meetings, working together within funding constraints</p>	FVAWP Executive	<p>Quarterly</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>3.2 Develop new pathways with psychological services for women and children affected by violence against women</p> <p>SG15. Ensure local workforces have capacity and capability to provide trauma-informed support and services for all WCYP who require it.</p>	<p>Develop care pathways to meet national standards for forensic examination for sexual assault</p> <p>Work with Fife Trauma Network and Psychological Services to ensure appropriate supports for survivors of violence against women</p> <p>NES trauma e-learning to be included in FVAWP training programme</p>	<p>Forensic Examination Short Life WG</p> <p>Trauma Network</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>2022</p>
<p>3.3 Work towards national standards for forensic examination for sexual assault</p>	<p>Continue to develop services and health pathways for adult survivors of sexual assault with regular review and incorporating the views of victims / survivors.</p>	Forensic Examination Short Life WG	2022

Planned Activity	Key actions	Lead	Timescale
<p>3.4 Review support for women and children with additional vulnerabilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trauma, • substance misuse and • mental health • military community • learning disability 	<p>FVAWP (including MARAC leads) to work with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) • Trauma network • MOD <p>to ensure appropriate services are accessible and meet service users' needs.</p>	<p>Trauma network / ADP/ FVAWP/ MARAC/ MOD</p>	<p>2022</p>
<p>3.5 Review and maintain support & recovery services available for children affected by VAWG</p> <p><i>SG4. Work in partnership with specialist VAWG services to ensure that robust pathways are in place to identify children and young people experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of VAWG and that they are able to access spaces at ELC and Education Hubs where possible, during periods when schools and nurseries are closed</i></p> <p><i>SG14. Work in partnership with specialist VAWG services to ensure the needs of children experiencing domestic abuse are prioritised as part of recovery strategies being developed by Children Services and Education teams</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people's sexual abuse support services 12+ years at FRASAC • Seafield Project • Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) • Fife Women's Aid Children and Young people's services • CEDAR+ (Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery including Early Years) <p>MARAC to identify and refer children and young people. Health, Social Work and Education work in partnership to identify children at risk (including all children on the child protection register) Develop mechanism for specialist services to refer to Education Hubs</p> <p>Share and discuss supplementary guidance with Community Managers for consideration at Multi-Disciplinary Teams</p> <p>Share with Education Managers</p>	<p>FVAWP / CPC</p> <p>Education Service</p> <p>Community Managers</p> <p>Education Service</p>	<p>2020 / ongoing</p>
<p>3.6 Continue to review and deliver training opportunities, responding to FVAWP priorities</p>	<p>Develop a FVAWP multi-agency training framework identifying e-learning and virtual training opportunities.</p>	<p>FVAWP L&D and specialist providers</p>	<p>2109 -22</p>

Planned Activity	Key actions	Lead	Timescale
	FVAWP training programme to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote Safe & Together principles • highlight the impact of VAW on trauma • highlight stalking and coercive control Rollout Safe and Together core training to Social Work (Children and Families and Criminal Justice)	FVAWP / CPC / Workforce Development	2022
3.7 NHS to review training and routine enquiry within healthcare settings	Develop an improvement plan to increase the use of routine enquiry in the priority areas as set out in CEL	NHS Fife	2020
3.8 Review options to provide quality, safe, secure and accessible accommodation that meets the needs of women, children and young people affected by VAWG SG3. Develop a COVID-19 domestic abuse housing policy based on good practice guidance	Fife Housing Partnership (FHP) Project to deliver on <i>Improving the Way We Work</i> action plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Prevention of Homelessness Fund to support women to access and retain settled accommodation • Continue to develop the Housing Options Pathway for women experiencing domestic abuse • Develop multi-agency case working model for women who wish to retain settled accommodation Each landlord to develop their own tenancy management policy based on revised Fife Housing Register Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Protocol	Housing Service	2022
3.9 MARAC – multi-agency risk assessment conferencing SG2. Ensure MARACs continue to function to identify and enable safety plans to be put in place for WCYP at greatest risk of harm	Develop and work to the 10 principles of an effective MARAC. Continue MARAC with revised processes to reflect Covid restrictions Undertake review / audit of MARAC	MARAC Strategic Oversight Group	Ongoing
3.10 Continue to deliver Safe Secure and Supported at Home (SS&S@H) services	Identify resources to continue project beyond November 2019 Co-ordinate delivery of:	FVAWP/ FWA/ Fife Cares/ Fife Housing Services/	Complete 2020 and

Planned Activity	Key actions	Lead	Timescale
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Befriending • Home security advice and equipment • Police alarms • Housing advice and support 	Police Scotland	ongoing
3.11 Cross reference learning from local and national case reviews relating to both children and adults relating to violence against women and children (including child sexual exploitation)	Learning from case reviews to be shared with FVAWP partners	FVAWP Executive / Fife CPC	As appropriate
SG 5. Develop a strategy for effective multi-agency communication & data sharing to capture both quantitative and qualitative evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on women, children and young people.	<p>Quarterly FVAWP Covid-19 Specialist Services Report to be considered by FVAWP Executive to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends • Waiting Lists • Alternative delivery methods 	All	Quarterly
SG 7. Encourage community planning partners to work together to ensure a consistent approach to meeting the needs of WCYP, particularly in adult protection, child protection and criminal justice responses.	COPSG to co-ordinate public protection responses including VAW, adult protection, child protection and MAPPA.	FVAWP Executive/ COPSG	
SG 8. Use social media and other communication channels to highlight local services & support available to WCYP and ensure different sectors of the workforce know the role they can play in reducing risks. The use of accessible communication should be promoted wherever possible to ensure that women and children with visual or sensory disabilities, learning difficulties, language barriers or other communication support needs are not excluded.	<p>FVAWP to work with Fife Council Communications Team and FVAWP partners to highlight local services & support and staff know the role they can play in reducing risks. Sharing information to those supporting service users with additional vulnerabilities</p> <p>Update FVAWP Website</p>	<p>FVAWP / Fife Council Communications Team</p> <p>FVAWP team</p>	
SG13. Adopt a whole-systems, child-centred approach to working with families experiencing domestic abuse & ensure children are involved in decision making where appropriate.	Core business.	All	

Equally Safe Priority 4

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

- a. Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent and co-ordinated
- b. Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified early and held to account by the criminal and civil justice system
- c. Relevant links are made between the experience of women children and young people in the criminal and civil justice system

Planned Activity	Key actions	Lead	Timescale
4.1 Identify staff that need training in identifying and engaging with perpetrators (including health visitors & midwives).	Use the Safe and Together model to underpin training to support staff in their role.	FVAWP and individual agencies	2022
	Develop and deliver-multi-agency training to support staff in identifying and responding to perpetrators of domestic abuse appropriately.	FVAWP/ CJSW	2022
4.2 Develop appropriate interventions to engage with, challenge and support change in the behaviour of perpetrators of VAW SG9. Update risk assessment & management plans for convicted perpetrators & ensure close monitoring of high-risk perpetrators. Where possible, and this can be done safely, intervene directly with perpetrators face-to-face or virtually to support them to change negative behaviours. If not possible, consider other ways of safely engaging to monitor behaviour SG10. Ensure that criminal justice partners have relevant details of index offences relating to VAWG and information around protective orders (e.g. NHOs) preventing contact with WCYP SG16. Ensure perpetrators are held to account through robust use of criminal justice process and resumption of programmed interventions, including use of flexible newly accredited 1:1 delivery methods, if groupwork support remains impractical.	Convicted perpetrators and high-risk offenders are monitored through MAPPA, engagement with offenders and MATAC	Police Scotland /CJSW	Ongoing
	Safety planning and robust management of offenders Work with Procurator Fiscal's office to ensure information is shared with criminal justice partners.	Police Scotland /CJSW	Ongoing
	Deliver the Caledonian System on a one to one basis until groupwork can resume One to one work with perpetrators of domestic abuse	CJSW	Ongoing

Planned Activity	Key actions	Lead	Timescale
	Deliver Moving Forward Making Changes (MFMC) programme (one to one basis) or other appropriate accredited programme Unpaid work <i>other activity including domestic abuse work</i>		
4.3 Multi-agency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) groups identify high risk domestic abuse perpetrators and hold them to account	Regular MATAC meetings are held with partners, linking with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSDAS (disclosure scheme domestic abuse scotland) - COMPLETE • MARAC 	Police Scotland (Fife)	Ongoing

The following longer-term actions identified within the Supplementary Guidance underpins the work of the Fife Violence Against Women Partnership and our Shared Understanding

LONG-TERM: AS PARTNERS WORK TO ‘BUILD BACK BETTER’

Effects of COVID-19 pandemic response

- Incidents of VAWG could go undetected/unreported for many months and years
- Economic crisis could exacerbate WCYP’s experiences of VAWG
- Gender inequality could be further entrenched in social and economic systems

Mitigating actions local authorities and other community planning partners may wish to consider during periods of lockdown and other restrictions

21. Continue to encourage multi-agency, collaborative working and promote strong engagement with VAW Partnerships at a local, strategic level
22. Ensure a whole-systems, gendered approach to tackling VAWG is embedded as part of wider recovery, renewal and transformation responses
23. Promote commitment to tackling VAWG and gender inequality at a leadership level
24. Ensure there is an emphasis on tackling gender inequality and embedding early intervention and primary prevention approaches in all relevant policy areas
25. Continue to capture both good practice and areas for improvement throughout the pandemic and ensure this learning is used to shape all policy and practice moving forward.

17. Guide to Abbreviations Used

ADP	Alcohol & Drug Partnership
CAMHS	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service
CEDAR	Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery
CEL	Chief Executives Letter
COPSG	Chief Officers Public Safety Group
CoSLA	Domestic Abuse Awareness Raising Training
CJSW	Criminal Justice Social Work
CLD	Community Learning and Development
CPC	Child Protection Committee
DAART	Domestic Abuse Awareness Raising Training
DSDAS	Disclosure Scheme Domestic Abuse Scotland
ELC	Early Learning Centre
ES	Equally Safe
FHP	Fife Housing Partnership
FRASAC	Fife Rape & Sexual Assault Centre
FWA	Fife Women's Aid
FVAWP	Fife Violence Against Women Partnership
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HR	Human Resources
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing
MATAC	Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating
MFMC	Moving Forward Making Changes
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NES	NHS Education Scotland
SG	Scottish Government
SEG	Senior Equalities Group

WCYP	Women, children & young people
WG	Working Group
WHIR	Women's Health Initiative Research