

# DARDR Bulletin

## Hazel

### Circumstances

In April 2021, Lincolnshire Police received a call from Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service stating there was a fire at an address in the area and that one person was still in the house. The casualty was Hazel. She had medically reported as having 90% full thickness burns to her upper body. The house was one of multi-occupancy and occupants reported hearing an argument between Hazel and her partner Andrew. Hazel went first to the local hospital and then transferred to a specialist burns unit in Birmingham, then ultimately to another specialist unit in Nottinghamshire. Doctors stated that with the extensive burns her chances of survival were slim.

In March 2022, Andrew was convicted of Section 18 GBH at Lincoln Crown Court, this followed a plea of guilty from him and Andrew was sentenced to 17 years and 10 months imprisonment. Hazel at this time was still alive.

In March 2023, Hazel died from her injuries. Lincolnshire Police considered with the CPS the uprating of Andrew's charge to one of murder and to prosecute him for this offence. Following forensic pathology advice, this did happen and Andrew subsequently pleaded guilty to murder. At Lincoln Crown Court in December 2024, Andrew was sentenced to serve a further minimum of 23 years and 145 days in prison for the murder of Hazel.

### Findings

- Professional curiosity required to understand relationships that may involve domestic abuse.
- Vulnerable victims require trauma informed approach.
- The risks of alcoholism in cases of domestic abuse.
- The vulnerabilities caused by being homeless- rough sleeping.
- There are missed instances when Hazel may have met the criteria for a Carer's Assessment.

### What should Professionals do?

- Gain a better understanding of coercive controlling behaviour. Complete DASH/DARA assessments. Understand the DVDS scheme (Clare's Law).
- Make use of the Lincolnshire 'Did not attend' guidance.  
<https://www.lincolnshiresab.org.uk/resources/not-attend-not-supported-attend-guidance>
- Always act in a trauma informed way- Ensured trained in trauma informed practice.  
<https://sway.cloud.microsoft/HKUpD0jd2uEFnCbT?ref=Link>
- Learn and understand the 'Duty to Refer' requirements, for the homeless.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-duty-to-refer/a-guide-to-the-duty-to-refer>
- Refer with appropriate consent to specialist services for cases of excess alcohol use in vulnerable victims including domestic abuse.