

Easy Read



# Our plan for dealing with violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

April 2018 – March 2023

This is an easy read version of “Gwent Regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018 - 2023”

April 2018



# How to use this document

This is an easy read version. The words and their meanings are easy to read and understand.



You may need help and support to read and understand this plan. Ask someone you know to help you.

Some words may be difficult to understand. These are in **bold blue writing** and have been explained in a box beneath the word.

If the hard word is used again it is in **normal blue writing**. You can check what words in **normal blue writing** mean in **Hard words** on page 30.

Where the plan says 'we', this means **Gwent VAWDASV Partnership Board**.

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This plan was made into easy read by **Easy Read Wales** using **Photosymbols**.

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# Introduction

## Gwent



This plan says how services in Gwent must work together to deal with **violence against women**, **domestic abuse** and **sexual violence (VAWDASV)**.



**VAWDASV** stands for **violence against women**, **domestic abuse** and **sexual violence**. We write **VAWDASV** when we are talking about all these things.

## Violence against women



**Violence against women** is any kind of behaviour that harms women and girls.

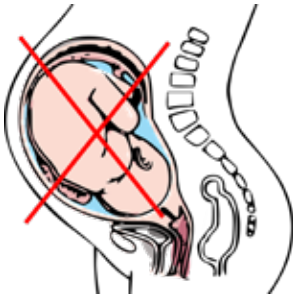
**Violence against women** includes:



- **Female Genital Mutilation.** This is when a girl's private parts are cut or changed.



- **Femicide.** This is when a woman is killed by their partner, ex-partner or a member of their family.
- **Forced prostitution.** This is being forced to become a sex worker.



- **Forced abortion.** This is being made to end a healthy pregnancy when this is not what the woman wants.



- **Forced sterilisation.** This is being forced to have a medical procedure so you can no longer have a baby.



- **Female infanticide.** This is when someone kills a baby girl because they wish they had had a boy.

## Domestic abuse



**Domestic abuse** can happen to anyone. It involves any behaviour that causes harm to someone that is carried out by a partner, ex-partner or family member.

**Domestic abuse** includes:



- **Physical abuse.** This is someone hurting your body. It includes hitting, punching, pushing, scratching, strangling.



- **Financial abuse.** This is someone taking your money without you knowing or agreeing to it. They may take charge of your money and use it for themselves. Or not let you have your own money.



- **Sexual abuse.** This is a sex act done to someone when they do not agree to it.



- **Emotional abuse.** This is behaviour that makes you feel upset and confused.



- **Coercive control.** This is controlling behaviour that makes you feel very upset. You are made to feel that you cannot do anything right. You may feel like the other person is in charge of everything. And that you cannot do anything without them saying it is ok.



- **Stalking and harassment.** This is behaviour that makes you feel upset or worried.



- **Forced marriage.** This is when 1 or both people do not agree to get married. But they are pressured or hurt and made to do it.

# Sexual violence



**Sexual violence** can happen to anyone. It is a sex act done to someone when they do not agree to it. It is against the law.

**Sexual violence** includes:



- **Rape.** This is a sex act done to someone against their will. It is against the law. It usually involves something being put inside you. Like a penis into a vagina or anus. Or an object in the vagina or anus.



- **Sexual assault.** This is touching someone in a sexual way or doing a sexual act against their will. It is against the law.



- **Child sexual abuse.** This is when a child is made to do sexual things with someone. It can include sex and touching. Or things like making a child watch sex. Or asking them to show their body.



- **Sexual harassment.** This is when someone comes on to you and you do not want them to. They may talk to you about sex things. They do not back down and it upsets you.





Women are more likely to experience **VAWDASV** than men. But violence and abuse happens to men too. And women can carry out violence and abuse.



It causes a lot of harm. It has a big impact on the health and well-being of the people it is done to. It can even lead to death.



It also affects other members of the family, including children.



It even has an impact on communities and society – the people who live in the same area or country.



We want this plan to help everyone in Gwent who is affected by **VAWDASV**.



## Gwent VAWDASV partnership board



The partnership board is a group of people from different organisations in Gwent.



It was set up to look at the work on [VAWDASV](#) across Gwent.



The partnership board is made up of lots of different types of people and organisations. This includes charities, and people who have been affected by [VAWDASV](#).



In 2015 a new law started called **Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015**. It says what must be done to make the way we deal with [VAWDASV](#) better.



Gwent has been leading the work on this. Getting all services in the region working together was started in Gwent.



We are 1 of the first areas to use **Ask and Act**. **Ask and Act** is part of the new law. It says trained professionals must ask people if they have experienced [VAWDASV](#). If they say yes they must do something to help.



The aim of this plan is to say how services in Gwent will work together. We also want this plan to be used to write good policies and plans in other areas.

# Writing this plan



To write this plan we thought about:

- the services we have now
- the **Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015**
- **Welsh Government** laws and policies
- what services people and professionals have said we should have
- what victims and survivors say.



## The services we have now

### Public sector



**VAWDASV** services are paid for in different ways.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Some **VAWDASV** services are organised and paid for by Welsh Government. These are **public sector services**.

By law the public sector have to provide certain services. These are organised through:



- the **criminal justice system**. For example police, courts and probation



- **social services**. Social services must protect children and adults at risk of harm



- **housing services**. These provide housing for people who have experienced **VAWDASV**



- **local health boards**. For example Accident and Emergency and GPs.

## When someone reports **VAWDASV** to the police



Gwent Police have systems in place to work with service providers. They share information and make plans together to give the best support to victims. And people at risk.



There are also systems in place to help services work together to deal with people who carry out **VAWDASV** crimes.



Gwent police also bring victim support services together. This is to provide the best victim support.

Some people in Wales come from different **cultures**.



**Culture** means the ideas, beliefs and behaviours shared by a certain group of people.



Some **cultures** believe in doing things that count as **violence against women**. For example, **Female Genital Mutilation** and **forced marriage**. Gwent police works with specialist services that support people from different **cultures**.

## Specialist services

Specialist services are usually set up to meet a certain need. In Gwent they are provided by:



- **Barnardos** – supports families experiencing **domestic abuse**.



- **BAWSO** – an information service for **black and minority ethnic** people.

People from **black and minority ethnic** groups may come from different countries. They have different beliefs, values and **cultures** than most other people in their community.



- **Cyfannol Women's Aid** – supports victims of **domestic abuse** and **sexual violence**.



- **Hafan Cymru** - provides housing and support for victims of **domestic abuse**.



- **Llamau** –provides housing and support for victims of **domestic abuse**.





- **New Pathways** - rape and sexual abuse support services.



- **Newport Women's Aid** - provides housing and support for victims of [domestic abuse](#).



- **Phoenix Domestic Abuse Services** - provides support for victims and perpetrators of [domestic abuse](#).



- **Victim Support/Connect Gwent.**



- **SEWREC** – works for equality and provides [advocacy](#).

**Advocacy** is when someone helps you by speaking up for you.



These services are organised in different ways. And provide different types of support.





We have a 1-stop-shop in each of the 5 local authorities in our area.

These are centres where people can go to get support from specialist services. They are an important part of supporting people.

The **Police and Crime Commissioner** and the **Home Office** provide specialist services to:



- support victims of **VAWDASV** crimes



- help people give good evidence. This helps make sure the people who carry out **VAWDASV** crimes are sent to jail.

## Housing support



Welsh Government runs the **Supporting People Programme**. This provides housing related support to help vulnerable people to live as independently as possible.



This programme spends nearly £2 million in Gwent on services for people who experience [VAWDASV](#). This is to stop them from becoming homeless. It includes:



- safe places to stay

- drop-in services



- family support

- services for people from different [cultures](#)



- support with money



- support with other issues like mental health and problems with drugs.



We are working on making sure people with different needs have a safe place to stay. It is for people in Gwent who have experienced [VAWDASV](#).



## Services for people who carry out VAWDASV

There are some services that work with people who are violent and abusive. The aim of these services is to stop abusive behaviour.



## Training

We have started giving staff in public services training on [VAWDASV](#) issues. The training is from the new national programme of training for [VAWDASV](#).

We also give staff training from all services on different issues like:



- [domestic abuse](#)



- [sexual violence](#)



- working with men who are victims



- effects on children.

## Children and young people



There are lots of programmes in Gwent that are teaching children and young people about healthy relationships.



Most of the work carried out in schools on this is done by **Hafan Cymru's Spectrum Project**.



Schools also have their own lessons about healthy relationships.

## What people and professionals think



We looked in to the needs of people in Gwent. We used information from lots of different places. And we asked **Welsh Women's Aid** to do work on this for us too.



We will use this information to help organise and buy services in Gwent.



We are working with people who need to use [VAWDASV](#) services.



We are working with survivors of [VAWDASV](#). They are experts in what people affected by [VAWDASV](#) need.



We have used their feedback to write this plan. And we will keep asking them for their thoughts and ideas on our work. We want them to be involved in all the work we do. Not just this plan.



We have not spoken to many men who have been affected by [VAWDASV](#). Because of this there may be things we have not thought of. We will do our best to speak with more men who experience these types of abuse.

Survivors of [VAWDASV](#) have told us:



- People working in services need more awareness about [VAWDASV](#). For example GPs, ambulance staff and housing organisations.





- Some survivors said they often felt bullied by some services to make certain choices.



- Some survivors said not all services worked well together. Sometimes certain types of support are only on offer in some areas of Gwent.



- They want harsher punishment for people who carry out [VAWDASV](#) crimes. And they want more done at a young age to stop a person carrying out [VAWDASV](#) crimes.



- It is very important that trained staff can give support in public services.



We have also asked professionals for their thoughts and ideas on [VAWDASV](#) services.

Professionals have told us:



- When professionals do not understand [VAWDASV](#) issues well, service users lose trust in them.



- Education for children and young people is important. It can help stop [VAWDASV](#). And can help support children and young people who have been affected by it.



- Services that deal with people who carry out [VAWDASV](#) need to do this well.



- It is very hard to stop [VAWDASV](#) before it has made an impact on someone.



- Training needs to be up to date. And all professionals should get the same standard of training.



- Some survivors feel that public services blame them for being hurt or abused.



# What we will do to tackle VAWDASV



We have written 6 important things to focus on. These 6 things will help us make [VAWDASV](#) services in Gwent the best they can be.

These are things all services in Gwent must do to:



- **stop** [VAWDASV](#) from happening



- **protect** people who have experienced [VAWDASV](#)



- **support** people affected by [VAWDASV](#).

## 1. Raise awareness of VAWDASV across Gwent



We need to make sure all staff in public sector services and members of the public know about [VAWDASV](#) issues.



We need to make sure everyone can spot the signs of abuse and violence. And know where to get help if they need to.



We need everyone to know that violence and abuse is not ok at all.

## 2. Teach children and young people about safe and healthy relationships



We need to make sure children and young people get told what healthy relationships look like. They need to learn about equality between men and women.



This is very important for children and young people who have seen abuse and violence in their own homes.



This will help young people understand the difference between behaviour that is ok and behaviour that is not ok.



Children and young people also need to know they can get help if they need to. And how they can get it.

### 3. Make sure people who carry out VAWDASV are held responsible



We need to find the best ways of working with people who carry out [VAWDASV](#).



We need to make sure these people are held responsible for what they have done.



This will give them a reason to change their behaviour.



We need to make sure everyone knows what behaviour is ok. And what behaviour is not ok.



Whatever work is done with people who carry out [VAWDASV](#) we need to make sure victims are kept safe.

## 4. Stop VAWDASV early on



Survivors have told us we miss lots of chances to stop violence and abuse.



We need everyone to be able to spot the signs of violence and abuse. To safely ask questions. And to do something when they need to.



We need to focus on stopping [VAWDASV](#) from happening.



We need to work with the people who carry out [VAWDASV](#) to do this.



And we need to make sure everyone knows about [VAWDASV](#) including children and young people.

## 5. The right professionals have the right training to give the best support



Staff in all services must know what to do if someone tells them they are being abused or hurt.



We now have a national training programme. This will help us make sure staff get good training.



This will make staff better at helping people who have been affected by [VAWDASV](#).

## 6. All victims can get the support they need when they need it wherever they are in Gwent



People have different experiences. And they have different needs.



People who experience [VAWDASV](#) will get help in different ways.







We need to make sure we have services that can meet all these different needs.



Survivors said we need more experts in places like the doctor's offices, police stations and hospitals.



Providers are worried about money to pay for services.

All types of services have an important part to play. We will focus on working together to make sure services:



- last into the future



- are based on the needs of people experiencing [VAWDASV](#) and what survivors have told us they need



- are easy to get.

# Checking our plan works



The partnership board will be in charge of checking if our plans are working.



We will write reports for the **Public Service Boards** and **Safeguarding Boards**.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

We will check our work against what Welsh Government say we should be achieving.



We will write our own aims and check how well we have done achieving those aims.



We have written a delivery plan – it says what we will do over the next 12 months.



# Hard words

## Advocacy

Advocacy is when someone helps you by speaking up for you.

## Black and minority ethnic

People from black and minority ethnic groups may come from different countries. They have different beliefs, values and cultures than most other people in their community.

## Culture

Culture means the ideas, beliefs and behaviours shared by a certain group of people.

## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone. It involves any behaviour that causes harm to someone that is carried out by a partner, ex-partner or family member.

## VAWDASV

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