

TOGETHER WE CAN
END VIOLENCE
**AGAINST WOMEN
AND GIRLS**

A CONSULTATION PAPER



Foreword

Violence against women and girls is unacceptable, whatever the context, whatever the circumstances. This consultation is intended to raise awareness, discussion and debate on how *together* we can end violence against women and girls, and overcome its debilitating impact on individuals, families and communities. Over the last 10 years this Government has worked alongside voluntary organisations to deliver a package of measures to protect women from violence and to support those who have suffered violence. Together we have made a real difference.

- The number of incidents of domestic violence has more than halved since 1997.
- The rate of conviction in domestic violence cases has significantly increased. Now, the vast majority of offences which are charged and brought to court result in a conviction.
- The number of women killed by their partners or ex-partners in 2007/08 was the lowest recorded figure for more than a decade.
- The conviction rate for rape cases when a case gets to court is at its highest for 10 years.
- The Government successfully intervened in over 400 cases of forced marriage last year alone.
- We have taken a stand on human trafficking, rescuing over 150 people through Operation Pentameter 2 led by the police.

This is the first time we have consulted on how to combat violence specifically against women and girls. And it is the first time we have sought to take a cross-government approach to the offences that disproportionately affect women.

My vision is that we can create a society in which women and girls feel safe and confident in their homes and in our communities, so that they can live freely, contribute to society, and prosper in their daily lives.



I am proposing that we need to take more action to prevent violence against women and girls; help them feel safer when they are out, especially at night; further improve the help women and girls get when it is needed; and act to catch and convict perpetrators.

I want this debate to engage with all sectors of society, with men and women, boys and girls. We need to identify what we can do collectively to overcome and end violence against women. As part of this consultation, we will be holding events in every part of England over the next three months to enable everyone to tell us what they think. Discussion and debate are essential if we are to raise awareness of the scale of the problem, and to improve the confidence of women and girls.

Violence against women is an enduring social issue affecting women and their children. We have done much to address the problem already, but we can all do more. We can end violence against women and girls, and to do that we must harness all our energies across government and within our communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jacqui Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

JACQUI SMITH
HOME SECRETARY

Contents

CONSULTATION AIMS	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
CHAPTER 1: KEY THEMES FOR CONSULTATION	6
CHAPTER 2: WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN ACHIEVED?	9
CHAPTER 3: FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS	11
SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS	29
ANNEXES	32
1. Summary of information about this consultation	32
2. The scale of violence against women and girls	34
3. Key achievements since 1997	35
4. Glossary	38
5. Confidentiality and disclaimer	39
Endnotes	40

Consultation aims

Our aims for the consultation are to:

- recognise the contribution our partners have made to success in reducing violence against women and girls and supporting victims;
- raise awareness of the scale and nature of violence against women and girls;
- generate national debate to identify what would make women and girls feel and be safer;
- test policy proposals and ideas designed to help prevent violence against women and girls; and
- build public confidence that the Government is prepared to listen and respond as a result of this consultation.

You can reply to the questions raised in this document by emailing vawconsultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. For further information visit www.homeoffice.gov.uk/keepwomensafe

Executive summary

We are committed to a vision of society in which women and girls feel safe and confident in their homes and communities, to live freely, contribute to society, and prosper in their daily lives.

We want women and girls:

- to go about their lives free from harassment or violence;
- to live a life without fear of violence and to live in a culture where violence against women and girls is unacceptable and people feel confident to intervene;
- to know that other people will be able to pick up on the early signs of violence, and help or advise them wherever possible;
- to receive the help and support they need quickly in order to overcome the physical and mental impact of being a victim of violence;
- to be safe and able to access quality care and support – no matter where they live; and
- to feel confident that, if they are a victim of violence, police and the wider criminal justice system will treat them sensitively and fairly when they report it, and to know that perpetrators will be dealt with.

This consultation is intended to raise awareness and to generate discussion and debate on what more could be done together to end violence against women and girls, and overcome its far-reaching effects.

Much has been achieved over the past 10 years:

- We have transformed the way that the criminal justice system deals with domestic and sexual violence, introducing a range of new legislation.
- Conviction rates for domestic violence have increased significantly, rising by 25% in the last five years.

- We have invested heavily in support services for victims of violence, and support through the criminal justice system.
- We have set up multi-agency arrangements to case manage the most vulnerable victims and most dangerous offenders. We have also invested in prison and probation programmes to rehabilitate and manage perpetrators.
- We have strengthened the legislation on forced marriage, and our new Forced Marriage Unit helped over 400 victims in 2008.
- We have worked tirelessly to tackle human trafficking; Operation Pentameter 2 alone has resulted in over 500 arrests and succeeded in recovering over 150 victims, including children.
- Conviction rates for rape prosecutions are now at their highest for 10 years. More effective implementation of criminal law now means that more women use the criminal courts.

None of the above would have been possible were it not for the dedication of the women's voluntary sector. For almost four decades, they have provided refuges, rape crisis centres, crisis lines, survivors' groups and other creative projects. It is due to their tireless work, both in terms of practical assistance and campaigning, that the issue of violence against women is now firmly on the public policy agenda, both nationally and internationally. More importantly, it is a movement to which thousands of women and children literally owe their lives.

But we're not complacent and we recognise that there is much more that can be undertaken to tackle all forms of violence against women. Major challenges remain, including:

- How do we prevent violence against women and girls from happening in the first place – including changing the way that some men, particularly young men, view what is acceptable?

- How do we help friends, family, employers and public services to identify early signs of violence as soon as possible and do something about it?
- How do we make sure that women who seek specialist help, or need to leave home to start a new life, receive a consistent level of local support wherever they live?
- How do we protect and support the children who are growing up in violent households?
- How do we build confidence in the criminal justice system to improve reporting?
- How do we make sure that men who have attacked or abused already don't continue to do so?
- How do we reduce women's disproportionate fear of violence in public settings and the disabling effect this has on many lives?

Government alone cannot be the answer to these questions. All of us have a role to play and a contribution to make to this debate. We, as government, want to have a conversation with the public on the best way to end violence against women and girls. We want as many people as possible to be involved to challenge the attitudes that make violence against women and girls acceptable to some.

This consultation paper represents the beginning of a process to develop a truly cross-governmental strategy. We believe the best way to take this forward is to understand where all of government can make a difference and work together in a coordinated and effective manner. We have developed this paper together and will continue to work together to ensure that we do all we can. We will put together our strategy by the end of this year to protect women and create a safer society.

Many of the questions are deliberately open ended – we want to start a debate over the coming months as we talk to hundreds of stakeholders and members of the public around the country.

This consultation paper sets out:

- a **model** for addressing the issue across government, focusing attention on **prevention, provision and protection**;
- the **key themes** for government action, which we will use to drive **public debate** and discussion on what more we could do.

To help start the debate and generate further ideas for action, we are setting in place a number of initiatives, including:

- a new Advisory Group with a specific focus on how schools can help prevent violence against women and girls;
- a fact-finding review into the increasing 'sexualisation' of teenage girls;
- a police-led review on new legal powers to deal with violent perpetrators including perpetrators of 'honour'-based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage;
- a safer streets website, enabling the public to report where they feel safe or unsafe, and why; and
- expansion of the safer car parks scheme, Park Mark.

SCOPE OF THE CONSULTATION

Devolution affects many of the areas of government covered in this consultation paper. Scotland has its own Violence Against Women Strategy. Northern Ireland has both a domestic violence strategy and a sexual violence strategy to address these issues on a regional basis. The Welsh Assembly Government has its own Domestic Abuse Strategy and will consider the most appropriate ways to address the issues in ways that meet its own circumstances and needs in those areas for which it has devolved responsibility. It will examine carefully the proposals that emerge from this consultation and will continue to work with the UK Government on addressing non-devolved domestic abuse matters.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

We want to have a conversation with the public, and to listen to their concerns. We want to challenge perceptions, discuss new ideas, and ask everyone what they think about those ideas.

We are supporting a wide range of events over a nine-week period across England which we encourage everyone to join, but this is only the start of the debate.

MOBILE ROADSHOWS

We are launching the biggest debate this country has seen to date on violence against women, and will be visiting over 40 towns, taking this discussion to all corners of the country, from shopping centres, to football grounds, to universities; we want to speak with everyone.

Each week, we will base ourselves in one of the Government Office regions, talking to the stakeholders who are so crucial to this work and listening to the public. Our bus will travel around the country and we will let the public know how they can get involved in our conversation. We will also be providing advice to those who are suffering.

In a different region each week, we will:

- hold a major stakeholder event to probe specific policy questions;
- hold focus groups for victims of violence, particularly vulnerable women and girls; and
- take the roadshow bus to a range of locations to meet the public.

In addition, we will be hosting specific focus groups with the public and professionals, such as those working for the NHS or in the criminal justice system, looking at individual policy areas where we need to develop new approaches.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

One of the key aims of the consultation will be to consider how best to deliver the strategy and ensure it will be effectively implemented and monitored.

Chapter 1: Key themes for consultation

In chapter 3 we ask a range of questions that we intend to use to inform our long-term policy development. Our consultation will focus on two separate themes: firstly, actual violence against women and girls – including how we prevent it, support those who have been victims and bring perpetrators to justice; and secondly, women’s fear of violence and the effect this has on their day-to-day lives.

Tackling violence against women and girls

TEACHING YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

Schools and colleges have a crucial role to play, with parents, in helping children and young people to develop healthy relationships, deal with their emotions, and challenge the way in which some young men behave towards young women. What is taught in the classroom, the school’s values and ethos and the way in which it deals with bullying and inappropriate behaviour towards girls could all have an important impact.

Educating children and young people about healthy non-violent relationships is a key route towards tackling and ending violence against women and girls. Both boys and girls need the opportunities to discuss how they would react in situations where they feel uncomfortable or under pressure, and how to avoid reacting to strong feelings in an aggressive way.

These issues are tackled by schools in a range of ways – and in particular through the curriculum on personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), which the Government intends, subject to consultation, should become part of the statutory National Curriculum. Delivery of the curriculum is supplemented by guidance and materials on sex and relationship education (SRE) and on social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL).

Revised guidance on SRE is being developed. The Government is also developing new guidance on preventing and tackling bullying related to gender.

Each of these strands of work has its own advisory and consultation processes, but the Government is keen to ensure that there is an overview of how all of this work fits together specifically from the perspective of preventing violence against women and girls. To this end, we are establishing a new Advisory Group with a specific focus on how schools tackle this issue and how the relevant strands of work can most effectively be harnessed to maximise their impact on preventing violence against women.

The Advisory Group will be led by a secondary head teacher whose school has a strong track record on PSHE and anti-bullying work, and its members will include key experts on PSHE, SRE, gender bullying and preventing violence against women, as well as at least one representative of young people themselves. A separate announcement on the leadership and membership of the Advisory Group will follow in due course.

The Advisory Group will start its work in April and be constituted initially for six months, subject to review and possible renewal of its remit. It will:

- contribute to the public consultation on PSHE (planned to begin in early May);
- advise on the development of new guidance on, respectively, SRE and preventing gender bullying in schools;
- participate in the wider Violence Against Women consultation process – including talking directly to parents and young people – and consider how the conclusions from that consultation can be applied specifically in the context of schools, with a focus on how the various work strands fit together and how their impact can be maximised; and
- consider the findings of a separate piece of work on how different messages and approaches can influence boys’ behaviour and reinforce positive images and role models, and advise on the implications for practice in schools.

SEXUALISATION OF GIRLS AND LINKS TO VIOLENCE

We know that many parents are concerned about the pressures that their teenage and even pre-teen daughters are under to appear sexually available at a younger and younger age, and about the negative impact that this may be having on boys too. We want to spend the next three months talking to parents and the public more widely about this issue and are establishing a fact-finding review to take this forward. The review group will join our roadshows, organise debates, and bring together and analyse the evidence. They will work closely with the media, online providers and other important bodies to gauge their views on the issue.

GIVING WOMEN HELP WHEN THEY NEED IT TRAINING FRONTLINE PUBLIC SECTOR STAFF TO BETTER IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT VICTIMS

We want to see how those in public services can play a stronger role in identifying the early signs of violence. This might include social care services, GPs and other healthcare professionals, and perhaps other agencies too. For example, Jobcentre Plus will continue to provide staff training in respect of violence against women and this training will be refreshed as appropriate.

THOSE WITH NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS

The Government has been working to find ways to support victims with no recourse to public funds. In March 2008 the Home Office announced a scheme whereby victims of domestic violence whose applications for Indefinite Leave to Remain are successful may qualify for a contribution towards their housing and living costs. That scheme will be up and running by the end of May 2009.

TACKLING PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Government has made great headway in ensuring that the perpetrators of violence against women are dealt with effectively. We have given the police and courts new legal powers to control perpetrators, including through the Sexual Offences Act 2003 which created a number of civil orders to impose restrictions on sex offenders, and allow police to make arrangements

to manage the risk they pose. Breach of these orders is a criminal offence, punishable by a maximum of five years' imprisonment.

Also the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 provides powers to protect people who are in forced marriages. Breach of these orders is a civil offence but it also carries a sanction of up to two years' imprisonment.

But more can be done to prevent women having to continue to experience violence in the home and elsewhere. From September 2009 we will implement section 12 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, which extends restraining orders to all offences.

We have also asked Chief Constable Brian Moore, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) lead on domestic violence, to undertake a full review of what additional powers the police may need to control the activities of perpetrators – particularly serial offenders who move from one abusive relationship to another.

The review will also look at what additional measures may be needed to tackle perpetrators of 'honour'-based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Aiming to report back by autumn 2009, the review will consider a range of issues including:

- **Tracking serial perpetrators**
How can we exploit the use of new technology, such as the ability to identify repeat offenders through the introduction of the new Police National Database which is being developed following the Bichard Report? How can the police and other local agencies best track perpetrators who offend serially, for example in successive relationships and sometimes across geographical boundaries? Who needs to share what information and what information should be made available to the public where they may be at risk?

- **Learning from past experience**

What are domestic homicide reviews starting to tell us about perpetrator behaviour? How can we learn from past experience to improve our knowledge of perpetrator offending and what may help prevent it?

- **Lessons from abroad**

The review will also look at what can be learnt from other jurisdictions and the powers they have created to control perpetrators. In Austria, Switzerland and Germany, for example, the police have the power to exclude a perpetrator from their home for a fixed number of days.

Women's fear of violence

ENABLING WOMEN TO FEEL SAFER WHEN OUT AT NIGHT SAFER STREETS WEBSITE

Women are less likely than men to be the victims of reported violent crime, but they are more likely to be fearful of it.¹ We need to address this perception gap, so it does not restrict women's freedom of movement.

We all know what makes us feel safe or fearful as we travel home after work or a night out. Some bus routes or train stations feel safer than others. Some roads feel safer than others to walk down late at night. But up to now there has been no easy way of feeding this information into the local police or council staff who are in a position to act, or to hold them to account for progress.

We will be launching a website to give people a say on what would make them feel safer on their streets. This will build on the excellent work that Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), Safer Neighbourhood and Safer Travel teams undertake up and down the country in making our neighbourhoods safer. The website will allow the public to report where they felt either safe or unsafe in their local area, and why – for example, that a particular street is badly lit. That information would then be shared with other users of the site, to add their own concerns, and with CDRPs, CSPs and others to use it when planning safety improvements.

IMPROVING WOMEN'S SAFETY IN AND AROUND LICENSED PREMISES

We will continue discussions with the police, local authorities and industry trade associations to encourage pubs and clubs to improve women's safety in and around their premises. Many pubs and clubs are supportive of existing schemes run by police forces and local authorities which help promote licensed taxi services and other schemes to protect women, such as taxi rank marshals and providing free devices to prevent drink spiking. We will continue to encourage voluntary take-up of other schemes that promote women's safety, such as improving the information provided to customers on the location of local transport links and providing direct telephone lines to taxi companies so that customers can wait in the safety of the premises.

CAR PARKS

Over 60% of women state that they feel unsafe in a multi-storey car park at night – the area of most concern to them.² We will be working alongside the British Parking Association (BPA) to promote and help to develop their Park Mark Safer Parking Scheme. Park Mark is aimed at the prevention of criminal behaviour within the parking environment, and requires owners and operators to adopt an active management strategy to minimise crime. It is an accreditation scheme but also a form of good practice that we believe operators should strive towards, and will ensure that we greatly increase the number of car parks that create a safer environment for their customers. We want to help to support accreditation of a Park Mark car park in every major city and town centre. We will do this by:

- consulting the public on what makes them feel safer in car parks and sharing this knowledge with the BPA; and
- including all accredited car parks on the safer streets website to highlight where women and men can use facilities that have worked to increase their safety.

Chapter 2: What has already been achieved?

Over the past 10 years we have transformed the way in which the criminal justice system deals with domestic and sexual violence.

- New legislation to better protect women and manage perpetrators – the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007, Sexual Offences Act 2003 and Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.
- Investment in support services for victims of violence – £30 million a year for Victim Support, funding for helplines, over £60 million a year invested in refuges and Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), and funding for Rape Crisis and the Survivors Trust.
- Investment to support victims through the criminal justice system to reduce the stress of this process and bring more offenders to justice (including Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVCs), Witness Care staff and witness protection arrangements in court).
- Specialist training – including for prosecutors, police and court staff.
- New multi-agency arrangements to case manage the most vulnerable victims and most dangerous offenders – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).
- Investment in prison and probation programmes to rehabilitate and manage perpetrators.

All of that action is pulled together in linked, cross-government national action plans for:

- sexual violence and abuse;
- domestic violence;

- forced marriage, and crimes committed in the name of ‘honour’; and
- human trafficking.

The Cross-Government Action Plan on **Sexual Violence and Abuse** aims to increase access to health and support services for victims; improve the response of the criminal justice system so that victims are confident to come forward and report an offence and see it through to conviction; and to prevent sexual violence in the first place.

The Cross-Government National **Domestic Violence Delivery Plan** brings together criminal justice partners with specialist support services for victims, to make sure the victim is at the heart of a coordinated response to domestic violence.

‘Honour’-based violence is also covered by the Delivery Plan, and a number of initiatives to address this have been implemented, including updated legislation, improving safeguards within our immigration laws, and an ACPO strategy for police forces.

On forced marriage, the Government’s **Forced Marriage Unit** has developed a two-year action plan, which also sits under the National Domestic Violence Delivery Plan. In 2008, the Unit directly helped over 400 victims. We have strengthened the legislation covering forced marriage enabling the courts to make a Forced Marriage Protection Order to prevent or pre-empt a forced marriage from occurring, and to protect victims if a forced marriage has already taken place. The Forced Marriage Unit has also raised awareness among practitioners, potential victims and others.

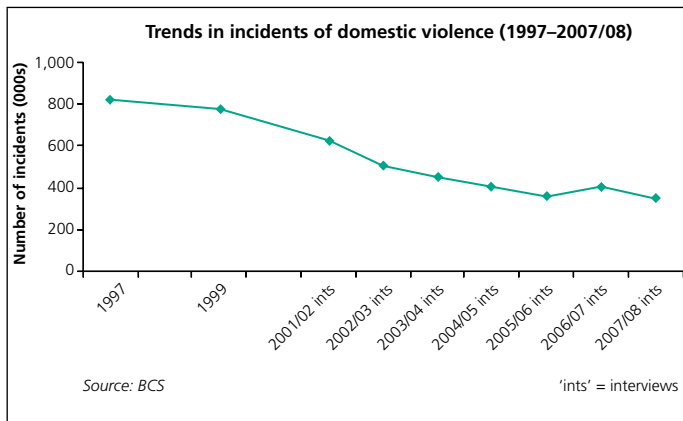
The UK has a comprehensive UK Action Plan on **Tackling Human Trafficking**, which covers prevention; investigation, law enforcement and prosecution; providing protection and assistance to adult victims of trafficking; and child trafficking. We have introduced comprehensive legislation to criminalise human trafficking and targeted measures to support victims of these crimes, and ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings on 17 December 2008. It will enter into force on 1 April 2009.

We have also invested £5.8 million in the POPPY project over the last six years to provide high-level specialist support for victims trafficked into sexual exploitation and will be extending this type of provision under the Convention.

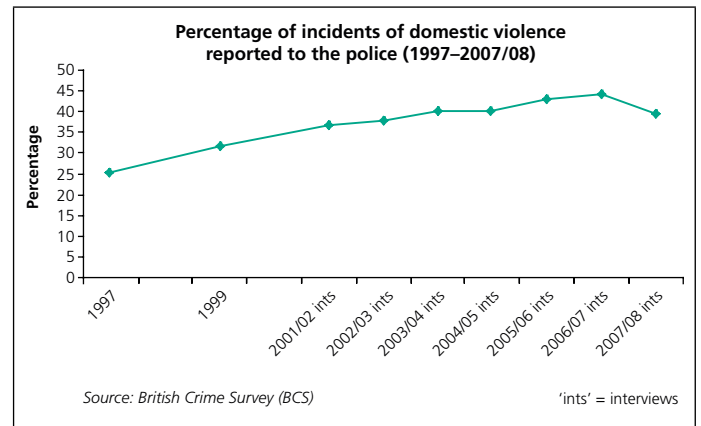
Much has already been achieved:

- 104 SDVCs are already up and running, and we are on target to deliver 128 by 2011 supported by over 100 Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs).
- Over 200 MARACs have been set up – to be rolled out nationally by 2011.
- Domestic violence champions and coordinators are in place in every police force and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) area.

There has been a 58% decline in the incidence of domestic violence between 1997 and 2007/08 as measured by British Crime Survey (BCS).



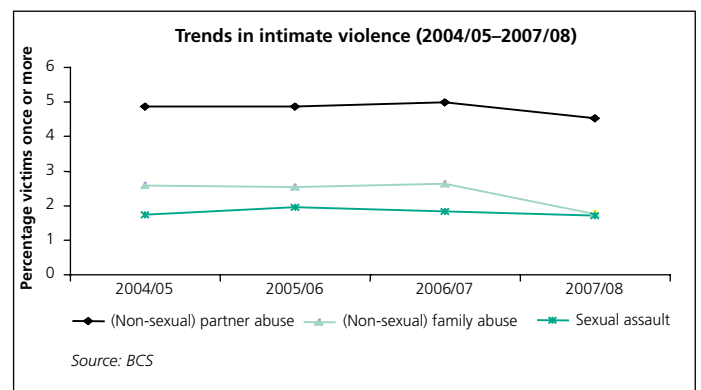
More victims are now choosing to report incidents to the police and to support criminal proceedings. In 2004, family courts made 32,906 protective injunction orders against domestic violence, while the criminal courts dealt with 34,839 cases involving domestic violence. In 2007, while the family court work dropped to 26,901 protective orders, the criminal courts dealt with 63,819 cases.³



Since December 2003 there has been an increase in the conviction rate from domestic violence prosecutions by 25% to 72.5% in December 2008.⁴ This is a significant improvement against the background of an increasing volume of prosecutions: from 34,839 cases in 2004/05 to 63,819 in 2007/08.

The number of women killed by their partners and ex-partners in 2007/08 (72) was the lowest recorded figure for more than a decade.⁵

We are seeing a small but steady increase in conviction rates: 37% of all cases prosecuted as rape now result in a conviction for rape; and 59% of cases prosecuted as rape result in a conviction for rape or another offence. This is the highest conviction rate for 10 years. Sentence lengths are also increasing. In 1984 the average sentence for rape was 40 months. In 2007 this had increased to 77.9 months. In 2007, 97.1% of offenders convicted of raping a woman or girl were sent to custody. Overall trends in incidents of intimate violence measured by BCS, as shown below, demonstrate a decline in non-sexual family abuse.



Chapter 3: Future challenges and actions

We have adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women definition of violence against women:

“Violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or that affects women disproportionately.”

In addition, as the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women states, it includes:

“... 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 private life.”

We are clear that such violence includes that committed at home or in public spaces, and that the term ‘women’ includes girls. In this consultation paper, references to women should be interpreted as including both women and girls.

Such violence includes:

- domestic violence;
- sexual violence, abuse and exploitation;
- stalking;
- trafficking;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage; and
- crimes committed in the name of honour.

In addressing violence against women and girls, we will use the framework set out on the next page, which focuses attention on prevention, provision of services and protection. The questions we ask in this consultation fit into the structure of this model, and represent the most important areas where action could be taken to stop violence against women.

We also want to reduce women’s fear of violent crime.

Women experience high levels of fear of violent crime, and are twice as likely to be worried about it as men.⁶ Although the actual risk of their being attacked by a stranger is low, the perceived consequences are frightening enough to prevent some women from feeling safe in public spaces, at least some of the time, which restricts their freedom.

Prevention

Interventions designed to prevent violence against women from occurring and/or early interventions to prevent further harm being caused. They can be divided into three sub-categories:

- **Primary prevention** methods, for example education to change attitudes and perceptions.
- **Secondary prevention**, identifying those particularly at risk, for example pregnant women.
- **Tertiary prevention**, reducing the harm already caused together with rehabilitative programmes for perpetrators.

Provision

Interventions designed to provide emotional and practical support to victims (including children), for example outreach services.

Protection

Interventions designed to keep abused women safe and to hold abusers accountable, for example actions against offenders, such as arrest.

Building on the real successes of the last 10 years we now need to extend and deepen our approach so that the progress that has been made within the criminal justice system is mirrored in the work of other departments and at local level.

To help us to achieve this, we are asking the public a series of questions on key issues which will contribute to the development of the Violence Against Women Strategy. A detailed explanation of the themes follows, covering key facts, current progress, future challenges and action, and the questions we would like you to respond to. A summary of all the questions starts on page 29.

Tackling violence against women and girls

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS START EARLY KEY FACTS

- It is important to educate children and young people that any kind of violence or coercion has no place in a mutually respectful relationship.

There is evidence⁷ that the majority of young people are confused about the issue of domestic violence and want to learn more.

- The SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) curriculum helps children develop their capacity to empathise, show respect and form positive relationships with other people. Schools using the curriculum have reported less conflict, calmer classrooms and better relationships as a result of the programme.⁸
- A Teen Abuse Survey by Sugar magazine and the NSPCC in 2005⁹ found that one in five teenage girls has been hit by a boyfriend, and one third of teenage girls say that cheating justifies violence.
- Research indicates that children who have witnessed domestic violence are 2.5 times more likely to have serious social and behavioural problems than other children.¹⁰

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

We are working closely with schools to help educate young people about how to develop mutually respectful personal relationships, and to make violence against women and girls unacceptable. The SEAL programme builds on work that is already under way to improve the sex and relationship education part of PSHE, and the development of guidance on preventing and tackling gender-related bullying in schools.

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is actively protecting children through the thinkuknow.co.uk education programme. The aim of thinkuknow is to empower through information and education. A variety of resources are provided for professionals and the young people they work with. The resources help to safeguard children from risks associated with the online world, including grooming, unwanted contact, bullying and violence.

WOMANKIND Worldwide project

WOMANKIND Worldwide is working in partnership with schools in the Midlands to promote safe and healthy relationships among children making the transition from primary to secondary school. The project has been developed to help children gain the skills and confidence to negotiate increased exposure to sexual peer pressure that they may experience as they start secondary school.

Clusters of primary and secondary schools in an area with high teenage pregnancy rates are piloting new approaches to raise children's awareness of sexual harassment and inappropriate touching, and increase their ability to challenge unwanted attention. Interventions to prevent sexual peer pressure are being integrated into the schools' anti-bullying policies and a new resource to guide work in this area is in development.

Website: www.womankind.org.uk

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

Educating children and young people about healthy, non-violent relationships is a vital route to tackling and ending violence against women. Both boys and girls need the opportunities to discuss how they would react in situations where they feel uncomfortable or under pressure, and how to avoid reacting to strong feelings in an aggressive way.

Continuing to strengthen preventative work helps to contribute to safer children, less truancy and absence and better behaviour, and therefore has a beneficial impact on the educational achievement and success of children and young people. Sexual bullying, like any other kind of bullying, can have a negative impact on young people's experience of school and their educational achievement.

Schools and colleges have a crucial role to play, with parents, in helping children and young people to develop healthy relationships, deal with their emotions and challenge the way in which some young men behave towards young women. What is taught in the classroom, the school's values and ethos and the way in which it deals with bullying and inappropriate behaviour towards girls could all have an important impact.

Schools tackle this in a range of ways – through the curriculum on PSHE, and guidance and materials on SRE and SEAL. The Government is keen to ensure that there is an overview of how all the existing planned work on these areas fits together, specifically from the perspective of preventing violence against women. To this end, we are establishing a new Advisory Group with a specific focus on how schools tackle this issue and how the relevant strands of work can most effectively be harnessed to maximise their impact on preventing violence against women.

The Advisory Group will be led by a secondary head teacher whose school has a strong track record on PSHE and anti-bullying work, and its members will include key experts on PSHE, SRE, gender bullying and preventing violence against women, as well as at least one representative of young people themselves. A separate announcement on the leadership and membership of the Advisory Group will follow in due course.

How should schools encourage young men to treat women and girls with respect, and not to resort to violent behaviour?

- What are your views on the role of schools in helping children and young people to develop the values and skills that they need as they grow into adulthood, including mutual respect, rights and responsibilities, gender equality, and the ability to manage their feelings and emotions?
- Should schools supplement this broader development by explicitly helping young people to understand issues such as domestic violence and sexual violence against women and girls?
- What teaching works on this already?
- How should this responsibility be shared between parents and schools?
- How well is sexual bullying being tackled in schools? Is the necessary support provided to schools to do this?
- What more could be done to help young women and young men to challenge negative perceptions or behaviours among their peers?

The Advisory Group will start its work in April and be constituted initially for six months, subject to review and possible renewal of its remit. It will:

- contribute to the public consultation on PSHE (planned to begin in early May);
- advise on the development of new guidance on, respectively, SRE and preventing gender bullying in schools;
- participate in the wider Violence Against Women consultation process – including talking directly to parents and young people – and consider how the conclusions from that consultation can be applied specifically in the context of schools, with a focus on how the various work strands fit together and how their impact can be maximised; and
- consider the findings of a separate piece of work on how different messages and approaches can influence boys' behaviour and reinforce positive images and role models, and advise on the implications for practice in schools.

REDUCING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN BY CHALLENGING SOCIETY'S PERCEPTIONS

KEY FACTS

- A quarter of people polled in an Amnesty survey (2005) said that they thought that a woman was partially or totally responsible for being raped if she was wearing sexy or revealing clothing.

- 16% of people thought that a man accused of rape should be let off the charge if he believed the woman was willing to have sex (even if she indicated that this was not the case).¹¹
- In February 2009, the Home Office commissioned an opinion poll in England and Wales.¹² Some of the findings are:
 - Nearly half of those polled thought that a woman should be fully or partly held responsible if she worked as a prostitute and was sexually assaulted or raped.
 - One third of those polled thought that a woman should be fully or partly held responsible if she was drunk and was sexually assaulted or raped.
 - Around two in ten of those polled thought that it would be acceptable or acceptable in certain circumstances for a man to hit or slap his wife or girlfriend in response to her being dressed in sexy or revealing clothing in public.
- In cases of serious sexual assault, 53% of female victims (since age 16) recorded that the offender was their partner or ex-partner, 41% another person known to them, and only 12% a stranger.¹³

How do social attitudes towards girls and women affect the problem of violence against women?

- How can we best challenge the perceptions that allow people to stay silent on violence against women and for it to be accepted in various sectors of society?
- How can we challenge cultural beliefs which promote forced marriage, crimes committed in the name of 'honour' and female genital mutilation?
- Is there a link between sexualised images, perceptions and actual violence?
- How could we help women and girls to achieve greater confidence in their lives?
- How can we encourage peer-to-peer support to challenge violence against women and girls?
- Should we encourage self-defence training for all women and girls?

- In cases of serious and less serious sexual assault, the overwhelming majority of victims were not under the influence of drink (68% and 70% respectively).¹⁴
- Younger women (aged 16–24) reported higher levels of victimisation for any domestic abuse than those in older age groups.¹⁵

We are establishing a fact-finding review to consider the pressure on girls to appear sexually available at younger and younger ages. During our consultation we want to talk to parents, young people and the wider public about these issues.

CHILDREN ARE VICTIMS TOO KEY FACTS

- In between 30% and 60% of domestic violence cases, the abusive partner is also directly abusing children in the family.¹⁶
- Domestic violence is a factor in two thirds of cases where children have been killed or seriously injured.¹⁷
- Children who have witnessed domestic violence are 2.5 times more likely to have serious social and behavioural problems than other children.¹⁸
- 39% of all the overseas assistance cases dealt with by the Forced Marriage Unit in 2008 involved children under the age of 18, and in 14% of these cases, children under 16 were involved.¹⁹

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE?

With regard to broadcasting, the Government placed a duty on Ofcom in 2005 to draw up a broadcasting standards code to prohibit discriminatory treatment or language on the grounds of gender; this is now in place.

We believe that we can work with the media in reporting violence against women more responsibly. The National Union of Journalists has agreed to work with us to draw up guidance for their members.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

We are concerned that violence against women and girls is seen as acceptable in some audiences and under some circumstances. We are clear: violence against women and girls is unacceptable. We must understand where these distorted views lie, why they continue to exist and what can be done to change them. One of the consequences of violence and abuse can be the erosion of women's sense of self-worth and confidence and we need to work to ensure that they are not likely to be the victims of predatory boys and men.

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

The Government is already providing support for families to improve relationships and prevent future problem behaviour, for example through Family Intervention Programmes (FIPs). Independent evaluation²⁰ of 65 FIPs has shown that the proportion of participating families judged at risk of domestic violence reduced from 26% to 8% following intensive intervention.

From April 2009, the Government will fund all local authorities to implement the Think Family reforms (encouraging children's and adult services to work more effectively together to identify and support families at risk) and to set up FIPs aimed at families experiencing problems that are known to be significant predictors of youth offending and other negative outcomes, including domestic violence.

To support the most vulnerable children, including those whose childhood is being ruined by abuse of any kind, we are providing £30 million to support the expansion and integration of the NSPCC's listening services, including Childline. This money will allow the NSPCC to expand their services significantly so that more children can be given the advice and help that can be so important.

Inter-agency guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*²¹ recognises the strong links between child protection concerns and domestic violence, and stresses the need for awareness of these links by professionals. The Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme aims to improve the welfare of all children by putting in place arrangements for earlier and more effective assessment and intervention for vulnerable children, including those affected by domestic violence.

DCSF has commissioned domestic violence perpetrator programmes from seven providers, for parents directed or ordered to complete this by a family court. These are intensive interventions designed to challenge and address participants' violent and abusive behaviour. The programme is intensive (about 60 hours' intervention) and seeks also to engage with victims and (if any) current partners.

DCSF has also taken forward a range of actions to tackle the issue of children and young people being forced into a marriage as part of the 'Stay Safe: Action Plan'.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

We need to safeguard children affected by family violence, intervene early with vulnerable families and offer appropriate support for all family members, whether individually or as a family.

Violence against women can have a long-term emotional impact on their children.

We need to protect children because they are victims too, and to mitigate against any long-term harmful effects.²²

When investigating or supporting women who have been affected by domestic violence, professionals must always consider particular risks to any children involved as a child protection issue. The Government will review safeguarding arrangements for children in light of any relevant findings of the Laming Report.

PICKING UP ON THE EARLY SIGNS OF VIOLENCE

KEY FACTS

- 40% of victims of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 told no one about their experience.²³
- 46% of women victims of serious sexual assault told a relative, friend or neighbour that they had been a victim; 12% told police; 10% told a counsellor or therapist; 8% told a health professional; and 4% told someone at work.²⁴

Are we doing enough to protect and support children affected by adult violence? Who's looking out for them and what do they need?

- What are your views on whether staff in all services that work with children and families have the knowledge and skills to identify, assess and refer children who are affected by adult violence?
- Are these staff working together effectively (both within and across organisations) to protect and support children?
- What types of support services are most effective and what should be done differently?
- Where are the main gaps in current provision?

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

We are rolling out a network of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) to provide a sustained and tailored response with emotional support. This results in better criminal justice and personal outcomes.²⁵

When using maternity services, women are now routinely asked a question about domestic violence in private, so that support can be provided when needed. And female (and male) patients in mental health services are asked whether they have been a victim of violence and abuse in child and/or adulthood.

We have launched a new leaflet (available at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/domestic-violence-leaflet/) with information on how to support a friend or relative who is a victim of domestic violence, and it includes practical advice. This could be extended to cover all forms of violence against women.

We have strengthened the legislation covering forced marriage enabling the courts to make a Forced Marriage Protection Order to prevent or pre-empt a forced marriage from occurring, and to protect victims if a forced marriage has already taken place. The Forced Marriage Unit has also raised awareness among practitioners, potential victims and others.

NHS Hull Domestic Violence and Social Marketing project

This is the first project of its kind in the UK to focus on using social marketing techniques to intervene at an early stage with potential and actual perpetrators of domestic violence.

Appropriate services are being developed jointly between the PCT and the local authority for men who respond to the social marketing ‘call to action’. Services include a domestic violence perpetrators helpline, and therapeutic interventions/perpetrator programmes delivered and developed by a newly appointed specialist practitioner, funded by NHS Hull.

The project’s three main objectives are:

- to continue to increase the safety of women and children affected by domestic violence;
- to develop a model for engaging with perpetrators of domestic violence in a proactive and productive manner; and
- to look for evidence, through the implementation of a robust and longitudinal evaluation process, of a reduction in the incidence and type of domestic violence offending/reoffending in Hull.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

Research shows that there is a window of opportunity of around four hours following an assault during which a supportive intervention has more positive and far-reaching outcomes than if offered later.²⁶

Although the support provided by IDVAs is essential, they provide assistance only to the 10% who are most at risk of homicide.

Women who have left abusive relationships may need to access financial support from government, and their interaction with Jobcentre Plus offers opportunities for earlier detection and action. Jobcentre Plus will continue to provide staff training in respect of violence against women and this training will be refreshed as appropriate.

How can we all better pick up on, and respond to, early signs of violence?

- How could public service providers play a stronger role in identifying and responding to the early signs of violence against women and girls?
- How would you like to access information (and what would you need to know) on how to support a friend, colleague or partner if they told you that they had been a victim of violence?
- How can Government better help supporters of victims?

Employers are also in a good position to support their staff. We want to revive and expand the Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence to support companies and organisations to address the impact of violence against women in the workplace through a wide range of resources, tailored to business needs and building on best practice.

CATCHING, CONVICTING AND CONTROLLING PERPETRATORS

KEY FACTS

- We are seeing a small but steady increase in conviction rates: 37% of all cases prosecuted as rape now result in a conviction for rape; and 59% of cases prosecuted as rape result in a conviction for rape or another offence. This is the highest conviction rate for 10 years.
- Sentence lengths are also increasing. In 1984 the average sentence for rape was 40 months. In 2007 this had increased to 77.9 months.
- In 2007, 97.1% of offenders convicted of raping a woman or girl were sent to prison.

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

The CPS published its first *Violence against women strategy and action plans* for 2008–2011 in April 2008. The strategy outlines a work programme across a range of offences that make up violence against women. Improvements in the numbers of cases charged and successfully prosecuted and victims supported have been achieved by better understanding, guidance, training and support services.

Police forces are implementing the national risk identification tool, DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-based violence), to provide consistent risk identification and assessment for the police, IDVAs and MARACs partners to assess victim and perpetrator risk. Good practice on the prevention of violence against women has been identified and shared across all forces through the Neighbourhood Policing website.

The prison and probation services work with offenders with the aim of reducing reoffending and enhancing the safety of victims. Probation-run interventions are linked with robust offender management, including inter-agency risk assessment and management, and contact with the known victims and current partners of men attending the programmes. The interventions are delivered across all probation areas.

Offenders waiting for a place on a domestic violence programme are under the supervision of their Offender Manager from the day of sentence. The Offender Manager will monitor the risk posed by the offender and actively manage it; additionally Offender Managers prepare offenders for the programmes.

The victim or partner of the offender is contacted by a women's safety worker who provides support and assistance with the ongoing risk assessment while the offender is subject to statutory supervision.

In addition, 14 women's prisons provide a range of supportive interventions to women who have been abused. New training for staff working with women offenders is being developed to raise awareness of the issues faced by survivors of sexual or domestic abuse.

'Go' orders

Austria, Switzerland, Germany and Poland have developed legislation allowing the police to exclude the perpetrator of domestic violence from the home. The legislation differs between these countries in terms of the length of the exclusion order, and the extent to which the state allows victims to influence the interventions that occur. In Germany the police can ban the perpetrator from the home for 10–14 days.

In Austria, the order is valid for 10 days and controlled by the police. There is a two stage process. In the first instance, the victim cannot influence the imposition of a barring order or 'go' order. The second stage of the process involves the woman taking action on her own behalf. After a barring order has been imposed, the victim can apply for an interim injunction at the Civil Court (Family Court) within 10 days. If such an application is submitted, the barring order is automatically prolonged to 20 days.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

The Government has made headway in ensuring that the perpetrators of domestic violence are dealt with effectively. We have given the police and courts new legal powers to control perpetrators including making breach of a relevant injunction a criminal offence, but more can be done to prevent women having to continue to experience violence in the home and elsewhere.

Criminal justice system attrition continues to be a problem in cases of violence against women. In partnership, the police, with the CPS and ACPO, will be issuing guidance and practical advice on investigating and prosecuting rape, and investigating stalking and harassment.

We have asked Chief Constable Brian Moore, ACPO lead on domestic violence, to undertake a full review of what additional powers the police may need to control the activities of perpetrators – particularly serial offenders who move from one abusive relationship to another. The review will also look at what additional measures may be needed to tackle perpetrators of 'honour'-based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Aiming to report back by the autumn, the review will consider a range of issues including:

- How can the police and other local agencies best track perpetrators who offend serially, for example in successive relationships and sometimes across geographical boundaries? Who needs to share what information and what information should be made available to the public where they may be at risk?
- What are domestic homicide reviews starting to tell us about perpetrator behaviour? How can we learn from past experiences to improve our knowledge of perpetrator offending and what may help to prevent it?
- What can be learnt from other jurisdictions and the powers they have created to control perpetrators?

How best can we keep track of the most serious offenders, and reduce the risks those individuals pose?

- What new powers would help the police to control serial perpetrators?
- There are already programmes for perpetrators of some forms of violence against women; how can their effectiveness be measured?
- What interventions would help perpetrators of all forms of violence against women to change their behaviour?
- Not all perpetrators come to the attention of the criminal justice system – are there other services that should be developing work with perpetrators to change their behaviour?

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IS NOT JUST A CRIMINAL JUSTICE ISSUE

KEY FACTS

- Over half (58%) of women who had been a victim of partner abuse in the last year suffered some form of injury or emotional effect.²⁷
- Around 50% of women in contact with mental health services have experienced child sexual abuse; a significant number have also suffered abuse as adults.
- The majority of women in prison have a background of child abuse or domestic violence.²⁸

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

Within the health service, the Government is developing a framework for the NHS to outline what more can be done to prevent violence including violence against women and girls.

The introduction of sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) provides a one-stop location for victims of recent sexual assault to receive medical care and counselling, and consider whether to report the matter to the police.

Sexual Assault Referral Centres

A SARC is a one-stop location where recent victims of sexual assault can receive medical care and counselling quickly and sympathetically. Referral centres bring together all the different legal and medical agencies and departments in one place, which helps both the victims and those investigating the crimes.

SARCs are a joint venture between police forces, health providers, the voluntary sector and the criminal justice system.

Victims of rape who are seen at a SARC will be provided with emergency contraception and HIV prophylactics if necessary, and will be screened for sexually transmitted diseases.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

The consequences of violence on women's health can be severe, from direct injuries to long-term mental, sexual and reproductive health problems.

Providers of health and social care play a vital role in early identification, referral for specialist help and provision of services. Many women will have contact with various health service providers, social care or children's services as a result of physical or emotional injury sustained during a violent incident.

What kind of services should you expect to receive from the health service and/or social services if you were a victim of violence?

- What would form a range of high-quality services for victims of violence against women in every local area? How should these services be commissioned?
- How could existing services improve their response to victims of violence against women?
- Are there specific services that should take a leading role?

PROVIDING WOMEN WITH A PLACE OF SAFETY, AND A FRESH START IF NECESSARY

KEY FACTS

- A 2002 study shows that domestic violence accounts for 16% of homelessness acceptances.²⁹
- Local authorities are not required to provide specific services for victims of violence against women and girls.

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

The Government is committed to providing victims with the support needed to report a crime, to see their attacker brought to justice and, most importantly, to help their recovery. We have, for example, introduced a Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and special measures to help vulnerable witnesses give evidence (the use of video-link and screens, for example). Victims of violent crime may also be eligible to apply to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.

We also recognise the importance of providing victims with specialist services that are tailored to their individual needs, which will include those that are gender sensitive. At a national level the Government:

- has invested over £11 million over the last five years in specialist services for victims of sexual violence. This funding includes grants for local third sector organisations, SARCs and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs), and capacity building for the umbrella groups, Rape Crisis England and Wales and the Survivors Trust; and
- has been working in partnership with the third sector organisation Eaves Housing for Women since 2003 to provide bespoke high-level support to adult women trafficked into the UK for sexual exploitation, through the POPPY project.

We also invest around £30 million a year into the national organisation Victim Support. Under the new Victim Support Plus programme, which has been rolled out nationally, victims are provided with a range of emotional and practical services based on an individual needs assessment.

In 2007/08, the Government provided £1.25 million for third sector services for victims of sexual violence and abuse through the Victims Fund. We also provided £150,000 core funding to the umbrella organisations, Rape Crisis England and Wales and the Survivors Trust to help to build the stability of the sector. The Government has also provided additional funding for Rape Crisis Centres through a £1.1 million cross-government fund, announced by the Minister for Women and Equality. Twenty Rape Crisis Centres have benefited from this fund, ensuring they were able to continue providing services to victims of sexual abuse and violence.

In 2006/07 local authorities spent over £61 million of funding allocated through the Supporting People programme on housing-related support for women at risk of domestic violence. In 2006, 3,180 households were accepted by local housing authorities in England as being owed a main homelessness duty, where the reason for homelessness was fleeing domestic violence. This represented 16% of the total number of homeless acceptances in England in 2006.

The Government has committed to ensuring that there will be at least one SARC in every police force area by 2011 and that all victims should have access to an ISVA in the same timeframe.

The Home Office also funds a number of national helplines, including the 24-hour freephone domestic violence helpline, the Men's Advice line, Respect phone lines for perpetrators and Broken Rainbow, for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans victims. This provides a vital service for people seeking advice. In 2007/08, the National Domestic Violence Helpline alone dealt with more than 140,000 calls. Also, the Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office jointly support the Honour Network for those who are experiencing, or have experienced, 'honour'-based violence or forced marriage.

In partnership, the Home Office and the British Bankers' Association are developing guidance for women escaping violence setting out what to expect from their bank and steps that can be taken to protect their finances, and for domestic violence service providers so that they can provide better support on

financial issues; and working to raise awareness of the impacts of financial abuse with banking staff to help them assist victims in managing their banking services.

The Home Office is working closely with the Commission for Rural Communities and relevant rural stakeholders to ensure that the needs of women in rural communities are addressed as the strategy is developed.

CEOP also provides a reporting function allowing members of the public, including children and young people, to report online directly to specialist police officers any concerns that they have.

The Local Performance Framework has been developed to bring together local authorities and other local service providers (such as police authorities and PCTs) to agree on prioritising and delivering services in a local area. The priorities for an area are agreed between central and local government in the area's Local Area Agreement (LAA) that is in place for a three-year period (currently until 2011).

Domestic violence is included in two national indicators which LAAs can opt to make a local priority and mean that every area is required to report on the inclusion or exclusion of these. This will be assessed by the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

Sanctuary Scheme

The Sanctuary Scheme is an innovative approach to homelessness prevention. It provides professionally installed security measures to allow those experiencing domestic violence to remain in their own accommodation where it is safe for the victim to do so, where it is their choice and where the perpetrator no longer lives within the accommodation. Support is also offered to the victim to implement safety measures in their lives.

The fundamental basis of the scheme is that it is a voluntary option and the wish of the victim to remain in the accommodation is paramount. The success of the scheme depends on a genuine and honest partnership between the local authority, the police, the local specialist domestic violence service, the voluntary sector and the fire and ambulance services.

In Barnet, North London, 40 sanctuaries were set up in 2004/05 leading to a 40% decrease in families in temporary accommodation as a result of domestic violence. The Sanctuary Scheme costs for the year were £68,461, leaving an estimated saving of over £600,000.

A recent survey commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government showed that 171 local authorities were operating Sanctuary Schemes and a further 90 were planning to introduce them.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

Effective support for victims of violence is vital and can be provided by the statutory sector (for example local NHS services) or the third sector. Government can provide some limited core funding to local non-governmental organisations but the majority of funding for local organisations to assist victims of violence will always need to come from local bodies such as local authorities including police, fire and rescue, and PCTs.

Funding for local services is based on local areas identifying a need and including this in their priorities for improvement, with outcomes specifying how the issues will be addressed. There is a growing concern

that LSPs are not prioritising services in this sector and, as a result, third sector organisations are facing a funding crisis that could lead to further closures.

The Government Equalities Office (GEO) has commissioned research on the stability and sustainability of the violence against women sector in England. This work will build on existing research that shows that parts of this sector are 'at risk' and there are gaps in funding and services.

The Government has also been working to find ways to support victims with no recourse to public funds. In March 2008, the Home Office announced a scheme

where victims of domestic violence whose applications for Indefinite Leave to Remain are successful may qualify for a contribution towards their housing and living costs.

The development of a scheme is currently being negotiated. The proposals under the new scheme will strengthen the way in which domestic violence cases are considered, enabling those victims who are vulnerable to access additional support. We are also working in partnership with key voluntary agencies, ACPO and immigration lawyers to develop appropriate and effective guidelines. The scheme will be implemented by the end of May.

How can central government, local government and other service providers best work together to promote better consistency and quality of provision in services for victims of violence against women across England?

- What are the barriers to sustainable delivery of and funding for services for victims of violence against women at present?
- What are the barriers to providing a wide range of quality services for victims of violence against women?
- What are the barriers to partnership working to tackle violence against women?
- How best can providers of local services reflect in their local priorities the needs of women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence?
- How should local bodies and service providers work together to ensure that the longer-term impacts of violence against women are acknowledged (for example, impacts on mental and physical health, or child welfare)?
- What can be done to place the provision and delivery of services for victims of violence against women on a more sustainable basis?
- What can be done to ensure that local bodies work together to ensure the provision of all forms of services for victims of violence against women in your local area?
- What can be done to ensure that the needs of victims of violence against women are accounted for in Local Strategic Partnerships in your local area?
- What can be done to drive delivery of services for victims of violence against women through the Local Performance Framework? How could this be monitored?
- What can be done to encourage commissioners of local services (for example, local health providers and local authorities) to work together to support women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence?

PROTECTION, WHEN IT IS NEEDED

KEY FACTS

- Thirty-seven per cent of all cases prosecuted as rape result in a conviction for rape; 59% of cases prosecuted as rape result in a conviction for rape or another offence. That is still too low but is the highest conviction rate for 10 years.
- In 2007 the family and criminal courts helped 22,975 more victims of domestic violence than in 2004.
- 28,980 more defendants were prosecuted in criminal courts in 2007/08 compared with 2004/05 (34,839 in 2004/05, and 63,819 in 2007/08).

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

The CPS violence against women strategy published in 2008 has four aims: improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the criminal justice system through bringing more offenders to justice; improving public and stakeholder confidence; improving victim support, safety and satisfaction; and improving the understanding of the associated equality and diversity issues and addressing any disproportionality.

Across government, significant progress has been made in the delivery of our commitments:

- All prosecutors have been trained on domestic violence.
- Specialist rape training for all prosecutors will be completed by 2011.
- Approximately 150 women's safety workers have been appointed (or their services contracted from victim services across the country). Their role is to create safety plans with women whose partners have been convicted of a domestic violence offence, inform them about the men's perpetrator programme and what to expect, and connect them with victim service networks, housing and legal services locally.

The police are also taking action to improve their service. Every area has an action plan on rape and specially trained officers.

A national risk identification tool has been developed by ACPO and Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA). DASH will provide consistent risk identification and assessment for the police, IDVAs and MARAC partners to assess victims and perpetrators.

MARACs are being rolled out nationally; currently there are 200 in place, which assisted over 19,000 people last year. They are made up of statutory and voluntary representatives including the police, social services, IDVAs, victim support services, health representatives, housing services, probation services and education services.

By sharing information, agencies get a better picture of victims' situations and so develop responses that are tailored to the needs and goals of individual victims and their children. Members of the MARAC jointly construct and implement a risk management plan that provides professional support to those victims at highest risk, thus reducing harm.

We are aware that some victims of crime will be subject to intimidation and may be reluctant to report it. The police and criminal justice system agencies have a range of measures to help address this and offer victims protection. This includes having a Central Witness Protection Bureau for those subjected to the most severe forms of intimidation.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

It is essential that women of all ages have the confidence to report crimes committed against them and are encouraged to support a prosecution through criminal proceedings.

There is still more work that can be done to increase confidence and to continue to deliver a victim-focused service. We would like to assess the support, safety and satisfaction of victims of violence against women within the criminal justice system.

How can we improve women's confidence that the criminal justice system is working to protect them?

- What more can be done to increase confidence and deliver a victim-focused service?
- How best could we assess the support, safety and satisfaction of women victims within the criminal justice system?
- How could police community support officers build on their relationship with the community and reassure victims of violence?

The Government has been working hard to improve the criminal justice response to rape. All CPS and police force areas are monitored on their rape performance on a quarterly basis. Any concerns are raised with Chief Constables and Chief Crown Prosecutors. Furthermore, the Home Office held a conference in London for Chief Constables last July which focused on improving the police response to rape.

But the conviction rate for rape is too low. Overall, only 6.5% of rapes reported to the police ultimately result in a conviction.

Women's fear of violence

FEELING SAFER WHEN OUT AT NIGHT

KEY FACTS

- We know that women are more likely to feel unsafe travelling on public transport after dark, and are less likely to travel on buses and trains after 9pm.³⁰ Walking and waiting at stations are perceived as the most insecure part of journeys, especially after dark.³¹
- We also know that measures, such as improved street lighting, appropriate use of CCTV technology and presence of staff at stations and on public transport, can significantly increase public perceptions of safety.³²

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

A number of initiatives are already in hand to improve safety when travelling:

- The nationwide Secure Stations Scheme aims to establish and standardise good security practices at overground and underground rail stations, and surveys passengers about how safe they feel. There are currently 850 Secure Stations.
- Through the National Station Improvement Programme £150 million has been allocated to modernise a selection of intermediate stations, including improved lighting and signage, redesigning stations to improve passenger safety and increased CCTV.
- New rail franchises now specify minimum levels of investment in public safety; for example, the new South Central franchise has requirements for all trains to have CCTV by the end of the franchise.
- There is increased use of visible police patrols on public transport, for example London Safer Transport Team PCSOs who provide visibility and reassurance and cut crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour on and around public transport.
- There are nearly 25,000 licensed taxi drivers and over 35,000 licensed private hire drivers in London. Late-night marshalled taxi ranks or private hire schemes have been established in areas of London that are particularly busy late at night.

Salisbury Street Car Park

Salisbury Street Car Park in Southampton has seen major changes in its surroundings, resulting in a significant reduction in crime-related incidents. Crime Prevention Design Adviser, David Armstrong and the Southampton Technical Manager for Parking Services, Jas Sahota visited the car park last year and noticed issues with rough sleepers using the stairwell as shelter, creating an inhospitable environment for people using the car parking facilities. The area was also found to have evidence of general misuse.

Immediate action had to be taken so that the car park, which already held a Park Mark Award, could maintain its safety record. The glazing in the stairwell windows was replaced with metal grilles to reduce the 'comfort zones' and reduce the attraction for rough sleepers. As a result, over the past year, there has been a significant and ongoing decrease in crime and disturbance at the facility.

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

Across all the age groups, women were more than twice as likely to be worried about violent crime as men, contrasting sharply with actual risk of being a victim of violence. For example, among 16–24-year-olds 28% of women had high levels of worry compared with 10% of men.³³

We want to remove self-imposed restrictions on movement and encourage a community-based response to making travelling, in all its modes, safer.

We are encouraging CDRPs and CSPs to engage with the public transport sector to address crime and the fear of crime across the whole journey. These partnerships are usually included in Safer Travel Teams; and partnership working has led to a number of initiatives, including improvements to street lighting along key walking routes, around main stations and bus stops, and in the introduction of taxi marshals to help to improve passenger safety at taxi queues late in the evening.

What would make your journey at night safer?

- How do you choose which route you are going to take home?
- What makes your route home safe or unsafe?
- What would help you be and feel safer on your journey home at night?
- How can we help particularly vulnerable groups of women, such as those from black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee communities, older people or those from rural areas, to feel confident in getting home safely?
- How do you think local partnerships could better work together to improve the safety of your journeys?
- What makes you feel unsafe in car parks?
- How useful would you find an interactive website that allowed you to report where and why you felt either safe or unsafe?
- If you would use this website, which features do you think would be useful?
 - An option to send reports automatically to the local council or police
 - Contact details for neighbourhood policing teams
 - Contact details for the local authority and other bodies such as the CDRP
 - Contact details for third sector organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch
 - Links to websites with more information about how to get involved in tackling crime in your local area.

Car parks

We will be working alongside the BPA to promote and help to develop their Park Mark Safer Parking Scheme. Park Mark is an accreditation scheme and a form of good practice that we believe operators should strive towards. We want to support accreditation of car parks so that every major town and city centre has a range of car parks up to the Park Mark standard.

Safer Hastings Partnership

Safer Hastings Partnership also works with Network Rail, British Transport Police, the local train company, bus operators and taxi associations to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour across the public transport network. The Partnership introduced a number of measures to reduce fear of crime on public transport, which included:

- encouraging taxi companies to work late into the night to assist people's safe journey home and providing funding for discounted in-cab CCTV surveillance systems;
- Dispersal Orders in operation at the two main railway stations and immediate environment, one to tackle problems of street drinking and another to prevent youth nuisance;
- British Transport Police providing a uniformed presence at one railway station; and
- Safer Hastings television programmes informing the public of initiatives undertaken to enhance perceptions of personal security. The programmes were broadcast in the waiting room at one of the railway stations.

As a result of these initiatives residents felt safer, with an increase of almost 20% in the number of people who feel safe walking alone at night in the area in which they live (2006 compared with 2001) and a 13.4% increase in the number of people who feel safe walking alone at night in the town centre.

Safer Streets website

We will be launching a website to give people a say on what would make them feel safer on their local streets. This website builds on the excellent work that CDRPs, CSPs and Safer Neighbourhood and Safer Travel Teams already undertake up and down the country in making our neighbourhoods safer. The website will allow the public to report where in their local area (e.g. particular streets, bus or rail stations) they felt either safe or unsafe, and why – for example, that a particular street is badly lit. That information would then be shared with other users of the site, who could comment or add their own concerns.

MONITORING: NEXT STEPS

Government at every level – central and local – can make an impact on combating violence against women.

In April 2007, the Government introduced a new law called the Gender Equality Duty (GED). This requires all public bodies in England, Wales and Scotland to take steps to promote equality of opportunity between women and men and eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment in all of their functions. This is known as the 'general duty' and is enforceable by judicial review proceedings. Many public bodies in England (including local councils, health trusts, police forces and schools) also have specific duties.

Since October 2007, the Equality and Human Rights Commission has been empowered to enforce and monitor the GED. Guidance on the GED and developing gender equality schemes is on their website (www.equalityhumanrights.com).

The Commission has set a number of objectives for its wider functions within its business plan. One of these is tackling violence against women.

Each public authority is responsible for deciding, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and based on available evidence, whether this is a priority for their gender equality scheme.

Following completion of the consultation period, the Government will issue a strategy in order to ensure that coordinated activity is undertaken across government to reduce and prevent violence against women.

- How should the strategy be delivered? Who should lead it locally?
- How should progress on the strategy be measured and assessed? Who should do this?
- Should the strategy include any specific measures on equality and diversity? What further equalities issues should the violence against women strategy take into account (for example on race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic background or geographical location)?
- Are there any other matters we should be considering?

The following are some of the ways in which the GED can address violence against women:

- Local authorities might need to consider the impact of funding decisions on gender equality. For example, if a local authority cuts the funding of a rape crisis centre or refuge, it might need to consider whether this has an effect on equality between women and men?
- Local health services might need to consider the extent to which violence against women is related to women's physical and mental ill health, teenage pregnancy and substance misuse, and whether they need to develop policies to address this.
- In order to take action on violence against women, and to fulfil their statutory obligations under the GED, public bodies will have to consult with stakeholders and collect data to create an accurate local picture of the impact of violence against women.

Summary of questions

How should schools encourage young men to treat women and girls with respect, and not to resort to violent behaviour?

- What are your views on the role of schools in helping children and young people to develop the values and skills that they need as they grow into adulthood, including mutual respect, rights and responsibilities, gender equality, and the ability to manage their feelings and emotions?
- Should schools supplement this broader development by explicitly helping young people to understand issues such as domestic violence and sexual violence against women and girls?
- What teaching works on this already?
- How should this responsibility be shared between parents and schools?
- How well is sexual bullying being tackled in schools? Is the necessary support provided to schools to do this?
- What more could be done to help young women and young men to challenge negative perceptions or behaviours among their peers?

How do social attitudes towards girls and women affect the problem of violence against women?

- How can we best challenge the perceptions that allow people to stay silent on violence against women and for it to be accepted in various sectors of society?
- How can we challenge cultural beliefs which promote forced marriage, crimes committed in the name of 'honour' and female genital mutilation?
- Is there a link between sexualised images, perceptions and actual violence?
- How could we help women and girls to achieve greater confidence in their lives?
- How can we encourage peer-to-peer support to challenge violence against women and girls?

- How could we introduce self-defence training for all women and girls?

Are we doing enough to protect and support children affected by adult violence? Who's looking out for them and what do they need?

- What are your views on whether staff in all services that work with children and families have the knowledge and skills to identify, assess and refer children who are affected by adult violence?
- Are these staff working together effectively (both within and across organisations) to protect and support children?
- What types of support services are most effective and what should be done differently?
- Where are the main gaps in current provision?

How can we all better pick up on, and respond to, early signs of violence?

- How could public service providers play a stronger role in identifying and responding to the early signs of violence against women and girls?
- How would you like to access information (and what would you need to know) on how to support a friend, colleague or partner if they told you that they had been a victim of violence?
- How can Government better help supporters of victims?

How best can we keep track of the most serious offenders, and reduce the risks those individuals pose?

- What new powers would help the police to control serial perpetrators?
- There are already programmes for perpetrators of some forms of violence against women; how can their effectiveness be measured?

- What interventions would help perpetrators of all forms of violence against women to change their behaviour?
- Not all perpetrators come to the attention of the criminal justice system – are there other services that should be developing work with perpetrators to change their behaviour?

What kind of services should you expect to receive from the health service and/or social services if you were a victim of violence?

- What would form a range of high-quality services for victims of violence against women in every local area? How should these services be commissioned?
- How could existing services improve their response to victims of violence against women?
- Are there specific services that should take a leading role?

How can central government, local government and other service providers best work together to promote better consistency and quality of provision in services for victims of violence against women across England?

- What are the barriers to sustainable delivery of and funding for services for victims of violence against women at present?
- What are the barriers to providing a wide range of quality services for victims of violence against women?
- What are the barriers to partnership working to tackle violence against women?
- How best can providers of local services reflect in their local priorities the needs of women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence?
- How should local bodies and service providers work together to ensure that the longer-term impacts of violence against women are acknowledged (for example, impacts on mental and physical health or child welfare)?

- What can be done to place the provision and delivery of services for victims of violence against women on a more sustainable basis?
- What can be done to ensure that local bodies work together to ensure the provision of all forms of services for victims of violence against women in your local area?
- What can be done to ensure that the needs of victims of violence against women are accounted for in Local Strategic Partnerships in your local area?
- What can be done to drive delivery of services for victims of violence against women through the Local Performance Framework? How could this be monitored?
- What can be done to encourage commissioners of local services (for example, local health providers and local authorities) to work together to support women and girls who are victims of gender-based violence?

How can we improve women’s confidence that the criminal justice system is working to protect them?

- What more can be done to increase confidence and deliver a victim-focused service?
- How best could we assess the support, safety and satisfaction of women victims within the criminal justice system?
- How could police community support officers build on their relationship with the community and reassure victims of violence?

What would make your journey at night safer?

- How do you choose which route you are going to take home?
- What makes your route home safe or unsafe?
- What would help you be and feel safer on your journey home at night?
- How can we help particularly vulnerable groups of women, such as those from black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugee communities, older

people or those from rural areas, to feel confident in getting home safely?

- How do you think local partnerships could better work together to improve the safety of your journeys?
- What makes you feel unsafe in car parks?
- How useful would you find an interactive website that allowed you to report where and why you felt either safe or unsafe?
- If you would use this website, which features do you think would be useful?
 - An option to send reports automatically to the local council or police
 - Contact details for neighbourhood policing teams
 - Contact details for the local authority and other bodies such as the CDRP
 - Contact details for third sector organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch
 - Links to websites with more information about how to get involved in tackling crime in your local area.

Following completion of the consultation period, the Government will issue a strategy in order to ensure that coordinated activity is undertaken across government to reduce and prevent violence against women.

- How should the strategy be delivered? Who should lead it locally?
- How should progress on the strategy be measured and assessed? Who should do this?
- Should the strategy include any specific measures on equality and diversity? What further equalities issues should the violence against women strategy take into account (for example on race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic background or geographical location)?
- Are there any other matters we should be considering?

Annex 1: Summary of information about this consultation

SCOPE OF THE CONSULTATION	
Topic of this consultation	Consultation on potential cross-government action to combat violence against women and girls, and to improve their safety, by exploring any gaps in preventative work, provision, and protection issues. To raise awareness of violence against women, and women's safety issues.
Scope of this consultation	A strategy to combat violence against women and girls will be put together in response to the consultation.
Geographical scope	England (except for those policy areas that are reserved).
Impact assessment	An interim impact assessment is attached, and a full impact assessment will be produced alongside a strategy document later in the year.

BASIC INFORMATION	
To	This is a public consultation and anyone who wishes to do so may comment. However, public and third sector organisations providing services to victims of violence may particularly wish to comment, along with victims and survivors of gender-based violence.
Duration	This is a 12-week consultation, starting on Monday 9 March 2009 and finishing on Friday 29 May 2009.
Enquiries	A copy of this consultation document and further information are available on the Home Office website, at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/keepwomensafe . Any specific queries can be raised by emailing vawconsultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk You should also contact the Violence Against Women Team should you require a copy of this consultation paper in any other format, e.g. Braille, large font or audio.
How to respond	Any comments may be sent to vawconsultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or by post to: Violence Against Women Team Violent Crime Unit 4th Floor, Peel Building 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF Please include the words 'consultation response' in the subject line of your email/on your envelope.
Additional ways to become involved	A range of regional events is being held as part of the consultation. Further details are given in the document, and online at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/keepwomensafe
After the consultation	A strategy on combating violence against women and girls will be published later in the year.

BACKGROUND

Getting to this stage

The Government Equalities Office published a cross-government narrative on combating violence against women in October 2008.

Previous engagement

We have met with external non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders in the private and public sector to discuss the direction of the consultation and key issues.

Parliament (House of Lords) has most recently debated the issue of violence against women and children on 5 February 2009. The sixth report of the Home Affairs Select Committee (session 2007–08 HC 263) has reported on domestic violence, forced marriage and ‘honour’-based violence.

Annex 2: The scale of violence against women and girls

We plan to update Home Office counting rules, which provide guidance to police forces about how crime reported to the police should be recorded and detected.

<p>Domestic violence</p>	<p>In 2007/08, domestic violence accounted for 16% of all reported violent incidents as measured by the British Crime Survey (BCS), with women being victims in the majority of these incidents.</p> <p>30% of women have experienced domestic violence since age 16, with the BCS interpersonal violence module estimating that there were over 950,000 women victims of domestic violence last year.</p> <p>35% of female homicides were committed by the woman’s partner or ex-partner. 44% of women victims of partner abuse in the past year were repeat victims.³⁴</p>
<p>Sexual violence</p>	<p>Statistics from the 2007/08 BCS interpersonal violence module indicate that 23% of women have experienced some form of sexual assault since the age of 16, which is equivalent to 3.7 million victims. There were an estimated 475,000 female victims of sexual assault in the past year.</p> <p>5% of all women have experienced serious sexual assault, but only 12% of those women reported it to the police. For female victims of serious sexual assault, 53% of perpetrators were a partner or ex-partner.</p> <p>In 2007/08, 12,654 rapes (against women and men) were reported to the police.</p>
<p>Stalking</p>	<p>8% of women were subject to stalking during the last year (by which we mean experiencing two or more incidents of unwanted attention causing distress, fear or alarm).</p> <p>22% of women have experienced stalking since age 16.³⁵</p>
<p>Female genital mutilation</p>	<p>Female genital mutilation is recognised as a form of domestic abuse. The practice became illegal in this country under the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 1985. It is also illegal to take women or girls abroad for this purpose.</p>
<p>Trafficking</p>	<p>Home Office research on organised crime markets suggests that in 2003 there were up to 4,000 victims (women and girls) of trafficking for prostitution in the UK. The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre’s scoping project on child trafficking in the UK identified that 360 children were being trafficked to the UK annually.</p>
<p>Forced marriage</p>	<p>In 2008, the joint Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit intervened to help victims in over 400 cases of possible forced marriage. Of these cases, 213 required overseas assistance. The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 allows courts the power to make a Forced Marriage Protection Order on behalf of a victim of forced marriage. Since the launch in November 2008 there have been 11 orders made. Forced marriage is categorised by the Government as a form of domestic violence.</p>
<p>‘Honour’-based violence</p>	<p>So-called ‘honour’-based crimes are categorised by the Government as a form of domestic violence. An ‘honour’-based crime is a crime that is, or has been explained by the perpetrator of the crime as being, committed as a consequence of the need to protect or defend the honour of the family.</p>

Annex 3: Key achievements since 1997

DATE	KEY ACHIEVEMENT
1997	Sex Offenders Act – Introduced requirement for sex offenders to notify details to the police (known as the ‘sex offenders register’)
1999	Women Ministers launch ‘Living Without Fear’, a national strategic approach to violence against women
2000	Safeguarding Children in Prostitution Guidance
2001	Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) – first Domestic Violence Policy and Guidance and monitors performance once a year
2001	Introduction of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements for sexual offenders
2002	Rape Action Plan launched following the publication of HMIC/HMCPSI Joint Thematic <i>Without Consent</i>
2003	Home Office launch of <i>Safety & Justice</i> Consultation Paper
2003	Launch of the 24hr National Domestic Violence freephone helpline, run in partnership between Women’s Aid and Refuge
2003	The Female Genital Mutilation Act
2003	Sexual Offences Act - introduced new civil orders to manage sexual offenders
2003-04	Development of 14 Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)
2003-04	Began pilot project for support services for victims of human trafficking
2003-05	CPS Domestic Violence project to pilot Specialist Domestic Violence Courts and develops Good Practice Guidance for prosecutors
2003-06	Gender Equality PSA
2004	CPS start Area Performance on domestic violence
2004	Paying the Price consultation paper on prostitution
2004	National awareness raising campaign-Domestic Violence
2004	Domestic Violence, Crime & Victims Act
2004	UN Resolution on Honour Killings, jointly presented by UK & Turkey
2004	CPS Rape policy and guidance
2005	Official launch of the Forced Marriage Unit
2005	National Report and National Delivery Plan
2005	Launch of the Corporate Alliance Against Domestic Violence
2005	Domestic Abuse Strategy for Wales
2005	Announcement to establish 25 Specialist Domestic Violence Courts by end of 05/06
2005	‘Tackling Violence At Home’ strategy for domestic violence and abuse, NI

DATE	KEY ACHIEVEMENT
2005	CPS revised Domestic Violence and Guidance
2005	Joint Police and CPS Training programme started
2005/06	100 Independent Domestic Violence Advisors trained with over 70 trained in 2006/07
2005/06	Consultation on the creation of a specific offence for Forced Marriage took place and the responses have been published
2006-08	Gender Equality PSA
2006	Coordinated Prostitution Strategy
2006	The UK Human Trafficking Centre opened
2006	Homicide Review guidance published for consultation
2006	Funding of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers
2006	Funding of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers and Independent Sexual Violence Advisers
2006 & 2007	Publication of health professionals' domestic violence handbook and DVD
2006/07	Development and funding of more Sexual Assault Referral Centres
2006/07	Funding of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers
2006/7-2008/9	Funding of Independent Sexual Violence Adviser pilot in 38 areas
2006/07	Selection of further Specialist Domestic Violence Court systems bringing the total supported by the national Programme to 64
2006/07	Invested into the Poppy project to expand services for victims of human trafficking
2007	Government publishes response to 2006 consultation on <i>Convicting Rapists and Protecting the Public</i> . Work to continue on general expert material
2007	Cross Government Sexual Violence and Abuse Action Plan is published
2007	Cross Government Rape performance Group is established to monitor police and CPS performance
2007	Introduction of special measures to enable victims of sexual violence to give evidence in court
2007	Establishment of Project Azure within the Met Police Child Abuse Investigation Command Unit to deal specifically with the issue of Female Genital Mutilation
2007	MAPPa Guidance updated to ensure 3rd party disclosure is considered in all sexual and violent cases to better protect victims and potential victims
2007	Gender Equality Duty
2007	Action Plan published on Human Trafficking
2007/08	Largest national human trafficking for sexual exploitation enforcement campaign Operation Pentameter 2

DATE	KEY ACHIEVEMENT
2007/08	Support given to over 100 areas to enable the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) model to be rolled out
2008 (to 2013)	New PSAs announced – PSA 23(1) Reduce most serious violence, including tackling serious sexual offences & domestic violence
2008	Cross Government – Tackling Violence Action Plan launched-includes a number of commitments to tackle sexual and domestic violence
2008	Tackling the Demand for Prostitution Review
2008	Launch of SARC expert team by HO and DH. Home Secretary makes a commitment to have one in each police force area by 2011
2008	CPS launches first government department Violence against Women strategy and introduces VAW Indicator for performance monitoring of domestic violence, rape and sexual offences
2008	Announcement of the £1M Cross Government Special Fund for Rape Crisis Centres.
2008	ACPO guidance on investigating domestic abuse revised and reissued
2008	CPS – all prosecutors and associate prosecutors trained
2008	Publication of first CPS Violence against Women Crimes Report
2008	Launch of ACPO Honour based Violence Strategy
2008	Launch of the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 and Statutory Guidance
2008	CPS Report of Forced Marriage and Honour Crimes Pilots
2008	Change to the Immigration Rules which raised the minimum age for a sponsor (or someone wishing to be sponsored) to 21 from 18 to prevent cases of forced marriage
2008	Criminal Justice and Immigration Act – introduced presumption to disclose information on certain sexual offenders
2008	Published Update to the UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking and ratified the Council of Europe Convention Against Human Trafficking
2009	Launch of the ‘Supporting A Friend Or Relative’ leaflet (DV)
2009	CPS revised Domestic Violence and Rape Policies and Guidance
2009	The HO has funded the training of over 200 Independent Domestic Violence Advisers
2009	Over 200 Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) operational
2009	104 Specialist Domestic Violence Courts operational

Annex 4: Glossary

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers	SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
BCS	British Crime Survey	SDVC	Specialist Domestic Violence Court
BPA	British Parking Association	SEAL	Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning
CAA	Comprehensive Area Assessment	SRE	Sex and Relationships Education
CAADA	Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse	SSPs	Safer Schools Partnerships
CCTV	Closed-circuit Television		
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership		
CEOP	Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre		
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service		
CSP	Community Safety Partnership		
DASH	Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour-based Violence		
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families		
DfT	Department for Transport		
DPA	Data Protection Act 1998		
FIP	Family Intervention Programme		
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act 2000		
GED	Gender Equality Duty		
GEO	Government Equalities Office		
GP	General Practitioner		
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus		
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Adviser		
ISVA	Independent Sexual Violence Adviser		
LAA	Local Area Agreement		
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership		
MAPPAs	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements		
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference		
NHS	National Health Service		
NPIA	National Policing Improvement Agency		
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children		
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer		
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Economic education		

Annex 5: Confidentiality and disclaimer

The information you send us may be passed to colleagues within the Home Office, the Government or related agencies.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want other information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, among other things, with obligations of confidence.

In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA, and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

CONSULTATION COORDINATOR

If you have a complaint or comment about the Home Office's approach to consultation, you should contact the Home Office Consultation Coordinator, Nigel Lawrence.

Please **do not** send your response to this consultation to Nigel Lawrence. The Coordinator works to promote best practice standards set by the Government's Code of Practice, advises policy teams on how to conduct consultations and investigates complaints made against the Home Office. He does not process your response to this consultation.

The Coordinator can be emailed at Nigel.Lawrence@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk, or you can write to him at:

Nigel Lawrence, Consultation Coordinator
Home Office
Performance and Delivery Unit
Better Regulation Team
3rd Floor, Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

The consultation follows the Government's *Code of Practice on Consultation*, the criteria for which are set out below:

Criterion 1 – When to consult – Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2 – Duration of consultation exercises – Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3 – Clarity of scope and impact – Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4 – Accessibility of consultation exercises – Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5 – The burden of consultation – Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6 – Responsiveness of consultation exercises – Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7 – Capacity to consult – Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

The full *Code of Practice on Consultation* is available at www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/bre/consultation-guidance/page44420.html

Endnotes

- ¹ Kershaw, C., Nicholas, S. and Walker, A. (2008) *Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 07/08. London: Home Office.
- ² Department for Transport (2005) *Gender, experiences and perceptions*, Fact sheet 6. London: Department for Transport. www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/crime/personalsecurity/perceptions/factsheet6genderexperiencesa3002
- ³ Judicial statistics 2007.
- ⁴ Crown Prosecution Service data.
- ⁵ Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S. (2009) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.
- ⁶ Kershaw, C., Nicholas, S. and Walker, A. (2008) *Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 07/08. London: Home Office.
- ⁷ Mullender, A., Hague, G., Imam, U., Kelly, L., Malos, E. and Regan, L. (2002) *Children's Perspectives on Domestic Violence*. London: Sage Publications.
- ⁸ Institute of Education's evaluation of the primary SEAL programme.
- ⁹ *Sugar* magazine and NSPCC (2005) Teen abuse survey of Great Britain.
- ¹⁰ Wolfe, D. A., Zak, L., Wilson, S. and Jaffe, P. (1986) Child witnesses to violence between parents: critical issues in behavioural and social adjustment. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology* 14(1): 95–104.
- ¹¹ Home Office (2006) British Crime Survey 2005/06 module, interpersonal violence.
- ¹² Results are based on 915 telephone interviews with people aged 18+ in England and Wales. Weighted to be representative of the population profile. This research is not part of the Home Office National Statistics programme. Results should be seen as indicative.
- ¹³ Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S. (2009) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.
- ¹⁴ Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S. (2009) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.
- ¹⁵ Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S. (2009) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.
- ¹⁶ Edleson, J. L. (1999) The overlap between child maltreatment and women battering. *Violence Against Women* 5(2): 134–154.
- ¹⁷ Brandon, M., Belderson, P., Warren, C., Howe, D., Gardner, R., Dodsworth, J. and Black, J. (2008) *Analysing child deaths and serious injury through abuse and neglect: what can we learn? A biennial analysis of serious case reviews 2003–2005*, Research Report DCSF-RR023. London: Department for Children, Schools and Families.
- ¹⁸ Wolfe, D. A., Zak, L., Wilson, S. and Jaffe, P. (1986) Child witnesses to violence between parents: critical issues in behavioural and social adjustment. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology* 14(1): 95–104.
- ¹⁹ Forced Marriage Unit statistics for January–December 2008. www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage
- ²⁰ National Centre for Social Research, July 2008.
- ²¹ HM Government (2006) *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*. London: The Stationery Office.
- ²² Whitfield, C., Anda, R., Dube, S. and Felitti, V. (2003) Violent childhood experiences and the risk of intimate partner violence in adults. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* (18)2: 166–185.
- ²³ Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S. (2009) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.
- ²⁴ Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S. (2009) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.

- 25 Hester, M. and Westmarland, N. (2005) *Tackling Domestic Violence: effective interventions and approaches*, Home Office Research Study 290. London: Home Office.
- 26 Kelly, L. (1999) *Domestic Violence Matters: an evaluation of a development project*, Home Office Research Study 193. London: Home Office. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors193.pdf
- 27 Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S. (2009) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.
- 28 Corston, J. (2007) *The Corston Report: Executive summary: A report by Baroness Jean Corston of a review of women with particular vulnerabilities in the criminal justice system*. London: Home Office www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/corston-report/corston-exec-summary?view=Binary
- 29 Women and Equality Unit (2003) *Increasing Safe Accommodation Choices*.
- 30 Department for Transport (2008) *Experiences and perceptions of anti-social behaviour and crime on public transport*. London: Department for Transport. www.dft.gov.uk/162259/162469/221412/221513/antisocialcrime/antisocialcrime.pdf
- 31 Department for Transport research (2004). *People's perceptions of personal security and their concerns about crime on public transport: Research findings*. www.dft.gov.uk/pgt/crime/personalsecurity/perceptions
- 32 Farrington, D. P. and Welsh, B. C. (2002) *Effects of improved street lighting on crime: a systematic review*, Home Office Research Study 251. London: Home Office.
- 33 Kershaw, C., Nicholas, S. and Walker, A. (2008) *Crime in England and Wales 2007/08*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 07/08. London: Home Office.
- 34 Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P. and Roe, S. (2009) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2007/08 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2007/08)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/09. London: Home Office.
- 35 Povey, D., Coleman, K., Kaiza, P., Hoare, J. and Jansson, K. (2008) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2006/07: 3rd edition (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2006/07)*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 03/08. London: Home Office.



Produced by the Home Office. March 2009. Ref: 291751
ISBN: 978-1-84726-882-2