



# South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board and Children's Partnership

Safeguarding Newsletter  
Domestic Abuse Edition

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE FOR ALL PARTNERS

JUNE 2021

## Domestic Abuse Edition

This special edition of the newsletter is a combined newsletter for both the South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership and the Safeguarding Adults Board and has a specific focus on Domestic Abuse.

This newsletter, and back copies from the last few months are now available on the website. You can find them all [here](#) on the Children's Partnership site and [here](#) on the Safeguarding Adults Board website.

### Domestic Abuse Training

Both the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Children's Partnership commission a programme of multi agency training open to all who work with adults and children in South Gloucestershire. The courses about Domestic Abuse are as follows:

**Introductory Level:** [E-Learning Module for those working with adults and children](#)

**Part One:** [Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control](#) (adults and children's workforce)

**Part Two:** Working With Those Who Are, Or May Be Experiencing Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control (work with adults [click here](#); work with children [click here](#))

**Part Three:** [Understanding and Responding to Perpetrators of domestic abuse](#) (adults and children's workforce)



### Domestic Abuse and the Euros

Share this messaging and image via your social media channels:

Did you know there are increased reports of domestic abuse during the football season? As the Euros kick off this weekend, let's show domestic abuse the red card.

If you need immediate help or you would like to report an incident, please contact the police.

For victim support and guidance on how to help someone who is suffering domestic abuse please can contact our partner Next Link on 0800 4700 280 or via their webchat at <https://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk/southgl/os/>

#SeeSomethingSaySomething

## The Domestic Abuse Act



On the 29th of April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Bill was signed into law. The new [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) provides further protections to the millions of people who experience domestic abuse and strengthens measures to tackle perpetrators. For the first time in history there will be a wide ranging legal definition of domestic abuse which incorporates a range of abuse beyond physical violence, including emotional, coercive or controlling behaviour and economic abuse.

The measures include important new protections and support for victims ensuring that abusers will no longer be allowed to directly cross examine their victims in the family and civil courts and giving victims better access to special measures in the courtroom to help prevent intimidation, such as protective screens and giving evidence by a video link.

Police will also be given new powers including Domestic Abuse Protection Notices, providing victims with immediate protection from abusers, while courts will be able to hand out new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders to help prevent offending by forcing perpetrators to take steps to change their behaviour, including seeking mental health support or drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

In addition, new measures further strengthen the law, including creating a new offence of non-fatal strangulation, extending an offence to cover the threat to disclose intimate images, and clarifying the law to further clamp down on claims of “rough sex gone wrong” in cases involving death or serious injury.

### Other measures included in the act:

- extending the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse.
- explicitly recognise children as victims if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.
- establish in law the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner and set out the Commissioner’s functions and powers.
- placing a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation.
- provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance.
- place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing.

## MARAC Update

Since relaunching MARAC in South Gloucestershire in April of 2021 we have worked tirelessly to ensure the MARAC panel has been built upon the feedback and voices of those working within the team. As the new coordinator, I prioritised hearing from the reps via feedback forms, one-to-one meetings and small focus groups that looked at different aspects of what made the previous MARAC successful and what needed to change as a matter of urgency.

One key theme to come out of the feedback was to ensure we were meeting on a video calling platform and no longer via phone line. This has had a significant impact on rep-engagement and attendance – and as several reps have complimented – this has had a direct positive impact on the quality of discourse around each case as ‘we are able to talk as though we are sitting round a table like pre-covid.’

Another area needing to be addressed was the lack of an information sharing platform for representatives to use. Each agency works from their own database and so it is a real challenge to get a cohesive and comprehensive report for each case without a shared medium through which to do so. We took this on board and introduced SharePoint. SharePoint has been a truly energising step for MARAC. From our MARAC App we can launch TEAMS meetings, file sharing, chats and see live actions, minutes and case note updates whenever a rep wishes to. This means we have better accountability for each rep’s role and assigned tasks but also clears up the communication medium to one accessible and simple platform that we are all able to use with minimal strain on our IT skills.

Looking back on the first two months of meetings we have reflected on these successes, but also analysed areas for improvement. We look towards tech-based opportunities to alleviate the data processing and quantitative data set management currently being undertaken by the coordinator and look forward to seeing if we can improve on an already strong base for our MARAC IT platform and build a more complex network that analyses the cases we are receiving and processes each week’s referrals into wider thematic trends and patterns; for those outside the immediate MARAC team to then look at addressing these wider issues with potential policy impact and resource focus. The possibilities are endless once we have the datasets available to us!

We have also managed to recruit reps from areas we previously hadn't been able to such as Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership and North Bristol Trust Midwifery Team. We have a passionate and engaged team of committed reps that are working tirelessly to support these high risk and vulnerable cases and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their commitment and highlight our collective excitement for MARAC's development moving forward.

[Charlotte Ross](#) - MARAC Coordinator and Vice Chair.

## South Gloucestershire Libraries

We are currently working in partnership with library staff to increase awareness around domestic abuse and to highlight the support that is available.

There is a slide with contact details for Next Link and the National Domestic Violence Helpline for display on the plasma screens, and there will also be some specialist book stock purchased which will have stickers signposting to Next Link with their telephone number inside. There will also be Second Steps leaflets placed next to the books with relevant information.



Other things under consideration are the purchase of a pull up banner to tour around our libraries, a link to Next Link's website on the libraries web pages, access to IT and telephone in a safe environment to enable victims to seek help.

Following on from this, we discussed the possibility of a Reading Group for survivors, the opportunity to use libraries for neutral meeting spaces in the evenings for a small charge, supplying books to prisons (particularly Eastwood Park) and materials aimed at perpetrator's who want to change.

They have already donated a selection of children's books to refuges.

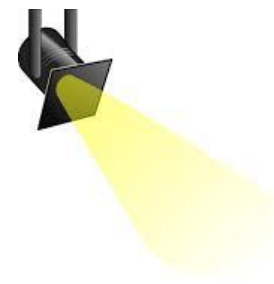
## Avon and Somerset Police –short film



Have you watched this film from Avon & Somerset Constabulary?

Sharon Baker, now a Chief Inspector, recounts her story of how her relationship turned into one of controlling behaviour and social isolation. Watch the video to hear more about Sharon's story. Click the picture to watch.

## Spotlight on Policies



### Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Toolkit

The multi agency toolkit for use by professionals working with children and families has been refreshed and relaunched on our partnership website. You can access a copy [here](#).

### Domestic Abuse Practice Guidance

The practice guidance for professionals working with adults is available on the Safeguarding Adults Board section of the website. Find it [here](#).

## DRIVE – Perpetrator Programme

You can find out all the details you need about DRIVE by clicking [here](#).

**WE NEED TO STOP ASKING  
"WHY DOESN'T SHE LEAVE?"  
AND START ASKING  
"WHY DOESN'T HE STOP?"\***

## Getting Help in South Gloucestershire



Relationships are important and should be equal, supportive, safe and free from pressure or violence. In short, they should be healthy. However, sometimes people do not enjoy the relationship they are in and feel under pressure to do things they do not want to do or are worried about their own or others behaviour. These relationships can be unhealthy.

For a range of support around relationships, including information on interactive online platforms, resources to use independently at home, and various contacts for further support, please visit the South Glos website at [Healthy relationships for adults | South Gloucestershire \(southglos.gov.uk\)](https://southglos.gov.uk)



Next Link provide specialist domestic abuse services in South Gloucestershire.

More information is [here](#). Missing Link [Court Up Poster](#), and [Court Up Leaflet](#)

Telephone help lines are open 8.30am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday **0800 4700 280**



Julian House offers services to children affected by Domestic Abuse in South Gloucestershire.

More information is [here](#).

Schools, Agency and Self referrals welcome. [cyp.service@julianhouse.org.uk](mailto:cyp.service@julianhouse.org.uk) **0117 942 4986**



If someone is in immediate danger – contact the police on 999

For information about reporting domestic abuse, accessing information about whether someone has been violent before (Clare's Law) and knowing what to expect after reporting to the police visit this section of the Avon & Somerset Police website [Report domestic abuse | Avon and Somerset Police](#)



Worried about an adult? Call **01454 868007**

Worried about a child? Call **01454 866000**

Out of office hours and weekends call **01454 615165**



Somerset & Avon  
rape & sexual abuse support

Sarsas provide support to people who have experienced rape or sexual assault at any time in their lives.

More information is [here](#). Tel. 0808 801 0456 email [support@sarsas.org.uk](mailto:support@sarsas.org.uk)

## Other Resources

**The Hideout** – website for children and young people worried about domestic abuse [The Hide Out](#)

**Womankind** - 0845 458 2914 - Provide free, confidential telephone advice and webchat service to women experiencing domestic abuse in Bristol, South Glos and North Somerset.

**Men's Advice Line** - 0808 801 0327 -Confidential helpline for men experiencing domestic violence

**LGBT+ Galop** [Galop – The LGBT+ anti-violence charity](#) National Helpline **0800 999 5428**