



**Domestic Abuse
Performance Report
(April 2014-Sept 2014)**

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This document has been produced to provide an overview of Domestic Abuse in the borough of Stockton. No part of this document may be copied or amended without prior consultation with Steven Hume, Community Safety Manager, SBC.

Introduction

This report provides an overview on research and analysis conducted on a number of data sets linked to domestic abuse within the borough of Stockton.

- Cleveland Police crime and incident reports
- Children, Education and Social Care First Contact Team, SBC
- Housing Options, SBC
- Safe at Home scheme, Community Safety Dept, SBC
- A&E Data, National Health Trust.
- Harbour performance data

The report focuses on data from each of the above sources however will feature within differing contexts of the report. For example, when looking at what is occurring in relation to domestic abuse, this will feature data from police incidents and crime performance statistics along with other relevant information.

A number of different databases have been utilised to provide this data which often do not provide personal or in depth information and therefore there are some constraints in reporting.

This document was previously utilised in the Domestic Abuse Strategy Meetings however this report is a work in progress in terms of trying to identify a wide factor of data that can enhance this report and will feed into the strategy through the Health and wellbeing meetings.

A revised Domestic Abuse strategy was implemented in July 2014 and sets out how the Council will work with its partners such as Police and health as well as voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to promote ways to prevent people being abused and provide support and protection for those who may need it.

The document was shaped through consultation with people who have experienced domestic violence and abuse, their families and perpetrators. Social Care staff who work with families affected by domestic abuse were also asked for their views.

The strategy will be in place until March 2017 and run alongside an identified action plan with set targets and performance measures.

In relation to this report, although it does not contain confidential information, it should not be copied, amended or disseminated without prior authorisation of Steven Hume, Community Safety Manager.

What is Domestic Violence and Abuse?

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. - This is not a legal definition.

Domestic abuse and young people

The changes to the definition of domestic raise awareness that young people in the 16 to 17 age group can also be victims of domestic violence and abuse.

By including this age group the government hopes to encourage young people to come forward and get the support they need, through a helpline or specialist service.

An adult is defined as any person aged 18 years or over. Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, and grandparents, whether directly related, in laws or stepfamily.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

DOMESTIC ABUSE	6.1	Reduce repeat perpetrators of domestic abuse	No assessed: 29 No engaged: 25 86% engaging
	6.2	Increase the number of repeat victims in MARAC accessing support from Harbour	75%
	6.3	Reduce repeat victims of domestic abuse not open to MARAC	50% reduction in top ten list produced and five couples have been added to this rolling programme.

QUICK FACTS

Type	April 2014 to Sept 2014
DV incidents	1318/-579 (-30.5%)
DV Crime	258/-144 (-35.8%)
DV Repeat incident rate	56.7%, reduction from 45.9%
DV Arrest rate	80.6% crimes, reduction from 82.8%
Local comparison	Lowest rate for domestic abuse incidents 2 nd ranked for DA related crime
CESC data - %NFA following assessment	Unable to give yearly comparison
Probation data	16 orders – increase 6 9 programmes commenced – 15 last year 4 completed - same
Housing options - approaches	71 no change
Safe at Home referrals	34, reduction from 60.
A&E presentations	Increase from 45 to 59

ANALYSIS OF DATA

At present this report will mainly focus on police recorded incidents and crimes. This is due to this information containing more in depth information such as ward location, type of domestic abuse, gender, ages of both victim and suspect.

Statistics previously collated for the domestic abuse performance reports in 2013/14 will also be utilised within this report within the relevant sections (Safe at Home/Housing presentations/CESC referrals/Probation/A&E data).

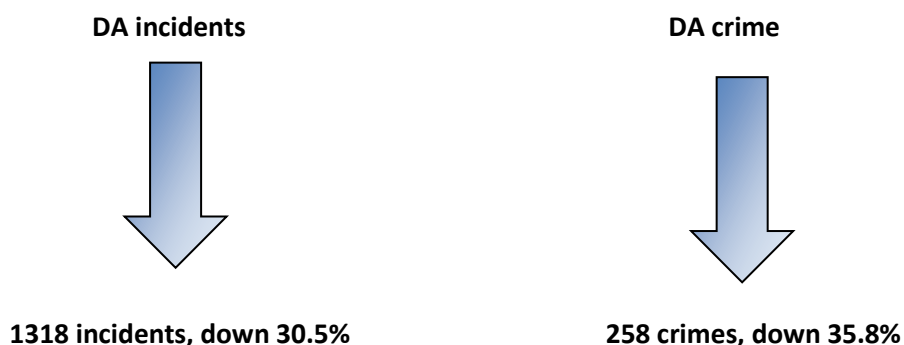
There also continues to be limitations in what information can be obtained and then further analysed. For example, police incidents do not provide any indicator fields or information that indicates the relationship between the victim and perpetrator however this is available for those that are then recorded as a crime.

These details are also recorded by other partners and SBC departments but unable to show the full journey that an individual may have experienced with variety of different organisations.

For example, female victim reporting a domestic abuse incident to the police, was she then referred to Harbour? did she present herself to Housing Options?, where there any child welfare issues? if yes, what was the result. As noted earlier, it is hoped that as time progresses, these are areas that can be improved upon.

What is happening?

Since the start of the financial year, police recorded incidents of domestic abuse have reduced by 579 incidents, a 30.5% reduction.



Alongside this, those that have been recorded as a crime (258 crimes) have also seen a more significant decrease from 402 offences, a 35.8% reduction.

Despite the reduction in crime the arrest rate has remained fairly static with slight reduction from 82.8% to 80.6%.

The number of arrests linked to a domestic related incident is a lot lower with only 23.1% of all incidents police attend resulting in an arrest taking place.

Comparisons within the Tees Valley area (not inc Darlington) show that Stockton has also had the largest reductions in domestic related incidents:

- Middlesbrough - 1632 incidents, reduction of 11.4%
- Hartlepool – 964 incidents, reduction of 13.8%
- Redcar & Cleveland – 885 incidents, reduction of 30.1%

The above three areas have also seen a decrease on domestic related crime – Middlesbrough (-20.6%), Hartlepool (-42.6%) and Redcar & Cleveland (-49.8%).

At present there does not appear to be any reasoning as to why domestic related incidents have reduced so significantly this is despite an increase in overall violence in Stockton (+5.8% April to Sept 14).

It was also anticipated that the World Cup would have an impact on levels in June however they actually reduced.

This is also the opposite for referrals for help to Harbour which have increased (333 last year/408 in Q1)¹.

Figure 1 – Comparisons with local authority areas²

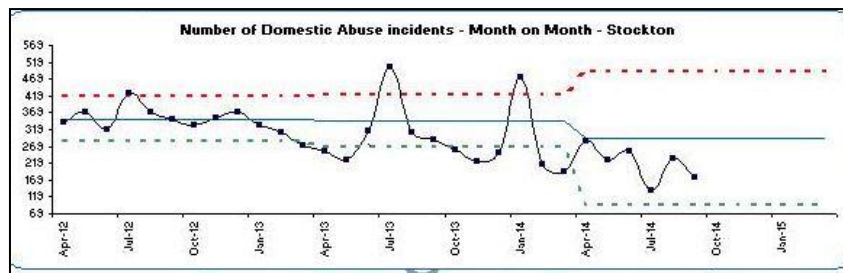
Type	Stockton	Hartlepool	Redcar & Cleveland	Middlesbrough
Domestic abuse incident	1318	964	885	1632
Rate per 1000 population	6.8	10.4	8.3	11.7
Domestic abuse crime	258	166	133	400
Rate per 1000 population	1.3	1.7	1.2	2.8

Stockton has the lowest rate per 1000 population for domestic abuse incidents however we are second for crime. Middlesbrough continues to have the highest rate which is the same for all crime and violence.

Data from the Safe at Home scheme, which provides security advice and measures to vulnerable victims of domestic abuse also shows a reduction from 60 to 34. This reduction is due to procedure changes and staff training that took place in summer 2014. Staff from the Community Safety Team, SBC are now responsible for this scheme which was previously led by Cleveland Police Crime Prevention Team. Now all staff are fully trained it is anticipated that levels should increase however it is also possible that referrals have reduced in lined with crime and incidents.

Domestic related crime also accounted for 5.4% of publicly reported crime which is reduction on April-Sept last year when offences accounted for 7.5%. This is also lower than the national average (8%)³

Domestic related violence also accounted for 20.2% of all violence, which is a significant reduction on last year (45.7%).



The long term rolling trend clearly shows reductions in domestic related incidents since July 2013.

It is not clear why domestic abuse incidents and crimes are reducing which is the opposite **of A&E presentations for assault**. This data shows an increase from 45 to 59 presentations for assaults that were recorded as being domestic related as the patient was admitted. However caution should be taken with this data when looking at comparisons from previous years as it is solely dependent upon this field being completed by staff.

Approaches to housing options have remained static with 71 approaches during the six month period (36 in Q2) the same as this time last year.

¹ Q2 Harbour data not available at time of writing due to changes with recording systems

² Rates per 1000 population based on ONS mid 2013 estimates

³ HMIC report, Improving the police response to domestic abuse (aug 13)

Alongside this there were also **364 referrals to Children and Education** services between April and September which accounted for 11.1% of all referrals to this team. This also included 23 children who were placed on a Child Protection Plan linked to 13 families (it is not possible to compare to last year due to changes in recording practices).

Due to changes in recording practices by Harbour, their current data set relates to Q1. During this time, Harbour data shows a significant increase in referrals from 333 in Q1 last year to 408 this quarter. The main increase relates to referrals from Social Services from 74 to 110 and Harbour from 45 to 59. However the majority of other partner agencies have seen reduction in referrals: Police (12/prev 19), Self-referral (49/prev 66), Housing (10/prev 13). This is in contrast to police recorded crime and incidents reducing.

Key Findings

Police recorded incidents of domestic abuse have reduced by 30.5%

Police recorded crimes of domestic abuse have reduced by 35.8%

Stockton also has the lowest rate per 1000 population for domestic related incidents

The World Cup during June appears to have no impact on levels with reductions recorded for both crime and incidents in June during Stockton compared to June last year.

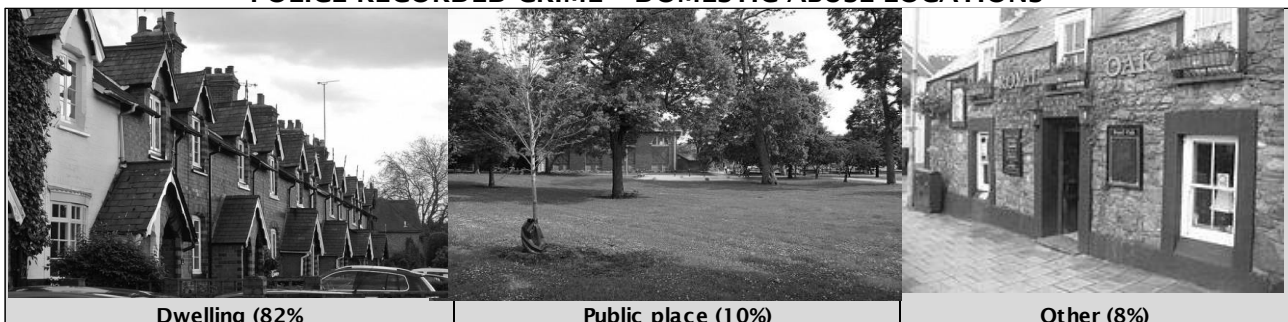
Despite reduction seen in incidents reported to police, approaches to housing, presentations for assaults and referrals to Harbour have all increased this period compared to last year.

Where is the domestic abuse taking place?

Research conducted on police data relating to **police recorded crimes** shows that the majority of assaults took place whilst the victim was in their home (82%) followed by public place/street (10%).

There were also eight recorded at a Licensed premises with all but one being assaults and the other a criminal damage.

POLICE RECORDED CRIME - DOMESTIC ABUSE LOCATIONS



Research of police domestic abuse incidents also shows similar figures however slightly higher for incidents with 90% occurring at a dwelling.

However this is a guide as due to the number of incidents and fact there is no indicator fields stating where the incident took place, this figure has been taken from those which occurred at a residential address.

Other locations include variety of establishments from outside schools, pubs to shops and in High Street.

Cross referencing this **to A&E data** shows that there were no presentations for domestic abuse during the same time who stated the assault had occurred whilst in a licensed premise with majority linked to their home address (75%). As with police data, other locations included public places or recorded at another address. Also to note, is that of those assaulted in their own home, all but two were female victims.

However of the offences that were recorded at public houses, the MO descriptions show only slight injury and may therefore have not warranted a visit to A&E.

Addresses of locations where police recorded domestic assaults took place were cross referenced with housing data showing that **18% of assaults occurred within a registered social landlord property (mainly Tristar)**. Alongside this, of the **presentations to Housing Options**, only four were recorded as living in social housing with 13 stating they were the owners (or joint owners) of their own home and shows what valuable service this is if owners of houses were prepared to move out of their own home. However the actual outcomes of these presentations shows that nearly all ended up returning back to their partner or cases were ongoing.

The above data has not changed significantly this period with majority of the data obtained continuing to indicate that domestic abuse continues to occur behind closed doors, and generally in the victim/perpetrators own home and data from Housing Options shows how difficult it is for victim's to leave their partner when living with the perpetrator in their own home

The top five wards relating to police crimes and incidents along with referrals to Harbour are displayed in table below.

Top 5 wards (April 2014-Sept2014)

Police Incidents	Police recorded crimes	Harbour referrals (q1 only)
Stockton Town Centre	Stockton Town Centre	Newtown
Mandale & Victoria	Hardwick	Stockton Town Centre
Parkfield & Oxbridge	Mandale & Victoria	Hardwick
Hardwick	Parkfield & Oxbridge	Parkfield & Oxbridge
Newtown	Billingham Central	Mandale & Victoria

This table illustrates the top 5 wards for domestic related crime, incidents and Harbour referrals are similar except in differing ranking. This is with the exception of Billingham Central which is featured only in police recorded crimes.

Of note is NEWTOWN which is the main ward area for referrals to Harbour however does not feature in the Top 5 for crime and fifth for incidents. This is something to consider as to why victims from this area are being referred or willing to be referred yet domestic incidents are lower than that of those living in Hardwick.

All of these wards also feature highly for overall crime, ASB and for deprivation.

Wards such as Ingleby Barwick, Yarm and Eaglescliffe, which are more affluent areas all feature in lower rankings compared to those of more deprived areas. However when cross referenced to housing data, the majority of those who owned their own home lived in wards such as these three areas.

Details obtained from Harbour also shows there were 18 referrals linked to women living outside the Stockton borough, accounting for 4% of all referrals.

Key Findings

Domestic abuse continues to occur within home address or dwelling of the victim and often perpetrator

18% of recorded crimes occurred at social registered housing

Offences also occur in wards where crime and ASB is higher and of low deprivation

A&E statistics also shows that victims were subjected to assaults in their own homes

Presentations to Housing options also shows how difficult it is for victims to flee their home with majority of those who are home owners and suffering abuse in their home are returning back to the home they share with the perpetrator

When is domestic abuse more prominent?

The majority of domestic abuse continues to occur during mid to late evening with key factors being alcohol consumption in 28% of all domestic abuse incidents. Those that have become a recorded crime also have alcohol recorded in 36% of all violent crimes however this maybe lot higher as over half of the reports were completed as 'Not known'.

It was also anticipated that the World Cup would have an impact on domestic abuse reports, however during June domestic abuse incidents reduced by 18.75% compared to June last and only a slight increase of 25 incidents compared to previous month. However when looking back to last year, incidents also increased from May to June 2013.

It is also clear that weekends also appear to be key times for both domestic abuse and crimes with peaks in calls for service to the police during these times. When police attend these incidents, the majority of DA incidents have occurred due to arguments between the victim and perpetrator or in several cases when the perpetrator has breached an injunction or harassment warning.

The weather also plays a role in domestic incidents with peaks over the summer periods and also the festive period.

When looking back to Q2 last year (July to Sept 13) incidents showed a considerable increase in domestic related incidents from 797 in April to June to 1083 between July and September. However this year

incidents have reduced in Q2 to 547 incidents from 771 in Q1, therefore difficult to identify any seasonal patterns.

Q2 is predominantly the main months when all crime and ASB rise and has the highest levels of all months. This is believed to be linked to the warmer and lighter nights over the other seasons. However, as with domestic abuse, overall crime also reduced this quarter.

The forthcoming period, Q3, levels were similar to Q1 last year so if they should follow this pattern then there could be further reductions in the next three months.

Who are the victims?

Domestic abuse occurs across all of society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth, and geography. Statistics, both locally and nationally, continue to show that it consists mainly of violence by men against women.

However it is hard to estimate how many children are also affected, both directly and indirectly. It is also believed that there is lack of reporting by male victims of domestic abuse.

The 2012-13 Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated there were 1.2 million victims of domestic abuse and 700,000 males covering all ranges of domestic abuse.⁴

It was also reported that the 16-24 age group is more at risk than any other for women or 16-19 for men.

Research of data sets obtained for this report shows the following:-

- Harbour referrals show that females aged 25 and under were the most prominent group accounting for 30%. This was followed by the 26-35 age group.
- This age group correlated with police data showing similar percentages for domestic related crime (36%).
- Presentations to Housing Options showed that the main age group was 35-44 accounting for 39% and there were also three females aged 50 plus who had sought help. However it would be expected that the age group would be slightly higher due to this age group more than likely living with partners rather than those aged 25 and under.
- Those helped by the Safe at Home scheme also shows differing age group, with 26-35 age group (same as Harbour referrals) accounting for 17 of the 34 referrals (50%).

Females continue to account for majority of police recorded data (80%) and are similar across the four local authority areas.

Unfortunately there is no data recording for police DA incidents to state what the relationship was with male victims. For example, with A&E data, males account for the majority of presentations where the relationship was parent to child. Although details are limited with A&E data some indicate that the reason for the assault was due to the intervention of child (usually a son) during a domestic assault occurring between the mother and father, thus resulting in male (son) being injured. Of note, alcohol also played an aggravating in half of these assaults.

However the relationship status is recorded on domestic related crimes and those with a male victim showed that partners/ex partners (mainly female) were the main perpetrators. There were offences where the victim was assaulted by their child (mainly older) or other family members.

It is still believed that the number of male victims suffering from domestic abuse is far higher than collated statistics with only 10% of approaches to housing from males. This compares to police data showing 20% of all victims were male.

⁴ Office for National statistics

It is also believed that children who are witness or hear domestic abuse will go on to become a victim, if female, and perpetrator if male. Most children in these homes know about the violence despite some parents thinking the children don't.

Violence in the home is dangerous for any child and can lead to wide range of emotional and psychological issues. It is also believed that young offenders are often from homes where domestic abuse has been prominent either directly or indirectly towards them. However housing data also shows that 21 women who had no children also sought help from housing showing again how difficult even for a single woman with no family it is to leave home or find suitable accommodation.

Research was recently conducted by Youth Offending Services who took a DIP sample of statistics relating to Domestic Abuse and the differing types of abuse. This was so we could get an understanding of the types of abuse taking place, emotional, physical, and the relationship of those giving and receiving the abuse, ie teen to teen, teen to parent etc.

Of the 30 young people who were reviewed, **all 30 cases featured emotional abuse**, with 28 of those featuring actual physical violence.

The predominant relationship was parent to parent abuse:

Parent to Parent - 28
Teen to parent – 7
Parent to Teen - 2
Teen to Teen – 1

This shows that despite the majority of young people not being physically hurt, they suffered emotional issues due to either seeing or hearing the abuse taking place between their parents. This can lead to the fear for the parent being hurt or other siblings and feeling feel bad that they cannot stop the abuse and can lead them onto a path of destruction from committing ASB to crime.

During the current six month period there were also 23 children placed on child protection plan via CESC relating to domestic abuse. These children were linked to 13 families with majority in an environment where there was physical abuse however from data that is collated it is not possible to say if the domestic abuse was directed at the children or towards their parents.

Those aged 16 to 17, who are now included in domestic abuse definition, continue to remain low, accounting for only 3% of victims, however there are still issues with females in the 18 to 25 age group who are particularly vulnerable to domestic violence from males they are in relationship with.

Police data in relation to repeat victimisation also shows how vulnerable victims are to being subjected to more than one incident or crime with 747 repeat incidents, equating to 56.7% of all incidents. This is also an increase on same time last year (45.9%).

In relation to CSP performance target relating to increasing support to repeat victims, during Q2, 75% of repeats engaged with Harbour, which is an increase on previous quarter (46%).

Who are the perpetrators?

There are different types of domestic abuse, including emotional, psychological, physical, sexual, and financial abuse. Many abusers behave in ways that include more than one type of domestic violence, and the boundaries between some of these behaviours are often quite blurred

Police recorded crime data shows that 83% of suspects were male; this compares to only 20% being victims. A third were aged between 26 to 35 yrs and linked to assaults on their partners/ex partners.

However when cross referenced to Harbour data in relation to those referred to the male perpetrator programme, this shows that the most common age was 19 to 25 yrs followed by the 26 to 35 yr age group.

There were also no referral from age group 55 plus, yet crime data shows this age group accounted for 7% of those linked to a domestic related crime.

Females accounted for 17% of offenders however unlike male offenders the age groups were fairly evenly spread between 26 to 34 and 35 and 44 age group. Offences also varied from harassment to more serious assaults. There were also several cases of child neglect.

Despite what many people believe, domestic abuse is not due to the abuser's loss of control over his behaviour but a deliberate choice made by the abuser. It is also believed that abuse only occurs in areas of lower deprivation.

However demographic data from Harbour linked to male perpetrator programme shows there were four males referred to this programme from Eaglescliffe ward, which ranked this 3rd out of the localities of offenders. Yet crime data and incidents feature the ward of Eaglescliffe low. This ward is also one of the more affluent wards in the Stockton borough, although interestingly when the crime and disorder audit was conducted in summer 2013, forms completed by those of school age (16 and under) and who lived in Eaglescliffe chose domestic abuse as one of their top priorities. This could indicate that there is under reporting of domestic abuse in this area.

In relation to CSP performance target relating to reducing repeat perpetrators of abuse, 86% who were assessed engaged with Harbour, increase from 66% in Q1. This relates to 25 males during the 3 month period.

How is domestic abuse being committed?

Whatever form it takes, domestic abuse is rarely a one-off incident, and should instead be seen as a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour through which the abuser seeks power over their victim.

Typically the abuse involves a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour, which tends to get worse over time. The abuse can begin at any time, in the first year, or after many years of life together. It may begin, continue, or escalate after a couple have separated and may take place not only in the home but also in a public place.

Details obtained from police data shows wide variety of domestic abuse from verbal arguments, to harassment and serious assaults.

During the six month period domestic related violence accounted for 20.2% of all violent crime recorded by Cleveland Police in Stockton however this is a significant decrease from last year (45.7%).

Assault Occasioning actual bodily harm accounted for 50% of all offences – this is where injury has been caused to the victim and varied from broken noses to bruising and cuts. Injuries have also been sustained by force using items such as vases or other blunt instruments.

Those that have been committed outside are mainly verbal altercations with more serious assaults occurring indoors, mainly the victim or family home. There are rarely any indications on police reports to say that anyone intervened during the incident when committed outside.

Abuse also takes the form of emotional abuse and neglect which is recorded in CESC data for those children placed on a Child protection plan. This showed that physical abuse was the main reason, however as noted earlier it is not possible to ascertain if this was abuse towards the child or the parent.

What are the motivating factors?

Domestic violence is learned intentional behaviour rather than the consequence of stress, individual pathology, substance use or a 'dysfunctional' relationship.

Perpetrators of domestic violence frequently avoid taking responsibility for their behaviour, by blaming their violence on someone or something else, denying it took place at all or minimising their behaviour.

Whilst responsibility for the actual violence is the perpetrators alone, there are belief that perpetuate abusive attitudes and make it difficult for women and children to get help. These include:

- Blaming the victim for the violence
- Putting the 'family' before the safety of women and children
- Tolerating the use of violence
- Privileging men over women and children's needs
- Treating domestic violence as a private matter

The misuse of drugs or alcohol is often linked to domestic incidents (35%) however this is not the underlying cause of domestic violence. Rather than focusing on the 35% under the influence, this shows 65% were not through misuse of alcohol or drugs.

Some abusers who do use alcohol or drugs may use this as an excuse for their behaviour saying "I was drunk" or "I don't remember". Even if they genuinely don't remember what they did, it doesn't remove responsibility for their behaviour. The causes of domestic violence are far more deep rooted than simply being an effect of intoxication or alcohol/drug dependency.

Unfortunately there is no data recorded on police crime reports to indicate motivating factors behind offending however dip sampling of incidents and crimes shows majority have started off as a verbal argument before escalating to physical assaults.

It is also clear that those incidents which are verbal altercations are often not seen by the victim as of serious nature resulting in police attending and not prepared to take any further action.

Those domestic related incidents linked to harassment or breaching conditions are often linked to the male offender wanting to see their children or have turned up at the victim's house. It is also evident that majority of female victims will allow the males into their home, despite being subject to abuse previously.

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