



## Domestic and Sexual Abuse Newsletter

April 2024



Hello and welcome to the Doncaster domestic and sexual abuse newsletter.

This newsletter is designed to keep you up to date with local, regional and national information about domestic and sexual abuse.

Please share with colleagues and if this email has been forwarded to you and you want to subscribe please email [sophie.bishop@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:sophie.bishop@doncaster.gov.uk)

You can also email Sophie if you would like to unsubscribe.

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### National Stalking Awareness Week

The 2024 theme for the National Stalking Awareness Week is 'Join Forces Against Stalking' and takes place from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> April.

Agencies are asked to work together to effectively support victims of stalking.

Stalking is a pattern of fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repetitive behaviour. It includes behaviour that happens two or more times, directed at or towards you by another person.

It takes many forms and can involve threats, criminal damage, following or spying on someone. It could happen in person, over the phone, online or on social media platforms.

Anyone can be a victim of stalking and the stalker can be a partner/ex-partner, family member, friend, colleague, acquaintance or stranger. It is a serious crime that can have a serious and long-lasting impact on its victims. What makes the problem particularly hard to cope with is that it can go on for a long period of time- sometimes the problem can build up slowly and it can take a while for you to realise you are caught up in an ongoing campaign of abuse.

Information about domestic abuse related stalking and non-domestic abuse stalking and support services can be found here: [Stalking and Harassment - City of Doncaster Council](#)

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust has arranged a stalking conference.

### [National Stalking Awareness Conference](#)

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## Operation Soteria finds alarming rape myths still hindering justice

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has recently published the final findings of its research on [improving responses to rape](#) – part of Operation Soteria.

The End Violence Against Women Coalition (EVAW) that has long campaigned to transform the justice system's response to rape say that the research highlights some worrying findings, including:

- Prosecutors inappropriately focusing on victim credibility as the basis of rape investigations, rather than investigating the actions of the suspect
- Rape myths and stereotypes continue to inform decision-making about victims' cases, at every stage of the justice process
- Prosecutors aren't taking seriously sexual offences reported by young people – with rape myths and lack of understanding about use of dating apps and social media meaning harmful behaviour is trivialised and younger victims dismissed
- A victim's mental ill health significantly undermines the likelihood of a rape case proceeding
- Judges fail to recognise the importance of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs)

In addition, VAWG survey's conducted in Doncaster conclude that people often don't report sexual abuse to the Police. The main reason given is that they don't think that action will be taken.

As well as trying to address the issues raised above through Operation Soteria, stakeholders are working hard to encourage reporting and providing support to people through the criminal justice system.

More information about sexual abuse and the support available can be found here:

[Sexual Abuse](#)

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## **Consultation: Statutory guidance on domestic abuse protection notices and protection orders**

The Government is consulting on whether the draft statutory guidance for police on domestic abuse protection notices (DAPNs) and domestic abuse protection orders (DAPOs) is clear and comprehensive.

In the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (DA Act), the government legislated for a new civil DAPN to provide immediate protection following a domestic abuse incident and a new civil DAPO to provide flexible, longer-term protection for victims.

The DAPN and DAPO provide protection from all forms of domestic abuse as defined in Section 1 of the DA Act, not just from physical violence or the threat of physical violence. This may include, sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, and psychological or emotional abuse.

The consultation closes on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024

[Consultation DAPN and DAPO](#)

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## **Suicide and domestic abuse**

The Domestic Homicides and Suspected Victim Suicides 2022-2023 report published last month showed there were 242 domestic abuse-related deaths in England and Wales that year, including 93 cases where victims were thought to have taken their own life.

This is the third annual report from the national Domestic Homicide Project which works across England and Wales. It is a Home Office funded research project led by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and delivered by the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme (VKPP) in collaboration with the College of Policing.

Key findings from the report:

A total of 242 domestic abuse related deaths were recorded between April 2022 to March 2023, including:

- 93 suspected victim suicide following domestic abuse (SVSDA)
- 80 intimate partner homicides (IPH)
- 31 adult family homicides (AFH)
- 23 unexpected deaths
- 11 child deaths
- 4 'other' deaths (individuals living together who are not family members or intimate partners)

The report highlights the link between suicide and domestic abuse. It is vital that professionals acknowledge the impact of domestic abuse on emotional health and wellbeing and the potential consequences if people are not supported and perpetrators are not held to account for their actions.

When working with people who have experienced domestic and sexual abuse please think about the risks of self-harm and suicide and ensure that appropriate and timely support is put in place, and that you have ensured that there is a coordinated community response to supporting victims.

In addition, perpetrators of domestic abuse are also at risk of self-harm and suicide. Sometimes the person causing the harm threatens suicide as a way of controlling and manipulating the victim. However, we also see suicide attempts and suicides. If you suspect that a person is struggling with their mental health please ensure that support is offered/provided.

If you would like suicide awareness training please visit [www.amparo.org.uk](http://www.amparo.org.uk)

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## Feedback wanted

- Do you like this newsletter?
- Is it useful?
- Do you share it wider?
- What content would you like to see here?

Could you take a few minutes to complete a very quick survey with feedback on this monthly newsletter please? Your time is precious and we all receive lots of emails. The aim of this survey is to get your feedback to ensure that this newsletter is useful and not just clogging up your inbox on a monthly basis. Any suggestions for improvements are very welcome.

## Newsletter Feedback

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### In the News

#### [The Push: Murder on the Cliff](#)

The Channel 4 documentary called The Push tells Fawziyah's story as it follows the trial of her husband, Kashif Anwar who pushed Fawziyah to her death from Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh.

#### [WHO calls for greater attention to violence against women with disabilities and older women](#)

Older women and women with disabilities face particular risk of abuse, yet their situation is largely hidden in most global and national violence-related data, according to two new publications released today by the World Health Organization (WHO). The health agency is calling for better research across countries that will help ensure these women are counted, and that their specific needs are understood and addressed.

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### For more information about:

- [Sexual abuse - Doncaster Council](#)
- [DRASACS](#)
- [Services for victims and people who are abusive](#)
- [Domestic and sexual abuse training for practitioners](#)
- [The domestic abuse protocol](#)
- [Digital copies of leaflets and posters and how to order hard copies](#)
- [Details of Domestic Homicide Reviews](#)
- [Survivor stories](#)
- [The MARAC](#)
- [The Doncaster Domestic Abuse Strategy](#)

and much more, visit the Doncaster Domestic Abuse website:

[www.doncaster.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/domesticabuse)

**You can also follow us on Twitter: @NoToDomAbuse**

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If you would like to include an article in a future edition please email:  
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