

# **ELIMINATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG)**

## **Hackney Strategy 2022-2025**



Hackney  
Safer  
Neighbourhood  
Board



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# Forewords



**Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas**

Cabinet Lead - Community Safety  
and Regulatory Services  
Hackney Council

The safety of everyone in Hackney - at home, at work or in public spaces - is a priority for me.

Hackney is a place where women and girls are generally safe in their homes and public spaces. We are aware, however, that we need to do more.

Domestic abuse continues to be a challenge faced by too many residents. I'm therefore pleased that Hackney's strong multi-agency partnership approach is key in identifying abuse, protecting victims/survivors and holding to account those who harm others.

Our public consultation into the safety of women and girls in public spaces from December 2021- January 2022 identified issues regarding women's safety in some of our public spaces.

I would like to thank everyone who responded to the consultation, as your feedback has helped inform this Strategy and the Hackney Labour Manifesto, endorsed by Hackney's electorate

The Council is now taking those identified issues forward in the form of targeted action to improve the safety of women and girls on our streets.

I am confident that during the lifetime of this Strategy, we will build upon what has already been achieved whilst acknowledging the impact of national fiscal constraints.

This partnership strategy establishes a comprehensive approach; that need to be in place to eliminate violence against women and girls and ensure that our borough is safe for all.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Susan', located at the bottom right of the page.



**Diane Benjamin**

Director  
Children and Families Service  
Hackney Council

I'm really pleased to be introducing Hackney's new Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. Since I assumed my role in 2021 I have been struck by the commitment the Council has shown towards addressing domestic abuse in particular and the strong collaborative approach across Hackney partner agencies to ending Violence Against Women and Girls.

I know though that we have further to go. The hurt and trauma caused by the Child Q case shows us the harm caused by racism and discrimination, particularly against Black women and girls, and the importance of agencies challenging one another. The progress the Council continues to make in the field of Anti Racist Practice is a source of pride but we must never become complacent. The struggle to address Violence Against Women and Girls must continue to be one that sees and responds to intersectionality and the different lived experiences of women and girls across the Borough. As a social worker, as a woman and as a mother of two girls I am proud to be a leader in Hackney's Strategy for Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls.

A handwritten signature in white ink, reading "D. Benjamin". The signature is stylized and cursive.

# Executive Summary

This Strategy is informed by and reflects the **London Mayor's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy** and the national **Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy**. The Strategy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by Hackney's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Board which sits under Hackney's Community Safety Partnership.

Throughout the Strategy the term 'victims / survivors' is used rather than solely 'victims' to describe those who have experienced gender-based abuse. This is to acknowledge that, for those who have experienced abuse, they have been victims of perpetrators' behaviour choices; however they have agency, they have survived and may not wish to be defined by the abuse perpetrated against them. Through the Strategy and Action Plan, Hackney will also provide support to the children of victims / survivors of gender based abuse.

This strategy, like the Mayor of London and national VAWG Strategies, uses the term 'perpetrator' to refer to those who cause harm to others in their intimate or family relationships; we urge agencies to see the complexities and histories of those who harm others, to address their behaviours holistically and to engage with them directly to disrupt and deter abusive behaviour where possible as part of a preventative approach.

Hackney is committed to ending misogyny and the associated abusive behaviours disproportionately committed against women and girls. This disproportionality stems from a societal culture of patriarchy, male dominance and discrimination against women and girls and requires a dedicated Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

Hackney is committed to addressing all domestic abuse and other behaviours commonly grouped together as 'Violence Against Women and Girls' regardless of the sex and/or gender of victim/survivor or perpetrator. As set out in **Supporting Male Victims**, domestic abuse and other forms

of abuse such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, so-called 'honour' based abuse and stalking are predominantly crimes against women and girls though can affect men and boys.

Transgender people are more likely to have been a victim/survivor of all gender-based abuse. Hackney is committed to treating transgender women and girls as women and girls and this is the case throughout this Strategy when the term 'women and girls' is used. This Strategy also pertains to non-binary people who are victims of gender-based abuse. Hackney is committed to addressing values and approaches which exclude trans women and girls.

Hackney is an Anti-Racist Borough and as such our Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy integrates Anti Racist Practice throughout. The Hackney partnership is committed to identifying and addressing racism within services and how this can compound marginalisation and contribute towards the harms faced by victims / survivors.

Hackney is committed to addressing structural inequalities and the intersections of class/racism misogyny and how these make women, girls, non-binary, trans and non-conforming gender people more vulnerable to abuse and less able to access safety and recovery. These inequalities need to be actively tackled at all levels of the system. We understand and respond to the complexities of people's lived experiences and the intersectionality of protected characteristics: sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, age, religion, marital status, pregnancy/maternity and sexuality. We know that misogyny can combine with discrimination on the basis of other protected characteristics to compound abuse suffered. We also know that vulnerability due to mental ill health, substance misuse, immigration status and language can be used by perpetrators of abuse to identify, control and silence their victims. We are committed to ending this.

Hackney's VAWG Strategy and Action Plan will continue to apply a public health approach to tackle and reduce gender based abuse. This approach treats VAWG as a preventable public health issue, recognising that VAWG is a consequence of factors such as adverse childhood experiences, harmful attitudes, beliefs and influences held socially or within the community.

The public health model has four steps:

- A problem is identified
- The risks; protective factors; and the causes are established.
- Once this has been done, interventions are developed and evaluated, and finally effective policies and programmes need to be scaled up.
- Once the final step has been reached, the cycle starts again from the beginning, with systematic data collection to identify the problem.

The priorities, objectives and actions for the updated strategy for Hackney are aligned with the principles of the public health approach.

The approach used to formulate Hackney's Eliminating VAWG Strategy has been to draw on

- national, pan-London and local policies which we have sought to integrate and reflect.

- national data as set out in the national strategy and local data pertaining to Hackney
- consultation with organisations working with victims / survivors of domestic abuse and VAWG
- consultation with women and girls in Hackney.

We are grateful to all those who have participated in the consultation process.

Hackney will work closely with local communities and community-based organisations including Hackney's existing well-developed 'by and for' domestic abuse services to implement the Eliminating VAWG Strategy and Action Plan. Communities within Hackney have different experiences and needs. The Hackney VAWG partnership will bring together the knowledge and expertise within communities to ensure everyone in Hackney can access the support they require. We are dedicated to creating and further developing sustainable support systems which represent the needs of all communities in the borough. The Council will continue to support the growth of 'by and for' VAWG organisations.

The Council acknowledges that economic and social policy decisions made at a national level have a very real impact on residents. The Council is committed to advocating at a national and London-wide level on behalf of residents for resources and approaches that grow local provision and address systemic factors contributing to need.

# Introduction

Violence against women and girls (referred to as 'VAWG') has severe and far-reaching consequences to individuals, families and communities on both a local and national level, with broad social, health and economic impacts. Tackling VAWG is the responsibility of every service within Hackney. Through working together as part of a whole systems approach, we can make Hackney a safer place for all.

This Strategy builds upon Hackney's previous **Strategy for Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls 2019-2022**. During that three year period, significant progress was made:

- A wide range of services/organisations is available to victims / survivors of domestic abuse including established 'by and for' agencies working to address VAWG
- Domestic abuse service provision responded robustly and proactively throughout the period of restrictions imposed upon the public in response to Covid-19
- Independent audit highlighted that agencies represented at Hackney MARAC collaborated effectively to develop meaningful action plans to support high risk victims/survivors of abuse<sup>1</sup>
- The Safe and Together Model has been adopted within Hackney Children and Families Service, is being embraced by the Hackney partnership and is being embedded across other east London boroughs
- Hackney Council has created and is following the country's first **Intergenerational Domestic Abuse Protocol** which deals with intergenerational/intrafamilial abuse / 'Adult Family Violence'
- The Annual 16 Days of Activism to Eliminate VAWG campaigns

and other events have kept Violence Against Women and Girls and domestic abuse more generally in the public and professional consciousness across Hackney

- Hackney Council has obtained accreditation with White Ribbon UK for its work in tackling VAWG and domestic abuse
- A range of services tackle harmful gender-based behaviours in schools and youth settings
- The Council's Hackney Nights initiative delivers training and educational toolkits in the Night Time Economy alongside work with the Police to make Hackney a safer borough for women

Despite the positive steps, it is clear that further progress is required to eradicate violence against women and girls and domestic abuse perpetrated against all victims. The safety of women and girls in public has been brought to national attention through several murders received widespread coverage in the media. The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated the difficulties faced by women and girls experiencing domestic abuse, with national lockdowns isolating victims / survivors and reducing their routine in-person contact with professionals.

This strategy will build on progress made, and outlines Hackney's vision for eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls. It has been influenced by the national **Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy** and its accompanying **Supporting Male Victims** position statement and **Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan**, the **London Mayor's Police and Crime Plan**, the **Metropolitan Police Service Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan** and the **London Mayor's VAWG Strategy for London**.

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<sup>1</sup>Hackney MARAC (August 2021 – MOPAC Review)

Hackney's strategy has consciously mirrored the four priorities in the Mayor of London's VAWG Strategy which reflect those of the national VAWG Strategy;

- Preventing and reducing VAWG
- Supporting all victims and survivors
- Holding perpetrators to account
- Building trust and confidence

Hackney's VAWG Strategy is in line with Standing Together's **Coordinated Community Response** model to address domestic abuse. Through working in partnership, Hackney will support victims / survivors of domestic abuse, hold perpetrators accountable and embed an early intervention approach in the borough which addresses the root causes of domestic abuse. The CCR has 12 components which the accompanying action plan will be aligned to:

1. Survivor engagement and experience
2. Intersectionality
3. Shared objective
4. Structure and Governance
5. Strategy and Leadership
6. Specialist Services

7. Representation

8. Resources

9. Coordination

10. Training

11. Data

12. Policies and Processes

Hackney's Eliminating VAWG Strategy is informed by and contributes towards the **Council's Anti-Racism Plan**. Its five pillars - Institutional change, Community engagement, Culture and leadership, Accountability and Influence are congruent with the need to have a whole-system approach to Violence Against Women and Girls. Hackney is also a signatory to the **Ending Racism In VAWG Charter**.

Hackney Council is a **White Ribbon** accredited organisation and our Strategy reflects our commitment to the four core criteria set to bring about genuine change in the area of Violence Against Women and Girls. These criteria are:

1. Strategic Leadership
2. Engaging Men & Boys
3. Changing Culture
4. Raising Awareness



# Understanding Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence Against Women and Girls encompasses a broad range of violent and abusive acts and behaviours which disproportionately affect women and girls. VAWG can be in many forms, including physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or economic. VAWG occurs in public spaces, private spaces such as a family home, and via online platforms.

The complexity of work to eliminate violence against women and girls makes it vital that the voices and experiences of survivors of abuse are heard, alongside feedback from the many services and organisations operating within the borough. To this end, Hackney Council has undertaken a wide-ranging consultation exercise. The consultation focussed on the four key priorities, and asked respondents for their feedback on how effective the current provision is, what is working well and what needs to be improved. The consultations were shared across the VAWG partnership for input from as many as possible, alongside sessions with specific groups. In addition, the consultation was informed by the participation of women and girls in the consultation exercise about safety in public spaces held across December 2021 - January 2022.

The consultation feedback highlighted many positives about the work being undertaken in Hackney:

- VAWG and domestic abuse services in Hackney were widely available
- There are a number of culturally specific services to meet the needs of the borough
- Safeguarding leads within agencies are accessible
- Co-location of services, e.g. Independent Domestic Violence Advocates in Homerton Hospital
- Training of staff who work in the Night Time Economy has had a positive impact on accessibility and support

- Referral pathways to services are well defined
- Services communicate effectively with each other
- Forums/meetings are effectively utilised to promote information sharing about available support
- Hackney's Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference shows good partnership working, is robust in its response and is action-focused
- Hackney showed a positive commitment to eliminating VAWG and domestic abuse services throughout the Covid-19 pandemic

However, the consultation did also highlight some areas for improvement:

- Certain groups, e.g. young people, indicated that they lacked knowledge on VAWG and VAWG services
- More support for young girls is required to support with prevention
- Demand for mental health services exceeds current capacity
- Public spaces at night time aren't experienced as being consistently safe by women and girls
- Police response to victims was inconsistent and practice isn't always trauma informed
- More alignment of partnership working and service level agreements would be beneficial

# Quotes from Hackney's Eliminating VAWG consultation

*“Good mixture of outreach services and response from voluntary sector”*

- Hackney based refuge

*“There are culturally specific women's charities across the borough”*

- Hackney based organisation

*“Educate guys more - there is too much violence in Hackney especially young guys”*

- Young person in Hackney

*“Services are working with victims to ensure they are aware of their rights”*

- Hackney based charity

*“More therapeutic support is needed”*

- Hackney based organisation

*“There is a multi agency response to perpetrators”*

- Hackney based organisation

*“Information sharing forums give a chance for everyone to meet and know what services are available in the borough”*

- Hackney based charity

*“Referral pathways around domestic abuse are well defined”*

- Hackney based organisation

The strategy was also informed by local and national data relating to VAWG and associated factors and issues.

In London, there continues to be a year-on-year increase in recorded domestic abuse. In 2021/2021, the Metropolitan Police Service recorded 249,986 domestic abuse related incidents and crimes in 2020/21 across London. Of these, 94,384 were domestic abuse related crimes across London.<sup>2</sup> During 2020/21, the MPS recorded more than 19,000 allegations of sexual offences including 7,700 rape offences and 8000 serious sexual offences.<sup>3</sup> Recorded domestic abuse offences have increased by approximately a quarter over the previous five years as part of a consistent trend,<sup>4</sup> with domestic abuse related crimes comprising 13 % of all crimes recorded by the MPS.<sup>5</sup>

Over the past 3 years, the demand for support has increased with Hackney Council's Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) receiving over 1000 contacts per year.<sup>6</sup> In 2021/22:

**92%** of contacts were female, **9%** were male, less than **1%** non-binary

**61%** of contacts were people who identify as from black and global majority backgrounds

**29%** of victims/survivors had at least **2** vulnerabilities recorded in referrals, **13%** of victims/survivors had **3** vulnerabilities identified

**33%** of victims/survivors referred to DAIS had experienced **2** or more types of abuse

<sup>2</sup> [Domestic Abuse in England and Wales data tool](#), Office for National Statistics

<sup>3</sup> [Metropolitan Police Service Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Metropolitan Police Service Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Domestic Abuse in England and Wales data tool](#), Office for National Statistics

<sup>6</sup> Hackney Domestic Abuse Intervention Service data

Hackney's Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) meets fortnightly to discuss high risk domestic abuse cases. Since 2019/20 (when 492 cases were discussed), the number of victims/survivors discussed at MARAC has increased by 41 % with 694 victims/survivors discussed during the 2021/22 financial year.

**Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse**, a national specialist VAWG agency, observed Hackney's MARAC in August 2021 when Hackney volunteered to be one of the Local Authorities to be observed as part of MOPAC's **Pan-London MARAC Review**. *Standing Together found that:*

"The MARAC was well run and the coordinator alongside the chair were instrumental in the smooth running of the cases...The coordinator clearly had good working relationships with agencies and there had been many examples where agencies had been liaising with one another prior to the meeting as well as the coordinator...Agency representatives in the room had good working relationships with each other, this meant that suggestions could be discussed...many [actions] had been implemented prior to the discussion...There was a good variety of agencies in attendance...All cases observed at the Marac meeting were high risk and had met threshold...There was a generally good feeling in the meeting, and it felt like a collaborative and open space to discuss high risk cases with meaningful action plans being created...Good range of core agencies in attendance...All cases had contact from IDVA or attempted contact"

Local data analysis has demonstrated a consistent disproportionate representation at Hackney's MARAC of black women as victims / survivors of domestic abuse - for example, in Q3 of the 2021/22 financial year, victims / survivors identifying as Black and British/Caribbean/African/ Mixed or Other made up 37 % of all cases heard at MARAC but the 2011

census recording that approximately 20 % of the Hackney population were Black or Black British.<sup>7</sup> This analysis has highlighted the need for high-risk victims / survivors to have greater access to 'by and for' services within the borough which, as a signatory to the **Ending Racism In VAWG Charter**, the Council supports and seeks to grow.

The Identification and Referral to Increase Safety (IRIS) service is a specialist domestic abuse training, support and referral programme based in GP surgeries across Hackney. Over the course of the previous eliminating VAWG strategy, referrals to the City & Hackney IRIS service have increased by 40 % , with 176 referrals received in 2021/22.

VAWG can often be hidden and unreported, with only 17 % of victims / survivors of abuse perpetrated by their partner reported to the police, with 45 % citing that it was too trivial or not worth reporting, and just under 40 % citing it as a private or family matter.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, it is paramount that all members of society understand and are aware so victims / survivors can be identified and supported, and that perpetrators are held to account for their behaviour. Victims / survivors of abuse frequently have multiple needs, and are known to numerous services concurrently, and therefore it is vital that services work in partnership to identify when a person has been abused or is at risk of being abused, and to ensure they receive support in a timely manner. Similarly, perpetrators of abuse will often have multiple needs. Protecting victims / survivors requires a joined-up response by agencies to identify, deter and disrupt perpetrator behaviour and sanction those who commit gender-based offences.

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<sup>7</sup> **2011 Census data**

<sup>8</sup> **ONS data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales**

# Preventing and reducing VAWG

Within society, behaviour which minimises or normalises misogyny or VAWG can increase the barriers victims / survivors face in recognising their own experiences, and can lead to an environment in which further abuse can occur. Working in partnership across Hackney, we will raise awareness of the issue amongst the public and professionals and educate on the impacts of violence and abuse.

Hackney Education is committed to taking a '[Whole School Approach](#)', to address VAWG within educational settings. The prevalence of harmful attitudes and behaviours in schools and colleges across the UK was recognised by Ofsted, leading to a [review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges](#). Hackney Education and partners have reviewed safeguarding procedures in schools and promoted the safety of children and young people within educational establishments and youth settings. Over the next three years, universal and targeted programmes will ensure children and young people in Hackney are educated about and deterred from harmful behaviours and attitudes towards women and girls. This work has been informed by recommendations from the [Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review into the case of Child Q](#); Hackney is committed to addressing the adultification of Black girls and the systemic racism that underpins this.

Children who are exposed to abuse are at increased risk of long-term physical and mental issues and are more likely to use or experience violence in relationships themselves. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse as victims / survivors in their own right. To reduce the future cycle of abusive behaviours, children and young people in Hackney will be

supported through trauma-informed interventions.

Hackney will protect children and young people from being coerced into either legal or ceremonial marriage. Awareness of Female Genital Mutilation needs to be reinforced to promote deterrence.

The intersectionality of gender with other factors, particularly racialised trauma and discrimination, can lead to greater vulnerability and barriers to receiving help. This strategy seeks to ensure VAWG is prevented across all communities within Hackney.

Domestic abuse and VAWG are often hidden. It is essential that people who live and work in Hackney are aware of the signs of abuse so that help can be provided on an 'early intervention' basis where possible. Professionals across the Hackney partnership have access to a broad and impactful training offer which has been updated to educate and challenge staff and equip them with tools and resources to help identify and support victims / survivors.

Hackney is committed to challenging problematic behaviours, and will strive to embed a network of community-based Champions who can lead the way in raising awareness amongst individual communities and faith groups, particularly focusing on men as allies of women and utilising 'bystander' interventions. Local businesses will be trained and receive accreditation for their work to prevent VAWG in the communities they serve.

Women and girls should be safe in all spaces in Hackney. Through utilising data intelligence and consultation to identify areas of risk, women and girls will be more consistently protected from harm.

## During the course of this Strategy the following priority areas will be pursued:

- 1.1:** Children and young people in Hackney exhibit positive behaviours and attitudes relating to gender, including non binary, trans and non-conforming gender
- 1.2:** Children and young people in Hackney harmed through violence or abuse are enabled to heal and avoid experiencing harm from or causing harm to others in adolescence and adulthood
- 1.3:** Individuals who live and/or work in Hackney are aware of domestic abuse and VAWG, and of the support services available.
- 1.4:** Women and girls, including trans women and girls and non binary children and adults, are safe in public spaces in Hackney and in online spaces.
- 1.5:** Attitudes and behaviour that underpin violence against women and girls are addressed.

# Supporting all victims and survivors

The aim in Hackney is to address all forms of domestic abuse and VAWG including intergenerational / intrafamilial abuse / 'Adult Family Violence'. Agencies must work to hear and respond to victims' voices and take robust multi-agency approaches to reducing the risk of further harm.

Victims / survivors with intersecting needs can face barriers to reporting abuse. Survivors of abuse may often present with multiple needs, and therefore professionals in Hackney will take a holistic whole-systems approach to support survivors with addressing all their needs to protect them and to reduce the risk of future abuse. It is essential that services are available and accessible to all victims / survivors and that services are promoted through a number of channels. Victims / survivors in Hackney can receive support from specialist services tailored to their needs, with 'by and for' services as a key part of the partnership response.

Victims / survivors must be treated with respect and dignity by all organisations in Hackney. The Council will advocate for survivors and will challenge systems and practices that discriminate against them or do not prioritise their needs, particularly Black and Global Majority clients.

Gendered abuse can have long-term physical and mental health implications for survivors. A priority of Hackney's strategy is to ensure victims / survivors and their children receive the therapeutic support they require in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of all members of the Hackney professional system to ensure that women and girls who experience domestic abuse or any other forms of VAWG receive a consistent, trauma-informed and needs-led response.

Hackney will continue to support those involved in prostitution / sex work to promote their safety and reduce the level of harm that women

and girls face, and to support individuals to exit prostitution / sex work safely. In Hackney, survivors of abuse will be supported to report abuse to the police, and will receive ongoing support from domestic abuse services as their cases progress through the Criminal Justice System.

The Council is committed to the *Safe and Together* approach to child safeguarding which requires services to support the non-abusive parent and address the behaviour of the person harming them and their child.

In Hackney, we are committed to supporting carers and cared-for individuals who are family members or (ex) partners who experience harm. We will provide support to staff so they effectively recognise and respond to abuse.

The Council is committed to Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation. Moving home can further isolate victims / survivors of abuse from their community and support networks; they should never have to flee their home. Housing providers will be challenged on responses to domestic abuse and early intervention measures will make victims more secure in their homes. Where moving is required, survivors will receive holistic support from their professional network to minimise the impact on them and to enable them to make decisions which best promote their safety.

This strategy will improve partnership responses to victims / survivors of public space abuse by sharing information, coordinating interventions and learning from victims' / survivors' experiences.

During the course of this Strategy the following priority areas will be pursued:

**2.1:** Women and girls who experience VAWG and all victims / survivors of domestic abuse receive effective support from all members of the Hackney VAWG partnership

**2.2:** Victims / survivors of abuse are aware of pathways to report abuse, and receive support through the Criminal Justice System

**2.3:** The housing needs of victims / survivors of domestic abuse are prioritised

**2.4:** Employers to support victims / survivors of VAWG and domestic abuse

**2.5:** Women and girls, including trans women and girls and non binary children and adults, are safeguarded from sexual exploitation



# Holding perpetrators to account

Violence against women and girls occurs because of a perpetrator's behaviour which inflicts pain and harm on others. In order to eliminate violence against women and girls, and to prevent future incidents of abuse, it is critical that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions and that attempts are made to address their behaviour on a long-term basis.

In 2020-21, only 8 % of recorded domestic abuse crimes had an outcome of being charged or summonsed in the same year. For survivors of abuse, this can be a deterrent to reporting and can mean that the perpetrator still poses a risk. The Metropolitan Police Service's action plan for targeting violence against women and girls has outlined their intention to increase targeting of perpetrators and to adopt a whole systems approach to achieve this.

Agencies working with perpetrators' intersecting needs must work in partnership to devise and implement effective strategies for reducing the risk they pose. This strategy will assist in embedding this within Hackney.

Where perpetrators have been charged, the MPS have also committed to utilising all means available to manage perpetrators effectively and reduce the risk they pose through the use of all measures and orders available. In Hackney, the VAWG partnership will work closely with policing colleagues in the Central East Basic Command Unit to support this.

Alongside a robust Criminal Justice system, it is important that perpetrators in Hackney have access to programmes and interventions to reduce the risk they pose to women and girls in the borough.

Hackney's Domestic Abuse Intervention Service operates a perpetrator programme for those who have used domestic abuse within their relationships. The service has expanded to include work with perpetrators of intergenerational/intrafamilial abuse / 'Adult Family Violence'. Further early intervention perpetrator programmes are also being piloted by the service.

Hackney Children and Families Service is committed to the Safe and Together approach which holds perpetrators responsible for their behaviour choices and seeks to engage them in work to make different choices in the interests of their children's safety.

Housing Services are committed to intervening with residents living in Council accommodation who are perpetrators of domestic abuse, ensuring that those who commit abuse and crimes are investigated by specialist teams and that sanctions are implemented which disrupt and prevent harm to victims / survivors.

Employers across Hackney are being supported to update their staff protocols which ensures those working in local businesses and organisations are aware of the potential consequences of harming others either in their personal or professional settings. Hackney Council will continue to promote and follow best employment practices as outlined in the [Mayor of London's Good Work Standard](#), of which Hackney is a signatory.

This strategy will strengthen the identification and analysis of perpetrators of public-space abuse and reduce the risk they pose to women and girls.

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<sup>9</sup> [Domestic abuse and the criminal justice system appendix tables](#)

## During the course of this Strategy the following priority areas will be pursued:

- 3.1:** Perpetrators of domestic abuse to receive a response which reduces the harm they cause through disruption, deterrence and sanction
- 3.2:** Perpetrators of domestic abuse to receive a response which reduces the harm they cause through behavioural change approaches
- 3.3:** Perpetrators of domestic abuse against family members to receive responses which reduce harm through deterrence, disruption, sanction and behaviour change approaches
- 3.4:** Employers to hold perpetrators of VAWG and domestic abuse to account
- 3.5:** Perpetrators of public-space VAWG to receive holistic approach to disruption, deterrence, sanction and behaviour change approaches

# Building trust and confidence

Eliminating violence against women and girls requires a whole system approach from organisations across the public, private, and charity and voluntary sectors. Through a coordinated approach, all sectors can play a role in raising awareness of abuse, identifying and supporting those at risk, and pursuing those who use violence and abuse as a means of control. It is only through working together with a shared vision that the complexity of violence and abuse can be fully understood and the needs of victims / survivors addressed.

Data reporting and sharing mechanisms will be embedded across the partnership, so the full picture of violence and abuse in Hackney can be understood, and specific needs addressed. Domestic abuse and violence are predominantly unreported, and therefore alternative methodologies utilising new technology for capturing information such as the Commonplace app will be explored and further implemented by the partnership to improve our understanding of the Hackney context.

Victims / survivors and perpetrators often present with multiple needs and require interventions from multiple organisations across the partnership. Hackney's VAWG partnership will produce and implement a Hackney Violence Against Women and Girls Protocol to ensure that a consistent, trauma informed approach is provided to victims / survivors of abuse, that referral pathways for victims / survivors and perpetrators are accessible and that casework is robust and linked to ongoing learning and improvement.

Hackney's VAWG partnership is committed to a learning culture where constructive challenge is promoted and good practice flourishes.

The Hackney VAWG Strategic Board and VAWG Operational Group have been a forum for information sharing, feedback and challenge over previous strategies and will continue to be robust in their approach over the course of this strategy to ensure the priorities are achieved.

Client feedback is at the centre of improving the service offer. Hearing the voices and experiences of those who use the services on offer as well as from those who don't is essential to improving service reach, and ensuring interventions are continuing to meet the ever changing needs of victims / survivors and perpetrators.

The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service has partnered with the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership and the City & Hackney Safeguarding Adult Partnership to widen the breadth of its training provision to improve reach across partner agencies and VCS colleagues. The training offer will continue to be expanded, with specialist training programmes and research based learning added throughout the course of the strategy so Hackney's VAWG partnership has access to pioneering approaches to eliminating VAWG. Learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews and other Reviews will be consolidated and promoted so learning for all agencies is incorporated into further training for the Hackney partnership.

Training, protocols, referral pathways, quality assurance work and client feedback will be reviewed on a continual basis to ensure that agencies and organisations across the Hackney partnership are confident in identifying and referring to domestic abuse concerns.

During the course of this Strategy the following priority areas will be pursued:

- 4.1: All agencies across the Hackney partnership to understand and work to an agreed casework pathway when addressing all forms of VAWG and domestic abuse
- 4.2: Effective data reporting and sharing mechanisms to be embedded across Hackney
- 4.3: VAWG partnership to foster a learning culture where good practice flourishes

- 4.4: The Hackney partnership is committed to ensuring provision for services working with victims / survivors who are male, trans, non-binary, Black and Global Majority or who have unresolved immigration status as well as any groups within the community for whom services are not meeting their needs

# Summary: Eliminating VAWG

## Strategy Priority Areas

### 1. Preventing and reducing VAWG

During the course of this Strategy the following priority areas will be pursued:

- 1.1:** Children and young people in Hackney exhibit positive behaviours and attitudes relating to gender, including non binary, trans and non-conforming gender.
- 1.2:** Children and young people in Hackney harmed through violence or abuse are enabled to heal and avoid experiencing harm from or causing harm to others in adolescence and adulthood
- 1.3:** Individuals who live and/or work in Hackney are aware of domestic abuse and VAWG, and of the support services available
- 1.4:** Women and girls, including trans women and girls and non binary children and adults, are safe in public spaces in Hackney and in online spaces.
- 1.5:** Attitudes and behaviour that underpin violence against women and girls are addressed.

### 2. Supporting all victims and survivors

During the course of this Strategy the following priority areas will be pursued:

- 2.1:** Women and girls who experience VAWG and all victims / survivors of domestic abuse receive effective support from all members of the Hackney VAWG partnership
- 2.2:** Victims / survivors of abuse are aware of pathways to report abuse, and receive support through the Criminal Justice System
- 2.3:** The housing needs of victims / survivors of domestic abuse are prioritised
- 2.4:** Employers to support victims / survivors of VAWG and domestic abuse
- 2.5:** Women and girls, including trans women and girls and non binary children and adults, are safeguarded from sexual exploitation

### 3. Holding perpetrators to account

During the course of this Strategy the following priority areas will be pursued:

- 3.1:** Perpetrators of domestic abuse to receive a response which reduces the harm they cause through disruption, deterrence and sanction
- 3.2:** Perpetrators of domestic abuse to receive a response which reduces the harm they cause through behavioural change approaches
- 3.3:** Perpetrators of domestic abuse against family members to receive responses which reduce harm through deterrence, disruption, sanction and behaviour change approaches
- 3.4:** Employers to hold perpetrators of VAWG and domestic abuse to account
- 3.5:** Perpetrators of public-space VAWG to receive holistic approach to disruption, deterrence, sanction and behaviour change approaches

### 4. Building trust and confidence

During the course of this Strategy the following priority areas will be pursued:

- 4.1:** All agencies across the Hackney partnership to understand and work to an agreed casework pathway when addressing all forms of VAWG and domestic abuse
- 4.2:** Effective data reporting and sharing mechanisms to be embedded across Hackney
- 4.3:** VAWG partnership to foster a learning culture where good practice flourishes
- 4.4:** The Hackney partnership is committed to ensuring provision for services working with victims / survivors who are male, trans, non-binary, Black and Global Majority or who have unresolved immigration status as well as any groups within the community for whom services are not meeting their needs.

