

REVISED EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS (EqIAA)

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

The Domestic Violence and Abuse Act 2021 places a new duty for providing safe accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse on the council.

An Extensive Needs assessment was carried out in 2021 which informed a draft Domestic Abuse strategy and an Initial EqIAA published with the draft strategy.

The draft Three Year Domestic Violence and Abuse strategy was agreed in October 2021 to identify how this duty would be achieved. As well as safe accommodation support for victims it also included how we would work to reduce the level and harm caused by domestic violence and abuse within South Gloucestershire.

The draft strategy was published for public consultation from 26 October 2021 until 5th January 2022. The results of the public consultation of the draft strategy were collated and the strategy was revised and agreed by the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board. The Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy 2022-24 was published in January 2022 as per the requirements laid out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

The initial EqIAA identified the prevalence and different needs of groups with protected characteristics, in order that they could be properly taken account of both in the final strategy and in its operational implementation.

South Gloucestershire has now begun the process of recommissioning the Domestic Abuse Specialist Services which include Safe Accommodation and Domestic Abuse Support services.

Engagement with stakeholders, providers and service users, literature reviews, national guidance and consultation with neighbouring local authorities has informed the South Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Commissioning Intentions Document. A public consultation on the commissioning intentions will be available for completion from 26th August 2022 – 20th October 2022.

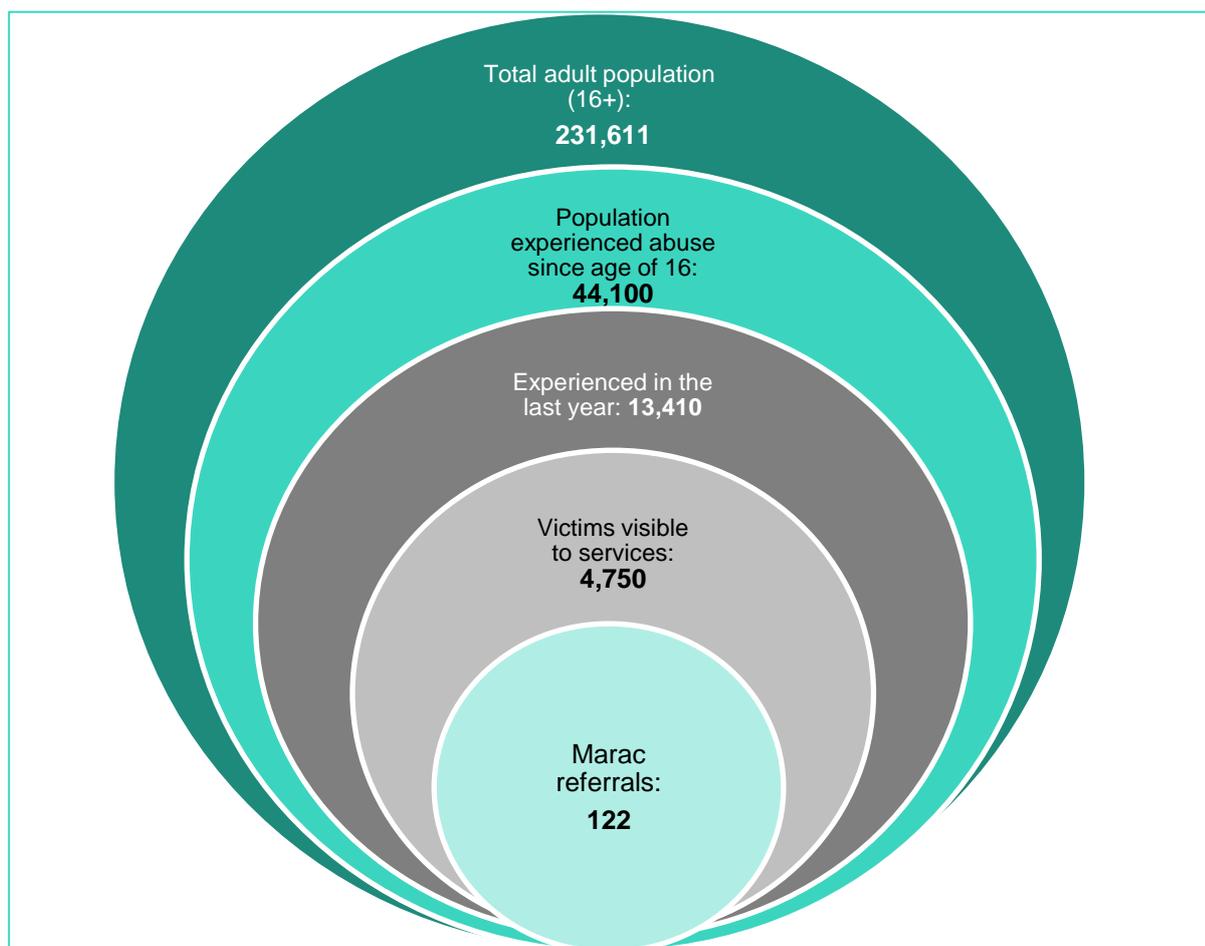
The initial EqIAA has been updated and will be further revised when the results from this commissioning public consultation have been collated and analysed.

SECTION 2 - RESEARCH, ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Estimated prevalence of domestic abuse

Levels of Domestic Abuse are notoriously difficult to accurately assess, as so many incidents are not reported to the Police or partners. To estimate the prevalence of domestic abuse we consider the population aged over 16 in line with the statutory definition of domestic abuse. There are 231,611 individuals aged 16 or over in South Gloucestershire of which we can estimate around **44,100 will have experienced domestic abuse over their lifetime**. On an annual basis, this equates to 13,410 individuals every year who experience domestic abuse (both familial and intimate partner violence).

Overview of domestic abuse prevalence in South Gloucestershire



Demographic analysis of the population

Age

Children

Overall, in South Gloucestershire there are **83,466**¹ children and young people between the ages of 0-24. Of those 59,243 were under the age of 18 so legally defined as children. The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) clarifies arrangements around definitions of children and what it means in the context of domestic abuse;

Abuse in relationships between those under the age of 16 years will be treated as child abuse as a matter of law and child safeguarding procedures should be followed. It is important to remember that abuse perpetrated by someone over the age of 18 against someone under the age of 18 also constitutes child abuse as a matter of law.

Overall, 20.7% (n=43,711) of the population in South Gloucestershire are under the age of 18 which is in line with the national average which indicates that 21%² of the overall population of England and Wales was aged under 18 years.

Overview of children 0-24 in South Gloucestershire (ONS, 2020)

	Female	Male	Total
0-5	9542	10163	19705
6-11	10322	10759	21081
12-15	6195	6501	12696
16-17	2857	2904	5761
18-24	11498	12725	24223
Total	40,414	43,052	83,466

Research from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has found that around one in five children have been exposed to domestic abuse, and that one third of children witnessing domestic abuse also experience another form of abuse. However, research has shown that as few as 3.4% of referrals to Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) services, and 3.2% of Marac referrals, come from Children's Social Care (SafeLives, 2020). Despite this, domestic abuse remains a leading child protection issue nationally with 51% of Child in Need (CIN) assessments identified domestic abuse. In section 4 of this report we explore how many children are visible through the domestic abuse service and children's service.

Children have historically been invisible as victims, although they too suffer from the detrimental impacts associated with family violence (Beetham et al., 2019) however it is now well recognised that the exposure of children to any form of family violence constitutes child abuse (Saunders & Oehme, 2007). This is whether children are directly physically harmed, witness physical or emotional abuse within the home, or are not directly present but aware that abuse is happening (Gregory et al., 2019; Kitzmann et al., 2003; MacMillan & Wathen, 2014; Wolfe et al., 2004). It is therefore a significant positive development that the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) now formally recognised children that have lived in homes where there is domestic abuse as 'direct' victims in their own right, and also places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide support to them within safe accommodation.

¹ 83,466

Young people

Domestic abuse is prevalent within the intimate relationships of younger people. Although the statutory definition of domestic abuse has included 16- and 17-year olds since 2013, there remains a gap in younger people being identified with only 1.1% of Marac referrals nationally being for 16-17 year olds (SafeLives, 2019). In the year ending March 2020, the data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) shows that women aged 16 to 19 years were significantly more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse in the last year than women aged 25 years and over. For men, there were few significant differences by age.

Based on the population of young people in South Gloucestershire we estimate that **2,850 young people between 16-24³** will experience domestic abuse every year. Of those around one fifth (n=550, 19%) will be 16–17-year-olds.

Young victims of domestic abuse (ONS and CSEW, 2020)

Sex	Number of young people (16-17)	Estimated number experiencing domestic abuse	Number of Marac cases (16-17 year old)	Number of young people (18-24)	Estimated number experiencing domestic abuse	Total number 16-24 experiencing domestic abuse
Female	2,857	400	0	13,102	1,570	1,970
Male	2,904	150		14,422	730	880

The new Domestic Abuse Act (2021) continues to define domestic abuse victims as individuals over the age of 16, however it has also recognised children as direct victims in their own right so understanding how many children and young people there are across the area is important. Although the definitions do not, it is vital that local commissioners consider how young people under the statutory definition age of 16 might experience abuse and harmful behaviours within their dating relationships.

A study of 13- to 17-year-olds by NSPCC suggests this abuse can begin even earlier in adolescence for large numbers of young people. A quarter (25%) of girls and 18% of boys in the study reported having experienced some form of physical violence from an intimate partner. SafeLives 'Safe Young Lives' (2019) report⁴ highlighted some of the challenges younger people experience in having their needs met. SafeLives Children's Insights data found that nearly all (95%) of young people experiencing intimate partner violence were female.

There has been research by a number of organisations into the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of younger people and how perceptions of healthy relationships could provide an insight into prevalence amongst young people under the age of 16;

- A survey of 13- to 17-year-olds found that a quarter (25%) of girls and 18% of boys reported having experienced some form of physical violence from an intimate partner⁵.
- 49% of boys and 33% of girls aged 13 – 14 thought that hitting a partner would be 'okay' in at least one of twelve scenarios they were presented with.

Older people

In terms of older victims of domestic abuse, data has previously been limited due to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) only collecting data from 16–59-year-olds. From April 2017, the upper age limit for the self-completion module was increased to ask all respondents aged 16 to 74.

In total there are 68,763 people over the age of 60 in South Gloucestershire which makes up 24% of the total population⁶. This is slightly higher than the national average in which around 22% of the population in England and Wales who are aged 60 or over.

Based on the age of the population in North Somerset we estimate around **2,650 individuals over the age of 60 will experience domestic abuse** every year⁷.

Table 3.2.1.1c: older victims of domestic abuse (ONS and CSEW, 2020)

	Number of older people (60-74)	Estimated number experiencing abuse in last year	Number of older people (Over 75)	Estimated number experiencing abuse in last year	Total older people experience abuse in last year
Female	25,477	1,120	18,055	790	1,910
Male	24,290	460	14,979	280	740

In terms of prevalence the CSEW data shows those aged 55 to 74 years were less likely to be victims of domestic abuse in the year ending March 2020 than those in most other age groups. However, the CSEW previously did not capture data on victims of domestic abuse aged over 74, and older victims of domestic abuse are 'hugely underrepresented' in domestic abuse services. This is reflected in the results of the 2019 Women's Aid Annual Survey, which found that only around 3.4% of their service users were over the age of 60. However, 'older victims experience abuse for twice as long before seeking help than those aged under 61' and are much more likely to continue living with the perpetrator even after getting support (SafeLives, 2020). We also know from Domestic Homicide data that a larger proportion of domestic homicide victims were aged 65 years and over (18%) compared with non-domestic homicide victims (7%). In terms of the nature of abuse experienced research carried out by SafeLives shows that 'victims aged over 61 years are much more likely to experience abuse from an adult family member or current intimate partner than those 60 and under' (SafeLives, 2020). This could have an impact therefore on the safe accommodation needs, particularly where family members or partners have a caring role.

Sex

Based on the population split of men and women in South Gloucestershire, **we estimate that there are 9,060 female, and 4,350 male victims of domestic abuse each year⁸.**

Overview of sex of estimated victims

16–74-year-olds				75+		
	Population number	Domestic abuse prevalence rate (ONS, 2020)	Estimated number of victims	Population number	Domestic abuse prevalence rate (SafeLives Insights, 2020)	Estimated number of victims
Female	113,078	7.3%	8,270	18,055	4.4%	790
Male	112,894	3.6%	4,070	14,979	1.9%	280
Total	225,972	-	12,340	33,034	-	1,070

Domestic abuse is part of the Government’s violence against women and girls agenda as a crime that disproportionately affects women and girls. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recognises the high prevalence of domestic abuse for women finding almost one third (27%) of women aged 15-49 years who have been in a relationship report that they have been subjected to some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner. This section will explore;

- The higher prevalence of domestic abuse for women and girls
- The impact of disproportionality on men and boys

In the UK data supplied from 28 police forces for the year ending March 2020 showed the victim was female in just under three-quarters (74%) of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police. This proportion was similar for most offence categories, though for domestic abuse-related sexual offences, the proportion of victims that were female was even higher, at 94%. From data on callers to the national domestic abuse helpline in the year ending March 2020, 93% identified as female.

Between the year ending March 2017 and the year ending March 2019, 77% of victims of domestic homicide were female. This compares with 13% of victims in non-domestic homicides. Two women a week are killed by a current or former partner, and it is estimated that around three women a week commit suicide due to domestic abuse (Walby, 2004), although new research suggests this could be higher. We can therefore understand that women are not only more likely to experience domestic abuse than men, but that the severity of abuse including physical violence and homicide is also increased.

Although women are more likely to experience abuse, a considerable number of men will also experience domestic abuse and their needs must also be understood. Mankind (2021) discussed the complexity of this as a cohort that are;

- invisible;
- often unaware of existing support;
- not being referred/signposted to appropriate support, and,
- limited or no services for them already in place including accommodation services

From their estimates around 300 men across the UK may be rough sleepers due to domestic abuse. Men are less likely to access services with men making up only 4.4% of victims of domestic abuse being supported by local domestic services. 61% of the men who call the Mankind Initiative helpline have never spoken to anyone about the abuse they are suffering and 64% would not have called if the helpline was not anonymous.

Sexual orientation

The UK Government estimates that 5-7% of the population are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning. Taking the higher estimate of 7% we can estimate that there are around 18,130 individuals in South Gloucestershire that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning.

Although we are unable to include within our prevalence transgender estimates due to the lack of data nationally, we can estimate the prevalence of abuse within lesbian, gay and bisexual communities using a combination of CSEW and SafeLives Insights data. Based on this we estimate in South Gloucestershire that there will be around 1,660 victims of domestic abuse within the LGB+ community every year.

Estimated prevalence within LGB+ community⁹

	Estimated number of LGB+ (16+)	Estimated number experience domestic abuse in the last year (based on CSEW LGBT prevalence rate)
Female	9,180	1,120
Male	8,950	540
Total	18,130	1,660

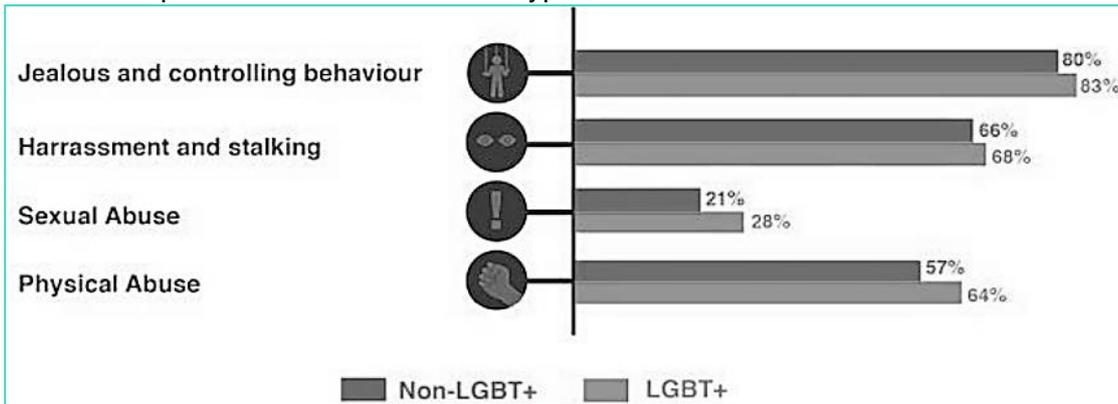
It is notable that as this estimate does not include transgender people as the crime survey sample size is too small, the true figure is likely to be higher.

SafeLives (2018) report 'Free to be safe: LGBT+ people experiencing domestic abuse' found a number of notable findings in relation to victims and survivors identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning such as;

- LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse are almost twice as likely to have attempted suicide
- LGBT+ victims are more than twice as likely to have self-harmed
- LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse are more likely to be abused by multiple perpetrators (15% compared to 9% of non-LGBT+ victims)

They also found some differences in the prevalence rates of the types of abuse that LGBT+ people experience.

Comparative overview of abuse types of LGBT+/non individuals

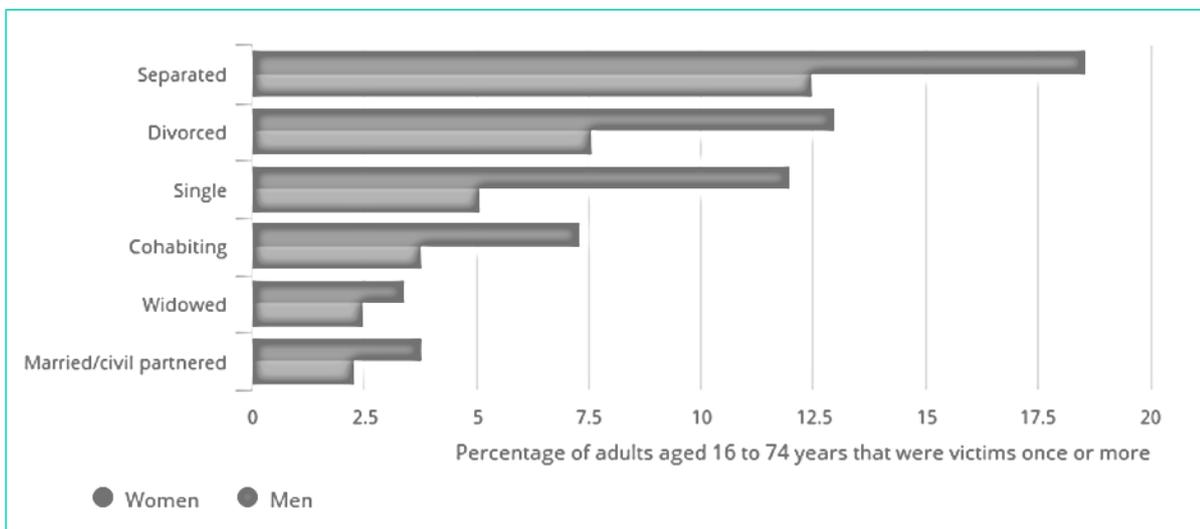


The ONS (2018) reported that bisexual women are nearly twice as likely (10.9%) as heterosexual women (6%) to report partner abuse. Lesbian women are also more likely than heterosexual women to report partner abuse (8% to 6%).

Marriage and civil partnership

Crime data for the year ending March 2020 showed that adults who were separated or divorced were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse compared than those who were married or civil partnered, cohabiting, single or widowed. However, it is important to note that those who have separated from an abusive partner are more likely to disclose abuse or report a related crime than those still in a relationship. Domestic abuse is also known to escalate at the point of separation, increasing the likelihood that someone will report it.

CSEW prevalence of domestic abuse in the year ending March 2020 for adults aged 16 to 74 years, by marital status and sex



Looking at more broad data relating to relationship status, of the male victims who called the national domestic abuse helpline, 95% reported that the perpetrator was a female partner or ex-partner (Office for National Statistics, 2020). Data from the homicide index between the year ending March 2017 and the year ending March 2019 shows that, of the 274 female domestic homicide victims in that period, the suspect was a partner or ex-partner in 222 (or 81%) of cases. Of the 83 male domestic homicide victims, the suspect was a partner or ex-partner in 38 (or 46%) of cases.

Pregnancy and maternity

In 2019 there were 3,729 conceptions in South Gloucestershire (ONS, 2021¹⁰). If we use the national prevalence rate of domestic abuse amongst women (7.3%) we can **estimate at least 272 pregnant women might experience domestic abuse each year**.

It is known that domestic abuse can escalate in pregnancy, putting both the victim and their unborn child at significant risk. In fact, domestic abuse has overtaken gestational diabetes and pre-eclampsia as the leading cause of foetal death¹¹. Around 30% of domestic abuse begins during pregnancy, while 40–60% of women experiencing domestic abuse are abused during pregnancy¹². Data from the charity Refuge reported that 20% of women in their safe accommodation provisions were either pregnant or had recently given birth (Refuge, 2018).

NHS maternity services provide care and support to women before giving birth (antenatal care), during the birth and in the six-to-eight-week period after the birth (postnatal care). The Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a survey in January 2020 of women that had received maternity services which 17,151 women (37%) responded. Midwives can often be the first port of call for victims experiencing domestic abuse so the survey finding that 83% of women always felt ‘listened to’ by their midwife was positive.

Race

The total non-white population in South Gloucestershire is 24,405 which is around 8.5% of the total population. Using this figure alongside the estimated prevalence of domestic abuse we can estimate that around **840 victims of domestic abuse in South Gloucestershire will be from a BAME community**¹³.

Overview of the population based on ethnicity (ONS, 2019)

	Total population	White/White British	Other White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Other	Total BAME
Avon and Somerset region	1,719,029	1,524,043	61,499	39,217	48,608	37,971	7,692	194,986
South Gloucestershire	285,093	260,688	7,666	5,235	7,800	2,597	1,107	24,405
Regional comparisons								
Bath and North East Somerset	193,282	174,748	7270	4,169	4,772	1,404	919	18534
Bristol City	463,377	354451	22893	21688	27615	32154	4575	108926
North Somerset	215,052	201844	6406	2666	2938	721	477	13208
Somerset County Council	562,225	532,312	17,264	5,459	5,482	1,095	613	29,913

Source: Population denominators by broad ethnic group and for White British, local authorities in England and Wales: 2011 to 2019

These are estimates for local authority denominators for England and Wales for 2011 to 2019; using the standard five way ethnicity classification with an additional split for White British, and including single year of age and sex. These estimates are consistent with the mid-year population estimates released March 2018.

These denominators are neither National Statistics nor standard published experimental statistics and have not been produced using methods which have undergone formal Quality Assurance. They have been produced specifically for use as part of the Race Disparity Audit, following discussion with the Race Disparity Unit of their specific requirements and time-frame.

For the year ending March 2020, the CSEW showed that those in the Mixed ethnic group were significantly more likely to experience domestic abuse within the last year than those in the Black or Asian ethnic groups. In the White ethnic group, women were significantly more likely than men to have experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2020 (7.7% of women, compared with 3.6% of men).

For partner abuse, those in the White and Mixed ethnic groups were significantly more likely to be victims than those in the Asian ethnic group. For family abuse, those in the White and Mixed ethnic groups were significantly more likely to be victims than those in the Black ethnic group. Of callers to the national domestic abuse helpline in the same year, 66% of callers were white (Office for National Statistics, 2020).

However, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women are overrepresented in refuge spaces, with BAME women occupying 6 in 10 spaces despite occupying only 13% of the general population (Lovatt, et al., 2020). Likewise, of cases discussed at Marac in the year ending 2020, 16% in Avon and Somerset involved a BAME victim.

Data from SafeLives shows that BAME clients suffer abuse for 1.5 times longer before seeking help than those from a white British or Irish background (SafeLives, 2020). Research has also shown that some BAME individuals are apprehensive about disclosing abuse due to 'specific issues related to racism including stereotypes about refugees and migrants' (SafeLives, 2015). A further barrier to leaving domestic abuse faced by BAME communities is immigration status, with research showing that one in five BAME women have no recourse to public funds. In many cases, victims' immigration status is used against them by their perpetrator (Imkaan, 2020).

SECTION 3 - IDENTIFICATION OF DISPARITIES, IMPACTS AND ISSUES

The research information above shows clear disparities. The Public Consultation from October 2021-January 2022 identified the following information.

100% of respondents agreed that the scope and objectives of the strategy met the support needs of victims of domestic violence and abuse in South Gloucestershire. The vast majority agreed that the strategic objectives were adequately detailed in the strategy.

Regarding the existing provision of services, the following information was of note:

No respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the current safe accommodation provision, 75% indicating a neutral response and 17% being unsure.

17% of respondents were satisfied with the current provision of domestic abuse support services, the majority being neutral or unsure. Barriers to accessing services for victims with learning disabilities was highlighted.

50% of respondents were satisfied with the proposals for improving the way we work, again highlighting the need for improving the accessibility of services for those with additional needs.

Respondents highlighted the need for more funding and resources for domestic abuse communications, prevention and services.

SECTION 4 - ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

The research information above shows clear disparities. As identified below we have begun work on the first year of the Domestic Abuse Communications plan and we are in the process of recommissioning the domestic abuse safe accommodation and specialist support services. The communications plan is aiming to raise awareness of domestic abuse and links to services targeting those underrepresented groups identified in the needs assessment through a range of campaigns and media.

We are launching a public consultation into our Commissioning Intentions on 26th August 2022 which will be open for 8 weeks. This will be combined with in person and online consultation events with providers stakeholders and the community. Once we have collated and evaluated the feedback we will use this to inform the service specifications for the recommissioning of services.

SECTION 5 - EqIAA OUTCOME

Complete the following table. (NB. there will be very few instances where 'Outcome 1' can be selected).

Outcome	Response	Reason(s) and Justification
Outcome 1: No major change required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Outcome 2: Adjustments to remove barriers or to better promote equality have been identified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Needs Assessment identifies groups of people who may have been the victims of domestic abuse who are underrepresented in our specialist domestic abuse services. These include but are not limited to: younger victims, older victims, LGBTQ+ victims and victims with disabilities. Service user consultation is being carried out prior to work to address these barriers through a Communications plan, a Domestic Abuse Action Plan and the recommissioning of specialist services in 2022/23
Outcome 3: Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Outcome 4: Stop and rethink.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

SECTION 6 - SOURCES OF EVIDENCE INFORMING THIS EqIAA

¹ Office for national statistics mid-year estimates (2020)

²Census (2011)

³ This is based on the number of young people in the population from the ONS (2020) mid-year estimates and the prevalence amongst young people in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (2020).

⁴ SafeLives (2017) Safe Young Lives: Young people and domestic abuse.

⁵ Barter, C, McCarry, M, Berridge, D and Evans K (2009) Partner exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships, NSPCC

⁶ ONS (2020) mid-year estimates

⁷ This is based on the number of young people in the population from the ONS (2020) mid year estimates and the prevalence amongst older people in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (2020) for over 75 we have used SafeLives estimates based on Insights data (2020).

⁸ This is based on the number of young people in the population from the ONS (2020) mid year estimates and the prevalence across gender the Crime Survey for England and Wales (2020).

⁹ This is based on the number of young people in the population from the ONS (2020) mid year estimates and the prevalence amongst people in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (2020).

¹⁰ [Conceptions in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹¹ Friend. J (1998), 'Responding to violence against women: a specialist's role', Editorial, Hospital Medicine, September, Vol 59, No. 9, pp 98-99.

¹² A Cry for Health: Why we must invest in domestic abuse services in hospitals (2016)

¹³ CSEW (2020)

South Gloucestershire Council Documents

- Domestic Violence and Abuse Needs Assessment 2021.
- Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy 2022-24
- Public Consultation responses – October 2021 – January 2022
- Commissioning Intentions document July 2022