

## The London Domestic Violence Strategy



November 2001

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**Greater London Authority  
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*Throughout this document the quotations are from survivors talking about their experiences of domestic violence*



## foreword by Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London

I am delighted to publish this strategy to address the issue of domestic violence. I made it clear during the election that the Greater London Authority must address the safety of women in London. The launch of this strategy today is an important step towards meeting that commitment. Our homes should be places of safety and comfort. Tragically, domestic violence can and does turn many homes into places of torment. Domestic violence spills over into schools and places of work; and it affects people from every walk of life. Though abuse may occur in the seclusion of a private residence, its effects scar the face of our city.

Crime, especially violent crime, is a key issue of concern to Londoners. But this is not just about unsafe streets; women are more likely to be the victim of a violent assault in their own homes, at the hands of a current or former male partner.

Domestic violence accounts for over a quarter of all violent crime reported to the police and results in around 30 murders each year in London alone. Over 100,000 women in London seek medical help each year. Seventeen per cent of homelessness applications are as a result of domestic violence. It has been estimated that the costs of dealing with this issue are at least £278m per annum in London.

To address this problem effectively, it will be vital that all agencies both statutory and voluntary work together. An unprecedented coalition of agencies was formed to assist us in this task and we have a unique opportunity to implement this document that will really make a difference to the lives of abused women and children.

For too long this issue has been viewed as a private matter which women themselves must cope with. It is not; it is a crime. The publication of this strategy represents a radical change in this attitude. It is the responsibility of the state and the wider community to hold violent and abusive men accountable and to provide effective protection for abused women and children. I call on all London's agencies and communities to commit to preventing domestic violence and to assist those who suffer from it. These collective efforts will, I hope, contribute to peace in our homes, schools, places of work, and communities and will help ensure the future safety of countless women and children.





## foreword by Councillor Sir Robin Wales, Chair of ALG

Crime is one of the biggest issues facing Londoners today and with domestic violence now accounting for a quarter of all violent crime in the capital, combating it is one of the top priorities for London boroughs and the Association of London Government (ALG).

The ALG is committed to working with all of its member authorities and other relevant statutory agencies to reduce the number of domestic crimes and to help the victims of such violence.

Over the last ten years London boroughs have been at the cutting edge of service provision, responding to domestic violence in the capital by developing many innovative and effective responses to it. For example, London Borough of Croydon worked with other agencies to establish a One Stop Shop which provides an integrated service to survivors of domestic violence. Boroughs have also funded voluntary organisations to develop a range of innovative responses on their behalf.

But this is just the beginning. Local authorities and the agencies they work with cannot afford to be complacent, there is still much to be done.

The ALG (representing London local authorities) is delighted to join with the Mayor to develop this London wide strategy to combat this very serious crime.

We will work together to develop effective responses so that the victims of these crimes feel safe to come forward and seek help. We will ensure that they no longer have to suffer in silence and that the perpetrators are held accountable for their crimes.





**Professor Liz Kelly, speaking at the Metropolitan Police Service 'Enough Is Enough' conference, October 2000:**

I want to begin with a story, a story some of you will recognise. It begins with a child who migrates from the UK to Canada with her mother and siblings. In Canada her household is dominated by the violent rages of her step-father and her mother's descent into alcohol and despair. The family spent short periods of time in a number of shelters/refuges but none seemed able to deal with the damage the family had already sustained and they always returned home. As she grew older, but was still a child, she began running away from home, to gain respite from the atmosphere of fear and chaos. She said:

*I was just looking for something better, I couldn't cope. I had nowhere to run to, nowhere to go, and there were men just stopping, picking me up... At first it was ok 'I'll look after you, I'll take care of you', but all they wanted was sex... There was always a side of me which was hoping this one would be different. At first I never asked for money or anything, I was just happy to have a roof over my head, to be fed, or whatever you know. Later on when I was about 14 it turned into proper for cash prostitution.*

The response of state child protection agencies was to view our young woman as 'out of control' and take her into care; and she had 11 placements in 18 months. She continued to run away and continued to be sexually exploited. Like many who become entrapped in the sex industry, drugs - legal and illegal - became her survival tool and refuge. No one managed to reach this troubled young woman, and many of the professionals she encountered were all too happy to label her - as a 'juvenile prostitute', as a 'juvenile delinquent', as an 'impossible child'.

She was aware that her life was a mess, and dangerous, and decided that her only chance was to return 'home' to the UK and find her remaining family. However, the negative effects of her life experiences and her 'need' for alcohol and drugs prompted a return to prostitution. She met a punter - an older man - who convinced her that he loved her, wanted to look after her. She moved in with him, and continued working in prostitution, but now she had to earn enough to maintain not just herself, but also him - he became her pimp. That this was not an equitable relationship is clear in the accounts she gave of his use of violence and threats on the occasions when she did not want to work. Some months after the relationship began, our young woman is gang raped. She bravely reports this to the police.

In the months that followed, the cumulative abuse she has sustained and survived - and she is 16 at this point - begin to overwhelm her. Rather than supporting her, the man she is involved with insists she continues to work, and takes sex with her whenever he wants it. She is close to suicide and her levels of self-harm have become more dangerous. One evening, she uses the knife that she had used previously to cut her wrists to defend herself from what she perceived as an attempted rape by her 'partner'. She is convicted of murder at 17, and spends the next ten years in prison, where she becomes addicted to the legal drugs - which were prescribed from the first night to dampen her distress - that will eventually kill her.

This summary encapsulates some of the life of Emma Humphreys, who died three years ago. She died having fought and won an historic appeal which changed case law in England and Wales for women who kill the men who have abused them. Her story exemplifies the kinds of connections which we need to be making, and her death illustrates the extreme price some women and children pay when we fail.

## executive summary

This strategy sets out a vision for effectively addressing the issue of domestic violence and details the specific steps that will be taken to achieve this.

The strategy was developed because:

- crime was identified as a key issue for Londoners
- domestic violence is the crime of violence women are most likely to experience
- effective co-ordination of services in London is needed to provide more effective and economic interventions
- Mayoral manifesto commitment.

The strategy contains a number of recommendations for key stakeholders as well as other relevant organisations. The aim is to create consistent quality responses across London and for agencies to work together in collaboration to address domestic violence more effectively.

Work is focused on achieving four key aims:

- Increasing safe choices for women and children experiencing domestic violence so that they might plan safer futures without compromising their quality of life.
- Holding individual abusers accountable for their behaviour in such a way that not only acts as a future deterrent for them, but also as a deterrent to potential abusers.
- Actions which undermine social tolerance / approval of domestic violence or actions which challenge inaction by either individuals or organisations. This includes exposing the many stereotypes and myths so that assessments are accurate.
- Providing children and young people with the necessary knowledge and skills required to build relationships based on respect and mutual understanding, with shared power and a commitment to non-violence.

The Mayor has allocated funding in his budget for the monitoring, development and implementation of these proposals and to facilitate the development of the proposals for other statutory and voluntary bodies.

The Mayor will provide leadership for London in reducing and preventing domestic violence and will encourage other statutory, private and voluntary organisations to contribute to realising the vision set out in this strategy.

The Mayor will establish a London wide Domestic Violence Forum to encourage joint planning of cross-service provision. Through this group, the Mayor will encourage all agencies to adopt minimum standards and will establish an annual awards scheme for recognising progress by individual agencies, innovative projects and effective use of resources.

Some of the changes needed to effectively address the issue of domestic violence are beyond the jurisdiction of the Mayor. Nevertheless, he will lobby for changes at a national level to ensure the effectiveness of the local and regional proposals is maximised.

### **What the Mayor and Association of London Government (ALG)<sup>1</sup> will do**

The Mayor and ALG will work with all London's Domestic Violence Fora to establish minimum standards for Domestic Violence Fora including definitions; membership<sup>2</sup>; roles and responsibilities (including domestic violence murder reviews); good practice; training; consultation with survivors and specialist services; relationship to other inter-agency structures, policies and priorities; information sharing protocols and a range of performance indicators.

The Mayor and ALG will work closely with the relevant functional bodies, local authorities and other key agencies to ensure that issues of safety are prioritised in service provision, gaps are identified and addressed, and standards are raised.

The Mayor and ALG will work towards implementing the recommendations contained within this strategy, protocols, minimum standards and effective inter agency referrals with the relevant functional bodies and other key agencies.

The Mayor and ALG will work with both the public and private sector to develop further publicity and information campaigns. Any initiative will take full account of linguistic, cultural and disability issues.

The Mayor and ALG will run a London-wide domestic violence poster competition for children which could act as a catalyst to encourage school involvement whilst also raising awareness amongst the general public. The winning poster will form part of the Mayor's manifesto commitment to devise an information campaign on domestic violence.

The Mayor and ALG will continue their joint lobbying work on behalf of London to ensure that adequate resources are available for addressing domestic violence in the capital.

# 1 introduction

- 1.1 This strategy sets out a vision for how domestic violence should be addressed in London and details how this can be achieved. It draws and builds on the work already developed by Domestic Violence Fora and other individual agencies in London. Although it is an agenda for one specific type of violence experienced by women, it makes connections with other forms of abuse of women which will be developed subsequently.
- 1.2 The proposals contained within this document are not intended to rival or replace existing projects or initiatives which provide an effective service.
- 1.3 Rather they are intended to complement and strengthen some of the excellent work which is already taking place. Our aim is to ensure that such service provision is available throughout the entire capital and that a more strategic and co-ordinated approach is developed.
- 1.4 It meets the commitment made by the Mayor in his manifesto that he would ‘work with the Commissioner to devise and implement a new strategy and information campaign to combat domestic violence’.
- 1.5 In *The State of London* report this commitment was restated in the community safety section where the following recommendation was made:

*Commission and publish an annual audit of the work and track record of London's Crime and Disorder Partnerships and Crime Reduction Programme schemes with a particular focus on how they involve Londoners in their work.*

- 1.6 In the MORI poll commissioned to ascertain the views of Londoners on the Mayoral priorities, the following was revealed:

*When asked to think about the downsides to life in the city, residents spontaneously mention four of the worst aspects – safety and crime (mentioned by a third), poor transport (27 per cent), the unaffordable cost of living (26 per cent) and traffic congestion (19 per cent).*

- 1.7 When asked what the Mayor's top priorities to improve life in London should be, respondents reiterate the points that have emerged so far – public transport and cheaper fares (52 per cent), and personal safety and crime rates (27 per cent). These are seen as the key priorities for the Mayor by all Londoners, irrespective of age or class.

### The financial costs

- 1.8 Over a five year period in the USA, domestic violence fell by 21 per cent.<sup>3</sup> The reduction was not even; it was the most serious (including homicide) which fell the most sharply.
- 1.9 In Greater London, there is an average of one domestic violence murder every 11 days with the Metropolitan Police attending around 177 incidents every 24 hours. Whilst the current cost of this cannot be calculated, in 1996, each incident cost about £61.00.<sup>4</sup>
- 1.10 In London, at least £278m per annum of public money is spent on responding to domestic violence.<sup>5</sup> This figure does not include some expensive items such as hospitalisation costs, the costs of murder trials and many others. The true cost to the public purse is likely to be considerably higher but poor data collection from a range of agencies means we are unable to definitively prove this.
- 1.11 The equations below, therefore, are based solely on the potential for direct, provable and financial savings to the public purse. The actual financial savings may be higher; there are also financial savings for individual women and children experiencing domestic violence and, of course, the most valuable savings of all, are priceless.
- 1.12 If the number of incidents of domestic violence in London were reduced by half that in the USA, a saving of at least £27.8m per annum would be made, even assuming a uniform reduction (unlike the USA where the most dangerous, and hence expensive, violence was most reduced).
- 1.13 Much of the money we currently spend does not, on the whole, make women and children safer, nor does it hold abusive men accountable or reduce social tolerance either amongst the general public or amongst children and young people. It should be noted that the services which do the most to increase individual safety are also the most likely to be inadequately and insecurely funded.

*I don't think people realise what its been like. I've given up everything I've ever worked for and I'm starting completely from scratch. I'm like a refugee escaping from a war.*

### Current position

- 1.14 Efforts to improve domestic violence service provision have been on-going for some time. It is notable that there are common obstacles that impede progress on this issue. Two key ones are:
- A failure to distinguish between process and outcome. For example, establishing and maintaining a Domestic Violence Forum is a process by which services may be improved and better co-ordinated. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself.

- A failure to pay sufficient attention to the style of working. Those engaged in trying to reduce and finally eliminate domestic violence must find ways of doing so that are respectful and non-abusive. Dialogue, negotiation, honesty and a fostering of trust between agencies engaged in this work are all essential if we are to create a dynamic of change that does not result in mere replication of abusers' behaviour.

*Why should we leave our homes? Why should our children be taken from their schools, family and friends? I will keep saying this my children and I are not criminals... but HE IS.*

- 1.15 Domestic violence is an issue which is 'everywhere and nowhere'. Many agencies have a part to play in providing effective interventions and promoting safety but no single agency can do it alone. It is unfortunate that most agencies, often mistakenly, believe domestic violence to be a very small area of their overall work.<sup>6</sup> In reality, many agencies spend an enormous amount of their resources on domestic violence but because this is not separately monitored, they remain unaware of how substantial their domestic violence work actually is.
- 1.16 For example, most Social Services Departments do not have a specific domestic violence policy or practice guidance yet domestic violence is a feature in the lives of over half of the children on the 'at-risk' register.<sup>7</sup> It is also a feature in the lives of many vulnerable adults who are clients of Social Services.
- 1.17 As a consequence of services being spread across a number of different agencies, there is a need for careful co-operation and inter-agency working to ensure that a holistic 'package' is provided. Whilst such a style of working is frequently problematic, no single agency can provide all the services required. It is therefore important that each agency fulfils its unique role and that all agencies are enabled to do so.
- 1.18 For example, whilst the support function offered by the police to women experiencing domestic violence has vastly improved over the past decade, this is not their primary function. It should not, therefore, be done at the expense of robust enforcement of the criminal law. Only the police are able to both effect arrests and conduct criminal investigations and available resources should be deployed towards this end.
- 1.19 Refuges, originally established to provide crisis intervention support, are now more often providing short to medium term temporary housing. Ways to either increase provision, or reduce demand by creating alternatives, must be found so that refuges are enabled to fulfil their intended function.



## 2 context of the strategy

- 2.1 This strategy is complementary to the existing policy developments at EU level<sup>8</sup> and will also contribute towards the fulfilment of the UK's international obligations as signatories to the 1993 UN Declaration on the elimination of violence against women.
- 2.2 The United Nations (UN) has also addressed violence against women by recognising gender violence as a fundamental violation of women's human rights. At the UN 4th World Conference on Women in 1995, governments were called upon to take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.<sup>9</sup>
- 2.3 The World Health Organisation has also recognised violence against women and girls as a major health and human rights issue. It states: *At least one in five of the world's female population has been physically or sexually abused by a man or men at some time in their life. Many, including pregnant women and young girls, are subject to severe, sustained or repeated attacks... The most common form of violence against women is domestic violence, or violence against women in families.*<sup>10</sup>
- 2.4 The World Bank has also recognised the extent of violence against women and states: *[it] is as serious a cause of death and incapacity among women of reproductive age as cancer, and a greater cause of ill-health than traffic accidents and malaria combined.*<sup>11</sup>
- 2.5 In the UK, the Home Office has been identified as the lead government agency on violence against women. A major review of current knowledge and services on domestic violence has been commissioned which has informed a small funding programme for a range of 'violence against women' demonstration projects within the Home Office Crime Reduction Programme. The majority of these projects address domestic violence although several on rape are included, and all will be evaluated. Other government departments have also commissioned research, produced circulars and made policy recommendations (eg see Department of Health, 1995, 1997, and 2000). Further, the government Women's Unit of the Cabinet Office<sup>12</sup> and the Home Office produced a national agenda, *Living Without Fear: an integrated approach to tackling violence against women* (Cabinet Office 1999). This publication was promised in 1998 as a national government strategy and comprehensive plan of action but focused primarily on good practice and has not yet been fully implemented.
- 2.6 Nonetheless, *Living Without Fear* constitutes an unprecedented advance in the UK outlining a national approach to the issue for the first time, and an attempt at strategic policy formulation on violence against women by central government.

2.7 At the same time as this important national and international policy work was being developed, countless feminist campaigning groups and the women's voluntary sector throughout the UK (and elsewhere) were responding to violence against women and children providing refuges, crisis lines, survivors' groups and other creative projects. The women's voluntary sector should be regarded by governments and professionals as possessing the strongest knowledge and practice bases in these areas. It is the tireless work of such organisations – both in terms of practical assistance and campaigning – which has placed domestic violence so firmly on the public policy agenda and to which thousands of women and children owe their lives.<sup>13</sup>

2.8 It cannot be denied that there have been many changes in how domestic violence is perceived and subsequently addressed over the past decade. A wealth of research has been conducted, government departments have begun the process of integrating the issue into their work and new projects and initiatives have been created. We will build upon and engage with all such initiatives.

*I was five months pregnant and due to his beatings and kicking, I finally lost the baby when I was rushed to emergency at the hospital.*

2.9 And yet. Despite the changes in case law relating to child contact, women are still being threatened with prison if they refuse to comply with orders that do not protect their children from known abusers. Despite the Government's concession on the 'One Year Rule', women with 'no recourse to public funds' are still unable to access refuge provision. There has been an introduction of a positive arrest policy by the police, but arrest rates even when a crime has been committed remain extremely low. Perpetrator programmes for violent men are being developed but many are established without partner support services which are still perceived not as an essential component but as an optional extra. The overwhelming evidence that domestic violence is largely committed by men towards women has not prevented agencies developing studiously gender blind policies and practices. Although recognition of the devastating effects that domestic violence can have on children, many refuge projects<sup>14</sup> remain without specific children's workers and the availability of other children's services remains poor. Overall services remain inconsistent and poorly co-ordinated.

2.10 It is not enough for agencies to increase reporting or identification without also developing or increasing service provision. When this is done, it is inevitably the already over-burdened women's voluntary sector that ends up dealing with an increased workload.

### The vision

- 2.11 This document sets out a vision for how domestic violence should be addressed in London and details how this can be achieved.
- 2.12 For women who experience domestic violence, there should be:
- co-ordinated services which prioritise her and her children's safety
  - a range of services, sufficiently flexible to meet her individual needs yet standardised enough for her to be able to safely rely upon them
  - less public silence about the abuse they are experiencing
  - an approach that encourages empowerment and self-determination
  - clear messages that society will not tolerate violence against women.
- 2.13 For children who live in violent homes there should be:
- help, support and advocacy to ensure that they are not left to deal with their experiences alone
  - information that the violence they have experienced is wrong, legally and morally
  - opportunities to share their experiences with other children so as to reduce their isolation.
- 2.14 For offenders who perpetrate domestic violence there should be:
- interventions designed to hold them accountable for their behaviour
  - negative consequences sufficient to act as a deterrent.
- 2.15 For practitioners who provide services there should be:
- a central information bank which disseminates good practice
  - training and support for all relevant staff
  - standard definitions relating to domestic violence service provision allowing all agencies to work towards a common purpose
  - standard criteria against which services can be assessed and compared.
- 2.16 For agencies that resource domestic violence services there should be:
- an increase in value for money and a decrease in wasted resources
  - robust monitoring to track the effectiveness of this strategy
  - better data to ensure future services can be more effectively targeted.
- 2.17 The benefits for Londoners will be:
- a safer community
  - better information for family and friends of abused women who currently provide the bulk of support
  - a reduction in the severity and dangerousness of domestic violence
  - a reduction in repeat victimisation
  - an increase in service user satisfaction
  - a reduction in the long term negative consequences of domestic

*I think we blamed ourselves for the violence because he used to hit her [Mum] if he didn't have any money... but we were eating the money 'cause it was for food.*

*Too many children are harmed as a direct result of contact with a violent father. Once the damage is done it is too late to say 'oh, we made a mistake'!!!*

- violence for women and children who experience domestic violence
- an increase in understanding of domestic violence amongst the general public and a decrease in social acceptance
  - the upholding of human rights
  - in the longer term, a reduction in the cost to the public purse.

## 3 strategy framework

### Definitions

#### *Domestic violence*

- 3.1 The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women defines violence against women as ‘any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.’
- 3.2 The UK Government is a signatory to this declaration and in its own agenda on violence against women has recommended that Domestic Violence Fora become Violence Against Women Fora by 2002.
- 3.3 For the purposes of this document, which addresses one aspect of violence against women, domestic violence is defined as follows: ‘Domestic violence is essentially a pattern of behaviour which is characterised by the exercise of control and the misuse of power by one person, usually a man, over another, usually a woman, within the context of an intimate relationship. It can be manifested in a variety of ways, including but not restricted to, physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and the imposition of social isolation and is most commonly a combination of them all.’
- 3.4 Throughout this document, victims/survivors of domestic violence are referred to as female and perpetrators as male. This is to reflect the overwhelming majority of those who use existing services.
- 3.5 However, we wish to make it clear that:
  - Domestic violence also occurs in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships.
  - Heterosexual men are also abused by heterosexual females.
  - Public bodies must give proper consideration to all individual’s human rights and investigate any complaint accordingly.
  - Since, with the sole exception of refuge projects, very few domestic violence services are gender or sexuality specific, the proposals to improve service provision will, in the main, result in service improvements for both genders, all sexualities and all familial relationships.
  - Further evidence is needed to establish if there is a need for specific services for abused men and different sexualities that are not met

under current provision. Replication of refuges, the only gender specific service, may not be sufficient or appropriate. For example there is little evidence of a need to provide services to protect against post separation abuse for heterosexual men. Establishing refuges for men would thus be a wasteful use of resources that could be more appropriately targeted.

- The proposals contained within this strategy do not prevent individual agencies affected from operating to a more general definition for their own operational purposes. The strategy only requires data collection to be divisible to meet the definition contained herein.
- This strategy is compatible with national and international developments aimed at reducing violence against women as outlined in section 2.

*Do you agree that it is very patronising to have multi-agency forums which discuss us, and make decisions for us and about us, but which do not include us?*

- 3.6 This strategy also contains a number of proposals designed to address the specific needs of black and minority ethnic women, migrant women and asylum seeking women as part of the duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which creates a general duty on public authorities to promote racial equality.

*Best practice*<sup>15</sup>

- 3.7 A domestic violence project can be said to be achieving best practice when it fulfils the following criteria:
- it has been independently evaluated from the perspective of the survivor
  - it increases the safety of survivors and prioritises this in all aspects of its work
  - it works collaboratively with existing services
  - it sends a clear message that domestic violence is unacceptable and that abusers are accountable for their behaviour
  - it maximises choices for abused women and children within its resources
  - it makes the most economic, efficient and effective use of its resources
  - if duplicating or adapting a model from elsewhere, it is implemented in such a way as to not compromise safety
  - it makes a concerted effort to meet the needs of all women experiencing domestic violence including disabled women, women with mental health problems, women with no recourse to public funds, migrant women, especially those subject to immigration regulations, women whose first language is not English, young women, older women, lesbians, bisexual women, women with substance abuse problems, older women and women with three or more children.

- 3.8 Sadly most provision in London does not currently meet the above criteria. The aim of the Mayor and the ALG will be, through negotiation and leadership, to raise standards of service provision rather than to reduce the criteria.

#### *Respectful support*

- 3.9 Many women who experience domestic violence find themselves being judged and told what to do not only by their abusers, but also by those attempting to help. Respectful support means helping women to reach their own decisions about what to do. It means:
- accepting that it is up to her to make decisions about her life, even if these are ones that you feel are ‘wrong’<sup>16</sup>
  - giving her the time and space she needs to do this
  - helping her to explore fears she has for her safety and ways in which the dangers might be reduced
  - providing accurate and realistic information so that she can make informed decisions
  - helping her explore the advantages and pitfalls of any choices available to her
  - still providing a professional service irrespective of the choices she makes.
- 3.10 A non-directive approach does not mean colluding with the abuse nor does it mean that concerns for the woman’s safety should not be expressed. Most abused women are focused on their immediate day-to-day survival and having someone who is clear about the danger she is in, without making her feel judged, can be very helpful.

*I can’t get the pain of it all out of my head.*

#### *Neutrality*

- 3.11 It is widely believed by many agencies that in dealing with domestic violence cases a professional attitude means conveying a position of ‘neutrality’. However, this position is rarely successfully communicated to either the abused woman or the abuser. The woman usually experiences it as collusion with the abuser, doubt of her account and a reinforcement of her abuser’s assertion that no-one will believe her. The abuser usually experiences some reassurance in his belief that what he has done may be justified in some way. Despite this, the illusion that a position of neutrality can be conveyed, remains widespread amongst agency staff. Clear and consistent messages about the unacceptability of domestic violence must take precedence.

*I was in tears most of the time I was in court, just being that close freaked me out even though I knew he couldn't do anything to me.*

#### *Inter-agency Domestic Violence Fora*

- 3.12 There are now over 200 Domestic Violence Fora in England and Wales, and 32 in London, one for each London borough. There is still not, however, a shared understanding of what key elements need to be in place

in order for this style of working to be most effective. Research<sup>17</sup> has shown that the criteria set out below are the elements of an effective Forum:

- active involvement of statutory agencies at both practitioner and policy making level with senior management support
- full participation of Women's Aid, independent refuge projects and advocacy services, with concrete strategies to actively promote their central involvement
- active participation of community, women's and grass roots organisations
- active involvement of the voluntary sector at practitioner and at management level
- consistent, committed and active attendance and membership, preferably with members delegated to attend by their agency as an agreed part of their work duties or job description
- stated commitment from member agencies, followed up by action, so that policy and practice changes can be taken up actively and implemented both within and between agencies.
- Adoption of guiding principles and the development of common agreements about domestic violence
- clear and well-developed aims and objectives, equal opportunities policies and other terms of reference
- a workable structure enabling clarity and lines of accountability but avoiding unnecessary layers of bureaucracy
- resources for activities, projects, co-ordination work and for servicing the Forum
- if possible, the employment of a co-ordinator or development worker with administrative support
- relating all activities to meet the needs, and increase the safety of, abused women and children and to decreasing the prevalence and severity of domestic violence
- the development of concrete initiatives and activities which are within the capabilities of the Forum
- the integration of equalities issues into the Forum's work
- the involvement of, and some form of informal accountability to, women survivors of domestic violence and their children
- evaluation and monitoring in relation to work done and its effectiveness.

3.13 Evaluation of domestic violence projects must have as their key criteria 'an increase in women and children's safety' and development proposals should demonstrably relate to this aim.

### Principles

- 3.14 Domestic violence is widespread throughout every socio-economic group. Most research suggests that domestic violence occurs in all sections of society irrespective of race, culture, nationality, religion, sexuality, disability, age, class or education level.<sup>18</sup>
- 3.15 Nevertheless, each abused woman has a set of unique circumstances which affect how she responds to the violence. Services need to be sufficiently flexible to take account of this whilst also being sufficiently standardised to provide a similar response to similar circumstances.
- 3.16 The most effective interventions are ones that support the woman and which increase her choices, building where appropriate, on positive coping strategies she has already developed.
- 3.17 It is the responsibility of the community and state institutions, not the abused woman, to reduce and eliminate domestic violence. Moreover, the focus of service providers should be what they can offer to increase safety, not, as all too frequently occurs, to merely assess what the woman is doing or not doing.
- 3.18 Interventions have the potential to be dangerous, even fatal, if due consideration is not given to safety. Safety must be the over-riding priority at all times.
- 3.19 Domestic violence is best understood as a pattern of behaviour designed to achieve power and control rather than as a single incident or even a series of incidents.
- 3.20 Domestic violence, as described above, is most commonly perpetrated by men towards women although it also happens in lesbian and gay relationships and in a minority of cases, by women to men.<sup>19</sup> There is a strong correlation between domestic violence and child abuse and domestic violence also frequently co-exists with animal abuse.

*I feel that solicitors just don't believe me about the domestic violence, not least because we are professionals and that they think I am in fact an undeserving ungrateful wife who should, to use my husband's words, be realistic.*

### Aims

- 3.21 In order to construct an effective intervention into domestic violence, we need to:
- deconstruct the current supports which exist to ensure its continuance
  - dismantle the current barriers which exist to discourage individuals and institutions from addressing the issue effectively.

*When the divorce was served on him, he said he didn't deny any of it and wouldn't be defending it. It had about his abuse, etc in it. When I asked him why he had felt he had to treat me that way he just replied... 'look if I had done it seven days a week maybe you could call me a wife beater but because it was only occasionally I don't consider myself a wife beater'.*

- 3.22 This leads us to four key areas<sup>20</sup> where useful work can be focused:
- Increasing safe choices for women and children experiencing domestic violence so that they might plan safer futures without compromising their quality of life.
  - Holding individual abusers accountable for their behaviour in such a way that not only acts as a future deterrent for them, but also as a deterrent to potential abusers.<sup>21</sup>
  - Actions which undermine social tolerance/approval of domestic violence or actions which challenge inaction by either individuals or organisations. This includes exposing the many stereotypes and myths so that assessments are accurate.
  - Providing children and young people with the necessary knowledge and skills required to build relationships based on respect and mutual understanding, with shared power and a commitment to non-violence.
- 3.23 In order to be effective, work must take place in all four areas as they each complement and strengthen one another.

### **Aim 1: Increasing safe choices**

#### *Summary*

*I tried to have him committed to prison as he had breached the order so many times, but the judge decided to give him a deferred penalty and let him go. This was after he had broken my arm, smashed up my car, broke the drivers door window showering glass all over our four year old daughter.*

- 3.24 Safety and protection of the abused woman and any children must be the over-riding priority at all times. There are two especially dangerous points; leaving the relationship (when most female victims of domestic homicide are killed) and during contact visits with any children (refuge residents report two thirds of women and one third of children are abused on contact visits).<sup>22</sup> Despite the increased dangers, few services exist to support women at these points.
- 3.25 Increasing choices must cover all possibilities, not just making it easier for an abused woman to re-locate.
- 3.26 Information on available options/services needs to be readily available.
- Further information*
- 3.27 Service provision must also integrate those elements that abused women and children find useful.<sup>23</sup> These include:

- Independent (ie voluntary sector based) advocates who can maintain an overview, negotiate with the various agencies and provide on-going support. Having a single person/agency from which women can seek

help means that women do not have to endure revealing the intimate details of their relationship to fifteen or more total strangers.

- Having their options carefully and realistically explained within the context of their specific circumstances. For obvious reasons, women prefer not to take a step into the unknown, especially when the consequences for themselves and their children may be so damaging and dangerous. Failure to provide a holistic approach means, for example, that women may know that they are entitled to housing but not how to pay for it. In such cases, the housing knowledge is rendered useless.
- Being taken seriously, being treated respectfully and being believed. Research<sup>24</sup> shows that women are as concerned with how a service is delivered as they are with what is delivered;
- Contact with other survivors. A key feature of abusive relationships is imposed social isolation. Contact with other survivors helps in reducing feelings of shame, self-blame and a sense of hopelessness. It can also act to strengthen the resolve to respond differently to the abuse.
- Being kept informed of any developments pertaining to her situation. There are some instances where this is especially important, such as when her abuser is released from a police station or if the abuser turns up at the children's school. However, on-going contact can also be reassuring at other points such as being informed of progress on the housing waiting list.
- Support to cope with the effects of domestic violence on their children. Outside of refuge provision, such services are in extremely short supply and, of those that do exist, most are one-to-one therapeutic services (eg Child Guidance). Research<sup>25</sup> shows that children, like their mothers, benefit greatly from contact with others in the same situation. Children's services need to be constructed in ways that assist the mother to provide protection for herself and her children rather than holding her accountable for 'failure to protect'. In this regard, much work still needs to be done to ensure closer co-operation between child protection services and domestic violence staff.<sup>26</sup>
- To be consulted about their experiences and have their views incorporated into service design. Many agencies and Domestic Violence Fora carry out no consultation with their service users even though domestic violence survivors are incredibly generous in this regard, trawling through their distressing and traumatic experiences to provide help for

*I didn't want to go to a refuge because I didn't want to live with lots of kids but I've just ended up being really lonely. I wish I'd gone to a refuge now.*

*Daily contact with someone for reassurance is essential in the early stages... anything more than a day can seem like a lifetime.*

other women. When consultation is done, the generosity of survivors is rarely reciprocated by either remuneration or even provision for them to cope with any negative feelings which may resurface as a consequence.<sup>27</sup>

- Timely and pro-active interventions. The evaluation of Domestic Violence Matters<sup>28</sup> showed that there was a window of opportunity of around four hours following an assault during which a supportive intervention could have more positive and far-reaching outcomes than if offered later. Moreover, pro-active intervention, such as routine screening at health appointments,<sup>29</sup> creates opportunities for women to seek help as well as identifying for women who do not want/need assistance at that specific point, who to go to should they want/need help in the future.<sup>30</sup>
- Most (but not all) women, prefer the State to take responsibility for intervening to hold their abuser accountable. This means that prosecutions should be constructed from the start with the understanding that few women will wish to give evidence in court.<sup>31</sup> Evaluations of this approach in the USA have shown that it increases the number of women prepared to involve the police.

*I have moved about 80 miles away from my husband but I still feel that fear. I still look over my shoulder. I still peer round corners. I still search a room for him before I dare go in.*

‘The officer who throws up his hands in frustration when a woman refuses to press charges after a brutal beating is actually witnessing the extent to which she is physically and psychologically controlled by her assailant. The prosecutor who receives the phone call or letter from the victim asking that the charges be dropped must understand that she is acting as her abuser’s emissary to court... Like the hostage or prisoner of war, she protects herself by acting for him...’<sup>32</sup>

- 3.28 Women commonly think in terms of wanting help for their abuser rather than punishment.<sup>33</sup> However, the most effective way of reducing recidivism is for the criminal justice system (CJS) to hold him accountable with a perpetrator programme as part of the sentencing. This means that perpetrator programmes need to be part of the CJS response thus encouraging women to use the law.<sup>34</sup> In order for such interventions not to be dangerous, however, independent help for women also needs to be available. Such programmes should also be able to be accessed by men who self-refer.<sup>35</sup>
- 3.29 Anecdotal evidence<sup>36</sup> suggests that there are two clear triggers for enabling women to take decisive action about their abuse. Firstly when the domestic violence has a negative effect on their children and secondly when they lose hope that he will change. The provision of perpetrator programmes,<sup>37</sup> therefore, play an important role in both changing some

men and in assisting some women to accept that their partner's behaviour is not going to change or change enough.<sup>38</sup>

- 3.30 If a woman is experiencing domestic violence, there are the following options:
- removing the abuser from the home but continuing to live in it herself
  - leaving the relationship and the home (permanently or temporarily)
  - remaining in the relationship, either with or without conditions.<sup>39</sup>

- 3.31 Many women find that leaving the relationship does not stop the abuse and violence; in some cases it increases it.

*There's no communal area in this hostel so once the kids go to bed I either sit in the hall or in here in the dark.*

- 3.32 Initiatives are often 'framed' as providing choices when in reality, they focus only on one of the above, which is usually permanently leaving the relationship and the home. This option not only maximises losses, but also represents the most dangerous choice (most murdered women are killed whilst in the process of leaving or having recently left). It is unsurprising that many women find this not to be a viable option until crisis point.

- 3.33 We will work closely with the relevant functional bodies and other key agencies to ensure that issues of safety are prioritised in service provision and that gaps are identified and addressed.

- 3.34 We will work towards developing protocols, minimum standards and effective inter agency referrals with the relevant functional bodies and other key agencies.

- 3.35 It is interesting to note that service providers are well aware of the dangers posed by violent men but that this rarely translates into prioritising the safety of abused women. For example, whilst 43.7 per cent of UK children's charities providing family support services have safety measures in place for workers, only 18.5 per cent have safety measures in place for abused women.<sup>40</sup>

*He used to hit me as well as my Mum... One time he smashed my head against the wall in my bedroom, gave me a black eye and I had to make excuses at school.*

- 3.36 There is also scope for better management of current resources, voids in refuges and inter-borough transfers.

- 3.37 Early intervention must be the key since research shows that the most common pattern of domestic violence is one of escalation, in both frequency and severity.<sup>41</sup> Early intervention has the potential to prevent this escalation to the benefit of all involved.

- 3.38 For those women who do move home, attendant issues are often problematic such as transferring their children's schools, registering with a

new GP or dentist, claiming from the Social Fund for new furniture and so on. Holistic floating support schemes<sup>42</sup> have potential as a valuable service.<sup>43</sup>

3.39 It must be emphasised that the development of these alternatives is designed to augment not substitute current options. There is no single solution which will suit all women at all times; the aim is to ensure that there are a sufficient number of choices for all women to have their needs met by at least one option.

*You feel to be such a nuisance to everyone, especially when the whole business drags on so long. So when someone is nice to you, it makes such a difference. But it always makes me cry.*

3.40 Providing information to women on where and how to access help needs to be approached much more creatively than at present. We need to find ways that women can have such information in their homes 'innocently'. Ideas that have been used in some parts of London include printing help-line numbers routinely on the back of supermarket receipts, pay-and-display parking tickets, bus tickets and producing credit card sized cards with useful contact numbers on about domestic violence. Posters have also been placed not just in agencies providing relevant services but in places where women go before seeking help such as in public toilets and at bus stops.

3.41 The Mayor will develop further publicity campaigns to build on this work and extend placement of such information. He will work with both the public and private sector so that such information is readily available. Any initiative developed will take full account of linguistic, cultural and disability issues.

*I knew I couldn't go back because he would definitely kill me.*

3.42 Two especially dangerous points are at the point of leaving and then subsequently, through child contact visits. Although recent case law suggests that judges should pay greater regard to the presence of domestic violence when deciding contact, should supervised contact be granted, there are few services to offer this provision at all, let alone safely.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, *Making Contact Worse?* (H Saunders, Women's Aid Federation 2001) reveals that despite the changes in case law, children continue to be abused on contact visits, even when contact is supervised. It also shows that abusers continue to be able to use Family Court proceedings to establish the whereabouts of their partner.

3.43 Contact centres in London are largely provided through voluntary sector organisations many of which are run by church and other faith groups, staffed by volunteers. We will work with a range of groups to establish minimum standards including safety protocols and explore increasing the availability of the current pilot model, The Safe Contact Project.

- 3.44 The Mayor will pledge his support to the Women's Aid Child Contact Campaign which is calling for an amendment to the Children Act to prioritise the safety of children caught up in contact disputes.
- 3.45 For those women experiencing domestic violence who choose to remain in their original home or who never access any form of temporary accommodation, support services should be made available within the community.<sup>45</sup> Outreach services offering advocacy,<sup>46</sup> the opportunity to meet with other survivors and pro-active contact are generally rated by survivors as the most helpful. Much current service provision focuses solely on crisis intervention which withers away once the immediate danger has passed. This is the point at which many women are particularly vulnerable to resuming the relationship with the abuser.
- 3.46 Evidence from other countries<sup>47</sup> has shown that a more robust enforcement of the criminal justice system increases the number of women who seek protection under the criminal law.

*I thought it was all my fault as this is what he told me.*

## **Aim 2: Holding violent men accountable**

### *Summary*

- 3.47 Accountability is most effective through co-ordinated efforts with the community, backed up with the sanctions available through the criminal justice system.<sup>48</sup> Under the duty to protect, police officers are required to justify a decision *not* to take positive action.<sup>49</sup>
- 3.48 There is, as yet, unexplored potential in generating accountability through means other than the Criminal Justice System (CJS) such as other institutions<sup>50</sup> and community disapproval; we will explore this potential through public, community and private sector organisations and support initiatives and campaigns run by other organisations.
- 3.49 Accountability is best achieved when the criminal nature of domestic violence is the primary focus rather than other issues such as poor communication skills or anger management.<sup>51</sup>
- 3.50 Violence is learned behaviour; perpetrator programmes (sometimes referred to as 're-education programmes') thus seek to teach men to re-learn the values and beliefs they have which support their justifications for using violent and controlling behaviour.
- 3.51 Since many women want help for their abusers at some stage in their experience, attendance at a perpetrator programme can be utilised by the abuser as a powerful weapon in his efforts to persuade her to take no further action. Perpetrator programmes, therefore, have a duty to actively

*If sporting institutions – like the Football Association – took the issue of violence seriously – all kinds of violence, I believe it could be a really crucial way to influence boys' and men's behaviour.*

*The fact that it happens within the home only makes the crime worse in my opinion. The home is the place where I – and everyone – should feel safest.*

undermine this potential by prioritising women’s safety in every aspect of their work. It is hard to see how this can be achieved without providing concurrent support services for female partners.

#### *Further information*

- 3.52 The component parts of the CJS are very fragmented and frequently unresponsive to women experiencing domestic violence. When a woman is assaulted in a domestic setting, it is rare for this to result in a prosecution, let alone imprisonment.
- 3.53 Couple counselling, self-help groups, anger management, family group conferencing, restorative justice and individual therapy do not guarantee either the safety of women or hold violent men accountable. In some cases, can be highly dangerous.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, violent men are frequently able to utilise their status as parent to manipulate the Family Courts to aid them in their continued harassment of their former partners. The focus of Family Courts on reaching agreement without court intervention is easily exploited by abusers and the ‘right’ of fathers to know the whereabouts of their children often renders useless women’s new-found safety following re-location.
- 3.54 Perpetrator programmes should only be provided if certain conditions are met. It is imperative that such projects do not endanger women or children experiencing domestic violence and as such, groups should never run without having established a system whereby concurrent support services are offered to the female partners. Experience shows that this is most effective when it is pro-active<sup>53</sup> and where women’s services are equitably resourced.

### **Aim 3: Public education**

#### *Summary*

- 3.55 Much of this work to date has focused on providing information for women experiencing domestic violence rather than on educating the general public as to the reality of the problem. This is another area where consultation with survivors could be vastly improved.
- 3.56 Women experiencing domestic violence are most likely to first reveal the violence to a friend or family member. Little exists to educate family members and friends in providing effective support.<sup>54</sup> Safety planning needs to be more widely publicised.<sup>55</sup>
- 3.57 Research<sup>56</sup> shows that linguistically and culturally appropriate campaigns are significantly more effective so we will ensure that this is incorporated

into any campaign. We will also ensure that materials are produced in a range of accessible formats.

- 3.58 Public education campaigns that are undertaken in partnership will not be done without ensuring that there are adequate resources to respond to increased numbers of women reporting. This has almost always been neglected in previous campaigns. This means that planning for increased responses will be part of the development process with partner agencies.

#### *Further information*

- 3.59 Many myths and stereotypes continue to inform people's thinking on domestic violence. Although some of these have changed in the past decade, many still remain. For example, most people now know that domestic violence crosses all socio-economic boundaries but persist in believing that it is more common amongst certain groups. Alcohol,<sup>57</sup> loss of control, 'provocation' and child abuse are the most commonly believed myths about causes.
- 3.60 There is frequently an unwillingness to name the abuser as male or the survivor as female in any public education work.<sup>58</sup> This often leads to obscure slogans such as 'break the chain' or difficulties in selecting non-gender specific graphics.
- 3.61 One under-exploited area of public education is in encouraging men to challenge other men. An initiative in the USA involves prominent local businesses and individual men contributing to the cost of advertising a 'pledge' against domestic violence. The Mayor will develop such an initiative in London.

### **Aim 4 : Educating children and young people**

#### *Summary*

- 3.62 Eighty-four per cent of secondary school children want lessons on domestic violence and what to do about it.<sup>59</sup>
- 3.63 Domestic violence could be taught under a number of areas of the national curriculum (eg citizenship, PHSE,<sup>60</sup> drama, etc) but should also be viewed as essential child protection work which should be being addressed by Area Child Protection Committees.<sup>61</sup>
- 3.64 In order for education work to be done effectively, support systems for those children and young people identified as currently living in a violent home should be available as should comprehensive training for teachers so that they are not simply teaching myths or stereotypes.<sup>62</sup>

*I am fed up with all the glossy posters that cost thousands of pounds produced by central and local governments which are not housing women survivors, helping with their poverty situations or assisting them in a practical way.*

*Anger doesn't come from nowhere – abusers are angry at not getting their own way – they need to learn that their sense of entitlement is wrong.*

*I am ashamed of him.  
I can't tell anyone  
because then they will  
know I haven't got a  
proper dad.*

- 3.65 Research from the NSPCC<sup>63</sup> shows that when experiencing domestic violence, what children want is support from their peers. Thus what they want from adults, is for them to educate their peers to understand the issue.
- 3.66 It is also important that we recognise the violence which occurs in the lives of many teenage girls in their own relationships as opposed to those of their parents.

#### *Further information*

- 3.67 There have been a number of educational initiatives which have largely been small scale and time limited. The paucity of evaluation material available is an obstacle in developing effective work in this area. Moreover, to date, most work has focused on mainstream secondary school aged children; 'special' schools, primary schools and nurseries should also be involved.
- 3.68 There are several packs of materials in existence: 'S.T.O.P. Domestic Violence' (Islington), 'Respect' (Zero Tolerance), and several children charities have produced materials. The latter are generally more suited for use in youth work/family support service settings.
- 3.69 The research which led to the development of the Zero Tolerance campaign in Scotland assessed adolescents knowledge of, and attitudes towards, domestic violence. Among the findings, the researchers found that the presence of a 'justification' made the violence more acceptable (eg she wouldn't stop nagging); violence towards wives was more 'acceptable' than to girlfriends but more encouragingly, only a minimal exposure to accurate information was required to shift attitudes in the direction of unacceptability.
- 3.70 The Mayor will work with several children's websites to include age appropriate domestic violence information and an email support service.
- 3.71 The Mayor and the ALG will establish with London boroughs, a Londonwide domestic violence poster competition for children which could act as a catalyst to encourage school involvement whilst also raising awareness amongst the general public. The winning poster will form part of the Mayor's manifesto commitment to devise an information campaign on domestic violence.

*The government needs  
to get tough on the men  
that cause the problems  
in the first place, and  
give some money to the  
organisations that are  
left to pick up the pieces.*

#### **Development plans**

- 3.72 A number of common themes run through the proposed development plans which follow. These include:

- 3.73 Plans to encourage new agencies which have previously had little or no involvement in domestic violence initiatives, yet which have a vital role to play, to become involved in the overall effort to reduce and prevent domestic violence.<sup>64</sup>
- 3.74 To encourage the private sector to play a key role in addressing this issue. This is for a number of reasons of which three are key: domestic violence negatively affects businesses in sick leave, a drop in productivity and sometimes even the resignation of valuable staff who are relocating for safety reasons; employers often know what is happening in their employees lives but not what to do with that information<sup>65</sup> and the rise of 'ethical consumerism' means that developing social responsibility is increasingly important for businesses.
- 3.75 The utilisation of technology in creative ways to increase protection and services available. This could include an email support service for women who would prefer to remain anonymous, automated telephone information and inclusion of domestic information on the websites sign posting women where to go for help. Research conducted for the ALG reveals that 47 per cent of Londoners have access to the internet; and that households with children are also more likely to have internet access at home compared with others.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, 90 per cent of London's school children have access to the internet at school. These figures are likely to increase further still over the next few years.
- 3.76 A focus on closer co-ordination of various sectors which have a key role to play in addressing domestic violence. The Mayor will establish a Londonwide Domestic Violence Forum to encourage joint planning of service provision.

#### **The role of the Mayor**

- 3.77 Some of the changes needed to effectively address the issue of domestic violence are beyond the jurisdiction of the Mayor. However, the Mayor will provide leadership for London in reducing and preventing domestic violence and encourage other organisations, statutory, private and voluntary, to contribute to realising the vision set out in this strategy.
- 3.78 The Mayor will establish a Londonwide Domestic Violence Forum to encourage joint planning of cross-service provision. Through this group, the Mayor will encourage all agencies to adopt minimum standards and will establish an annual awards scheme for recognising progress by individual agencies, innovative projects and effective use of resources.

*The response I received from friends and colleagues (especially my job which is working in a predominantly male environment) was very positive. They all said I was brave (even though I did not feel that way).*

*So many of the staff I have met really want to help and are often visibly distressed when their hands are tied by the red tape. There is a huge barrier erected on a foundation of paranoia that someone is getting something they are not entitled to. The people who suffer are the ones who are entitled.*

*Why can't all the authorities understand that prevention is better than cure.*

- 3.79 The Mayor has also made arrangements for progress on the strategy to be overseen on a day to day basis and has allocated funding from his budget to facilitate its development.
- 3.80 In addition to the commitments already stated, the Mayor will also utilise his status to lobby on a number of issues set out in 5.4.

#### **The role of the Association of London Government**

- 3.81 Domestic violence is a significant problem and combating it is one of the top priorities for London boroughs and the Association of London Government.
- 3.82 The ALG is committed to working with all its member authorities and other relevant statutory agencies to reduce the number of domestic crimes and to help the victims of such violence.
- 3.83 The ALG will consider the role of the voluntary sector in responding to domestic violence and will seek to improve responses, looking at both the domestic violence specialist and wider voluntary sector. We will seek to implement the minimum standards and will work with others to develop effective responses to domestic violence.

## 4 implementation

- 4.1 Nothing contained within this strategy is impossible to develop and the benefits have the potential to be far-reaching.
- 4.2 The Mayor has allocated money in his budget to be used to facilitate the development, monitoring and assessment of this strategy. The London wide Domestic Violence Forum will provide a mechanism by which discussions can continue with key agencies to further develop, implement and evaluate the recommendations contained within the strategy.
- 4.3 The London wide Domestic Violence Forum will have its inaugural meeting in January 2002 at which terms of reference, a detailed work programme with a timetable and a range of quantitative and qualitative performance indicators will be discussed.

*It would have been nice to have someone to talk to who understood and to help me deal with everything that needed to be done.*

### Assessment framework

- 4.4 This strategy will be implemented over a three year period with regular assessments to ensure progress is made.
- 4.5 We will work towards the provision of a central clearing-house where data is collected, information housed and disseminated, consultancy provided and progress on the strategy monitored.
- 4.6 It is further proposed that members of the Advisory Group (see appendix A) be invited to join the Greater London Domestic Violence Forum, convened by the Mayor, which will meet on a bi-annual basis. It will have smaller sub-groups meeting more frequently.
- 4.7 The Forum will produce an annual report detailing progress and plans for the coming year. The report will be widely disseminated to key agencies and individuals.
- 4.8 An annual awards scheme will be developed to recognise and publicise innovation and good practice in domestic violence work.

*I can't sleep at night because I dream of him doing what he did to me and I can't stay awake because I'm scared to face reality.*

## 5 the strategy recommendations

- 5.1 The following recommendations have been derived from a wide variety of sources including various consultation exercises with women experiencing domestic violence, conferences for front-line practitioners, other strategic documents, existing services which could be usefully duplicated across London and a number of domestic violence research projects and service evaluations.
- 5.2 The strategy was consulted over a six month period. In total, written responses were received from 66 agencies/partnerships and 22 individuals. It should be noted that a substantial number of the agency responses were from multi-agency groups and as such, the total number of agencies whose views have been considered represents in excess of 150. During the six month consultation period, over 30 presentations on the strategy were made at a range of public meetings. Issues raised during these meetings were noted and have been incorporated into the final version of the strategy.
- 5.3 The recommendations have been made with the aim of achieving the four aims set out in section 3.
- 5.4 It is not the intention of this strategy to single out any agency in particular; specific organisations mentioned below are providers of key domestic violence services. However, if we are to be effective in addressing this issue, all agencies need to recognise that their current provision clearly is not working and that there is room for improvement. It is hoped that all relevant agencies will work co-operatively together with the common purpose of reducing and preventing domestic violence.
- 5.5 There are four sets of proposals:
- minimum standards for all agencies
  - recommendations to address local issues
  - recommendations to address regional issues
  - recommendations to address national issues.

### **Recommended minimum standards for all agencies**

- 5.6 ■ A baseline minimum standard for all agencies and systems should be an ability to demonstrate that services are appropriate and accessible to the range of communities that they aim to serve. Agencies should be aware of the needs of women from ethnic minorities, disabled women, older women, women with drug or alcohol dependency, women with mental health problems, bisexuals and lesbians. All agencies and systems should be able to demonstrate that they are actively working to develop such services.<sup>67</sup> All groups (women, children, abusers) should be able to refer themselves to suitable projects.

*It is no good leaving everything to the discretion of individuals which it now is, the police, doctors, social workers, judges can all do virtually what they please, under the guise of using their discretion.*

*Getting clear and accurate information about what is available would be really helpful.*

*I was desperate for help to escape from the abuse. Reached the end of my tether. The minister listened sympathetically and then took me back home...*

- All systems and agencies should have clear methods of identifying abused women and perpetrators, including both reactive and proactive identification. In other words, agencies should be able to recognise the obvious signs of domestic violence when it presents, but also, where appropriate, each agency should develop systems for 'screening' clients including introducing routine questioning where appropriate, in order to identify cases of domestic violence where there are no outward signs.<sup>68</sup>
- All systems and agencies should give out clear and consistent messages, information and referral to women, children and abusers. Additionally, all agencies should display posters and provide information about local domestic violence services.
- The voluntary sector has specialist expertise and an ability to work at a grass roots level with many clients who might not access help via statutory services. This expertise should be acknowledged as a valuable resource and measures should to be developed to ensure their full participation in planning domestic violence provision. On its own, issuing invitations to participate is usually insufficient; account must also be taken of capacity to accept such invitations.
- All agencies should be fully aware of the level and nature of domestic violence, of the need for their policies and practices to address it, and of its possible presence in cases with which they have to deal. Importantly, this includes those cases which originally come to their attention for other purposes.
- Domestic violence training should be provided for staff at all levels. This includes reception staff who are frequently omitted, senior managers and, for voluntary sector agencies, Management Committees or Boards of Trustees.<sup>69</sup>
- When dealing with individual cases, the priority for agencies should be the safety and well-being of the woman and children. Staff themselves should undertake such emergency action as they can and not always rely on voluntary sector agencies to accept referrals.
- As employers, agencies should develop a domestic violence personnel policy which sets out an appropriate response to members of staff who may be experiencing or perpetrating domestic violence. This should also include employees utilising employer resources such as e-mail and telephones to either access information safely or as a tool to intimidate and harass.<sup>70</sup>

- Agencies should ensure that information about both statutory and voluntary domestic violence services is available to staff and the public in accessible formats. Agencies with websites should post information of use to service users.
- Participation with local inter-agency Domestic Violence Fora is desirable, but should be seen as a means to an end, not an end in itself. To promote consistency and increase effectiveness, minimum standards will be developed for Domestic Violence Fora.
- Agencies should work to create a safe and supportive environment which encourages the reporting of domestic violence. For example, all agencies providing front line services should have a safety procedure in place for dealing with domestic violence calls such as explicitly stating on answer phone messages that they will be safe when returning calls.
- The success of any initiative to reduce or prevent domestic violence depends on a careful implementation strategy and needs to be confirmed by thorough evaluation and monitoring. Data collection and evaluation should be implemented in all agencies whilst so far as possible avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy.
- Agencies should consider the importance of information sharing (section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act) as a valuable part in the co-ordination of their client based services. However, mechanisms should be developed so that information is shared only for the purposes of increasing women's safety with due regard paid to women whose partners work for agencies dealing with domestic violence. In most cases, this will mean only sharing anonymous/aggregated information. Where information is being shared on individual cases, due regard will have to be paid to the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act.
- Where possible, all key agencies should seek to nominate a specific individual with overall responsibility for domestic violence work in that agency. This responsibility should be explicitly included within the job description.<sup>71</sup>

*Women survivors are able to talk for themselves and it is about time that everyone realised it and stop treating us as if we are brainless!*

### **Recommendations to address local (ie borough) issues**

#### *Police*

- 5.7 ■ Community Safety Units and Child Protection Teams should develop closer working mechanisms including routinely screening for the presence of domestic violence in all child abuse cases and vice versa. The possibility of linked IT systems should be explored.

*The police officers have been brilliant towards my circumstances and they have tried to answer all of my questions that I needed to know about going to court, and what will happen when I'm there.*

*Although the police will arrest these men why should we bother as when they get to court they seem to get away with a slapped wrist and then you are in for it!*

- Develop systems to keep women informed of all progress following her initial call to the police. These should explicitly address informing women when their abuser has been released from the police station, irrespective of whether any action was taken.
- Reasons why an arrest has not been made when the power to do so existed should be monitored and evaluated to ensure an undue reliance is not being placed on women's statements.
- Systems to track allegations from initial phone call to 'clear up' to ensure all reported cases are being recorded on Crime Recording Information System should be developed, monitored and evaluated.<sup>72</sup>
- A specific monitoring system should be developed to determine what happens to abusers if they have fled the scene prior to police arrival.
- Domestic violence to be integrated into the training of police officers dealing with sex workers.

#### *Crown Prosecution Service*

- 5.8
- With the victim's consent, routine referral of domestic violence cases to the Court Witness Support Scheme (CWSS) should be implemented and a mechanism developed to ensure that domestic violence cases are 'flagged' to the CWSS.
  - Whilst recognising the legal restrictions, a consistent approach to CPS representation on London Domestic Violence Fora should be developed.
  - Whilst reviewing casework monitoring, consider ways in which domestic violence casework can be dealt with more effectively to increase women's safety. This should include an evaluation of reasons for discontinuance.
  - Publicise more widely measures available to encourage women to co-operate with a prosecution (eg expenses with transportation/childcare)

#### *Magistrates and judges*

- 5.9
- Publicise the value of pre-sentence reports and the option of perpetrator programmes to the courts to encourage their greater use in sentencing.
  - Within legal limitations, develop a system whereby the same judge can hear a case all the way through as this has been shown to impact positively on recidivism.

- The guidance from the Advisory Board on Family Law, Children Act sub-committee regarding domestic violence and contact should be adopted and its effect monitored.

#### Probation

- 5.10
- Perpetrator programmes should be developed. This should include the provision of Women's Services which should be equitably resourced. Where Probation is unable to provide this service in-house, it should enter into partnerships to ensure that its work with offenders does not compromise women and children's safety.
  - A specific recording category for domestic violence that allows for assaults to be differentiated between stranger and familial should be created.
  - Repeat breaches of Probation Orders should be monitored.
  - Probation Service staff should participate in all local Domestic Violence Fora.

*My ex-husband said that the person who ran the men's group said that women liked violence and that this had made him realise that I liked it too. Because of this he felt it was OK to go on hitting me. Although I realise now (well over a year after we'd separated) that this was probably my husband's words rather than those of the person running the group, it isolated me even more than I had been already.*

#### Local authorities

##### Corporate

- 5.11
- Adopt a corporate domestic violence policy based on the principles of believing the woman, ensuring her safety, confidentiality and anti-discriminatory practice.
  - Demonstrate clear authority-wide commitment to working to reduce domestic violence and improve responses to it.
  - Conduct a cross-cutting Best Value review of domestic violence provision.<sup>73</sup> See appendix C for more detail.
  - Include domestic violence as a priority in the Crime and Disorder strategy, including addressing the issue of rape by current/former partners.
  - Co-ordinate responses to domestic violence.<sup>74</sup>
  - Work with other agencies to improve services including exploring inter-agency service delivery and active support for and involvement in a Domestic Violence or Violence against Women Forum.<sup>75</sup> Encourage local businesses to play a part for example through displaying posters.

*My ex has re-married and moved away. But the fear is still with me. I could never risk living with anyone again. I enjoy my own company. My independence is invaluable to me.*

*I was really lucky to have a boss who supported me when [the abuser] began hanging around the shop. My boss asked me if I wanted to work round the back so he [the abuser] wouldn't see me.*

- Integrate domestic violence into wider strategies and policies for example health improvement programmes, community plans, initiatives to reduce teenage pregnancy.<sup>76</sup>
- Provide information on domestic violence of relevance to service users on the council website.
- Display leaflets and posters about available services in all council buildings open to the public.
- Include information on confidentiality of identity and whereabouts on electoral registration forms.
- Implement adequate information systems to monitor and evaluate the authority's responses to domestic violence. Systems should be able to identify:
  - all approaches to services as a result of violence
  - the circumstances prompting each approach
  - the action taken
  - the outcome of the intervention
  - demographic information on the victim and perpetrator.
- Ensure that services are appropriate and accessible to all communities including:
  - providing training and guidance for translators and interpreters
  - providing information in community languages
  - improving access for people with disabilities.

*Why should we leave our homes. Why should our children be taken from their schools, family and friends. I will keep saying this – my children and I are not criminals... but HE IS.*

### *Housing*

- 5.12
- Ensure that policy and practice enable women experiencing domestic violence, including women without children, to make choices about their housing.<sup>77</sup>
  - Ensure that a range of measures are available to support women who choose to stay in their own home without the abuser including:
    - evicting the perpetrator for breach of the tenancy agreement
    - increasing security measures such as free lock changes, internal intercom systems, community alarms
    - including within the tenancy agreement an explicit statement that perpetrating domestic violence is a breach of the tenancy and perpetrators are liable to eviction.

- Seek to improve the quality of temporary accommodation to include play provision for children, outreach services and adequate security measures.
- Improve the speed of management transfers to create a genuine choice between this and temporary accommodation.
- Actively participate in the local Domestic Violence Forum.
- Include domestic violence in bids for external funding such as Safer Communities.
- Train frontline staff and their managers on their responsibilities with regard to council policy on domestic violence.
- Display leaflets and posters about available services in all buildings open to the public.

### *Social services*

- 5.13 ■ Develop domestic violence policies and protocols including:
- recognising the strong links between domestic violence and child abuse
  - screening cases for domestic violence
  - adequate monitoring and recording systems (including responses to Police 78 forms: notification of a child at risk)
  - providing referrals to other services.
- Integrate domestic violence into other policies and projects including:
- Children's Services plans
  - Community Care plans
  - Drugs and alcohol initiatives
  - Mental health services.
- Develop formal links between the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) and the local Domestic Violence Forum.<sup>78</sup> Integrate domestic violence into the work of the ACPC including inter-agency training.
- Improve liaison mechanisms with local refuges, especially with any children's workers.
- Integrate domestic violence into the work of relevant frontline staff.

*When talking with social services I was amazed they believed me. I had no proof, no evidence. They told me that they only had to look at me and the children and note our reactions to see we had been abused.*

*The social worker who came to my house after a violent incident said that Social Services consider domestic violence if witnessed by children as a form of child abuse. However, she didn't say if they consider both parents to be at fault or just the perpetrator, and at the time I felt extremely vulnerable and didn't want Social Services involved – just in case.*

*It was worse seeing my mother hit than being hit myself.*

*He would come in and rip my mother's clothes off. He tried to strangle her, just beat her up like... We were always watching it... he used to tell us to get back to bed... he would stamp on the 'phone so we couldn't 'phone the police.*

- Explore the potential for providing specialist support groups for children affected by domestic violence.
- Work with local nurseries and registered child-minders to raise awareness and understanding of domestic violence.
- Train frontline staff and their managers on their responsibilities with regard to council policy on domestic violence.
- Display leaflets and posters about available services in all buildings open to the public.

#### Education

- 5.14
- Develop domestic violence policies and protocols including:
    - Seeking to prevent domestic violence through curriculum approaches
    - ensuring access to education for children fleeing domestic violence
    - recognising domestic violence as a potential child protection issue.
  - Integrate domestic violence into the work of teachers with responsibility for child protection.
  - Ensure that children living in temporary accommodation, including refuges, as a result of domestic violence are able to join a new school quickly.
  - Integrate domestic violence into existing initiatives for example on bullying, truancy, school exclusion.
  - Recognise the potential impact of domestic violence on educational attainment and behaviour and seek to support children in order to reduce any such problems.
  - Introduce prevention programmes in schools and youth settings.
  - Ensure that schools have procedures in place to deal with perpetrators attempting to use the school to track down their former partner.
  - Display leaflets and posters about available services in all schools and other buildings open to the public.
  - Train teachers, especially those with designated child protection responsibilities, on their responsibilities with regard to council policy on domestic violence.

- Provide schools with information about available support services to which children/adults affected by domestic violence can be referred.
- Actively participate in the local Domestic Violence forum.

#### *Cultural services*

- 5.15 ■ Develop cultural initiatives to raise awareness and change attitudes for example themed events in libraries, poetry readings, theatre in education.
- Display leaflets and posters about available services in all libraries, leisure centres and other buildings open to the public.

#### *Housing associations*

- 5.16 ■ A domestic violence clause should be included in tenancy agreements and a specific statement included in tenancy packs stating that domestic violence is an eviction offence.<sup>79</sup>
- All frontline staff and first line managers should receive domestic violence training.
  - Increased security measures for women staying in their homes should be developed, including free lock changes on request, internal intercom systems and repairs needed to ensure safety.
  - Posters and leaflets for display in all offices should be developed.
  - A domestic violence policy, including an effective transfer policy within existing stock, should be developed.
  - Domestic violence should be included in 'Safer Communities' bids.
  - Actively participate in local Domestic Violence Fora.<sup>80</sup>

*Being in bed and breakfast feels like a test to see whether I'll go back home again.*

#### *Health*

- 5.17 ■ The provision of outreach/advocacy services in primary health care settings should be explored.
- Health Action Zones and Health Improvement Plans should explicitly incorporate domestic violence in future planning.
  - Primary Health Care Trusts (PHCT) to nominate a specific individual with thematic responsibility for domestic violence.

*My doctor now has been very supportive, but not before one of the other doctors in the practice accused me of being manipulative. I had only asked what their policy was on domestic violence.*

- The Development Officer of the PHCT should attend local Domestic Violence Fora.

#### *NSPCC/Family Support Agencies*

- 5.18
- The potential should be explored for increasing the range of parenting classes for mothers whose relationship with their children has been damaged as a result of domestic violence. Such classes should be provided in conjunction with an increase of support services to children who are or who have suffered through domestic violence. Where parenting classes are to be provided to violent and abusive fathers, their abuse should be addressed first and separately.
  - Liaison mechanisms with children’s workers in refuge projects should be developed.

#### **Recommendations to address regional (ie pan-London) issues**

##### *Police*

- 5.19
- Meaningful targets for the two Best Value performance indicators, as required by the Audit Commission, should be set.
  - In collaboration with the CPS, investigation and evidence gathering protocols should be developed to increase the potential for prosecutions that do not require abused women to attend court. This should include clarification to officers regarding the difference between the ‘interests’ and the ‘wishes’ of the victim whilst retaining a commitment to prioritising safety. Joint training should be developed to implement this, providing all such prosecutions fall within the tests as laid down in the Code for Crown Prosecutors issued under the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985.
  - Develop specific domestic violence risk assessment processes.
  - Community Safety Units should conduct an annual service user satisfaction survey with the data to be divisible by homophobic, racist and domestic violence crime.
  - Police domestic violence training should include all police officers but especially new recruits, front line officers, custody sergeants and station office staff. Domestic violence should also be included as an issue in hostage training.
  - Domestic violence should be included as an issue on the Metropolitan Police intranet and website.

*I do agree with the police taking the decision out of our hands. When asked if I was going to prosecute my ex, I asked what would happen. I was told he would more than likely get a prison sentence. I was so afraid of what would happen before the trial, and if he did go down how would I explain things to his parents, the children, etc. I was terrified of what he would do to me when he came out. I did not press charges. I wish now that I did.*

- Further develop the capacity for effectively linking series/patterns of offending.

#### *Crown Prosecution Service*

- 5.20
- In partnership with the Metropolitan Police, develop protocols as to what is required for the purpose of prosecutions.
  - Joint training should be developed with the police to improve preparation of prosecution cases.
  - Participate in a working group to develop a pilot domestic violence court which can deal jointly with civil and criminal issues.

#### *Magistrates courts*

- 5.21
- The efficacy of various sentences available should be evaluated from the perspective of increasing the safety of women and children.
  - The potential for utilising reverse electronic tagging for repeat offenders should be explored.
  - Participate in a working group to develop a pilot domestic violence court which can deal jointly with civil and criminal issues.
  - Magistrates' Courts Committees should include domestic violence awareness training in their training programmes and this should include court clerks.

#### *Probation Service*

- 5.22
- The London Probation Service should create a specific domestic violence group and have a named officer with Londonwide responsibility for domestic violence.
  - A Londonwide domestic violence policy should be developed.
  - Publicity initiatives should be developed.

#### *Association of London Government*

- 5.23
- Ensure that existing provision and the needs of women fleeing violence will be assessed as part of the work of the London Supporting People Forum. This to include exploring the potential for specialist refuge projects.<sup>81</sup>
  - Through its pilot project 'Getting London Moving' explore the potential of the pilot to support inter-borough housing transfers for women fleeing domestic violence.

*We need to know that our abuser will face stiff penalties. We need to know that there is security and safety for us. We need to know that we can keep our homes. Too many of us have to leave for our own safety while our attackers stay in the matrimonial home, stay in their jobs, stay in the same environment and feel as if nothing much has changed, except that there is no-one to get the dinner or do the cleaning now.*

*Why did my children have to lose everything including every photo of them growing up... everything that we ever owned, due to one man and his violence?*

*My children have been transformed since I left [the violent man]. I used to think I had naughty kids but they were just playing up because of all the tension that was in the house. It makes me cry when I think I stuck it for so long for their sakes.*

*It is not so easy to walk out of a marriage especially if there are children involved. It's humiliating to leave and it feels as if you've failed. I just tried to stay there and make it work.*

- Convene a network for local authority domestic violence co-ordinators in order to provide an opportunity to identify and address pan-London issues, share information and good practice and provide a forum for discussing common problems and interests.
- Work through the community safety officers network to highlight the issue of domestic violence.
- Explore how its new website can be used to share information on domestic violence with member authorities.
- Through the women's sector and 'second tier' funding review process, consider the role of the women's voluntary sector in responding to domestic violence and consider what second tier support is needed to improve voluntary sector support to women and children experiencing domestic violence, looking at both the domestic violence specialist and wider voluntary sectors.

#### *Housing Corporation (London Region)*

- 5.24
- A named individual within the London Regional Housing Corporation to oversee domestic violence developments in housing associations should be appointed.
  - In its role under the 'Supporting People' framework, give due consideration to the development of further specialist refuge provision to meet the needs of women experiencing domestic violence currently excluded from accessing refuges.
  - The possibility of developing information sharing protocols regarding housing of abusers should be explored.
  - Incorporate domestic violence into the good practice 'bank'.

#### *Audit Commission*

- 5.25
- Best Value Inspectors to have appropriate preparation to conduct Best Value reviews of domestic violence services.
  - In its review of the inspection process, consider ways of improving the feedback given to local authorities. This may include providing advice to authorities in advance of the review, supplying good practice examples and offering full feedback after the review.
  - Ensure that learning from Best Value reviews on domestic violence is captured and shared across authorities.

- Consider the development of a standardised framework for assessing domestic violence Best Value reviews, including the possibility of using case studies for use in the compare function.

#### *London Voluntary Service Council*

- 5.26
- Encourage voluntary sector agencies to adopt the recommended minimum standards for all agencies.
  - Assist in distributing GLA domestic violence information materials
  - Participate in a working group along with the NSPCC and other family support agencies, to explore the potential for increasing the provision of safe contact centres.

*I am forced to have contact with him through access to my son, he behaves as if nothing has happened now, and that I am paranoid to be scared of him.*

#### *NSPCC/Family Support Agencies*

- 5.27
- Assist in the development of standards, assessment protocols, procedures and training to promote safe supervised contact for children in line with standards being developed by the 'Safe Contact Project' and in partnership with others, explore the potential for expanding provision in London.
  - With the London Voluntary Service Council participate in the development of a more integrated, pan London approach to risk assessment procedures in collaboration with other family support services.
  - Domestic violence information in a variety of formats, including on websites for children and young people, should be developed.

#### *Relate/Counselling services*

- 5.28
- All couple based therapeutic services should routinely screen for domestic violence. If revealed, the safety of the woman and any children should be of paramount importance. The perpetrator should be referred to a specialist perpetrator programme which meets Respect's minimum standards and no further couples counselling should take place until the perpetrator has completed a specialist perpetrator programme AND after a suitable period of non-violence AND only where the woman is and feels able to freely enter the couples work without fear for her safety.
  - Support groups and person centred counselling provision for abused women and children should be further developed.

*The unskilled therapist covered up the issue of the violence and abuse and actually said early on: 'I know from my own marriage that there is right and wrong on both sides.'*

*I sat with my doctor and cried for about an hour telling him everything. At the end of it, he gave me some anti-depressants and sent me home.*

### Benefits Agency

- 5.29
- Develop monitoring of domestic violence cases beginning with a pilot in the lone parent section initial claim for income support.
  - Develop fast-tracking benefit procedures for women fleeing domestic violence, including those benefits claimed by disabled women.
  - Information for women fleeing violence should be displayed in benefit offices.
  - Explore the potential of printing details of domestic violence help-lines/websites in child benefit books.

### Health

- 5.30
- London Health Commission should integrate domestic violence into the London Health strategy.
  - A training programme should be developed with the aim of introducing routine questioning where appropriate in primary health care and hospital based services (including dentists and ambulance staff) in accordance with the good practice materials set out in the Department of Health's 'Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals'.
  - Minimum standards should be developed which should include the distribution of information within the health service, through leaflets and posters in local clinics (including toilets), in maternity packs and in dentists' waiting rooms.
  - A Londonwide forum for health professionals should be established to meet on a quarterly basis for networking and dissemination of good practice.
  - A Londonwide conference for health professionals to present findings from within London and share good practice should be held.
  - Domestic violence issues should be included in compulsory mental health admissions protocols (conducted in partnership with Social Services).
  - Domestic violence information should be included on all health websites and hospital intranets.

*My GP was brilliant. She used to arrange for me to get the last appointment of the day so I could talk as long as I needed. She was really supportive.*

### Greater London Domestic Violence Project

- 5.31
- Develop the distribution of a mobile telephone scheme in conjunction with identified private partners.
  - In partnership with Domestic Violence Data Source, Women's Aid and others, further develop website provision for practitioners and abused women. This to include information in different languages.<sup>82</sup>
  - Develop online domestic violence training modules.
  - Map current availability of interpreting and translating services across London.
  - Convene a working group to develop training standards.
  - Explore the potential for developing an email information and support service for abused women and children.
  - Develop 'injunctions-online' to reduce the currently unacceptably high cost of civil orders for women who do not qualify for, or who are refused, Community Legal Service<sup>83</sup> funds.
  - Convene a working group to consider how pan-London advocacy services might be developed which are reflective of the needs of London's diverse communities.
  - In partnership with the ALG and providers, develop minimum standards for refuge projects which will include standards of provision for disabled women.
  - Explore the potential for involving complimentary health practitioners in domestic violence work.

*The support given to women who have experienced domestic violence is excellent whilst they are in the refuge, however once they return back into the community they are alone once again. I think this is the time when they need support the most as for some it can be a frightening experience to realise that they are now alone, without the support and guidance of other women in the refuge and the workers.*

*I've moved so many times in the last year [six times] that I just feel indifferent now. He [the abuser] keeps tracking me down. I only go out when it's really necessary now, I don't see any of my old friends, none of my [grown-up] children know where I am, even my sister doesn't know. I've changed my name, cut my hair and I disguise myself when I go out. I bumped into him in Safeways last month and I ran without stopping for nearly two miles. I didn't know I had it in me.*

### Recommendations to address national issues

- 5.32 Unless laws, regulations and practice are changed, and a lead taken by government in terms of co-ordination and setting policy priorities in this area, the improved response of many individual agencies and multi-agency forums will only have a limited effect, despite the enormous commitment of many individuals working within them.
- 5.33 The Mayor will lobby Government on the following issues:
- The Home Office to introduce a new offence for any agency or individual (eg bounty hunters) to track down, for financial gain,

*He threatened me with deportation if I left him so I was too frightened to go to anyone. Eventually a Nigerian nurse in the hospital helped me.*

*The legislation regarding contact orders needs to be totally rewritten, and I feel that judges need educating in domestic violence.*

someone who is fleeing from domestic violence.

- Perpetrators on remand to be denied access to telephones where their (ex) partner's can be reached to prevent ongoing harassment.
- The National Asylum Support Service to develop a more detailed policy for asylum seekers in London who are experiencing domestic violence and to disseminate information more widely.
- Further reform to the 'One Year Rule' and for a waiver in domestic violence cases to the 'no recourse to public funds' rule that women fleeing domestic violence subject to immigration regulations can claim income support for themselves and their children, housing benefit for emergency accommodation, and access to Community Legal Service Funds to obtain protection from their abuser.
- Sufficient resources to enable automatic inclusion of domestic violence cases in the Vulnerable Witness proposals.
- The minimum standards set out by Respect to be accepted nationally.
- The creation of a specific domestic violence law and for domestic violence offences to be an aggravating factor when dealing with sentences, in common with racist crime.
- Changes in the Children Act to enhance women and children's safety when deciding contact.
- Independent advocates to be made available to all children and separate legal representation to be introduced in family court proceedings.
- The Lord Chancellor's Department to establish a National Register for all injunctions to enable a more effective multi-agency response by police, probation, social services and the courts to secure the safety and protection of abused women and children.
- To publicise the financial cost of domestic violence to the Treasury and make a case for the Invest to Save Budget being utilised to fund domestic violence work.
- To ensure specific refuge provision forms part of the Safer Communities funding and that the specific needs of refuge projects are fully considered in 'Supporting People' guidance and to further lobby for a co-ordinated national strategy for the provision and funding of

refuges, help-lines, outreach, counselling and other specialist services for women and children who are survivors and victims of domestic or sexual violence to meet a wide range of support needs, including those of black and ethnic minority women, women with disabilities, lesbians, young women and older women.

- Safety restrictions to be implemented on the sale of electoral registers.
- Guidance on safety issues to be developed for DSS staff.
- The creation of a specific category for refuges within the National Day Care Standards.

## appendices

### Appendix A: Members of the Advisory Group

Association of London Government (Grants)	Ms Elizabeth Wallis
Association of London Government	Ms Hilary McCollum
Asylum Aid	Ms Helen Smith
Audit Commission	Ms Anne Shore
Child & Women Abuse Studies Unit	Professor Liz Kelly
Children & Families Court Advisory Service	Mr Peter Jeffries
Children's Forum on Violence	Mr Will MacMahon
Comic Relief	Ms Gilly Green
Crown Prosecution Service	Mr Howard Cohen
Director, ESRC Violence Research Programme	Professor Betsy Stanko
Domestic Violence Data Source	Ms Debbie Crisp
Domestic Violence Intervention Project	Ms Jo Todd
Eaves Housing For Women	Ms Denise Marshall
Greater London Action on Disability	Ms Brenda Ellis
Greater London Authority (Health)	Ms Hilary Samson-Barry
Greater London Domestic Violence Project	Ms Davina James-Hanman
Imkaan	Ms Sumanta Roy
King's Fund	Mr David Woodhead
London Development Agency	Ms Marie Winckler
London Probation Service	Ms Geraldine Gavin
London Regional Crime Director	Ms Ellie Roy

London Regional Housing Corporation	Ms Alice Spencer
London Regional Housing Corporation	Ms Pamela Sedgewick
London Voluntary Service Council	Mr Drew Stevenson
London Voluntary Service Council	Ms Sally Copley
Magistrates Association	Ms Harriet Cullis
Mayor's Office	Ms Anni Marjoram
Metropolitan Police Authority	Ms Jennette Arnold
Metropolitan Police Service	DC Superintendent John Godsave
National Relate London Office	Mr Geoff Hogan
Newham Asian Women's Project	Ms Anjum Mouj
North London Relate	Ms Penny Wurzal
NSPCC	Mr Jason Lever
Refuge	Ms Clare Jennings
Shelter	Ms Vicky Watson
Southall Black Sisters	Ms Hanana Siddiqui
Victim Support London	Ms Anne Coughlan
Women's Aid Federation (England)	Ms Nicola Harwin
Women's Health Information Centre	Ms Helen Scadding

### Appendix B: Terms of reference for the Advisory Group

The role of the Advisory Group was to act in an expert advisory capacity to the Mayor and the Association of London Government on domestic violence in London. The Advisory Group assisted in mapping out the current range of approaches, interventions and provision in London and considered the scope for strategic improvement and effective co-ordination. Members of the Advisory group met on three occasions to advise on draft proposals. The Group utilised existing research, data and information to develop proposals on the Mayor's possible role, and defined the approach the Mayor and the ALG should take to reduce the harm of domestic violence in the capital.

The proposed principal areas for investigation were:

- Assessment and audit of current national domestic violence policy, legal framework – do they work for London?
- Policing and community safety – Metropolitan Police approach to domestic violence in London and the role of other criminal justice agencies in promoting community safety. How does domestic violence impact on communities in London and are certain communities disproportionately affected due to poor service provision or other factors? What is the process for realising the Mayor's commitment on increasing women's safety? What is the potential to use resources more effectively?
- Public health – assessment of the impact of domestic violence on the health and welfare of Londoners. How can health services be more fully involved in preventing domestic violence?
- Equalities – how do race, gender, sexuality and discrimination inter-relate with domestic violence in London? How do these issues affect take up of services and is there potential for changing these patterns of help-seeking? How are the needs of London's dispersed communities of new arrived asylum seekers and refugees met?
- Where should and could domestic violence be located? How can domestic violence be more fully integrated into existing strategies such as Best Value, Children's Service Plans and the London Health Strategy? How can the issues of housing needs and after care be addressed? How can agencies currently conspicuous by their absence (eg CPS, DSS, Child Support Agency, Education, etc) be brought into planning processes?

- Education and prevention – approaches adopted in London – how could they be improved?
- How can new technology (eg electronic tagging, internet, etc) be utilised to reduce and prevent domestic violence?

Integration and consistency – What is the relationship between domestic violence and the different areas of GLA responsibility – such as London’s culture, transport, spatial development and economic development? How should domestic violence be integrated with the GLA’s strategic development and cross cutting themes of sustainable development, health and equalities?

## Appendix C: Service/project/activity descriptions

Some of the of the projects, services and activities mentioned in this document vary enormously from agency to agency or are new proposals. To aid clarity, therefore, a brief description of the key elements of each are outlined below.

### *Consultation*

Recent research<sup>84</sup> has shown that the aim of consultation is rarely explicitly stated. Unsurprisingly then, those doing the consultation and those being consulted, frequently have a different understanding of the purpose and eventual outcome. For example, those consulting often end up with descriptions of the problems but rarely ask for solutions. There is also a tendency to treat consultation as an end in itself. Those being consulted frequently expect to be informed of progress and for their contributions to be more influential in shaping future provision. It is important that consultation is seen as an on-going, two way process requiring negotiation, rather than a one-off event which is a one way process.

Both consistency and flexibility are required by consulting bodies. Moreover, consultation with survivors of domestic violence should be done sensitively, with sources of emotional support offered, and, where appropriate, remuneration.

### *Safety planning*<sup>85</sup>

Safety planning is a key practical strategy which aims to help individual women and children to stay safe. It involves separate planning with women and children in a practical and detailed way, including:

- asking abused women and children to identify a safe place to go if there is further violence
- asking abused women and children to identify a safe person they can go to if necessary
- ensuring that abused women and children know how to contact emergency services safely
- making sure children understand that it is neither safe nor their responsibility to intervene to try and protect their mothers
- undertaking very detailed work with women about locks, access to the telephone and so on.

### *Floating support*

This is a service offered to new tenants who may be living in a previously unknown area. Assistance is given in settling into the new area by, for example, helping to locate GPs, new schools and so on. Since research has shown that new tenancies are most likely to break down within the

first six months of occupation, this can be a very cost-effective service as well as useful to women and children in starting their new lives.

Although the forthcoming introduction of 'Supporting People' will provide funding for floating support schemes, it is more narrowly defined as housing related support only. It is, as yet, unclear what will be included and what will be excluded.

### *Inter-borough transfers*

Whilst the exact details of how such a scheme might operate are yet to be determined, the outcome of this project would be that a woman living in social housing in one London borough would be able to move to another London borough without entering temporary accommodation. In order for such a scheme to be of use, speed will be of the essence. One potential area to explore which may provide a partial solution, is the possibility of a ring-fenced scheme solely for women fleeing domestic violence, where a series of mutual exchanges could be realised. The potential financial savings of such a scheme are enormous let alone the 'social savings' in reduced trauma to abused women and children. The ALG is currently piloting one possible solution, 'Getting London Moving'.

### *Advocacy services*

All available evidence suggests that this is the service most valued by women experiencing domestic violence. The confusion of different policies and practices is a minefield for most professionals in this field, let alone for abused women to negotiate successfully. Having one point of contact who maintains an overview of her progress with various agencies, who advocates on her behalf where necessary to ensure policies are being adhered to properly, can make all the difference. In general, advocates are more effective when located within the voluntary sector as the fear which most women have of statutory agencies means that staff of these agencies are often told an edited version of events. For example, if the abuser has threatened to kill the children if she leaves, this information is often concealed from social workers out of a fear the children may be taken from her.

In the recommendation pertaining to the development of advocacy services, there are three preferred models, each of which has particular advantages. Local Domestic Violence Fora will have to decide which model most suits their local circumstances.

### *Model 1*

An independent advocacy service, often attached to the local refuge (often called outreach). This has the advantage of providing support for the advocate(s) who are usually carrying a very heavy workload

(60-70 'live' cases is not unusual) as well as strengthening the role of the women's voluntary sector as a provider of local domestic violence services. This is also the only model which does not carry the possible deterrent of dissuading abused women to come forward due to visibly close links with statutory agencies.

### *Model 2*

Independent advocates are located within a statutory agency and cases coming to the attention of the staff of this agency are referred to the advocacy service. Whilst it can be difficult for the advocacy service to avoid becoming a 'dumping ground' for all the 'difficult' cases, it does have the advantage of ensuring the service women want is provided via a route that might otherwise not have met her needs as well as raising the profile of the issue in an agency that might otherwise marginalise domestic violence. The statutory agencies where this service is most useful are police and primary health care settings; the former because it allows for intervention to take place at the point of crisis (which is often far more effective) as well as defining more clearly that the role of the police is primarily to enforce criminal law. Within health settings, the advantage is because routine screening seems impossible to effect without this kind of 'back up' provision yet identification through health services is vital if we are to develop early intervention mechanisms.

### *Model 3*

Key agencies providing domestic violence services each provide a member of staff who are then co-located in a building to provide a 'one stop shop'. Whilst not strictly an advocacy service, the advantage of this model is that it reduces the traipsing from agency to agency (often difficult, especially when subject to movement restriction / monitoring from the abuser) and allows contradictory approaches by different agencies to be more easily identified by the agencies themselves which can be more effective in implementing longer term change than when alerted by an (outsider) advocate.

### *Contact centres*

These are a place where non-resident parents can meet with their children for supervised contact or where children can be 'handed over' without the parents themselves having to meet.

Most Child Contact Centres do not offer 'supervised contact'. The provision which most offer is supported contact which is described by the National Association of Child Contact Centres (NACCC) as:

- low vigilance
- several families at a time in one or a number of rooms

- volunteers and staff keeping a watchful eye
- conversations not being monitored.

### *Supervised contact*

Supervised contact is the term used for contact visits which are supervised by a trained member of staff to ensure the child's safety and well-being and to ensure that the child is not grilled for information which could put the child or the resident parent in danger. In the past the courts have made orders requiring friends or relatives or sometimes an abused woman herself to supervise contact visits. Although this practice is slowly changing it still remains relatively widespread.

### *Cocoon Watch*

Pioneered in Killingbeck, this involves getting the help and support of neighbours, family and relevant agencies with the woman's consent. Essentially, it is a way of giving neighbours 'permission' to intervene or take other action.

### *Best Value*

Best Value, which currently applies to both the police and local authorities, is an assessment framework to ensure that public services are efficient, economic and effective. It is proposed that each Borough conduct a holistic fundamental performance review encompassing all relevant agencies in the locality. As part of the compare and compete functions required, it is additionally proposed that five case studies be developed for all Boroughs to assess their services against. This will provide essential information on consistency across London. As part of the challenge function, it is proposed that each review include an external challenger.

### *Training*

There are many different types of domestic violence training offered; the most common types are:

- basic awareness training
- inter-agency training
- specialist courses for specific groups of staff / individual agencies
- sectoral training (eg all component parts of the criminal justice system)
- Domestic Violence Forum development training
- Domestic Violence Trainer courses.

It should be noted that formal classroom training is not the only model available. Where possible, shadowing, job swaps, distance learning and secondments can equally be appropriate and useful approaches.

In order to ensure that consistent messages are delivered throughout the capital, assessment criteria for all domestic violence courses should be developed.

### *Refuges-online*

This project aims primarily to connect, via a secure website, all refuges in London to provide a more effective management of available bed-spaces in refuges. There are a number of useful 'spin-offs' that could occur from this project such as electronic newsletters for refuge staff and the sharing of policy and good practice to better inform refuge work. It is essential that specialist domestic violence voluntary sector services are not left behind in the development of technology, especially in view of the Government's plans to hold all social care records electronically by 2004.

In the longer term, it is envisaged that 'Refuges-Online' will develop a public part of the site where non-sensitive information of use to both abused women and children as well as service providers, can be posted.

### *International Day of Action Against Violence Against Women*

25 November honours the anniversary of the murder of the Mirabal sisters who were brutally murdered by the Trujillo dictatorship in the Dominican Republic in 1960. It is now commemorated around the world by women's groups as the day to publicise issues relating to violence against women. This international day has also been linked with December 10, international Human Rights day, to emphasise the point that violence against women is a human rights issue. The intervening period is known as 'the 16 days of activism'.

### Appendix D: The Mayor's vision for London

To develop London as an exemplary sustainable world city based on three balanced and interlocking elements of :

- strong and diverse economic growth
- social inclusivity to allow all Londoners to share in London's future success
- fundamental improvements in environmental management & use of resources.

This will mean London needs to become:

- A prosperous city: in which all share in the benefits of wealth created in London's dynamic economy.
- A city for people: a liveable city of safe, attractive streets, where goods and services are within easy reach and where everyone feels safe and secure.
- An accessible city: with fast, efficient and comfortable means of transport, and access to affordable homes, education and training, health, leisure and recreation.
- A fair city: showing tolerance and abolishing all forms of discrimination, where neighbourhoods and communities have a say in their futures.
- A green city: making efficient use of natural resources and energy, respecting the natural world and wildlife, using to the full the varied pattern of open space, eco-friendly design and construction methods, recycling waste and creating new 'green' industries.

This strategy is consistent with the Mayor's vision for London, meeting not only the aims of London as a city for people and a fair city but also contributing towards the cross-cutting themes of sustainable development, a healthy city and the promotion of equality.

### Appendix E: Position statement on mediation<sup>86</sup>

During the consultation phase, the absence of any proposals for mediation as an intervention was raised. The practice of mediation is explicitly excluded from this strategy since it contravenes one of its key aims of increasing safe choices for abused women and children.

When agencies, family members and friends do intervene, attempts are sometimes made to mediate between parties, frequently with the aim of reconciliation. Of course women have the right to choose mediation, but it must be recognised that reconciliation attempts are often made many times before approaching agencies for help. The role of agencies is to provide alternatives. Their role is to encourage and advise women to change abusive situations through law enforcement and by providing welfare and legal services. Mediation compromises their position, often creating a conflict of interest, undermining their legal and moral duty to protect women from abuse.

The dangers of mediation are highlighted by the case of Vandana Patel, who, in 1991 was stabbed to death by her husband in the supposed safety of Stoke Newington Police Station's Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) in North London.

The police had agreed that the meeting could take place at the DVU following a request from the women's refuge that Vandana was staying at, after she had left her husband as a result of domestic violence.

Despite the death of Vandana Patel, legal professionals and other service providers, particularly Social Services, continue to undertake mediation in cases of domestic violence and forced marriage. Whilst some of this is unwitting, for instance when passing on messages and letters between parties under pressure from family or community members, many do so as a formal or informal part of their service.

Although mediation is a useful option in some situations of conflict resolution, it cannot be advocated in situations of abuse.

The power dynamics involved in abusive relationship can be exploited by the abuser to assert pressure whilst the victim may be intimidated into making agreements, which do not work in her best interest, thus minimising protection. Agencies have a legal duty to encourage women to take up alternatives and to maximise protection. To do otherwise is negligent and potentially a breach of human rights legislation.

## References

- 1 The Association of London Government represents the 32 London boroughs, the Corporation of London, Metropolitan Police Authority and the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.
- 2 This will not only address existing members but also set out the key stakeholders frequently absent from Fora (eg Community Legal Service Partnerships)
- 3 '1993–1998 Intimate Partner Violence' Bureau of Justice Statistics, USA May 2000
- 4 'Counting the Costs' E Stanko et al, Crime Concern 1998
- 5 Ibid
- 6 The exceptions to this are refuge projects and some women's voluntary sector groups who do focus specifically on domestic violence.
- 7 NSPCC 1997, cited in "Children's Needs, Parenting Capacity" H Cleaver, I Unell and J Aldgate (1999)
- 8 These include the Council of Europe Plan of Action for combating violence against women (EG-S-VL June 1997); the Committee on Women's Rights resolution to Parliament (16 July 1998); the European Observatory on violence against women; the Fourth Action Programme for equality between women and men; the designation of 1999 as a European Year Against Violence Against Women and the EU resolutions of 11 June 1986 on violence against women, 17 December 1993 on pornography and 6 May 1994 on abuse of women's freedom and fundamental rights.
- 9 In 1994, the United Nations appointed a UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences, entrusted with documenting and analysing the issue worldwide. In some regions, international conventions on violence against women have already been introduced, for example the American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women and the Draft Pan-African Treaty against Violence against Women.
- 10 'Violence against women: a priority health issue' World Health Organisation July 1997
- 11 'World Development Report: investing in health' World Bank, 1993.

- 12 Now renamed Women and Equality Unit
- 13 This section has been adapted with permission from '*Challenging Violence Against Women: The Canadian Experience*' By Gill Hague, Liz Kelly & Audrey Mullender 2000
- 14 Throughout this document, reference is made to refuge projects to emphasise that the refuge movement provides much more than supported accommodation. Many refuge projects provide outreach and advocacy support, resettlement services, and play a vital role in education, public awareness and training.
- 15 This is based on a synthesised version of findings from a range of research studies such as those listed in footnote 24.
- 16 There are some limited exceptions to this such as child protection considerations.
- 17 '*Tackling domestic violence: A guide to developing multi-agency initiatives*' Gill Hague and Ellen Malos, Polity Press 1996
- 18 '*Multi-Agency Guidance for Addressing Domestic Violence*', Home Office 2000
- 19 As one example, on 28 September 2000, over a 24 hour period the UK police received over 1300 domestic violence calls. 81 per cent of those contacting police were women attacked by men, 8 per cent men attacked by women; 4 per cent women attacked by women and 7 per cent men attacked by men. '*A Snapshot of the Impact of Domestic Violence in the UK*' by Prof E Stanko. The British Crime Survey also shows that women are more than twice as likely to be repeatedly assaulted and more likely to suffer serious injury. '*Domestic Violence: Findings From The BCS Self-Completion Questionnaire*' Home Office 1999.
- 20 This framework, which originated with Prof Liz Kelly, has been promoted by the Greater London Domestic Violence Project and has been adopted by a number of London Domestic Violence Fora/Crime and Disorder Partnerships.
- 21 This is yet another reason why intervention and accountability need to be carried out by the state and the wider community. If left to the individual woman, even if she is effective, it does not deter the abuser from doing it again in his next relationship.

- 22 *'What Works? Meeting The Needs Of Children'* Audrey Mullender, Jan 2000 Crime Reduction Research Series Home Office.
- 23 This is a amalgamation from several research studies into domestic violence service provision including *'Domestic Violence Matters: an evaluation of a pilot project'* L Kelly 1997; *'Domestic violence and housing: Local authority responses to women and children escaping violence in the home'* E Malos & G Hague, 1993; *'Womenspeak'* Women's Aid 2000, *'Children's And Mothers' Views On Domestic Violence'* C McGee NSPCC 1999; *'From good intentions to good practice'* C Humphreys et al, 2001 and, *'What works? Women survivors views'* Home Office briefing paper 2000.
- 24 *'Domestic violence and housing: Local authority responses to women and children escaping violence in the home'* E Malos & G Hague, 1993
- 25 *'Reducing Domestic Violence...What Works? Meeting The Needs Of Children'* Audrey Mullender, Home Office 2000
- 26 In particular, closer working practices need to be developed between Police Child Protection Teams and Police Community Safety Units as well as between Area Child Protection Committees and Domestic Violence Fora as recommended in *'Working Together'* Dept of Health, 1999.
- 27 Many Fora rely solely on refuge project staff to provide feedback on survivors' views and experiences. Whilst this is appropriate (90 per cent of refuge projects consult survivors), it is insufficient in isolation. Such an approach is unlikely, for example, to highlight any problems with refuge provision and it places many refuge staff in the awkward position of providing negative feedback to their funding bodies. However, it should be noted that refuge projects are 'the only agencies that women believed could offer them safety and refuge staff [are] the only professionals to whom women felt able to tell the full details of their experiences' Home Office briefing paper 2000, *'What works? Women survivors views'*. Women's Aid Federation (England) will shortly be publishing a practical guide on consultation: *'Professionals by Experience: A guide to service user participation and consultation for domestic violence services'* by G Hague, A Mullender and R Aris.
- 28 *'Domestic Violence Matters: an evaluation of a pilot project'* Liz Kelly, Home Office 1998

- 29 Routine screening needs to be carefully implemented and should not be done without training, staff support systems and sufficient resources to respond should domestic violence be identified.
- 30 *'Women consistently reported that they wanted to be asked [by health professionals] about domestic violence'* Home Office briefing paper 2000, *'What works? Women survivors views'*.
- 31 This does not mean routinely prosecuting against a woman's wishes as safety must be the primary consideration. It means evidence gathering and prosecutions need to be approached more creatively so that the success of the case does not rely solely on a woman's testimony in court.
- 32 Ellen Pence et al *'The Justice System's Response To Domestic Assault Cases; A Guide For Policy Development'* 1989, Domestic Abuse Intervention Programme
- 33 This may well be because women (usually accurately) lack faith in the criminal justice system to offer adequate protection. In the Women's Aid and Hansard society's on-line consultation, 90 per cent of women who had had contact with the criminal justice system said they did not receive an adequate response. (*'Womenspeak'* 2000)
- 34 *'The impact of mandatory court review on batterer program compliance'* E Gondolf 1998
- 35 As Probation services move towards taking such programmes 'in-house', opportunities for men who self-refer are decreasing.
- 36 Based on personal communications with survivors, refuge and advocacy staff and supported by evidence in *'Womenspeak'* Women's Aid 2000
- 37 Perpetrator programme is the preferred term to emphasise the criminal nature of the behaviour and to distinguish it from more therapeutic approaches.
- 38 The most common achievement of perpetrator programmes seems to be a reduction in abusive men's dangerousness rather than in stopping abuse altogether.
- 39 This does, of course, assume that the abuser and survivor share accommodation. *'The Hidden Figure'*, J Mooney, Middx. University 1993, found that 21 per cent of women experiencing violence from a male

partner had never lived with him. We know very little about how this difference may affect both their experience and/or what services might be required.

- 40 *'Good Intentions to Good Practice'* C Humphreys et al, 2000.
- 41 *'Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals'* Department of Health 2000
- 42 The term 'holistic floating support scheme' is used here to distinguish it from the more narrowly defined floating support schemes offered by some Housing Associations and included within the 'Supporting People' proposals which focus solely on housing related support.
- 43 Many refuge projects now employ a resettlement worker who assists with such matters. However, most abused women do not go through the refuge system.
- 44 One contact centre claims in its annual report to have a near 100 per cent 'success' rate. Examination of how success is defined reveals that this means establishing on-going contact between children and the non-residential parent. However, evidence from Women's Aid research shows that women and children continue to be harassed and abused on such visits. Even when contact centres do have due regard to safety issues within the building, assaults in the car-park are all too common.
- 45 *'Cocoon watch'* is a concept which might be usefully employed to increase community responses. Details can be found in *'Arresting Evidence'* Jalna Hanmer et al 1999, Home Office.
- 46 These services were pioneered by the Women's Aid network and tend to be rated highly by survivors. However, they are rarely recognised as a core part of the services and hence are often provided on an inadequate and insecure budget.
- 47 *'Community Justice and Safety for Women'* F Morten, London Action Trust, 1994
- 48 *'Co-ordinating Community Responses to Domestic Violence - Lessons from Duluth and Beyond'* M Shephard and E Pence, 1999
- 49 As emphasised in HOC 19/2000 *'Domestic Violence: Revised Circular to the Police'* May 2000

- 50 For example, sporting organisations who, to date have rarely taken a stand on violence against women.
- 51 *'Reducing Domestic Violence...What Works? Perpetrator Programmes'* S Burton and A Mullender Home Office 2001 and *'The Case Against Anger Control Treatment Programs for Batterers'* E Gondolf and D Russell 1986
- 52 Respect, the national co-ordinating body for perpetrator programmes, has a set of minimum standards which are endorsed by this strategy. Copies can be obtained from Respect, PO Box 34434, London, W6 0YS. Tel: 020 8563 8523
- 53 This means, for example, that the partner support service should pro-actively continue to make contact with women until successful rather than simply sending a leaflet in the post and waiting for her to initiate contact. The National Probation Directorate in the Home Office is currently working towards standardising these programmes
- 54 A rare exception is the publicity material produced by Women's Aid which has included guidance aimed specifically at family and friends and which was later utilised by the Home Office in their *'Break The Chain'* leaflet
- 55 Domestic Violence Intervention Project in Hammersmith has published an excellent manual which explains and explores the concept of safety planning. We will build on and disseminate this information to key agencies.
- 56 *'There's no excuse; evaluation of a public education campaign'* Family Violence Prevention Fund, 1996
- 57 The GLA is producing an alcohol and substance abuse harm reduction strategy as part of its overall crime prevention policy and statutory requirement to produce a health strategy. Work is underway to ensure that (a) women's safety is prioritised as during the withdrawal phase, violence may actually increase and as such, routine screening for domestic violence should be introduced in substance abuse projects and (b) the myth of drugs or alcohol abuse causing domestic violence is not reinforced. (this is not to deny their frequent co-existence). Crack cocaine and steroids are the only known substances where a reduction in their use may also reduce violence but even here, the withdrawal phase is still a period of potential danger and the cessation of abuse is in no way guaranteed.

- 58 The most well known exceptions to this are Women's Aid campaigns, the Zero Tolerance campaign in Edinburgh and the European Parliament campaign. The similarities between the failings of 'colour-blind' approaches to race and 'gender-blind' approaches to domestic violence appear not to have been made.
- 59 Home Office briefing paper 2000 *'What works? Meeting the needs of children'*
- 60 Personal, Health and Social Education.
- 61 'At present, too much spending is locked into a child protection investigative approach which offers no protection to women, leaves many children at risk and draws resources away from family support and direct work with children.' Home Office briefing paper 2000 *'What works? Meeting the needs of children'*
- 62 For example, a recent research study found that 99 per cent of education staff believe domestic violence is caused by alcohol. Cited in Ruth Aitkin *'Domestic violence and the impact on children – results of a survey into the knowledge and experience of educational personnel within two European countries'*. Refuge 2001
- 63 *'Children's And Mothers' Views On Domestic Violence'* C McGee NSPCC 1999
- 64 For example, domestic violence information could be placed in dentists waiting rooms, in hairdressers and nail salons.
- 65 In 1995 a study by the Nova Scotia Justice Department discovered that when women were murdered, the workplace was the most common location where they had talked about abuse. This underlines the importance of work with employers and trade unions (Health Canada, 1998),
- 66 *'Survey of Londoners 2000'* Association of London Government
- 67 Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, public bodies are especially required to demonstrate that they are providing services which meet the needs of black and minority ethnic women experiencing domestic violence including asylum seekers.
- 68 It is absolutely imperative that 'screening' procedures only be implemented following appropriate staff training and that agencies only

engage in this activity having established appropriate services are in place to cope with increased demand. Either the agency themselves should provide these services or have entered into written agreements with other local service providers.

- 69 Domestic Violence Training Standards will be developed as part of the work of the London wide Domestic Violence Forum.
- 70 In some cases, it may be more appropriate for agencies to integrate domestic violence into existing policies.
- 71 This does not mean, for example, that this individual would do all domestic violence case work for that agency, only that they would have a overview. Further work will take place to standardise this role.
- 72 This exercise was conducted in another police force and found an under-recording rate of 100 per cent.
- 73 It is recognised that this recommendation may take time to implement in those authorities where a five year programme has already been agreed and resources allocated. Where this is the case, local authorities should seek to integrate domestic violence into planned Best Value Reviews where possible.
- 74 Some local authorities have Domestic Violence Co-ordinators
- 75 The government's national agenda on violence against women, *'Living Without Fear'* (1999), recommended that Domestic Violence Fora be extended to cover other forms of violence against women.
- 76 There is some evidence to suggest that controlling access to birth control is a feature of abusive teenage relationships. *'Domestic violence and Birth Control Sabotage'* Centre For Impact Research, Chicago, 2000
- 77 In their 1999 guidance on Allocations and Homelessness the DETR advised local authorities: that they should consider waiving any residential requirement they have for entry to the housing registers to allow access to people from another district if they are fleeing domestic violence; that they should consider invoking emergency procedures to make a speedy allocation where necessary; that people who have suffered domestic violence should be treated as having 'reasonable preference' because they have a welfare need for settled accommodation; that women occupying refuges are in accommodation which is insecure and should be given reasonable preference on this ground; that people fleeing domestic

violence should be treated as homeless, because it is not reasonable for them to return to the accommodation they have left and they should not be referred back to the authority from whose area they have fled; that people recovering from the effects of violence may be treated as vulnerable and therefore having a priority need for accommodation.

- 78 As recommended in *'Working Together'* (Dept. of Health, 1999).
- 79 It is recognised that Housing Associations are required to consult with their tenants on changes to the tenancy agreements and that this may, therefore, take time to implement.
- 80 This will not be practicable for some smaller Housing Associations. In such cases, a consortia representative could substitute.
- 81 Specialist refuges are ones which cater for specific groups of women whose support needs are not always met within mainstream provision such as women with substance abuse issues, women with mental health problems and women with older male children
- 82 It should be noted that the Women's Aid website has 'leaflets'/information for survivors about their legal and housing rights in 11 languages, as well as an online version of the Gold Book, which gives direct access to refuge and outreach services across the UK.
- 83 This was previously known as Legal Aid
- 84 *'Widening Access: Improving Police Relations With Hard To Reach Groups'* Police Research Series Paper 138, Home Office, T Jones and T Newburn, January 2001
- 85 This definition is quoted from *'From Good Intentions to Good Practice'* C Humphreys, et al, Policy Press & Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000
- 86 This statement has been adapted in agreement with Southall Black Sisters from *'Forced Marriage: An Abuse of Human Rights'* July 2001.

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