

# Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Our plan for how we will keep people safe from 2023 to 2026



This document is an easy read version of ‘**Swansea Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2023-2026**’.

**August 2023**

# How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 33**.



Where the document says **we**, this means **Swansea Council and our partners**. For more information contact:

**E-mail:** [VAWDASV@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:VAWDASV@swansea.gov.uk)



[Easy Read Wales](#) made this document into Easy Read using **Photosymbols**. [To tell us what you think about this easy read version, click here.](#)

[Photosymbols Licence number 403527247](#)

# Contents

<b>What this plan is about .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>What we want to see happen.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>About these issues in Wales and the law .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>What Swansea has been doing already .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Our plan for 2023 to 2026 .....</b>	<b>18</b>
1. We want people to have a better understanding of VAWDASV .....	18
2. Make sure children understand the importance of safe, equal, and healthy relationships .....	21
3. Make sure those who cause abusive behaviour are held responsible .....	22
4. Try and prevent abuse from happening and work with people when they show early signs of abusive behaviour .....	25
5. Staff are trained to know how to support victims of VAWDASV .....	27
6. Make sure victims get the best services for each of their needs .....	29
7. Check if our plans work.....	31
<b>Hard words .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Useful contacts .....</b>	<b>34</b>

# What this plan is about



This plan is about what we are going to do from 2023 to 2026 to support people affected by:

- **Violence against women**
- **Domestic abuse**
- **Sexual violence**



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

**Violence against Women** includes things like:



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



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

**Domestic abuse** includes things like:



- **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.





**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 it again and again and it upsets you.



For the rest of this plan we are going to use the letters **VAWDASV** for short. They are referring to:

**VAW – Violence Against Women**

**DA – Domestic Abuse**

**SV – Sexual Violence**



Over 2 million adults experience **domestic abuse** in the UK every year.



Most of these are women. But it happens to men too.



It has a huge effect on people's lives and affects people in many different ways.



It also causes people to lose their human rights.





We want to support women and men affected by **domestic abuse**.



We have worked with a number of other organisations to make this plan.



We will keep working together to make sure people get the services and support they need to deal with these issues.



And to make sure those who cause the harm are brought to justice.



This includes working with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

# What we want to see happen



We want everyone who lives in Swansea to be safe, happy, and healthy.



We want them to be free from all types of abuse.



**Some of the main things we want to achieve are:**



- To listen to people.



- To give people the right support at the right time.



- Work with the whole family when needed.



- Work with other organisations better.



- Try to stop problems from getting worse.



- Make sure everyone has equal access to the services they need.



- Help people understand the issues better.



- Deal with those who cause the abuse and try to help change their behaviours.



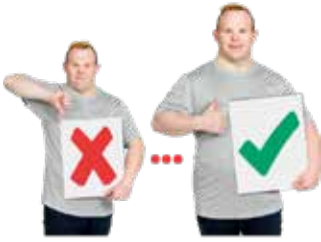
- Help make sure **VAWDASV** is reported more.



- Make sure people are supported to deal with trauma.



# About these issues in Wales and the law



In the past few years, a lot of work has been done in Wales to improve services that deal with **VAWDASV**.



In 2015 a law came out in Wales called **Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015**.



This law made sure that local councils and health boards worked together to make sure there were good services available to support and protect people in each area of Wales.



**VAWDASV** is also talked about in a number of other laws in Wales.



And a number of other organisations have plans about it. For example, South Wales Police and the Welsh Government.

# What Swansea has been doing already



Swansea has a range of services in place to support people experiencing **VAWDASV**.

**Here are some examples of the services:**



Working with families and stopping things from getting worse.



For example, to prevent children being removed from their families. This would be classed as **prevention** work.



Another example of prevention work is our 12 week training programme. For example, people who cause **VAWDASV** learn new ways of behaving and prove they have changed.





We have a team who work with people who have experienced, or are at risk of things like:



- **Child Sexual Exploitation** – this means taking advantage of children to make them carry out sexual acts.



- **Trafficking** – this means people are moved from one place or country to another and forced to do things they do not want to do.



- Other types of abuse or harmful behaviour.



We run training about healthy relationships for people who have experienced **VAWDASV**.



GPs have also been trained to support people with these issues.



Swansea Women's Aid, CALAN DVS, BAWSO and Stori support women and children experiencing **VAWDASV**.



New Pathways support victims of Sexual Violence and Sexual Abuse.



We have supported housing for women and children experiencing **VAWDASV**. They can use this for a few nights a week. Or stay until we have found them a new safe home.



We have support just for children. We also have a number of other support services.



Between 2021 to 2022 **VAWDASV** services across Swansea gave advice, information, and support to over 10,000 people.



We have also asked people experiencing **VAWDASV** for their views on services and what is needed.



It is really important to recognise that people experiencing **VAWDASV** are experts. They must be listened to when thinking about services.



Swansea Women's Aid also run **The Co-Production Project**.



This project makes sure the women experiencing **VAWDASV** decide how the service should be run. Also, what activities they should have.

# Our plan for 2023 to 2026



Our plan focuses on 7 main areas.

## 1. We want people to have a better understanding of VAWDASV



We have a team in place that makes sure people learn and understand the issues.

### They try to raise awareness about:



- Our services.



- How **VAWDASV** affects people.



It is really important that communities recognise and understand the issues. Because they can also support people.

### Some of the things we will be doing are:



- Increase people's awareness using the media and social media. Social media means things like Facebook and Twitter.



- Run healthy relationship programmes and other training.



- Make sure people know about the special services we have.



- Help **vulnerable groups** to understand the issues about **VAWDASV**. **Vulnerable groups** are those at risk from harm. It includes disabled people, people from other countries or cultures and other groups.



- Make sure people using services have a say on how they are run.



- Change attitudes around **harassment in the workplace** – **harassment in work** is when someone in your workplace keeps acting in a way that makes you feel upset, scared or threatened.



- We will run events throughout the year.





## 2. Make sure children understand the importance of safe, equal, and healthy relationships



There is a lot of work going on in Swansea already to help make sure children know what an abusive relationship looks like.

### Some of the things we will be doing are:



- Make sure children get to learn about [VAWDASV](#) in all education settings.



- Make sure children and young people are listened to.



- Make sure school staff understand the risks to children to do with child sexual abuse and other issues.



- Make sure children get the support they need.

### 3. Make sure those who cause abusive behaviour are held responsible



We will always try to reduce the risk to people experiencing **VAWDASV** and keep them safe.



There are a number of services in Swansea that support those who cause abuse to change their behaviours.



They are also dealt with by the criminal justice system – this is things like the police and courts.



There is a need to support people who cause abuse early on.

## These are some of the things we are going to do:



- We are going to have more services working with those who cause abuse and trying to change behaviours. Including working with specific groups or people. For example, women only or people with additional learning needs.



- Work closely with police and probation services.



- Look at more options for how to respond to all types of **VAWDASV**.



- Work well with other organisations.



- Put the safety of victims first.



- When people who cause abuse come out of prison, we will work with other organisations to help stop them causing abuse again.



## 4. Try and prevent abuse from happening and work with people when they show early signs of abusive behaviour



Preventing violence and getting involved as early as possible to prevent it are very important to our work.



This is why it is important for services to recognise abuse and respond to concerns early on.

**These are some of the things we are going to do:**



- Make sure organisations know the importance of recognising and reporting early.



- Make sure organisations know about our range of services.



- Work with organisations across Wales to find out the best ways to work.



- Make sure services get the training they need.





## 5. Staff are trained to know how to support victims of VAWDASV



A group of people from different organisations are responsible for training and making sure the right people receive it.



For example, Swansea Bay University Health Board have trained over 3500 staff.



Many more people have been referred to **VAWDASV** services for help because staff understand these issues better.

**Some of the things we are going to do are:**



- Keep training staff.



- Make sure people know about our training timetable.



- Make sure we get feedback.



- Offer training to more relevant people. For example, pharmacists – also called chemists.

## 6. Make sure victims get the best services for each of their needs



We offer a range of services across Swansea to support people experiencing **VAWDASV**.

**These are some of the things we are going to do:**



- Keep a check of services and make sure we understand if the needs of people are being met.



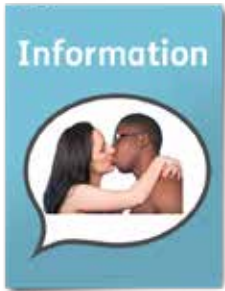
- Make sure we follow the law called **The Equality Act** – this law makes sure that groups of people who are often treated unfairly, are treated fairly. For example, disabled people.



- We will make sure we follow this law in all our services, including housing.



- Make sure communities across Swansea know about our services.



- Provide more support to the safety of people affected by working in the **sex industry**. The **sex industry** is people who make money from sex.



- Look at other ways of sharing our information, so more people can understand it. For example, in other languages or Easy Read.

## 7. Check if our plans work



We have done a lot of checking into our work already. We have:

- looked at our services,
- checked if there are services missing,
- and listened to the voices of victims.

**Here are some of the things we are going to do as part of our plan:**



- Collect information about how well services are working and what is missing.



- Work together with partners more to achieve more.



- Check what people need and what services need.



- Look at the best ways to work with other organisations.





# Hard words

## Domestic abuse

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

## 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.

## Violence against Women

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

# Useful contacts

---

## Live fear free helpline

Provides help and advice about [VAWDASV](#).

**Helpline:** 0808 80 10 800

**Website:** [www.gov.wales/live-fear-free](http://www.gov.wales/live-fear-free)

---

## Bawso

Provides information and support to Black, minority ethnic, and migrant communities in Swansea.

**Phone:** 01792 642003

---

## New Pathways

Provides services to people affected by rape and [sexual abuse](#).

**Phone:** 01685 379 310

**Email:** [enquiries@newpathways.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@newpathways.org.uk)

---

## Swansea Women's Aid

Women's only organisation that supports women and children.

**Phone:** 01792 644683

---

---

## Calan DVS

One of the largest **domestic abuse** charities in Wales.

**LiveFearFree Helpline:** 0808 80 10 800

---

## Stori (Used to be called Hafan Cymru)

Housing association. Supports people and provides training so everyone can live safely.

**Website:** [storicymru.org.uk](http://storicymru.org.uk)

**LiveFearFree Helpline:** 0808 80 10 800

**Swansea Office Phone:** 01792 345751

---