

**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough  
Domestic Abuse  
and Sexual Violence Partnership  
Annual Report  
2020-21**



**Cambridgeshire  
& Peterborough**  
Domestic Abuse & Sexual  
Violence Partnership

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## Introduction from the Chair

Dear Partners

I am pleased to introduce to you the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership Annual Report for 2020/21.

The past 12 months have placed an unprecedented demand on our collective resources across the county with a continued increase in domestic abuse allegations and a rise this year in allegations of serious sexual assault and rape across Cambridgeshire. When set against the challenges of successive Covid-19 lockdown periods, the challenges for all our staff in responding to this increase have been immense – we are grateful to everyone for their patience, perseverance, and continued professionalism.

During 2020/21, and as we focus now on the year ahead, we have been rightly guided and informed by several high-profile events, not least the murder of Sarah Everard. The spotlight shone on peer on peer abuse within schools and the government's 'End to End Rape Review' have both challenged the entire country's perception of, and response our to, Violence Against Women and Girls and sexual violence. More positively, they have served to galvanise the national resolve and determination to do more for the victims of these offences. Within the DASV Partnership, drawing upon our wealth of expertise and experience, this is precisely what we are committed to continue doing. The passing into statute in April of the new Domestic Abuse Act, is another welcome addition to this purpose.

This document is an overview of what has been achieved in addressing the above challenges and the structures and strategies employed to do so. The report articulates how, through the DASV Partnership, we are able to provide preventative, protective engagement with families, give support and care to victims and survivors of abuse and trauma, and provides practical assistance through a network of joined-up partner agencies. Crucially, we have highlighted how innovative and resourceful the partnership has been in maintaining and coordinating a high level of performance and support provision across many different business areas, in response to considerable demand.

To build on the past year's progress, we are: submitting numerous bids for central government funding, specifically aimed at reducing VAWG in public spaces, reducing stalking and adolescent to parent violence and increasing perpetrator programmes; increasing IDVA and ISVA provision; and creation of Vulnerability Focus Desks and Early Intervention Domestic Abuse Desks within the Constabulary.

There are many more initiatives underway and we know that across the partnership all our staff are working tirelessly to reduce instances of domestic and sexual abuse and provide the best possible care and support for victims. Thank you all once again for your support of the DASV Partnership and strategy.

John Massey & Rob Hill

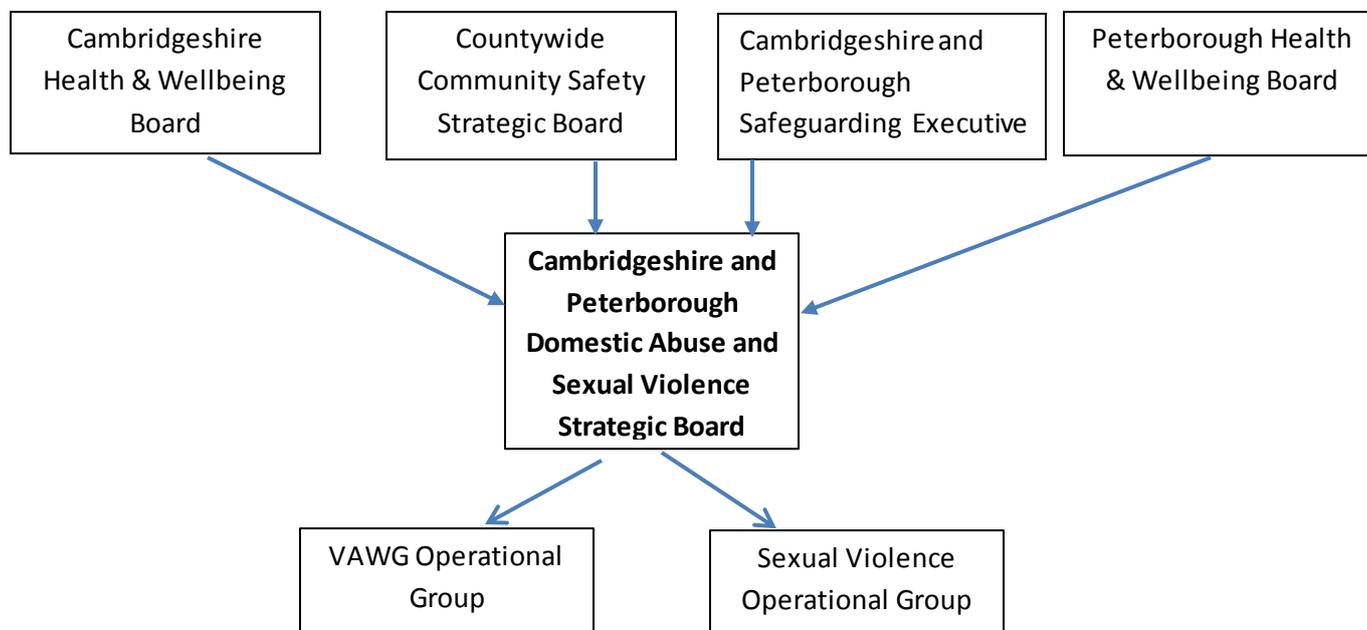
Co-Chairs, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership

### **Key Headlines 2020-21 – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**

- ❖ There were 2,324 referrals to the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor Service for domestic abuse, an increase of 18% on 2019-20
- ❖ A total of 1,176 cases were heard at MARAC - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences
- ❖ A total of 14,804 domestic abuse incidents were reported to Cambridgeshire Constabulary which is an increase on the previous year.
- ❖ 7,588 victims of violent crime (including domestic abuse and sexual violence) supported by the Victim and Witness Hub.
- ❖ Refuges across the county housed 93 women and 112 children.
- ❖ 2,297 referrals were made to domestic abuse outreach services
- ❖ Cambridge & Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership supported 1,679 survivors in 2020-21 with support moving from life changing to life saving.
- ❖ The Adult Safeguarding Teams received 601 referrals that involved a domestic abuse element and 249 with a sexual violence element.
- ❖ An additional £600,000 in extraordinary Covid 19 funding and extra ISVA funding was secured by the local authority and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

## 1.0 Our structure

The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership operates across both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. At a strategic level, work is overseen by the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Delivery Board who ensure the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, and associated Action Plan are delivered by the Violence Against Women and Girls Operational Group.



## 2.0 Our Aims

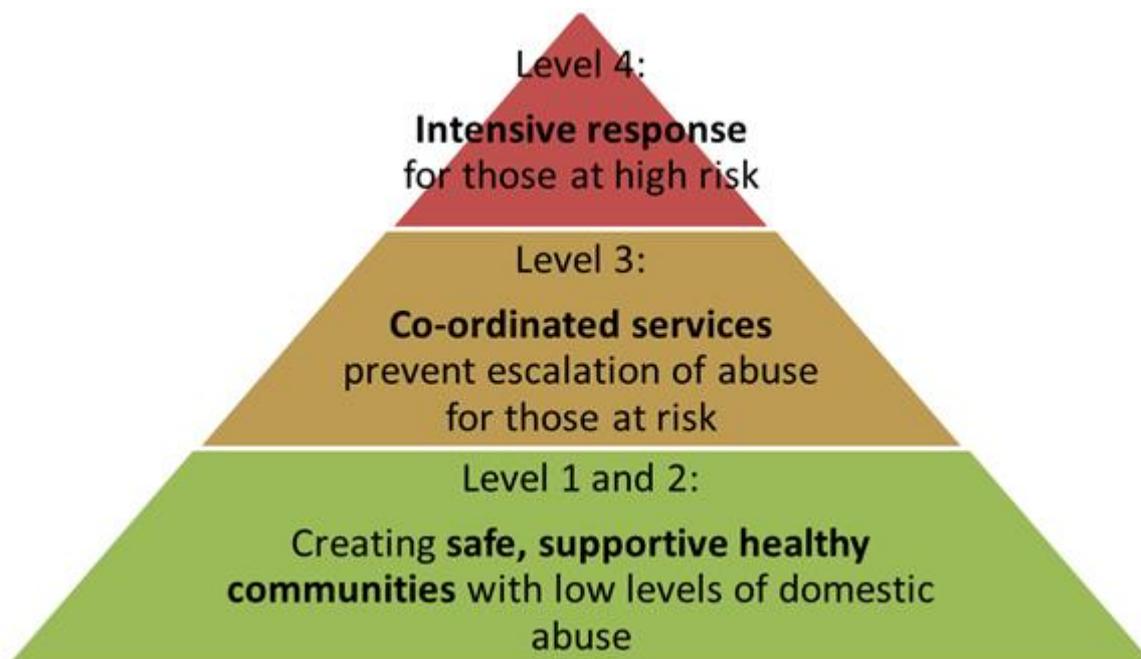
Our vision:

**To reduce the harms associated with domestic abuse and sexual violence, and prevent these crimes from occurring across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.**

The current Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG) Strategy is based on Home Office strategy for VAWG services. Our strategic aims are separate for domestic abuse and sexual violence and more information can be found in the relevant sections further in this report.

### 3.0 Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Offer

The domestic abuse and sexual violence 'Offer' is based on the Model of Staged Intervention, setting out services at four levels: the model is a key part of a wider integrated model of support services for victims of crime commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.



### 4.0 Response to Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown periods were unprecedented and required extensive partnership working to ensure a service could be maintained for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.

National media outlets quickly reported significant increases in calls to the National Domestic Abuse Helpline and to children's helplines such as Child Line and NSPCC. Several national organisations held online meetings/discussions and webinars to look at how Covid-19 may be impacting on domestic abuse victims and services including focus on specific groups such as children.

Locally, interim strategies were developed to ensure key risks for both domestic abuse and sexual violence victims and services were identified and actions in place to mitigate risks. The DASV Strategic Board held well attended monthly virtual meetings where all agencies were able to discuss their current situation and risks and a document was drawn up to collate this information. The DASV/VAWG Operational Group held bi-monthly meetings where front line and emerging issues were discussed. In addition, the Eastern Region Domestic Abuse Coordinator Forum met virtually monthly to share information and updates from neighbouring counties.

The Independent Domestic Abuse Advisory Service stopped face-to-face meetings with clients when the first lockdown was announced. Instead, virtual meetings have taken place over the telephone. The Young People's IDVA reported clients wanting to communicate via What's App and this was agreed by CCC Information Management Team providing transcripts of conversations were uploaded to the IDVA database (MODUS). The IDVA staff were all able to work remotely from home without any significant disruption to service. Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) continued virtually, and agencies dialled into the meeting.

The Home Office launched the 'You Are Not Alone' campaign early in lockdown with a key message that national and local support services for domestic abuse were still available and advising on ways to make safe contact. The DASV Partnership shared these messages via social media and created a poster which was sent out by email and available on the website to print off. We linked in with Cambridgeshire County Council's corporate Communications Team early on to ensure messages about national and local support were shared via social media.

A key message became reassuring victims that they could leave their homes during lockdown to escape domestic abuse without any repercussions from the police. This message was shared extensively by the DASV Partnership and Cambridgeshire Constabulary. The monthly VAWG Newsletter continued to be sent to over 500 professionals a month, as well as being available to download on the Cambs DASV website, and an emphasis was put on sharing news from a range of available services including mental health services and Covid updates.

National charity Hestia launched a partnership with Boots Pharmacies (later joined by Superdrug, Morrison and some independent pharmacies) whereby victims of domestic abuse could use the consulting room as a 'safe space' to ask for support. Towards the end of 2020 the Home Office launched a similar service with independent pharmacies. We ensured local contact information was distributed to all pharmacies in the county.

Local magazine 'The Listing' which is available online and covers villages in South Cambs around the border with Herts, offered space for information about domestic abuse free of charge, which was used to create greater awareness. Heart FM Cambridgeshire offered a reduced rate for a radio advert to run 4 times a day for the month of June, which we accepted and wrote the script for the advert advising that support services are still available and referring to the CambsDASV website for more information.

We provided local NHS services, who were receiving disclosures at Covid-19 testing, with printable coupons they could give to women at the testing points that contained local support service telephone numbers. The CCC Corporate Communications Team and Human Resources Team put out messages to CCC employees and managers about recognising and supporting staff around DA.

Weekly virtual meetings were set up with specialist providers in the domestic abuse sector (refuge and outreach providers), as well as sexual violence services to discuss the current situation and emerging risks.

Some short-term funding opportunities became available and successful bids were made to support DA and SV services with additional expenditure due to Covid. Cambridge Women's Aid, Refuge, Peterborough Women's Aid and Cambridge and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership were all successful in bids to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Clients were able to benefit from flexible funding, part of MCHLG funding, particularly for household goods and security measures for victims. As the Bobby Scheme and charitable organisations had to close, items needed to be purchased online.

The Safeguarding Boards, in partnership with DASV, created short presentations hosted on their website around domestic abuse and sexual violence during Covid and several training presentations were delivered virtually by the DASV Partnership.

### Covid related funding

During the year the Government announced a range of additional funding opportunities for domestic abuse and sexual violence support services:

- Covid-19 Extraordinary Ministry of Justice Funding for Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Support Services – through which the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in partnership with the local authority secured an additional £380k for local services. This was awarded to core and emerging grass roots specialist organisations enabling seldom heard communities to access bespoke services.
- Funding from the Home Office for three additional ISVAs for two years.

As well as successful bids for the funding from Cambridge Women's Aid, Refuge and Cambridge & Peterborough Rape Crisis, the organisations below were all awarded funding through the Ministry of Justice Covid 19 Extraordinary fund.

### **Cambridgeshire Deaf Association**

- Provided support to 26 deaf victims of domestic abuse, including three male victims. 21 victims had additional needs, requiring support: including courts, finances, housing and child protection procedures. Seven clients were supported to move to a safer location. The service continued to support victims face to face where this was essential, and their needs could not be met remotely due to their communication requirements.

### **Choices**

- Adapted their support during the pandemic to offer victims of childhood sexual abuse a short-term stabilisation service consisting of a six-session programme of psychoeducation, stabilisation, and resourcing. They received 85 referrals and were able to offer support to 49 victims.

### **Hampton Trust**

- The funding enabled them to launch the CARA Telephone Intervention scheme, which works with perpetrators of domestic abuse, when the planned face to face project CARA scheme had to be delayed due to the pandemic. As part of this service, 33 victims of these offenders were contacted to ensure that they were safe and had access to further domestic abuse support if required.

### **NSPCC**

- Funding supported 43 young victims of crime, including rape, sexual assault, online grooming, and domestic violence to receive therapy and support to help them recover from their trauma. Funding helped to provide resources so that children could have their own equipment to use during sessions as this could not be accessed from the centre in the usual way during the pandemic.

### **One Voice 4 Travellers**

- 82 victims of domestic abuse within the Gypsy, Romany and Traveller community were supported. Practical and emotional support was delivered using a variety of different methods including phone, WhatsApp, Facebook and Zoom to ensure that victims could still be supported during the pandemic. Victims reported that perpetrators were becoming more stressed as a result of being confined in their home environments and being unable to work during lockdown, with victims who had previously been supported by the charity getting back in touch for reassurance and support.

### **The Meadows Children and Family Wing**

- The Meadows provided support to 201 female victims of domestic abuse, the service adapted the support offered and the Freedom Programme was delivered virtually to 18 women who were supported through phone calls after each session. WhatsApp groups were set up to provide the women with peer support and to help combat loneliness. Over 480 food boxes were provided to families who were struggling financially due to the pandemic.

### **Embrace – Child Victims of Crime**

- 163 young victims of domestic abuse, bullying, hate crime or sexual abuse were supported to access therapeutic support, 53 of these victims were aged 12 years or under. Support was adapted to be provided in online virtual rooms along with phone-based support and occasional 'walk and talks' and even using a camper van in a Covid secure way. 20 young people were also provided with tablets to support their home learning.

### **Family Action**

- Specialist workers from Family Action worked with 301 young victims of crime and their families, over half of whom were aged 12 years and under, providing 1-1 support and onward referral and signposting to a wide range of local agencies. 89 per cent of the young people said that they felt more empowered because of the support they had received.

## **5.0 Strategic Aims – Domestic Abuse**

- Working to prevent people becoming offenders of domestic abuse and reducing victimisation by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it.
- Reducing the risk to victims and intervening to prevent it from continuing, recurring or escalating.
- Perpetrators are appropriately pursued and challenged.
- Through a joint commissioning approach, we will ensure all victims have access to appropriate and proportionate outcome-focused support

### **5.1 Challenging Attitudes and Behaviours**

#### **5.1.1 Education and Awareness for Communities**

Raising awareness across the general public, and with specific community groups forms a large part of our work and is therefore included on the VAWG Action Plan. Communications were delivered to ensure victims and survivors were able to access support during the pandemic and throughout lockdown periods. Partner organisations assisted with sharing messages via social media platforms and newsletters.

### 5.1.2 Preventative work with children and young people in schools and other settings

As the pandemic led to school closures, there was a change of focus to ensure contact with vulnerable young people was maintained. Organisations such as Centre 33, Kite Trust and DHIVerse switched to online groups and other virtual support settings. Contact between Education Safeguarding, police and schools was maintained by frequent meetings between the police, Education Safeguarding, Children’s Social Care and Early Help Hub, Adult Safeguarding, IDVA service and Health partners to identify COVID related issues. These meetings were held daily at the high of the pandemic and then moved to twice weekly and now take place weekly.

## 5.2 Reducing Risk to Victims and Intervening

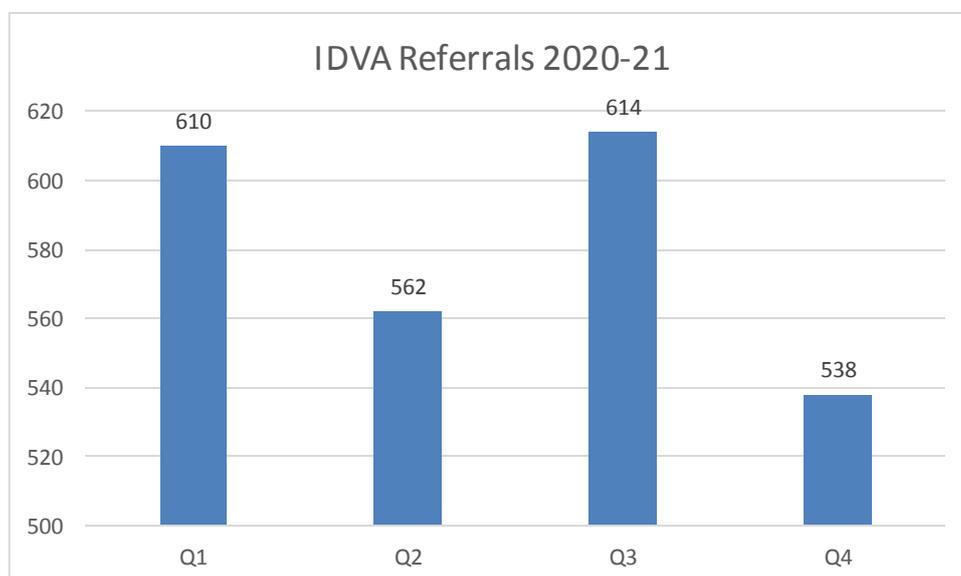
### 5.2.1 IDVA Service

Cambridgeshire County Council manages the IDVA Service which includes 15.4 FTE Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (IDVAs), an IDVA Manager, 2.4 MARAC Coordinators and 1 Business Support Assistant. Most of the posts are based at the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Godmanchester with posts covering Peterborough based at Copse Court. The IDVA Service works mainly with victims who are assessed as being at high risk of harm utilising the sector wide ‘DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-Based Violence) Risk Assessment Checklist but also has four specialist posts that take referrals at all risk levels:

- 2 Young People’s IDVA posts – working with young people aged 13-19 (24 with additional needs) that are experiencing abuse in their own intimate relationships and at all risk levels
- 2 A8 IDVAs – work with victims from Eastern European ‘A8’ countries at all risk levels (an additional post to cover Peterborough was implemented in 2021)
- Health IDVA – works with victims referred by all hospital and Midwifery Services at Addenbrooke’s and Hinchingbrooke Hospitals, at all risk levels
- The Stalking & Harassment IDVA was funded until June 2020 so is included in this report year.

### Number of referrals to Cambridgeshire & Peterborough IDVA Service

The total number of referrals received for 2020-21 was 2,324 which is an increase of 18% on the previous year. The IDVA Service saw increases in referrals as each ‘lockdown’ period was eased.



### Engagement rate

The engagement rate is the percentage of referrals that engage with the IDVA Service. Engagement is on a voluntary basis. Although all efforts are made to engage clients, in some cases it is not possible to safely contact the client or they may not wish to engage. The overall engagement rate for 2020-21 was 76% (target of 75%).

### Repeat Rate – Cambridgeshire IDVA Service

The repeat rate refers to cases re-referred to the IDVA Service with the same victim and perpetrator within twelve months of the last referral. The overall repeat rate for 2020-21 was 30%, which is a decrease on the previous year.

Repeat referrals are not always a 'negative' thing; these can be viewed in a positive way, when the client is engaging with the IDVA Service and is reporting further repeat incidents to the Police in accordance with their agreed safety plan.

### Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) data

The threshold for MARAC referrals were increased to 17 in January 2020 for a three month pilot, with the IDVA service receiving risk assessments scoring between 14-16 and these victims offered support. As part of the pilot MARAC meetings were reduced to three per week, excluding bank holidays.

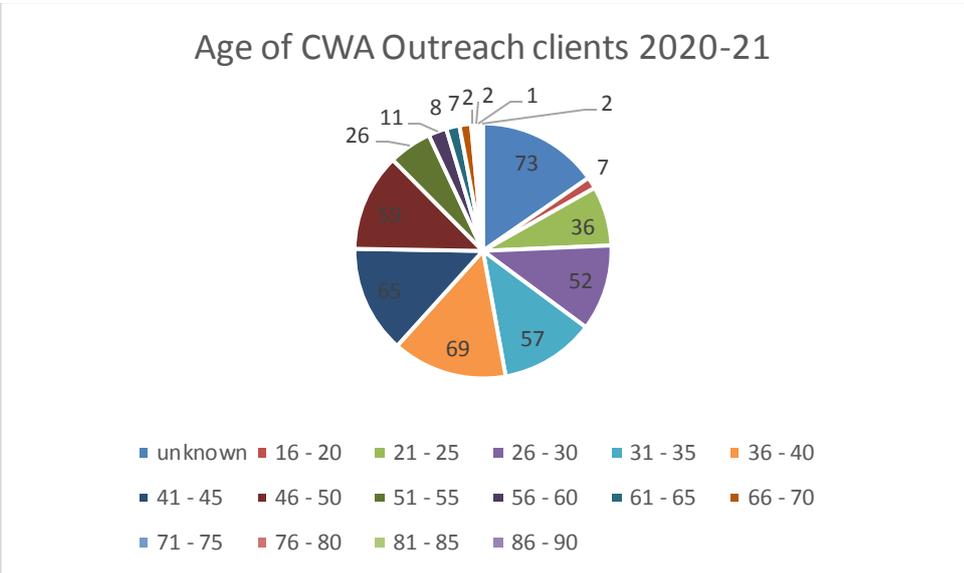
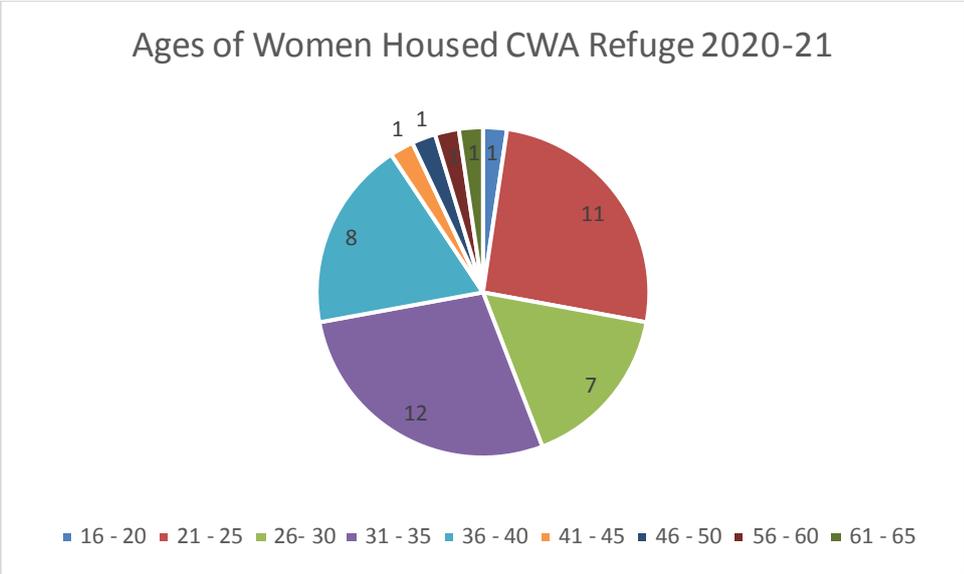
Complex cases which require further investigation or multi agency working escalated to a "MARAC Plus". Evaluation of the pilot proved the change had been successful, so MARAC threshold remains at 17. This led to the anticipated decrease in the number of MARAC cases heard from 1471 in 2019-21 down to 1176 in 2020-21, a 20% decrease. It is important to note that all cases assessed as high risk were offered support from an IDVA.

## 5.2.2 Specialist Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Support Services

The four women's refuges in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough housed a total of 93 women and 112 children during 2020-21. Funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government enabled outreach services to continue and 2,297 referrals were made. Additional funding was provided by OPCC (from emergency DA/SV Ministry of Justice funding) to enable services to adapt delivery through Covid.

### Cambridge Women's Aid 2020-21

The Cambridge refuge housed 43 women during 2020-21, 35 of these were new referrals during the period. The outreach service supported 477 women in 2020-21, 220 of these were new referrals.



Refuge 2020-21

The two refuges continue to support women, keeping families safe with 38 women being housed in 2020-21. Child Support Workers are also funded within the refuges, they are critical in supporting families on their recovery journey.

Refuge continues to deliver Outreach Services to male and female clients covering Huntingdon, Fenland and Peterborough. This year has seen a dramatic increase in the number of referrals during the pandemic with 802 referrals. Refuge secured funding from the Cambridge Cultivate and Innovate fund to employ a new Health Outreach Worker. This role will focus on training health professionals and taking referrals from the health sector across Fenland and Huntingdonshire.

Peterborough Women’s Aid 2020-21

Peterborough Women’s Aid accommodated 20 women in the refuge and received 518 referrals for outreach support.

## Victim and Witness Hub

The Victim and Witness Hub is funded by the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner which provides support to anyone in Cambridgeshire or Peterborough who is a victim of crime, whether they wish to report the crime to the police or not, and/or a victim or witness attending court.

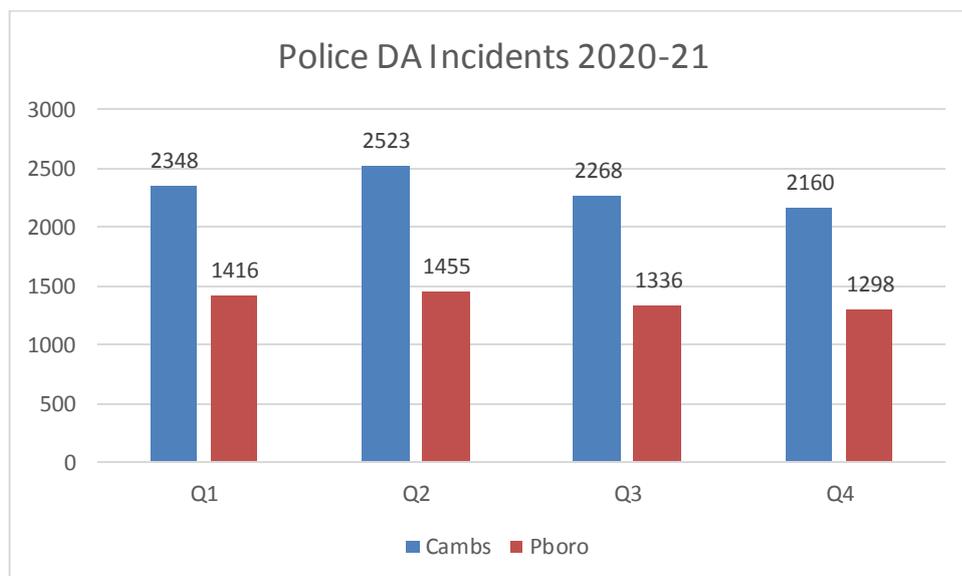
The Hub offers emotional and practical support to victims of crime, including those who have experienced domestic abuse assessed under DASH as being at Standard Risk.

During the year April 2020 to March 2021 Victim and Witness Care Coordinators in the Hub were able to contact and support 647 victims of domestic abuse. This represents 19.1% of the total number of victims supported by the Hub. The Victim and Witness Hub service continued uninterrupted throughout the year during COVID.

### 5.3 Pursuing Perpetrators

#### 5.3.1 Police Domestic Abuse data 2020-21

The total number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the Cambridgeshire Constabulary (including Peterborough) for 2020-21 was 14,804 which is a slight increase on the 2019-20 figure. Domestic abuse incidents have been increasing consistently for the last five years. The rolling 12-month figure for recorded domestic abuse continues to increase in line with that trend.



#### 5.3.2 Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Panel

The Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Panel is a multi-agency meeting designed to identify and manage the highest risk perpetrators, co-chaired by the Detective Inspector responsible for domestic abuse and the DASV Partnership Manager. The panel brings together police and key partners to work effectively to manage perpetrators of domestic abuse and thereby protect the most vulnerable victims. The panel seeks to reduce the risk of harm caused by those who are identified as posing the highest risk through a coordinated approach using problem solving techniques and a menu of tactical options, which are focussed on the perpetrator.

The panel shares information across agencies to develop a tactical plan to ensure the risk posed by the alleged offender is mitigated and managed. The meeting also reviews progress of live investigations involving the perpetrator, reviews recent intelligence and shares partner agency information. It assesses the risk posed to the victim, develops actions to manage risk, agrees timescales for action and tracks outcome and compliance of actions agreed.

Since September 2020 when the panel was reviewed, there have been multi agency actions on 69 cases. These cases remain “active” until there have been no incidents reported to any of the agencies for 3 months. All but one perpetrator was male and in five of the cases the perpetrator had no fixed abode. Six of the cases involved violence against a parent, 55% involved stalking and in 47% of cases the perpetrator had strangled the victim.

#### 5.4 Outcome Focussed Support

##### 5.4.1 Supporting children and young people to recover

Cambridgeshire County Council, on behalf of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership, was awarded continuation funding from the Home Office Public Protection Unit to support children and young people who had experienced domestic abuse during 2020/21.

This funding has continued to provide the services below.

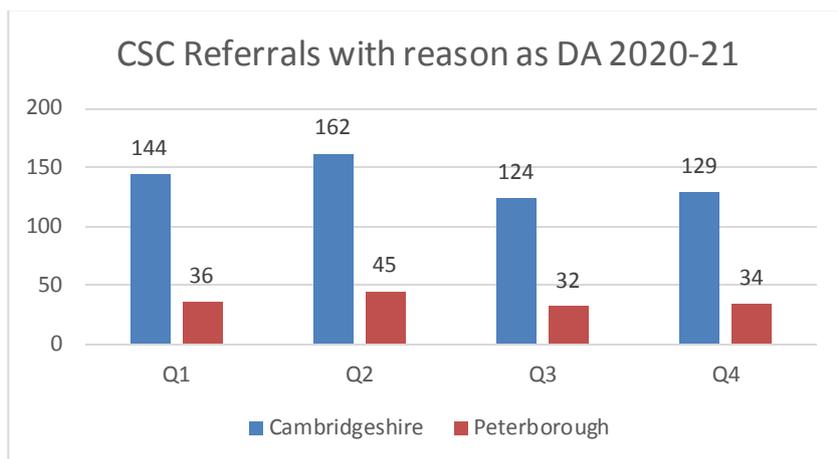
- Cambridgeshire County Council: Young People’s IDVAs x 2
- Cambridge & Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership: ChISVA x 1
- Refuge: Children’s Refuge Workers x 2
- Cambridge Women’s Aid: Children’s Refuge Worker x 1
- Bobby Scheme: Security devices to enable families with children to remain safely in homes
- Embrace: Support service for children aged 7 – 12 years who are victims of domestic abuse

During 2020/21 the CADA project in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough had a target to support 600 children. Through all the projects described they managed to support 913 individual children. This is a 52% increase from the target, despite disruption to services during the first COVID lockdown and a move to virtual working for many of the services.

##### 5.4.3 Developing a group work offer and supporting children’s social care

Due to the Covid19 pandemic face to face group work was unable to go ahead. However, all services worked hard to ensure victims could access support virtually.

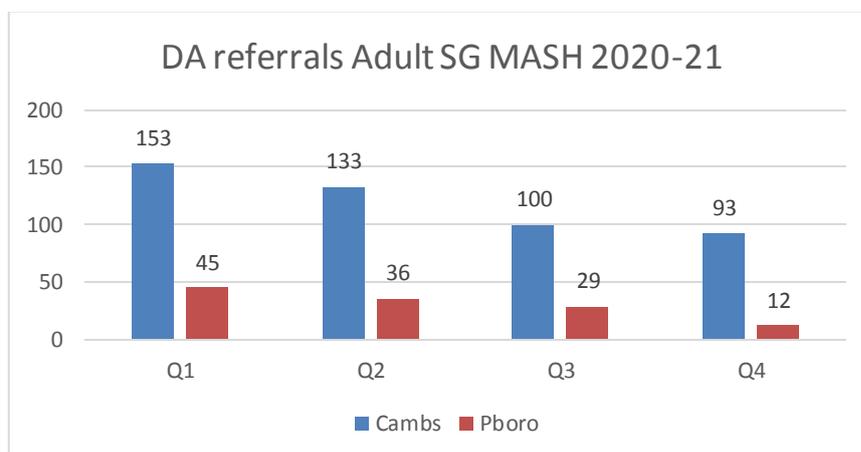
#### 5.4.4 Child Safeguarding Domestic Abuse data



#### 5.4.5 Adult Safeguarding domestic abuse data

The total number of Adult Safeguarding (AS) referrals to the Cambridgeshire MASH with a domestic abuse element in 2020-21 was 479. The total number of AS referrals to the Peterborough MASH with a domestic abuse element in 2020-21 was 202. All these figures are a decrease across both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as the charts below show. A possible explanation for this decrease is that Covid-19 restrictions likely limited observation by others reporting concerns. In addition, from the end of January 2021, the MASH pre-triage all police 102's, so only those deemed to be safeguarding will be recorded as Adult Safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding Adults criteria under the Care Act 2014 is not met in the majority of cases involving domestic abuse that are referred to the Adult Safeguarding MASH Team in Cambridgeshire, but most cases do meet the criteria at the Peterborough AS MASH.



#### 5.4.6 Domestic Homicide Reviews

Partners agreed to pool funding and proceed with a centralised coordination process from April 2021. This was agreed to enable a consistent approach to DHRs across the county.

Over the year, there were sadly 7 deaths which met the criteria for a DHR, 4 homicides and 3 suicides. 5 women and 2 men died or were killed due to domestic abuse. One of these cases will be reviewed as a Child Death rather than a domestic homicide.

A countywide group is in place to Domestic Homicides in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with representatives from Community Safety Partnerships, Safeguarding, Health and Police. An action plan has been drawn up to ensure that learning and associated service improvements from DHR's are shared across the county. This group reports to the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board. DHR reports published can be found at [https://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/domestic\\_homicide\\_reviews/405477](https://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/website/domestic_homicide_reviews/405477).

There can be delays in the process due to the criminal justice systems and in receiving these from the Home Office to publish. As of April 2021 there were 10 DHRs at various stages. Whilst DHRs require recommendations and an associated action plan, actions are progressed when a need is identified. This included greater focus on substance misuse, suicide, and male victims, with greater awareness, training of specialist staff and sessions for the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Champions.

#### 5.4.7 Whole Housing Approach Project

The Whole Housing Approach (WHA) was first conceptualised in 2018 by the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) in collaboration with the National Housing and Domestic Abuse Policy and Practice Group. The MHCLG extended the 18-month pilot with funding for an additional year 2020/21 with continued delivery of the project in three areas, including Cambridgeshire. A mix of direct services to survivors were delivered alongside second tier work with professionals and organisations to help improve how they respond to DA and embed within the local Coordinated Community Response to domestic abuse.

The main delivery outputs for activities delivered between April 2020 and March 2021 includes:

- 973 survivors and 868 dependent children were supported by 7 mobile advocates and 2 co-located housing advocates across Cambridgeshire and London sites.
- 104 survivors and 166 dependent children received Flexible Funding to help them maintain or access safe and stable housing. A total of £35,343 was awarded with most funds helping to clear rent arrears and debts accumulated due to financial abuse, pay for deposits and other move on costs and for household items after relocation.
- The Reciprocal Scheme in Cambridgeshire received 6 referrals and facilitated 5 moves, bringing the total to 9 moves over the course of the pilot, which enabled these survivors to maintain their secure tenancy.
- Two additional housing providers in Cambridgeshire signed up for DAHA accreditation and 8 providers working towards accreditation.
- The PRS lead also developed and delivered a 1-hour awareness session for a Cambs district council PRS and Environmental Health teams.

The group produced and published a [WHA toolkit](#) in March 2020 with a [virtual launch event](#) in November 2021 that was attended by 350 participants. It included over 10 speakers, mainly the delivery partners updating on their work and the voice of three survivors sharing the impact the project had on them and their housing circumstances. A [year 1 report](#) was published in November 2021 and was launched as part of this event.

There are three new pieces of legislation that relate to housing with links to WHA explained:

- Secure Tenancies Act, granting secure tenancies in cases of domestic abuse where an original sole or joint secure tenancy was held (Part 7 miscellaneous and general). The Managed Reciprocal scheme will support the secure tenancies act, which is a coordinated, cost-effective mechanism created to prevent survivors from losing their social tenancies. The Whole Housing Programme Managers chaired and spoke at an event in March 2021 hosted by Safer London to promote this scheme with local authority leads, which was attended by 120 participants.
- Amendment to Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and omitting the vulnerability category for Priority Need (Part 7 miscellaneous and general). The DAHA accreditation process will help local authorities consider the implementation of this as part of their focus on their overall response to DA.
- Duty on Tier 1 boards / local authorities to deliver 'safe accommodation' (Part 4). This is an exciting new piece of legislation that will see new responsibilities and DA service provision being commissioned. There are three main types of Safe Accommodation defined as refuge services, move on accommodation and sanctuary schemes. Standing Together have endorsed that local authorities go a step beyond and deliver this within a WHA framework. The WHA has been mentioned in the draft statutory guidance for Part 4. And Standing Together have been approached by at least 15 local areas asking for guidance on how they can deliver this within a WHA.

## 6.0 Strategic Aims – Sexual Violence

- Working to prevent people becoming offenders of sexual violence and reducing victimisation by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it.
- Promoting the safety and protection of victims and survivors.
- Appropriately pursuing and challenging perpetrators.
- Ensuring all victims and survivors have access to appropriate and proportionate outcome-focused jointly commissioned support.

### 6.1 Challenging Attitudes and Behaviours

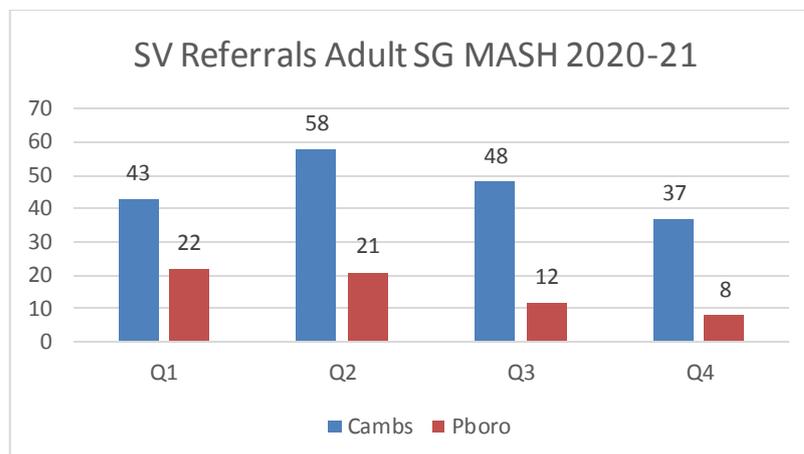
Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, it was not possible to hold any in-person awareness events. However, messages were shared via social media including during and Sexual Violence Awareness Week in February 2021. The message that specialist services were still available- such as local Rape Crisis and the Sexual Assault Referral Centre – were shared with partners via newsletters and on social media.

The beginning of 2021 saw a vast national media focus on sexual violence and VAWG due to the murder of Sarah Everard, it is hoped that the focus will lead to change in public attitudes and awareness of the issues.

## 6.2 Promoting safety and protection

### 6.2.1 Adult Safeguarding

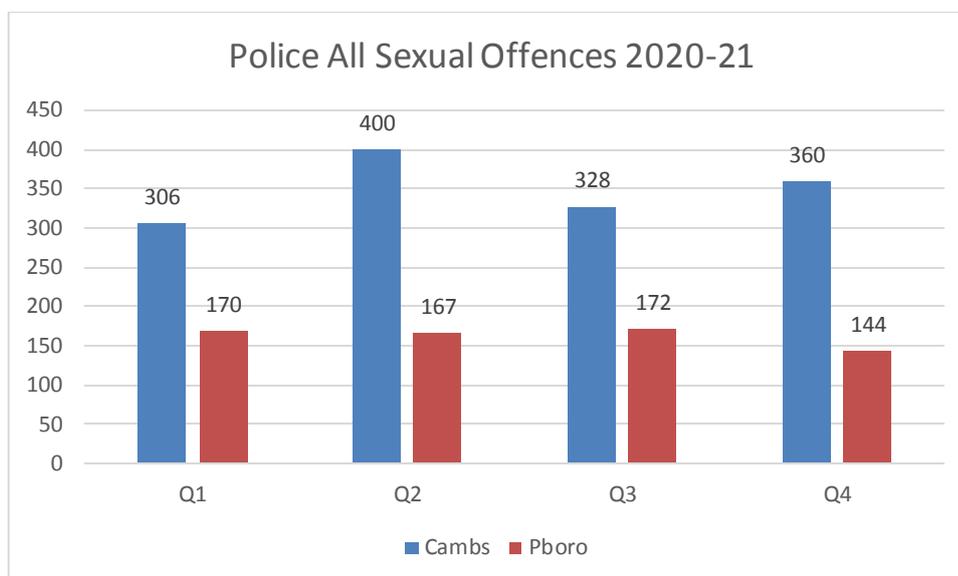
There were 249 referrals relating to sexual violence/assault to the Adult Safeguarding MASH Teams at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough as the chart below shows, which was a decrease of 31 referrals the previous year. As with Adult Safeguarding referrals for domestic abuse, the decrease is likely to be due to Covid 19 restrictions and changes to how referrals are triaged before being passed onto the Adult Safeguarding Team.



## 6.3 Pursuing Perpetrators

Sexual violence data from Cambridgeshire Constabulary is below. The data from the police performance team supports the national picture that sexual violence offences are on the rise. This was particularly prevalent during the recent COVID restrictions and lockdowns. The number of night-time economy offences significantly reduced, due to those venues being closed. However, the number of offences within the home/domestic settings increased.

There is a gradual rise in reports of both sexual assaults and serious sexual crimes in most quarters. The increase can be looked at in a positive way, as more members of the public are being encouraged to report crimes. The second quarter of 2020-2021 saw a significant increase, particularly for Cambs. This coincides with the beginning/mid lockdown as articulated earlier. This is mainly due to a media campaign that Cambs police did over this period, to encourage reporting.



### 6.3.1 Sexual Assault Risk Assessment Conference (SARAC)

A SARAC is a meeting where agencies share information about the risk of serious harm to people who have experienced sexual abuse or rape, outside the context of domestic abuse. Multi-agency safety plans are developed to support those in need. The aim is to increase the safety and well-being of the adults and children involved and to reduce the likelihood of repeat victimisation. There have been 11 referrals since the panel was set up in 2018.

### 6.4 Outcome Focussed Support

#### 6.4.1 Cambridge and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership and ISVA Service

- Helpline and email support services continued through remote working models
- ISVA service continued with the offer of support on-line, over the phone and via email
- ChISVA service continued with the offer of support on-line, over the phone and via email
- In-person support continued throughout for 'report to court' clients
- Counselling, Talking Therapies and emotional support provision continued with on-line sessions, phone sessions and check in calls
- Additional support structures were put in place for staff and volunteers
- Remotely recruited and trained a new group of helpline and email volunteers
- Recruited and appointed a new ISVA and two ChISVAs to join our teams
- Developed and piloted a new SENSE model emotional support service
- Expanded our counselling service and delivered a secure on-line service
- Introduced risk assessed in-person support as soon as we could where it was safe to do so
- Piloted Walk and Talk Therapy in the summer of 2020
- Launched a new Live Chat service in response to survivors needs
- Expanded our use of social media channels to post self-care tips and grounding techniques

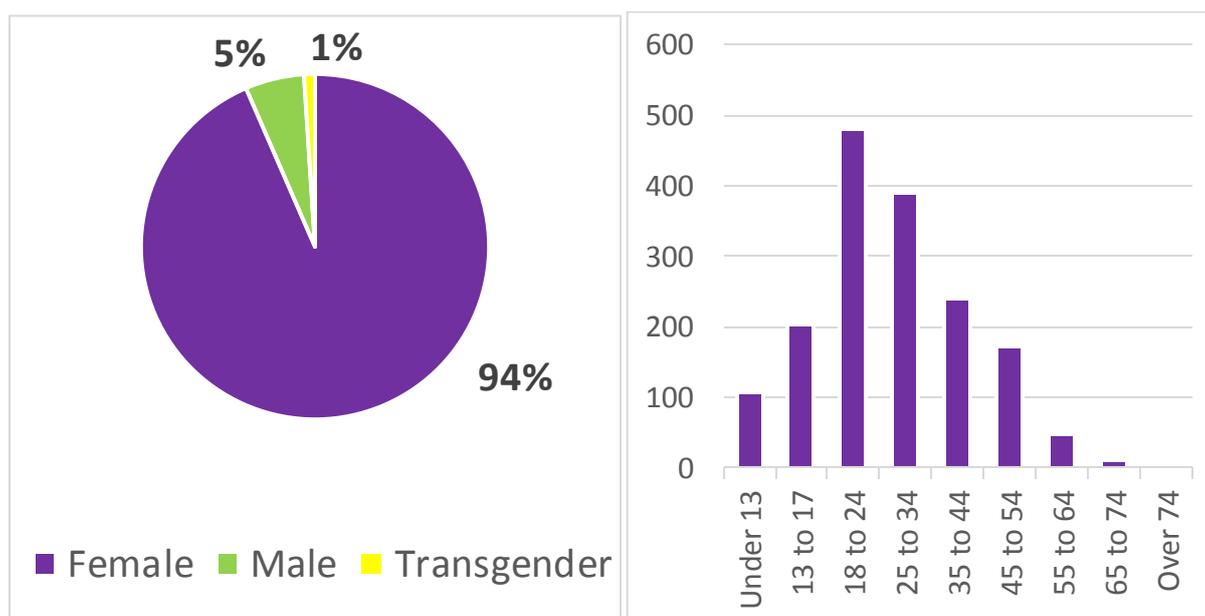
Impact of the pandemic on survivors:

- Stalling of effect justice via the Criminal Justice System
- Breakdown of support structures and systems
- Lack of access to primary health care services
- Impact of acute isolation
- Re-traumatisation from lockdowns and restrictions
- School closures and lack of access to safe or trusted adults
- ‘Perfect storm’ for abusers in the home/family setting
- Increased risk of food poverty, insecure housing, limited economic security, tech poverty

<b>Total number of valid NEW referrals to ISVA service 2020-21</b>	<b>524</b>
ISVA referrals	407
ChISVA referrals	117

<b>Total number of clients supported 2020-21</b>	<b>789</b>
ISVA clients	<b>620</b>
ChISVA clients	<b>169</b>

Cambridge and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership – total number of survivors supported 2020-21 was 1,679.



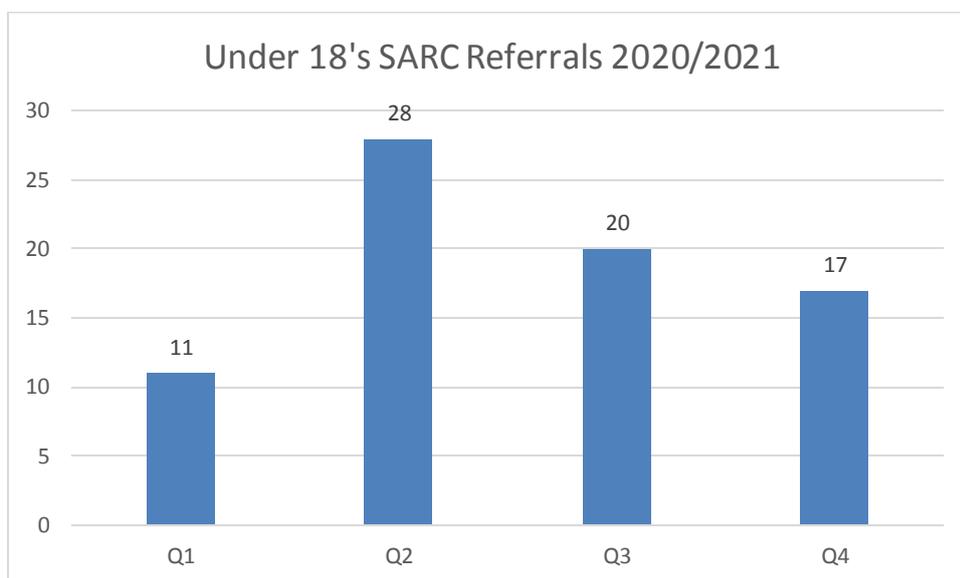
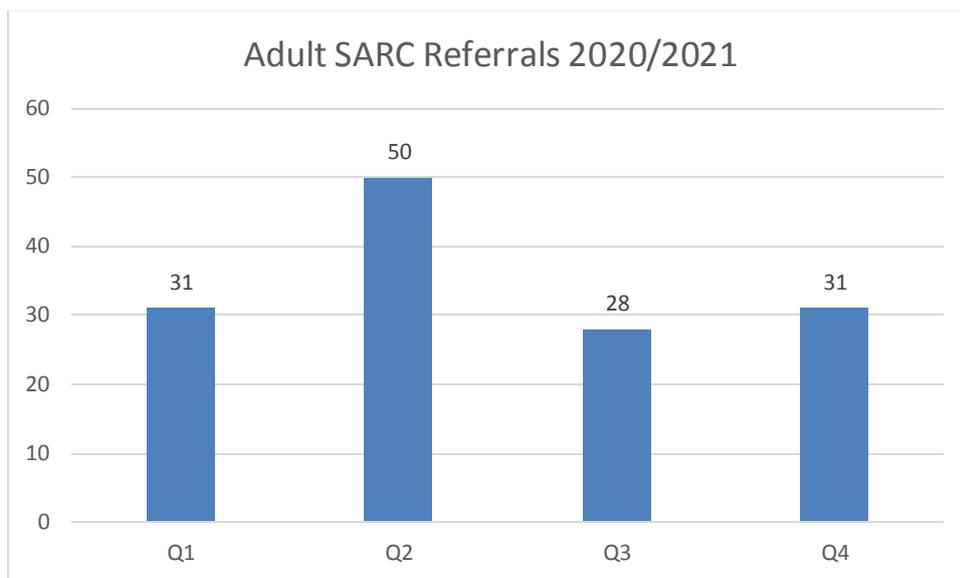
**Helpline/Emotional Support Service Client feedback**

*“I would not have got through the lockdown without your support”*

*“With your support my self-worth has gone up a lot, I have taken control over my own happiness and wellbeing”*

*“Thank you for keeping me alive”*

## 6.4.2 The Elms Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)



During 2020/21 the SARC has continued to deliver a 24/7 service in a COVID-secure way. This has included providing remote assessments for our patients where appropriate to reduce the contact time at the SARC for staff and patients, increased PPE for staff and patients and COVID screening for all patients. Staff have continued to work on site safely and there has been very little impact on the service due to staff testing positive for COVID-19 or track and trace.

In March 2021 The Elms was inspected by the CQC and key findings were:

- The provider had robust safeguarding processes and staff knew their responsibilities for safeguarding adults and
- children.
- Care records evidenced a holistic approach to assessing patient needs.
- Staff treated patients with dignity and respect and took care to protect their privacy and personal information.
- There were excellent working relationships with co-located police colleagues.
- There was effective leadership and culture of continuous improvement.

- Staff showed care and passion for their work and felt very well supported in their roles.
- Patient feedback was positive about the support they received from the SARC and there had been no complaints.
- Comprehensive information about local services, referral pathways and the operation of the SARC was readily available to staff.
- The provider had good governance arrangements to support the delivery of services from the SARC.
- The environment was clean, welcoming and included age appropriate rooms and equipment with local school artwork and visual distractions for children.
- The provider had infection control procedures which reflected published guidance and had adapted quickly to COVID-19 guidelines to ensure services remained available to patients throughout the pandemic.

The full report can be found at <https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-3151163614/reports>.

## 7.0 Training

7.1 Due to the pandemic, face-to-face training was suspended during 2020-21. However, several virtual training opportunities were delivered including:

The Safeguarding Boards developed SWAY presentations on domestic abuse and sexual violence during Covid which are hosted on their website.

The DASV Partnership Team delivered training online to:

- Care Network around domestic abuse and people with vulnerabilities
- Cambridge City Council x3
- Peterborough Community awareness x3
- Peterborough Women's Forum
- Fenland Staff Development – coercive control
- Garden House Homelessness charity – Peterborough
- Peterborough City Housing
- Lifeline help line staff and Lifecraft staff
- Samaritans
- Hunts Health and wellbeing network
- CCC and Peterborough city council HR departments
- Kingsgate Church
- CPSL Mind
- CPFT Older People's Team
- GP surgeries
- Change, Grow, Live Substance Misuse Service
- CPFT & CCS 9-19 Team
- Think Communities Team

## 7.2 LGSS DA Training

Due to the pandemic, all face to face training was suspended during 2020-21.

## 7.3 Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Champions

The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Champions Network switched to online sessions during 2020-21 and these were very well attended. Topics covered included

- Sexual Violence
- Suicide awareness
- Housing Options
- Police and Criminal Justice
- Strangulation

We currently have over 250 DASV Champions signed up including representatives from children's and adult's social care, mental health, NHS, police, voluntary organisations, and community organisations. Between 100-150 attend the sessions each quarter.

## 8.0 **Priorities for 2021-22**

The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act places a duty on each tier one local authority in England (county and unitary councils (other than London Boroughs), the Greater London Authority and the Isles of Scilly Council) to:

1. Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board which it will consult as it performs certain specified functions.
2. Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area for all victims or their children, including those who come from outside the area.
3. Develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support to cover their locality, having regard to the needs assessment.
4. Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning / de-commissioning decisions).
5. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.
6. Report back to central government.
7. Require tier two councils (district or borough councils, and London Boroughs) to co-operate with the lead local authority, so far as is reasonably practicable.
8. Require the Secretary of State to produce statutory guidance, having consulted the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, local authorities and such as other persons as considered appropriate.
9. Require local authorities to have regard to the statutory guidance in exercising their functions.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership will be completing the needs assessment from Spring to Summer 2021 and new priorities will be developed.

**Contact Details:** Email: [Dasv@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Dasv@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

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