

Shropshire Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2026-2029

DRAFT for public consultation

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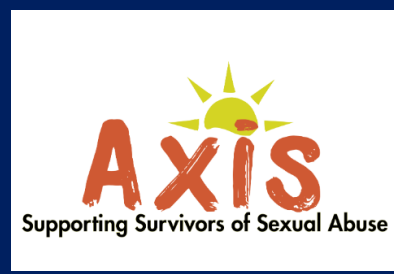


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If you need support, you are not alone

If you are being subjected to domestic abuse, or if you are worried about someone else, please remember there are support services who are ready to help. Taking the step to reach out—whether for yourself or on behalf of someone else—can feel daunting, but it is a sign of strength and courage. You do not have to manage this alone.

To find out more about the support available, please visit the information provided [here](#).

In an emergency:

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, **call 999 straight away**. If you are unable to speak, you can use the Silent Solution system by dialling 999 and pressing 55 when prompted—this will let the operator know you need urgent help without having to say anything.

“For survivors, a strategy is not an abstract document. It becomes real in the moment we reach out for help, often at the point of crisis, fear, exhaustion, or trauma. The priorities of this strategy should therefore be grounded in what survivors actually experience when engaging with systems that are meant to protect and support us.” - Survivor

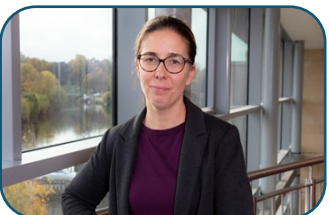
Foreword



"We welcome you to the Shropshire Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2026-2029. Domestic abuse remains a significant concern in Shropshire and nationally, causing lasting harm to individuals, children, families, and communities. It deeply affects physical and mental health, can threaten housing and financial security, strain social connections, and at its worst, results in loss of life. Ending domestic abuse requires collective action.

The Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DALPB) is dedicated to addressing domestic abuse. Success depends on coordinated efforts involving all sectors, people with lived experience, and the wider community. We thank everyone who contributed, especially victims and survivors whose experiences have shaped this strategic response."

Laura Fisher, Shropshire Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board Chair



"Domestic abuse is a significant public health issue and a key area of focus highlighted in our Health and Wellbeing Strategy, that impacts the wellbeing, safety and long term outcomes of individuals and families across Shropshire. As a partnership, we have a responsibility to respond with clarity, compassion and evidence based action. This strategy brings together partners from across our system to ensure victims and survivors receive timely, trauma informed support, and that prevention, early intervention and accountability are embedded in all that we do. It reflects the voices of those with lived experience and recognises the unique challenges of our rural county. By working collectively, we can reduce harm, strengthen community resilience, and create the conditions for every person in Shropshire to live free from abuse."

Rachel Robinson, Deputy Chair of Shropshire Community Safety Partnership and Shropshire's Director of Public Health



"Domestic abuse affects individuals, families and communities across Shropshire, and tackling it requires strong partnership working. This strategy brings together the insight of survivors, local partners and our workforce to set a clear, shared direction for preventing harm, supporting victims, and holding perpetrators to account. By working together across our rural county, we can build a safer Shropshire where people feel heard, protected and able to access the support they need".

Cllr Ruth Houghton, Portfolio Holder for Social Care



"Domestic abuse destroys lives, and the rising number of cases in West Mercia underlines just how vital it is that we continue to invest in services and work collaboratively to protect victims and drive meaningful behaviour change. From our rural villages to our urban towns and cities, domestic abuse impacts all parts of West Mercia. That is why I am committed, as set out in my Safer Communities Plan, to doing all I can to ensure we deliver the support victims need, wherever they live, and to keep pushing for a society free from abuse."

John Campion, PCC

Understanding domestic abuse

Domestic abuse includes any pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between individuals aged 16 or over who are personally connected. Abuse may be emotional, psychological, economic, sexual, physical or digital and includes coercive controlling behaviours. It also includes honour-based abuse, involving coercion or violence linked to perceived family or community “honour,” and forced marriage, where someone is pressured or threatened into a marriage without their free and informed consent.

For the full statutory definition please, refer to the guidance linked [here](#).

Who Can Be Affected?

- Anyone: women, men, LGBTQ+ individuals, children, and adults from all backgrounds.
- “Connected” children, including unborn, who see, hear, or experience abuse are considered as victims (in their own right) even if they are not present during a particular incident
- It can occur in any personal relationship, including intimate partners, parental figures, family members, siblings, parent/guardians or those sharing parental responsibility and carers.
- People with protected characteristics, such as disabilities, minority ethnic groups, faiths, or immigration statuses, can also be affected.

In Shropshire, Child-to-Parent Abuse (CPA) is defined as harmful acts—physical, psychological, emotional, sexual, digital, stalking, harassment, coercive, controlling, or financial—by a child (any age) toward a parent, guardian, carer, or primary care provider. Siblings are

also recognized as victims according to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Professionals prefer the term “child or young person causing harm/using harmful behaviour,” when the child is under 16, and acknowledge these children may also be victims of abuse or trauma. CPA is treated as part of the broader definition of domestic abuse.

We also acknowledge the gendered nature of domestic abuse but work to ensure our local response to domestic abuse is accessible to all regardless of gender and other protected characteristics.

Why This Matters

Understanding that domestic abuse can affect anyone helps professionals and communities respond inclusively and effectively. It ensures support services are accessible to everyone at risk, including those who face additional barriers to seeking help.

“Systems must adapt to reality, not expect survivors to adapt to them. If the priorities outlined in this strategy are implemented meaningfully, they can ensure that survivors and children are not only protected but empowered to rebuild their lives with dignity and hope” – Survivor

Rurality

In July 2019 a report by the [Rural Crime Network](#) on Domestic Abuse being carried out in Rural Areas showed that abuse in rural areas lasts up to 25% longer in most rural areas. As part of their strategic planning, the DALPB has considered Shropshire's rural nature and will make sure rurality is considered in all future action plans.

“Rurality adds another layer of complexity. Survivors in rural areas may be isolated, have limited access to services, or fear lack of anonymity. Awareness campaigns and workforce training must account for these challenges, ensuring that prevention and support are accessible to all, regardless of geography” - Survivor

Executive summary

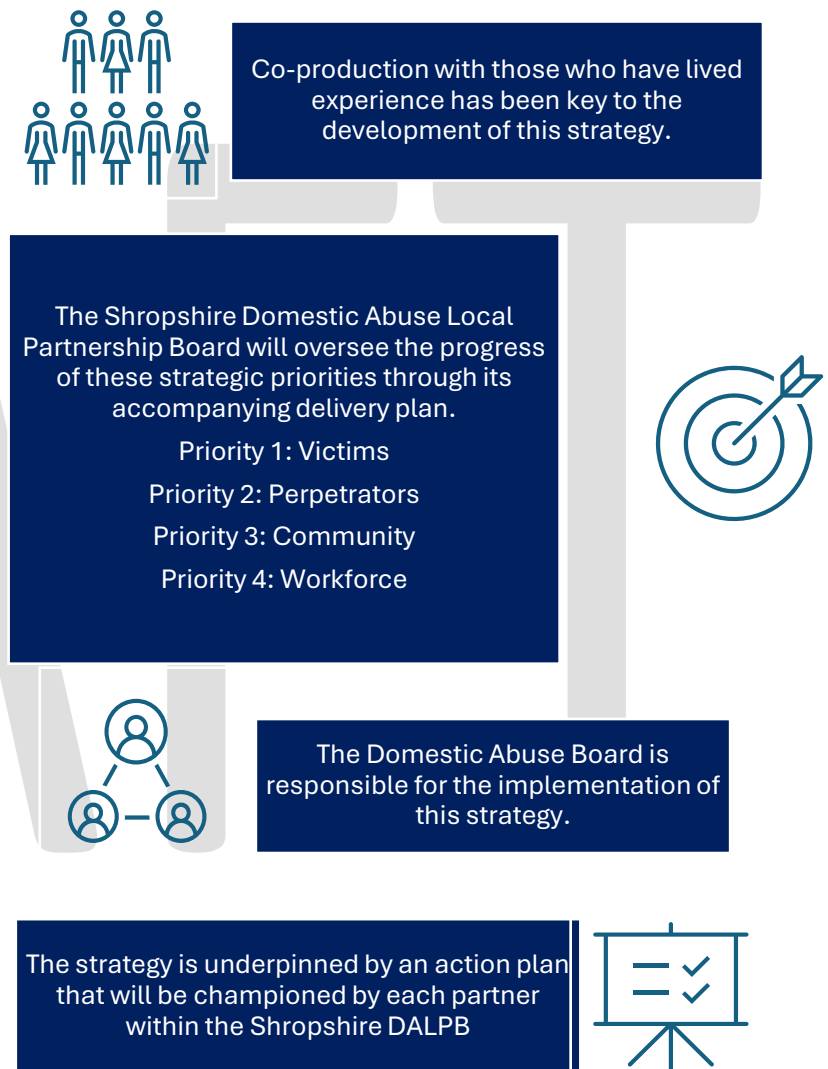
This strategy sets out a collaborative, multi-agency plan to reduce domestic abuse in Shropshire over the next three years. Developed by the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DALPB) in partnership with Shropshire's Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) and input from the community.

This strategy focuses on the four priorities:

- Victims
- Perpetrators
- Workforce
- Community

The strategy recognises that ending domestic abuse in Shropshire requires collective action across all sectors and communities. It aligns with national legislation as outlined in The DA Act 2021 and will be delivered through a joint action plan overseen by the DALPB.

Progress will be monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure effective support and continuous improvement.



Introduction

Developed by the [Shropshire Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board \(DALPB\)](#) this strategy helps Shropshire Council meet statutory requirements by setting the strategic direction of support in safe accommodation for all victims. It also sets out how we will meet the wider needs of adults and children impacted by domestic abuse either as a victim or someone who uses harmful and abusive behaviours, and how we will support our communities and workforce in responding effectively and proportionately.

Co-production and the voice of lived experience

Victims and survivors from Shropshire's Lived Experience advisory group (LEAG) led by Shropshire Council's Domestic Abuse Prevention Team (DAPT) have been pivotal to the work of the DALPB. LEAG members supported the DAPT in the completion of the Needs Assessment, they supported the creation of public surveys to identify the communities' priorities and have been fully engaged in the strategy development thus ensuring a co-produced document.

We thank our LEAG members for always keeping us focused on the needs of victim/survivors and supporting us to ensure our strategy and ongoing work is victim centred and reflective of their voice.

*"In LEAG we share, we care,
Our voices rise, our thoughts laid bare.
Together we plan, together we try,
To make things better, reaching for the sky"*

– Survivor Poem

Previous strategy

In 2018, we published a [Domestic Abuse Strategy](#) spanning the period 2018-2020. As a result of the pandemic this strategy was not reviewed nor updated. The Domestic Abuse Act gave the partnership various statutory duties, and since then we have achieved the following which have enabled us to be able to write this strategy which identifies where we want to go and the areas that our partnership needs to focus on:

- Formed the DALPB as a statutory multi-agency body under the [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)
- Shropshire Council formed a Domestic Abuse Prevention Team (DPT) which in turn recruited a Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG) to inform decision making and strategic direction.
- Delivered comprehensive Domestic Abuse Needs Assessments ([2022](#) and [2024](#)) which were, and will continue to be used to inform commissioning decisions and shape strategic priorities.
- An Operational Domestic Abuse Forum was re-formed to enable operational and tactical frontline services/professionals to feed directly into DALPB decision-making.
- Delivered the [Safe Accommodation Strategy](#) in line with statutory duties.

Needs Assessment

The most recent Shropshire Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment was released in 2024 and aimed to create a comprehensive picture of domestic abuse across the county. Developed in response to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the assessment looks at the demand for support in safe accommodation and identifies gaps in provision.

Our needs assessment also looks at the wider support needs of victims and those using harmful and abusive behaviours. It includes national and local prevalence data and insights from those with lived experience and services across the county.

Key findings of the needs assessment fall into the following themes:



Data



**Lived
experience**



Housing



**Strategic
Leadership**



Education/Training

The needs assessment concludes with recommendations aimed at improving accommodation-based and community-based services and creating a multi-agency approach to tackling domestic abuse in Shropshire.

Reliance on a single agency to hold risk ignores the reality that survivors interact with multiple services, often simultaneously. – Survivor

Gap Analysis

Following on from the needs assessment we completed a gap analysis. We then asked the DALPB and LEAG to review this to identify their specific organisations or groups immediate and long-term actions.

Shropshire profile

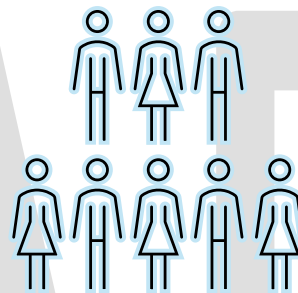
Please note, in line with our domestic abuse needs assessment 2024, this profile uses data from the [Office of National Statistics 2021 census](#).



Shropshire has a population of 323,619, including 163,927 females, 159,692 males, and 48,000 children under age 15.



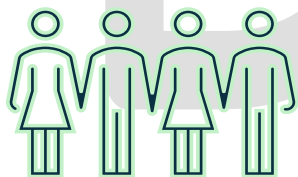
Approximately 57% of Shropshire's population is living in rural settlements (ONS).



In Shropshire 40.3% of the population are aged over 54 years. 20.0% (64,838) of Shropshire's population were aged under 19



139,583 Households in Shropshire. there 18,585 households with 2 or more children living in the property, equating to 14% of all households on Shropshire.



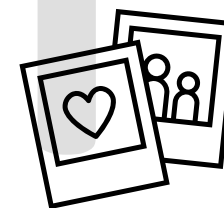
96.7% of Shropshire residents identified as White, compared to 81.0% in England. The Asian population was 1.3% in Shropshire versus 9.6% nationally.



In total approximately 800 people (0.3%) in Shropshire selected a gender identity different from birth compared to England and the West Midlands (0.5%).



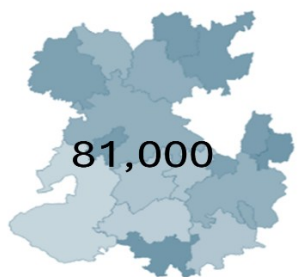
36,594(26.2%) households had one person disabled under the Equality Act Similar to England



A total of 6,318 people (2.3%) in Shropshire described themselves as gay or lesbian, bisexual or all other sexual orientation.

Shropshire Domestic Abuse Profile

Please note: This profile uses data from the [2024 Shropshire Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment](#), reflecting information provided by local services between 2022 and 2024. The DALPB is dedicated to reviewing domestic abuse data for an accurate understanding of need.



Taking the nationally recognised statistic that 1 in 3 females are subjected to domestic abuse in their lifetime and 1 in 6 men, it could be assumed that: If 323,619 people lived in Shropshire, 54,000 women and 27,000 men in Shropshire are subjected to domestic abuse in their lifetime.

We can also assume based on national research, that if 1 in 10 families are affected by CPA then at least 13,958 families in Shropshire are affected by CPA.



At time of needs assessment, Shropshire had completed 2 [Domestic Homicide Reviews](#). The Shropshire safeguarding community partnership have also released learning briefings around these reviews.



According to West Mercia Police between 2022 and 2024 a total of 6,379 domestic abuse offences and 8,277 incidents took place in Shropshire



Between 2022 and 2024, 577 referrals were received and accepted for MARAC. 232 of these, were repeat referrals



Between 2022 and 2024 a total of 3,299 Operation Encompass notifications were sent to schools regarding domestic abuse incidents reported to the police in which children are in the household

Vision, Goal and Approach

This Strategy has been informed by stakeholder engagement from across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors as well as by public feedback but, most importantly, it has been informed by the voices and experiences of victim/survivors of domestic abuse.

We united around a shared inspirational vision. Together, we then determined the goal of our strategy over the next three years, along with outlining the approach we will use to achieve it.

VISION

- To end domestic abuse

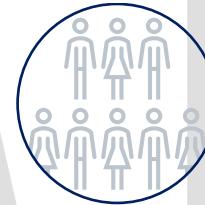
GOAL

- Reduce domestic abuse in Shropshire

APPROACH

- One single agency can not achieve this alone; partnership working is key

Chosen Priorities



Victims



Perpetrators



Community



Workforce

Framework for Action – Priorities - DRAFT

•**Objective/Outcome:** Ensure victims and survivors—including children—quickly access trauma-informed support and strong advocacy. Provide clear, simple routes to information and services so people know exactly where to turn for safety, recovery, and ongoing support.

•**Our Key areas of focus:** Safe accommodation • Lived experience • Partner-wide promotion of support • Accessibility and inclusivity • Delivery of FFP including MACPT

•**Desired Impact:** Fast, trauma-informed support and clear service pathways boost safety, wellbeing, and trust in local systems. These actions reduce long-term harm and strengthen confidence in how local partners respond to domestic abuse

•**Objective/Outcome:** Equip the workforce—including professionals, volunteers, charities, and key partners—with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to spot domestic abuse early and respond effectively. Build a capable, trauma-aware workforce that knows how to act, support, and safeguard.

•**Our key areas of focus:** Accountability • Training • Awareness raising • Trauma-informed practice • Intersectionality • Accessible support

•**Impact:** Stronger skills and better awareness mean earlier identification of all forms of domestic abuse and fewer gaps or duplicated services. Consistent training and preventative education reduce incidents and help build safer, healthier relationships across our communities



•**Objective/Outcome:** Prevent harm through targeted, evidence-based interventions while holding those who use harmful behaviours fully accountable. This includes legal action, behaviour-change programmes, monitoring, and requiring clear acknowledgment of the harm caused to victims and communities—reinforcing zero tolerance and driving meaningful change.

•**Our key areas of focus:** Accountability • Collaboration • Promoting safety • Accommodation • Change

•**Desired Impact:** Stronger accountability and coordinated interventions that disrupt or prevent harm. A consistent, long-term approach that promotes genuine behaviour change and reduces ongoing risk to victims, families, and communities

•**Objective/Outcome:** Create a coordinated community response to domestic abuse by equipping communities with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to act. Clear and visible support pathways make it easier for people to seek help, reduce stigma, increase awareness, and drive earlier referrals for those at risk.

•**Our key areas of focus:** Awareness raising • Providing early support • Community awareness • Shared accountability • Utilising by-and-for services • Partnership working • Training

•**Impact:** A community-centred approach helps people spot abuse earlier, reducing isolation and improving access to support. By breaking down cultural barriers and increasing understanding of domestic abuse, communities become safer, more informed, and better able to support those affected

Commissioning and resourcing

This strategy is intentionally brief so that all those commissioning or working in domestic abuse can absorb, articulate, and play their part in delivery of its key objectives. Resourcing and Commissioning is an important focus for the DALPB.

Governance and Accountability

The [Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership](#) (SSCP) consists of a wide range of partners who come together to prevent and tackle Child and Adult safeguarding and Community Safety (with scrutiny from the Independent Chair). Domestic abuse was identified as a priority of the Shropshire Community Safety Partnership and the DALPB is overseen by it.

This Shropshire Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy will be in place for three years. We will continuously refer to our strategy to ensure it remains in line with expected publications and policy changes locally and nationally.

A Joint Action Plan is being developed by all partners including the LEAG, in order to deliver the outcomes agreed in this strategy. For each of our four priorities, the Joint Action Plan sets out what we each partner will do, who is responsible for each task, the delivery timescale and what the outcome will be for survivors.

It is a working document, which will be overseen by the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board and updated by the Domestic Abuse Prevention Team as we make progress.

Collaboration Opportunities between the partnerships

Domestic abuse is everyone's business and is a shared concern across the partnership structure. There are a series of ways in which the DALPB have agreed to collaborate with the aim to improve collaboration at both a strategic and operational level:

1. Joint annual communications/advertising campaign
2. Operational/tactical leads task and finish groups
3. Agency/person led workshops

Scrutiny

Scrutiny will be delivered through a robust governance framework led by the DALPB and reporting into the community safety partnership. Progress will be monitored quarterly, with annual reports published for transparency. Survivor voices will be embedded in evaluation processes, and findings will inform continuous improvement and commissioning decisions.

Conclusion

The Shropshire Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2026–2029 sets out a collaborative, evidence-based approach to tackle domestic abuse. By working with partners and centring survivors' experiences, the strategy focuses on accountability, ongoing improvement, and trauma-informed, inclusive support. Our LEAG will inform us at every step whether we are making a difference and heading towards our goal of reducing domestic abuse in Shropshire.

Appendix

Legislative framework

Protecting victims and preventing domestic abuse are key aims of the [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#). Part 4 of the Act is set out to ensure victims of domestic abuse and their children can access support in safe accommodation.

Section 54 of the Domestic Abuse Act requires local authorities in England to establish a multi-agency DALPB. The board must be consulted whenever the authority carries out certain defined activities.

- Evaluating the need for accommodation-based support for all domestic abuse victims in their area, including those who may need help across local borders.
- Developing and publishing a strategy for delivering such support locally, with reference to the findings of the needs assessment.
- Implementing the strategy through decisions to commission or withdraw services.
- Reviewing and measuring how effective the strategy is.
- Reporting progress to central government.

The [Victims and Prisoners Act 2024](#) includes that local policing bodies, authorities, and ICBs in England must work together to support victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, and violent crime. They are required to jointly assess needs and create a unified plan to improve services.

Relevant National Strategies/Plans

- [Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 2025-2030](#).
- [Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan](#)
- [NHS 10-year plan](#)
- [A National Plan to End Homelessness](#)
- [Wellbeing and Schools Bill](#)
- [Multi-agency child protection teams: regulation-making powers - GOV.UK](#)

Relevant Local documents/Strategies/Plans

- [Shropshire Safe Accommodation Strategy](#)
- [Shropshire Child To Parent Abuse Policy](#)
- Shropshire Corporate Plan – Pending
- [Shropshire Councils People Plan](#) Draft
- [Shropshire Council Improvement Plan](#) Draft
- [Shropshire Community Safety Strategy](#)

Definitions used:

- Victims and Survivors – This Strategy utilises the terms "victims" and "survivors" for consistency across legal and policy frameworks. It is recognised that many individuals prefer the term "survivor." Both definitions are respected, acknowledging that experiences may vary and self-identification differs among individuals.
- Perpetrators and Offenders – The term "perpetrator" encompasses any individual who causes harm, including those not subject to criminal justice proceedings. The designation "offender" is reserved exclusively for individuals who have been convicted of an offence.