

# Keeping Swindon **Safe**

## Swindon Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021 -2024

***“Our vision is to end domestic abuse, to make every family safe.***

***To do this we need to listen to survivors, be guided by  
The evidence of what works and make domestic abuse  
Everybody’s business”.***

***Adapted from SafeLives – Whole Picture Strategy 2018***



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## Foreword



Domestic abuse can, and does, happen to anyone. It is indiscriminate of age, gender, race, profession or social background. In the UK around one in four women and one in six men will be affected by domestic abuse in their lifetime, and the NSPCC reports that around one in five children have been exposed to domestic abuse.

The impact of abuse can result in a range of negative and harmful effects on health, wellbeing and outcomes in life. Domestic abuse impacts upon future generations and their ability, capacity and attitude towards relationships, parenting, self-esteem and mental health. Domestic abuse affects the whole family, and prevention or responses must recognise both the immediate impacts which domestic abuse may have on an individual or family, and also its long-term consequences.

Many different agencies, both statutory and voluntary, work to support families and individuals affected by domestic abuse. These agencies engage with the complex and often chronic nature of domestic abuse and collaborate to challenge it.

This strategy sets the strategic direction for the work to tackle domestic abuse and to make Swindon a place where domestic abuse is totally unacceptable. As a Community Safety Partnership, we will aim to strengthen and further coordinate our responses across our services. We are committed to working strongly as a partnership to ensure that those at risk of, or experiencing domestic abuse in Swindon have the support and service provision that they need.

Successful delivery of the strategy will require strong leadership, commitment and engagement from all Community Safety Partnership agencies and, as the chair of the Partnership, I am committed to ensuring this takes place.

**Assistant Chief Constable Deborah Smith**  
Chair Swindon Community Safety Partnership

## 2. What is Domestic Abuse?

This strategy adopts the government definition of Domestic Abuse, which is outlined in The Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It states that domestic abuse covers a wide range of behaviours that are used to control, threaten or intimidate victims.

Behaviours are classed as domestic abuse if:

- Both the individuals are over 16 years of age
- Both the individuals are 'personally connected' to each other and the behaviour is abusive

Behaviour is considered abusive if it consists of one or more of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- psychological or emotional abuse
- coercive or controlling behaviour – intimidation, threats, humiliation that is used to punish, harm, isolate a victim and prevent them from enjoying life
- economic abuse – any behaviour that prevents a victim having the ability to acquire, use or maintain money, or obtain goods or services

**Please see Appendix 1 for full definition of Domestic Abuse.**

### Use of Language in this Strategy

#### **Victim/survivor**

These terms are used interchangeably throughout this strategy to refer to people who have or are currently experiencing domestic abuse.

#### **Perpetrator**

This term is used throughout to refer to the person using abuse.

#### **Lived experience**

This term refers to individuals who share their expertise and knowledge based on their first-hand experiences of domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional and/or physical and sexual abuse.

#### **Specialist domestic abuse service**

This term refers to organisations/services independent from the state (i.e. third sector), whose core business is to support victim/survivors and/or perpetrators and/or children and young people impacted by domestic abuse and other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) - including sexual violence, forced marriage, so called 'honour based' violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation

### 3. Introduction and Context

#### Prevalence of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone regardless of age, disability, gender identification, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or, sexual orientation, social background or geography.

Evidence shows that domestic abuse is predominantly committed against women. In the year ending March 2020, it was estimated that 1.6 million women and 757,000 men aged 16- 74 experience domestic abuse.

Between April 2016 and March 2019 a total of 222 women were killed by a partner or ex-partner. The majority of suspects were male (218, 98%). This means that an average of three women were murdered by their male partner or ex-partner during this period. (ONS, Homicide in England and Wales: Year ending March 2020)

Domestic Abuse affects all aspects of community life including health and crime rates, ability to participate in the workforce, child development and family dynamics.

Wiltshire Police had 5540 incidents of domestic abuse reported to them in 2020-2021. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, reports early in 2020 decreased as did the level of risk of those reported incidents. However, by the end of the year the number of incidents reported had increased to expected levels.

The NSPCC reports that around one in five children have been exposed to domestic abuse. The Adoption and Children Act 2002, Sec. 120 recognises that witnessing domestic abuse can have serious long-term implications for children. Feletti et al (1998) reported domestic abuse as a key Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) other ACEs included living in a household with adults experiencing substance misuse, or a mental health condition.

Children and young people who are exposed to violence in the home may experience emotional trauma, poor health and trouble learning at school. They are also vulnerable to engaging in risky behaviours, youth violence, and exploitation. Adverse Childhood Experiences can have a negative impact on health and wellbeing in adult life including substance misuse, mental ill-health, offending, self-harm and suicide.

National learning from Serious Case Reviews identifies domestic abuse, mental ill-health and drug and alcohol misuse as the most common negative issues relating to children's family life. Substance misuse and poor mental health can be both contributory and causal factors of domestic abuse. The Care Act 2014 acknowledges domestic abuse as a category of abuse that particularly affects adults with care and support needs.

The cost for agencies and organisations dealing with domestic abuse is significant. In England and Wales, in the year ending 31st March 2017 it was estimated to have

collectively cost, the Criminal Justice System, Health Services and local authorities £66 billion (Home Office, 2017).<sup>1</sup>

Using Professor Sylvia Walby's Ready Reckoner from her research (The Cost of Domestic Abuse 2004) the cost to Swindon, based on the 2021 estimated population size of 222,881, is around £21.5 million per year. This figure does not include the emotional and human cost of domestic abuse.

Women's Aid Federation of England (WAFE) undertakes an annual audit of domestic abuse services (for women) in England. The audit reviews changes in provision, information about survivors as well as future challenges. A key finding of the most recent audit in June 2021 estimated that local service providers had supported 10,592 women and 12,710 children in refuge accommodation and community services had supported 103,090 women and 124,762 children in 2019-2020. In Swindon in 2020-2021, Swindon Domestic Abuse Support Service supported 92 women and 132 children in Refuge and 167 victims and survivors and 248 children in community services in the same year.

The Women's Aid Survivors Voices Survey on the 'Economics of Abuse' (2018) revealed:

- Over two thirds of women responding reported they had experienced economic abuse with nearly half not having enough money to pay for basic essentials like food and bills
- Economic abuse had an adverse impact on their employment and education. Nearly one in five women were prevented by their abusive partner from having paid employment while a third reported their partner was abusive towards them while they were working or at college. This impacted negatively on their future employment prospects as it jeopardised their current job or their ability to complete their course
- Some woman had not been able to leave their abusive partners due to a lack of financial independence
- Many of the women who left their abusive partner faced financial hardship and homelessness
- One third of women had to give up their homes as a result of leaving their abusive partner. (Womensaid, 2019)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [horr107 \(1\).pdf](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Economics-of-Abuse-Report-2019.pdf](#)

The Mankind Initiative published a report in June 2021, Making Invisible Men, Visible - outlining how male victims can be identified and supported.

The report highlights that:

- Male victims of domestic abuse are largely invisible to society and to public services
- This includes LGBT+ people and men who are victims of forced marriage and 'so-called' honour-based violence and abuse
- Around 300 men are sleeping rough because of partner abuse every night
- Over the pandemic period, the charity saw an increase in calls to its helpline by one quarter and visits to its website by 75%
- 61% of the men who call the ManKind Initiative helpline have never spoken to anyone about the abuse they are suffering, and 64% would not have called if the helpline was not anonymous
- One in five victims (19%) of forced marriage are male; and specialist helplines like Karma Nirvana have reported increases in men seeking support from so-called "honour" based violence and those with no recourse to public fund. (ManKind, 2021)<sup>3</sup>

#### **4. What we want to achieve**

This strategy reflects a multi-agency approach to what we want to achieve, what we will do, and how we will know that we have made a difference. It is recognised that domestic abuse is a complex issue that impacts on individuals, communities, agencies and organisations within Swindon. Domestic abuse can lead to a significant increase in the use of health services, hospital admissions and prescriptions, due to chronic health problems e.g. mental health, gynaecological problems substance misuse, homelessness. Other consequences include the impact on the criminal justice system, loss of income or work, isolation from friends and family, poverty and financial hardship - all of which may increase an individual's vulnerability. For the children in families where domestic abuse is present, there can be impacts on long term physical, emotional and mental health. Domestic abuse can ultimately result in the death of the victim. There have been five Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) in Swindon since 2014.

We aim to work towards the prevention of domestic abuse by identifying and using evidence based primary preventions and to ensure that individuals and families who are at risk of, or exposed to, domestic abuse are able to access information, support and safe accommodation. We will also raise awareness and encourage our

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<sup>3</sup> [Making-Invisible-Men-Visible-Guide-Final \(1\).pdf](#).

communities, to report any domestic abuse they hear or witness without fear of reprisal.

The principles underpinning the strategy are based on:

- Health Needs Assessment, (Swindon Borough Council, 2021) <sup>4</sup>
- The National Statement of Expectations (Home Office, 2016)<sup>5</sup>
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence Guidance on Domestic Violence and Abuse (NICE, Quality Standards QS116, 2006)<sup>6</sup>
- Getting Right First Time, (SafeLives, 2015)<sup>7</sup>
- A Place of Greater Safety (SafeLives, 2015)<sup>8</sup>
- Tackling Violence against Women and Girls Strategy (Home office, July 2021)<sup>9</sup>
- Making Invisible Men, Visible (ManKind) <sup>10</sup>
- Male Victims, a Position Statement on Male Victims of Crime (considered in the Cross Government Violence against Women and Girls Strategy) (Home Office)<sup>11</sup>
- In Search of Excellence, The coordinated community response (CCR) STADV 2020)<sup>12</sup>
- The Whole Housing Approach (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance)<sup>13</sup>

These principles focus on agencies working together within the new statutory requirement for a Local Partnership Board aligning budgets and resources where relevant, and the commissioning of evidence-based services that address all levels of need.

Members of the DA & VAWG Board (the Local Partnership Board) and Key Stakeholders of this strategy and the Statutory Housing Duty Strategy who will support implementation include:

- Swindon Borough Council teams: Community Safety, Children's Services including Community and Health Services, Early Help and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Social Care; Adult Social Care and Safeguarding; Housing Services, Public Health and the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership
- Wiltshire Police

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<sup>4</sup> Swindon JSNA website: [www.swindonjsna.co.uk](http://www.swindonjsna.co.uk)

<sup>5</sup> VAWG National Statement of Expectations - FINAL (1).PDF.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs116>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.safelives.org.uk/policy-evidence/getting-it-right-first-time>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.safelives.org.uk/node/500>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.mankind.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Making-Invisible-Men-Visible-Guide-Final.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [Male Victims Position Paper Web Accessible.pdf](#)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.standingtogether.org.uk/blog-3/in-search-of-excellence>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/whole-housing-approach/what-is-the-whole-housing-approach>



- Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Swindon Domestic Abuse Support Services (SDASS)
- Great Western Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- National Probation Service (NPS)
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue
- Her Majesty's Court & Tribunal Service (HMCTS)
- Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)
- Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Trust
- Swindon & Wiltshire Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
- Turning Point
- Nelson Trust
- Stonewater Housing Association

As a partnership, we are committed to:

- Ensuring that every victim, both adult and children will have access to specialist safe accommodation and support that is tailored to their needs
- Identifying and developing primary prevention programmes to ensure that the incidence of domestic abuse do not occur in the first place
- Increasing reporting, improve recording, reducing repeat victim incidents and reducing repeat and serial perpetrators
- Helping victims and families of domestic abuse to improve their health, wellbeing and resilience using our understanding of the local picture of domestic abuse to direct prevention work and shape services and support based on our local need
- Embedding greater awareness across the Swindon community of what domestic abuse is and how to report it
- Increasing knowledge for early identification of parental conflict to help prevent escalation and to help prevent the emotional harm to children and young people
- Continuing to provide training to a wide range of professionals, organisations and communities
- Ensuring early identification of victims and their children to enable prompt support to break the cycle of domestic abuse in families
- Improving coordinated, responsive specialist services and support to victims and children affected, with accessible pathways
- Ensuring appropriate and timely referral and support for children and young people at risk of harm from domestic abuse
- Providing support for perpetrators to enable them to change or modify their behaviour (this may include access to accommodation)

- Holding perpetrators to account through policing and the criminal justice system with better identification and reporting by all partner agencies
- Embedding learning from domestic homicides and other statutory reviews
- Continuing to protect victims from the risks of honour based abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, sexual exploitation, modern day slavery, stalking & harassment, sexual exploitation and sexual violence

## 5. The Local Picture

We can predict in a population of 222,881 (estimate October 2021) that approximately 13200 people (aged 16 to 74 years) experience domestic abuse (DA) each year (5.9%) in Swindon; and that one person can experience multiple incidents of DA.

- In 2018/19 Adult Social Care received 198 referrals that were linked to domestic abuse. The highest recorded abuse type was physical (43%) followed by psychological (32%)
- Police recording for Swindon indicates 5,540 incidents of DA in the Borough have been reported in 2020/21. 2,854 of the reports were considered a crime
- Research shows that on average only 20% of incidents that occur are reported to the Police which indicates that in 2020/21 there were in excess of 20,000 incidents that were not reported to them, or may have been disclosed to another agency. Research also indicates that reporting is lower in more affluent populations
- 488 high risk cases were referred by professionals to the Swindon MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) in 2020/21. In those cases, there were 651 children living within the family
- At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 316 children had Child Protection Plans with 100 identified as having domestic abuse within the family; and 352 children were Looked After, with 29 having domestic abuse as a factor. 129 children with both a Child Protection Plan and Looked After had domestic abuse within the family.

Since the publication of the 2014 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Domestic Abuse Report and the 2018 refresh, a strong governance framework has been put in place for Domestic Abuse. Improved communication has enabled professionals to effectively share information about those at risk to prevent initial or further harm.

Gaps in local domestic abuse provision were identified in 2018 through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. These included the need for:

- A 'Whole Family Approach' programme working with victims, children and perpetrators to reduce the risk of abusive situations escalating. Including provision to works with families who wish to stay together
- Specialist support for vulnerable children including care leavers

- Specialist provision for victims and perpetrators who have complex needs (such as substance misuse; mental health needs; Learning Disabilities; and adults at risk and older people)
- Specialist provision for hard to reach groups such as LGBT+, BAME Groups and male victims as required in the Statutory Housing Duty , Part 4 of the DA Act 2021
- Education programmes in school, promoting healthy relationships
- Increased specialist provision for adolescents aged 10 to 17 years who abuse parents, carers or siblings
- Provision for under 10's who display harmful behaviours towards their parents, carers or siblings
- Non-mandatory Interventions and Programmes for perpetrators (particularly serial perpetrators) (DASP Project – OPCC, Probation & SDASS)
- Domestic Abuse Champions network within departments, agencies, organisations and communities. (SDASS now have an Ambassador programme)
- Improved access to information and advice at a community level including local employers and faith groups
- A Survivors Network to enable peer support and a pathway for survivors to be included in consultations on services, policy and legislation

The Domestic Abuse Health Needs Assessment (2021) provides a detailed analysis of the needs of our local population to inform the Domestic Abuse Act, Part 4 Statutory Housing Duty.

### **Recommendations for 2021**

- Improve data collection to develop a broader picture of domestic abuse in Swindon to inform future provision
- Enhance training to front line staff to enable identification of domestic abuse especially in older people
- Develop innovative ways to work and engage with victims with protected characteristics – BAME, LGBTQ, Gypsy & Travellers to encourage them to disclose domestic abuse and seek support
- Provide specialist support for victims and perpetrators with complex needs and multiple disadvantages
- Develop early intervention approaches to identify lower risk victims and their children to prevent escalation to high risk and crisis
- Develop a mechanism for consulting with victims, survivors, by and for groups to ensure the services are meeting the needs of our local community

## 6. Domestic Abuse Act 2021

### Overview of the Act

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (“the Act”) received Royal Assent on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The Act has overhauled the response and support offered to victims and survivors of domestic abuse with changes in protection, legislation and a new definition of domestic abuse, which, for the first time, recognises children and young people as victims in their own right. It also includes economic abuse.

### The Domestic Abuse 2021 Act aims to:

- Protect and support victims – to enhance the safety of victims and the support they receive
- Transform the justice process – to provide support to victims throughout the justice process and an effective response to perpetrators to end the cycle of abuse
- Improve performance – to drive consistency and better performance in the response to domestic abuse; and
- Promote awareness – put domestic abuse at the top of everybody's agenda

### Local Authority Statutory Housing Duty

Part 4 of the Act places the following duties on Swindon Borough Council to;

- Set up a Multi- Agency Local Partnership Board that will be responsible for performing certain functions including oversight of the Housing Duty
- To undertake a needs assessment to map the needs of victims and their children to ensure safe accommodation offers them the services they require. This includes victims from out of the area
- Develop and publish a Safe Accommodation Strategy based on the needs of victims in the area
- Implement the strategy through a commissioning or decommissioning process
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy
- Report back annually to Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on progress

A full list of the measures and commencement schedule can be found via the following link:

[Domestic Abuse Act 2021 commencement schedule - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/944247/Domestic-Abuse-Act-2021-commencement-schedule.pdf)

The Swindon Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy will fulfil Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act and the Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy will set out Swindon's overall and holistic approach to tackling domestic abuse in Swindon.

[Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services)

[Swindon Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024](#)

## 7. Key objectives, Actions and Outcomes

This strategy has been informed by national and local policy, views of stakeholders and professionals, and evidence of good practice. The strategy proposes three strategic objectives to address the health, economic and social consequences of domestic abuse. As referenced earlier, domestic abuse can affect family members as well as those in intimate relationships, and incurs significant costs for the criminal justice, health and care system. The strategic objectives, actions and outcomes for 2021-2024 are:

### Objective 1

Reduce the incidence of domestic abuse by improving early intervention and prevention by focussing on early help and specialist services for victims, families and perpetrators

#### Priority Actions

- Develop an early help model for individuals, children and families adopting a whole family approach
- Respond to best practice and research findings to improve the services available for victims, families and perpetrators
- Raise awareness with front line practitioners of the impact of domestic abuse on individuals, children and families to enable them recognise the dynamics sooner and to focus on earlier intervention and help
- Develop integrated care pathways across partner agencies for identifying, referring and providing appropriate interventions to support adults, children and families
- Further develop the offer of working with young people to prevent escalation of abusive behaviour and to reduce harm
- Develop education programmes for schools and colleges to promote healthy relationships, in line with the Governments proposals to make this compulsory within Physical, Social and Health Education(PSHE)
- Ensure stakeholders and survivors participate in the planning and delivery of services

- Ensure specialist financial and debt advice is accessible to victims through support services, Citizens Advice Bureau and Jobcentre Plus
- Improve access to safe accommodation and support according to need, for victims and survivors and their children fleeing domestic abuse
- Develop non-mandatory perpetrator programmes to support perpetrators who want to change their behaviour
- Develop processes and pathways to help to identify and disrupt serial perpetrators, to bring them to justice and using recent research from people, such as: Jane Monckton-Smith<sup>14</sup>, to help to identify those perpetrators who may go on to murder their partner/ex-partner

## **Objective 2**

Improve the response to domestic abuse by promoting awareness and training to help communities, professionals and specialist services respond effectively and consistently

### **Priority Actions**

- Raise levels of domestic abuse knowledge in communities and across front-line staff with a focus on improving the signposting of victims and children to specialist support services
- Ensure that front line staff recognise the links between drug & alcohol misuse, self-harm suicide and domestic abuse
- Continue to run co-ordinated multi-agency communication campaigns to support the delivery of strategic outcomes
- Build capacity and competence of frontline staff to recognise the indicators of domestic abuse, and develop a trauma informed approach to experiences, through staff induction and ongoing professional development
- Develop accessible resources for frontline staff that include policy, procedures, pathways and information regarding the services available
- Improve information and support for victims from LGBT+, BAME communities, older people, male victims and others with protected characteristics
- Improve understanding and early recognition of parental conflict and how this impacts on the family

## **Objective 3**

Align joint commissioning activity across partner agencies to make the best use of resources to deliver high quality and responsive services for victims, survivors, children, young people and perpetrators that focus on risk reduction and recovery

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<sup>14</sup> Monckton-Smith, Jane (2019) Intimate Partner Femicide: using Foucauldian analysis to track an eight stage relationship progression to homicide against women.

## Priority Actions

- Complete a financial and cost-benefit analysis of spend and impact of current Domestic Abuse support and perpetrator services within Swindon to inform future commissioning intentions
- Develop a multi-agency joint commissioning strategy to improve both mainstream and specialist support for those at risk - victims, survivors and perpetrators - that meet local need and align with requirements of the Statutory Housing Duty
- Reduce organisational and service boundaries, to ensure delivery models are joined up and streamlined to support families and individuals affected by or at risk of domestic abuse, i.e. one referral leads to all needs being addressed covering mental health, substance misuse, housing, welfare advice, employment etc.
- Monitor the implementation and impact of this Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Strategy and the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy, maintaining continuous stakeholder engagement through the DA & VAWG Board

## 8. How will we know we have made a difference?

By the end of this Strategy in 2024 will have:

- Increased the number of victims reporting domestic abuse either to the Police or through a third party
- Reduced the number of repeat victims of domestic abuse
- Reduced the number of serial perpetrators
- Improved the timeliness of information sharing between agencies
- More agencies involved in multi-agency case management
- Improved understanding of referral pathways to specialist support services
- Improved housing options for victims including staying in their own home and provision of move-on accommodation
- Increased the options for victims to access education, training and employment
- Increased the use of civil actions to support victims and disrupt perpetrators

## **9. Next Steps**

An action plan will set out how we will work in partnership with our key stakeholders to ensure a successful implementation of this strategy and The Safe Accommodation Strategy.

It will be developed by March 2022, monitored and reviewed quarterly through the DA & VAWG Board.

A report will be presented to the Community Safety Board quarterly and annual reports will be delivered to the Safeguarding Strategic Partnership and the Health & Wellbeing Board.



## Appendix 1

### Part 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

#### Definition of “domestic abuse”

1. This section defines “domestic abuse” for the purposes of this Act.
2. Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—
  - (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
  - (b) The behaviour is abusive.
3. Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—
  - (a) Physical or sexual abuse;
  - (b) Violent or threatening behaviour;
  - (c) Controlling or coercive behaviour;
  - (d) Economic abuse (see subsection (4));
  - (e) Psychological, emotional or other abuse;And it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.
4. “Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to—
  - (a) Acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
  - (b) Obtain goods or services.
5. For the purposes of this Act A's behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B's child).
6. References in this Act to being abusive towards another person are to be read in accordance with this section.
7. For the meaning of “personally connected”, see section 2.

#### Definition of “personally connected”

1. For the purposes of this Act, two people are “personally connected” to each other if any of the following applies—
  - (a) They are, or have been, married to each other;
  - (b) They are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
  - (c) They have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(d) They have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);

(e) They are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;

(f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));

(g) They are relatives.

2. For the purposes of subsection (1) (f) a person has a parental relationship in relation to a child if—

(A) The person is a parent of the child, or

(b) The person has parental responsibility for the child.

3. in this section—

- “child” means a person under the age of 18 years;
- “civil partnership agreement” has the meaning given by section 73 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004;
- “parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989 (see section 3 of that Act);
- “Relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.

### **Children as victims of domestic abuse**

1. This section applies where behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is domestic abuse.

2. Any reference in this Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who—

(a) Sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, the abuse, and

(b) Is related to A or B.

3. A child is related to a person for the purposes of subsection (2) if—

(A) The person is a parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child, or

(b) The child and the person are relatives.

(4) In this section—

- “child” means a person under the age of 18 years;
- “parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989 (see section 3 of that Act); “Relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.