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| April 2024 |
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DHR Male Victims Bulletin



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| **What are we doing in Lincolnshire?**Text  Description automatically generated**Let’s Talk Lincolnshire Male Voices Survey** A screenshot of a computer  Description automatically generated**72 respondents** took part in the Male Voices survey (Apr 2024)(See page 4) **Male Victims eLearning** Supporting and understanding men who experience Domestic Abuse (Live 6th Jun 24)[All Learning - Enable (vc-enable.co.uk)](https://safeguardinglincolnshire.vc-enable.co.uk/Learn/Learning/All)**DHR Male Victims Bulletin** Greater understanding of learning for professionals**Importance of language eLearning**[All Learning - Enable (vc-enable.co.uk)](https://safeguardinglincolnshire.vc-enable.co.uk/Learn/Learning/All) |
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| **Focus:** The recent DHR’s 2021X and 2021Y feature male victims of domestic abuse. These have brought to light the importance of further understanding and awareness raising of the role of male victims within domestic abuse. |
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“There are lots of missed opportunities to identify and support
male victims of domestic abuse as no one understands the issue.
As a result, professionals less readily recognise victims and men
feel that they won’t be believed or taken seriously,”
Mark Brooks CEO, ManKind Charity.

**It is important not to simply assume that ‘male victim’ means ‘female perpetrator’** (DA Commissioner) So often the narrative of domestic abuse is steeped in assumptions about heterosexual relationships and GBT+ men’s experiences are often invisible.

**Overview**

Domestic Abuse is routinely seen as a gendered crime, perpetrated by men against women.

****There is an increasing recognition of men as victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) within the academic literature and the public narrative. Statistics suggest that **one in three victims** in the United Kingdom (UK; specifically, England and Wales) are male, with some academic literature suggesting the ratio of female to male abuse could be even closer ([Archer, 2000](https://connect.springerpub.com/content/sgrpa/12/4/384#ref2)). Internal and external barriers can lead to missed opportunities to intervene and support men to escape abuse or prevent higher risk cases from escalation.

**Why is change needed?**

Research in the main has been focused on the experiences of female victims
This has produced a narrative that frames domestic abuse - as a gendered issue. This has led to a focus on heterosexual women as victims with male perpetrators. It is often predicated as being “a cause and consequence of gender inequality, with women disproportionately the victims” (Home Office, 2020). The effect being that when men are victimised; their voices are minimised and not recognised as a victims.

‘It is important for professionals to understand that men do not always recognise they are a victim of domestic abuse. Research tells us that language is key when speaking to males. Using language such as ‘being controlled and asking if someone being aggressive towards them’ may relate more to men rather than asking if they are a victim of domestic abuse. This may feed into a lack of reports to services from men, therefore the national statistics may not be as accurate as they could. (Mankind Conference, Nov 23).

Good practice by all Lincolnshire partners involved in DHR 2021X from the onset noted that a male victim of domestic abuse was identified, even though the victim was not able to identify himself as a victim of domestic abuse.

This led to recognising that male victims awareness and training was necessary throughout Lincolnshire, which has since been put into place. (Male victims eLearning – Supporting and understanding men who experience Domestic Abuse) [All Learning - Enable (vc-enable.co.uk)](https://safeguardinglincolnshire.vc-enable.co.uk/Learn/Learning/All)

**Stereotyping, myths and misconceptions:**

There are myths about men who experience domestic abuse; that it doesn't happen to men, men who are victims are not 'real men' and that the law only protects women.  These myths are false but can impact men disclosing or reporting abuse.

Harmful stereotyping, combined with popular myths and misconceptions around male victims, can act as additional barriers when it comes to reporting and seeking help. For example, stereotypes around masculinity can play a significant role in a male victim’s experience. Male victims may be less likely to disclose that they are being abused as they may believe the term ‘domestic abuse’ is only applicable to women.

**Barriers**

Men and boys may face particular challenges to disclosing abuse due to stereotypes and out of fear of not being believed. Barriers to reporting these crimes, and seeking help from specialist services, can be experienced by all victims, regardless of sex.

Male victims with protected characteristics may be at greater risk of facing barriers to reporting and seeking help. Services may not be equipped to support those with protected characteristics.

LGBT victims and survivors may be less likely to seek support because there can be a lack of clarity as to whether services are ‘LGBT friendly’. (Hudson-Sharp, N, Metcalf, H (2016)). The support organisation Galop identified that LGBT people experienced a range of structural, cultural, individual, and interpersonal barriers when accessing domestic abuse and sexual violence services in the UK. (Galop 2021).

**Barriers Statistics:**

* 89% are concerned about the children.
* 81% believe marriage is for life.
* 68% fear never seeing their children again.
* 53% don’t have enough money.
* 46% don’t want the kids to be taken away from their mother.
* 53% of men who contacted the Mankind helpline have never told anyone.
* 70% of those who say would only call if anonymous.
* 66% have children in the household.

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**Work to raise awareness being carried out:**

The Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (GOV.UK) in which male victims of domestic abuse are classified as a victim of VAWG. This move has been widely criticised by survivors and charities for not explicitly recognising males as victims within their own right, further delegitimising their experiences and making it more difficult for them to speak out (Broberg, 2022).

[**Supporting Male Victims document**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-male-victims-of-crimes-considered-violence-against-women-and-girls)outlines the Government’s support for male victims of crimes that fall within the violence against women and girl’s space. This document sits alongside the Tackling violence against women and girls strategy (GOV.UK) and the Domestic Abuse Plan 2022, as a connected and complementary piece of work.​

There still remains significant issues in how male victims are described and recognised,
as well as the need to accelerate the dismantling of the cultural, societal and
public service delivery barriers they face. **(Brooks 2022)**

The Survivorship Experience of Men and Boys of Crimes Categorised as Crimes of Violence Against Women and Girls, University of Central Lancashire (Apr 2024) 369 respondents took part in the survey (Aug 2023) – 342 male survivors, 3 female survivors, 16 family members, partner, or friend of male survivor and 8 others (professionals).

In this they recognised the need to support women and girls who are victims of these crimes but also stated that they also needed to recognise that we do not want resources focused on supporting women and girls to be switched to men and boys. “We want more for all.”

**What victims wanted?**
Gender Neutral Interpersonal Violence Strategy - Male survivors 65
Separate Strategies for male and females – Male survivors 30

**Male Victims** **Statistics:**

* The latest Office for National Statistics figures (2022/23) show that **one in three victims** of domestic abuse are male equating to **751,000 men (3.2%**) and 1.38 million women (5.7%). From this, 483,000 men and 964,000 women are victims of partner abuse. (ONS 2022/23).
* **One in seven men** (13.9%) and one in four women (27%) will be a victim of domestic abuse in their lifetime (ONS figures 2022/23).
* Of domestic abuse crimes recorded by the police, **25%** were committed against men (ManKind Initiative).
* Only **4.8%** of victims of domestic abuse being supporting by local domestic services are men according to SafeLives data. This highlights how few men are being supported for local domestic abuse services (ONS 2022/23).
* **58.9%** of the men who call the ManKind Initiative helpline have never spoken to anyone before about the abuse they are suffering and **64%** would not have called if the helpline was not anonymous (ManKind Initiative).
* Currently in the UK (1 February 2024) there are 57 organisations with 410 refuge or safe accommodation spaces available for men (**108 are dedicated for men** and 302 for men or women). (ManKind Initiative).
* **21%** of male victims (2022/23) fail to tell anyone they are a victim of partner abuse – which is big improvement as previously it was 49% in 2017/18. The figures for female victims are 18.2% (2022/23) and 19% (2017/18. (ONS 2022/23).

**Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs):**

* 6.5% of male victims (2.8% women) have considered taking their life due to partner abuse in 2022/23. The charity has seen an increase in calls regarding suicide ideation over the pandemic period and beyond. (ONS 2022/23).
* In 2022/23, 13 men died at the hands of their partner or ex-partner compared to 56 women. (ONS 2022/23).
* The Mankind Initiative charity has collected (and is still collecting) Domestic Homicide Reviews involving male victims of domestic abuse. [Domestic Homicide Review Library - male victims (mankind.org.uk)](https://mankind.org.uk/statistics/domestic-homicide-review-library/)

Dr Elizabeth Bates (University of Cumbria) led a research project ([Domestic Homicide Reviews](https://connect.springerpub.com/content/sgrpa/12/4/384) )  – Analysis of 22 Domestic Homicide Reviews  which explored the experiences and gender stereotypes surrounding the support male victims of domestic abuse received before they lost their lives.

The findings suggested there is often a dismissal of women's abusive acts towards men by services, and men (as victims) are also more likely to be arrested than their partners. It is clear from the findings that domestic abuse services are not currently working inclusively, and this serves as an additional barrier to male help-seeking victims.

**Let’s Talk Lincolnshire Male Voices Survey (Apr 2024)**

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| **Questions (Out of 72 respondents):** | **Yes** | **No** | **Don’tKnow** |
| Do you feel there is enough support locally for men who experience controlling or aggressive behaviour from their loved ones? | 1(1.4%) | 50(70.4%) | 20(28.2%) |
| Do you feel men who are experiencing these behaviours know what services are available in Lincolnshire? | 2(2.8%) | 63(88.7%) | 6(8.5%) |
| Do you feel people have prejudged ideas about men experiencing controlling, aggressive and abusive behaviour from their loved ones? | 64(90.1%) | 7(9.9%) |  |
| Would this put you off accessing support? | 37(57.8%) | 10(15.6%) | 17(26.6%) |
| Do you have children? | 51(71.8%) | 20(28.2%) |  |
| Do you feel there are stereotypical views people have on what a father should be like? | 49(96%) | 1(2%) | 1(2%) |
| Would these views stop you seeking support? | 22(43.1%) | 18(35.3%) | 11(21.6%) |

**If you thought about contacting a service for support, what would
 you want them to offer? (Select as many options as applicable)**

Understanding of the issue 59 Refer to other services 48

Listen with no judgement 64 Attend appointments with you 15

Give practical advice 66 Be an advocate for you 37

Other (please specify) 8

**Conclusion**

Every case of domestic abuse should be taken seriously, and each individual given access to the support they need. All victims should be able to access appropriate support.

We want to end domestic abuse for everyone, for good. We know that domestic abuse is experienced by men and boys – as children in the home as well as young people and adults in heterosexual and LGBT+ relationships, and in the potential for child to parent abuse.

The results in the table above – Let’s Talk Lincolnshire Male voices survey show that not only in Lincolnshire but “Tens of thousands of men are suffering in silence and simply do not know where or who to turn to for help and guidance. They often do not even recognise what they are going through is domestic abuse until it is described to them. This is why it is important for local organisations and the police to publicise the support they have and be very clear that they will take them seriously. (Mankind Initiative)

“There need to be more awareness campaigns aimed at men and changing public attitudes alongside more services and better responses from services when they do come forwards.” (Mankind Initiative)

It can be difficult for men to identify themselves as a victim or survivor of the crimes framed within the VAWG Strategy, which remain largely hidden. Harmful gender norms, shame or honour, and stereotypes of masculinity and sexuality can act as barriers for male victims and survivors to seek support.

**Moving Forward** – voices of male survivors (University of Central Lancashire (Apr 2024))

* “I don’t understand why we need abuse to be gendered. Regardless of your gender, abuse is disgusting and needs to be eradicated.”
* Whilst a single strategy appears to be a logical solution, there are too many differences between male centric and female central abuse patterns to have a ‘one size fits all’ strategy. We, as a society need to understand that we have our differences and that they need to be treated accordingly.”
* “Build towards a gender inclusive approach…this starts by having a dedicated men’s version and under an umbrella we include VAWG and a male centred version.”
* “One solution could be through creating an overarching “Ending Intimate Violence Against Men and Boys Strategy” with clear targets, accountabilities, commitments and responsibilities for public services. It must also have robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms.”

**Support Available:**

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|  **Nationally:** | **Lincolnshire:** |
| Mankind Initiative <https://www.mankind.org.uk> 01823 334244 Weekdays 10am to 4pm | Survivors UK – Male Rape and Sexual Abuse [www.survivorsuk.org](http://www.survivorsuk.org) Text chat available by texting 020 3322 1860 | Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Specialist Service 01522 510041<https://ldass.org.uk/contact> |
| Respect.uk.net [www.mensadviceline.org.uk](http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk)0808 801 0327 Monday-Friday 9am-5pm | National Stalking Helpline - 0808 8020 300 [www.stalkinghelpline.org](http://www.stalkinghelpline.org) | South Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Service (SoLDAS) 01205 311272<https://bostonwomensaid.org.uk/>  |
| Andys Man Club – Men’s suicide prevention charity[www.andysmanclub.co.uk](http://www.andysmanclub.co.uk)  | Galop - National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline0800 999 5428 - [www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk) | Andys Man Club groupsLincoln and Louth [www.andysmanclub.co.uk](http://www.andysmanclub.co.uk)  |

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 **Brooks (2022) Statement from Mark Brooks OBE, Chair of the ManKind Initiative** [ManKind Initiative -
 supporting Male Victims of Domestic Abuse](https://mankind.org.uk/)

Galop (2021) [Barries-Faced.pdf (galop.org.uk)](https://galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Barries-Faced.pdf)

GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy>

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ONS 2022/23 [Search - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/search?q=male+victims+of+domestic+abuse)

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