

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

This document demonstrates how the council is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010, by giving due regard to the requirement to: eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and promote good relations.

1. Background

Directorate	Adults
Service area	Prevention, Wellbeing and Communities Commissioning Hub
Title of the activity being assessed i.e. the strategy, plan, policy or service	To seek Cabinet approval to extend the contract for Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) for a further two years, as permitted in the contract.
Brief outline of the proposal(s)	<p>For Cabinet to agree for Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) to exercise the two-year option to extend within the GDASS contract.</p> <p>The extension will secure continuity of specialist support for victims of domestic abuse (DA) in the county; and support delivery of the county council’s statutory duties for domestic abuse under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.</p> <p>The extension will also support the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board (DA LPB) to fulfil the strategic vision and priorities of the Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021 - 2024</p> <p><u>Vision:</u> For Gloucestershire to be a county where domestic abuse is not tolerated and everybody can live free from abuse and harm, where healthy relationships are the norm and where victims/survivors and their children have access to the right support at the right time.</p> <p>For domestic abuse to be everybody’s business, where a collaborative approach creates lasting change across our systems and communities, where the voice of the victim is at the heart of our response.</p>

	<p><u>Priorities:</u> Specifically, Priority 4: High quality service provision for victims and their families</p>
Who is affected by the proposals?	<p>Service users <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other, please specify: <input type="text"/></p>
Decision to be taken and decision maker	
Person(s) responsible for completing this assessment	<p>Kate Richardson - Commissioning Officer, Gloucestershire County Council Tina Hemingway - Outcome Manager for Domestic Abuse, Gloucestershire County Council</p>
Date of this assessment	June 2022

2. Information Gathering

Briefly outline your approach to consultation and engagement, together with details of any other information and data sources you have utilised:

Research, Consultation and Engagement	
Service users	<p>Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021</p> <p>Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021- 24 which includes feedback from consultation with service users, providers and the wider communities in Gloucestershire</p> <p>Consultation and Engagement commissioned by GCC</p>
Workforce	N/A
Partners	Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board – Strategic and Operational Groups
Other	<p>Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment 2021¹ Gloucestershire Population Profile (2021): https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</p>

¹ [Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment](#)

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3. Equality Assessment

Briefly explain your assessment of the impact of the proposed activity on the protected characteristics below. This section evidences how the council is giving due regard to the three aims of the general equality duty, which are to: eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and promote good relations.

Protected Characteristic	Service Users	Workforce
Age	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support to all victims of domestic abuse aged 16+ as well as indirect support to under 18s through support to their parent/carer which will likely secure better outcomes for children as well.</p> <p>GDASS have a Young Person's Violence Advisor (YPVA) who supports young high-risk victims of domestic abuse to provide an age-appropriate support offer. The YPVA is building links with other services that support young people to ensure they know what support is on offer and how to refer to the service. The YPVA has recently done some joint working with Young Gloucestershire on a case which will hopefully lead to additional referrals into GDASS for younger clients, and the YPVA will be doing further engagement.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the Safe Teenage Relationship Education and Empowerment Team (STREET) Service, which is outside of the GDASS contract provides support for young people aged 13-19 who are experiencing harmful relationship behaviours or domestic abuse.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that there is a gap in direct support for young people aged 12 and younger who are witnessing or experiencing domestic abuse. This is considered as an unmet need within the Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024. The Delivery Plan for the strategy includes an action to consider the current approach to children as victims of DA in their own right considering service provision and gaps, noting that this is outside of the remit of the GDASS contract.</p> <p>In total referrals to GDASS in 2021/22 had 7814 dependent children, who may benefit indirectly from the support provided to their parents/carers in terms of</p>	N/A GCC workforce not impacted

	<p>reduced risk of harm or witnessing domestic abuse and parents having more understanding of the impact of domestic abuse on their children.</p> <p>GDASS input into children’s social care via co-located staff in the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) and Gloucester Multi Agency Team (GMAT) which enable GDASS staff to provide both early intervention support and ongoing specialist input into safeguarding for children who are on child in need or child protection plans where there is also domestic abuse.</p> <p>GDASS is predominately accessed by victims who are in the 30-34 age group, followed by those aged 25-29 years and 18-24 years, and this is disproportionate compared to the Gloucestershire population, but is in line with expectations for victims/survivors of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Data suggests that GDASS is accessed by fewer victims over 65 than would be expected based on wider population data for the County, but this is likely to reflect the demographics for victims/survivors of domestic abuse. However, to address the lower levels of older people accessing support GDASS have a dedicated older persons specialism, and this may help to impact on the underrepresentation of this age range accessing support and raises awareness of domestic abuse with services that support older people and Adult Social Care. This worker has provided support to older persons with dementia via multi-agency teams where support could not be provided direct to the clients to ensure they are still able to benefit from specialist support.</p>	
Disability	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support to all victims of domestic abuse including those who identified as having one or multiple disabilities.</p> <p>18.9% of GDASS clients state that they have a disability primarily related to their mental health, and there is also evidence of a higher level of learning disabilities in clients accessing GDASS than in the wider population.</p> <p>GDASS’ primary service offer is virtual which is generally safer for victims and more convenient for clients to access across the county. GDASS will provide face to face visits where it benefits victims/ survivors with learning difficulties or multiple disadvantages.</p>	

	<p>GDASS already has workers with specialisms in learning disabilities, mental health, British Sign Language and complex needs with existing and new clients benefiting from this expertise.</p> <p>GDASS have also resumed their Champions Group for workers with specialisms including protected characteristics, they meet to share best practice and knowledge. GDASS will be reporting to commissioners on the activity of this group as part of quarterly contract monitoring.</p> <p>The members of this specialisms group will also take turns to contribute towards the GDASS newsletter which will help to highlight the raise awareness of the specific needs of disabled victims/ survivors and the support available through GDASS.</p>	
Sex	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support for female and male victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>The GDASS offer reflects the gendered nature of domestic abuse (88% of the service users are female) with a largely female support team. GDASS has workers who specialise in supporting male victims, and there has been a year-on-year increase in the number of male victims accessing support from GDASS. GDASS have committed to develop literature and comms to encourage more male victims to access the service.</p> <p>A male worker has recently been recruited to the Young Persons Violence Advocate post. The service considered whether this would discourage young female victims from seeking support but considered that many youth support workers in other fields are male, and that having a male worker will help to encourage young men to access support without providing a barrier to female victims though they will have the option to be supported by a female IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) if needed.</p> <p>GDASS tailor support to reflect the needs of female and male clients. For example, GDASS offers Six Steps group support separately for female and male victims and has tailored the offer to support the different dynamics and needs of each gender such as how information is presented, what information is available to</p>	

	<p>consider outside of sessions and the different emphasis placed on peer support.</p>	
Race	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support for all ethnicities.</p> <p>Currently GDASS is primarily accessed by White British clients (86.5%), though at a lower percentage than the Gloucestershire population (91.6%), followed by White Other, Black or Black British, Asian, or Asian British, and mixed, which are all higher than the Gloucestershire average.</p> <p>There is underrepresentation in the data from GDASS of people engaging with support from some Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority communities. The need to improve links to the Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority community to encourage access to specialist support has been highlighted in the DA needs assessment and will be considered as part of the wider work of the DA LPB Consultation Officer.</p> <p>Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS) recently delivered a presentation to the IDVAs on No Recourse to Public Funds to provide increased awareness on barriers for this client group and interagency connections.</p> <p>GDASS have an IDVA with a Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) specialism who will attend specialist training and look at better practices internally for working with and improving access for BAME clients. They will also be contributing to the GDASS newsletter which will help raise awareness of their role with professionals in the county and promote referrals.</p> <p>GDASS use interpretation services via Language Line to ensure access to support for victims/survivors where English is not their first language.</p>	
Gender reassignment	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support for clients who identify as having a gender other than the one they were assigned at birth.</p> <p>The service is accessed by a lower percentage of clients who have identified that their gender is other than the one they were assigned at birth compared to the estimated 1% of the population.</p>	

	<p>GDASS are already committed to supporting victims who are trans and non-binary. They are committed to reducing discrimination through a range of community activities and have an IDVA with a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer + (LGBTQ+) specialism.</p> <p>The IDVA also regularly attends the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans (LGBT) Partnership meetings with the aim of improving the response to domestic abuse for victims from all LBGTQ+ backgrounds, and LGBTQ+ has been a focus in the GDASS newsletter.</p> <p>GDASS work to ensure that GDASS is welcoming and inclusive for all victims and survivors of domestic abuse such as including LGBTQ+ logos on their emails.</p> <p>GDASS publicity material has specifically included supporting LGBT victims of domestic abuse and highlighted the high percentage of transgender people who experience domestic abuse.</p> <p>We noted as part of the EIA that GDASS' referral form could be more inclusive for individuals who are trans and non-binary, and have asked whether there is an option to have a free-text box for gender, and this work has been completed by GDASS.</p> <p>GDASS also have in this year's annual operational plan to develop literature and comms to encourage trans and non-binary victims to access the service.</p>	
<p>Marriage & civil partnership</p>	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support for clients from all relationship statuses.</p> <p>Most of the clients are married/partnered or separated/divorced which reflects the nature of the service and stages of relationships where victims are likely to be at highest risk.</p> <p>Risk assessments consider a victim's relationship status and are reviewed regularly so will be able to reflect any periods when a victim may be more at risk, such as at the point of separation, and put in place appropriate safety planning and support.</p>	
<p>Pregnancy & maternity</p>	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support for females who are pregnant or who have just given birth.</p>	

	<p>While only small percentage of victims accessing GDASS support will be pregnant, this is a time when victims are often at high risk.</p> <p>GDASS through funding from the Clinical Commissioning Group have a Health Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (HIDVAs) with a maternity specialism.</p> <p>GDASS also have co-located workers within the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) which gives them the opportunity to provide early intervention and support to mother whose new-born children are referred in for any safeguarding concerns where domestic abuse is a factor.</p> <p>The Young Person’s Violence Advisor (YPVA) has also attended the Teenage Pregnancy Team to raise awareness of GDASS and build connections with the service.</p>	
<p>Religion and/or belief</p>	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support for victims of any religion or beliefs, or none.</p> <p>GDASS have limited data on clients’ religion or belief and will continue to build a better picture of the religion/ beliefs of those using the service and any barriers that may exist in relation to religion or beliefs that impact access or engagement with the service.</p>	
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>The contract extension will continue to provide access to domestic abuse support for victims of any sexual orientation</p> <p>The service is currently accessed primarily by victims/ survivors who are heterosexual and lesbian, gay however bisexual victims/ survivors appear to be underrepresented.</p> <p>GDASS are already committed to supporting victims who are LGBTQ+, and to reducing discrimination through a range of community activities and have an IDVA with a LGBTQ+ specialism.</p> <p>The IDVA also regularly attends the LGBT Partnership meetings with the aim of improving the response to domestic abuse for victims from all LGBTQ+</p>	

	<p>backgrounds, and LGBTQ+ has been a focus in the GDASS newsletter.</p> <p>GDASS work to ensure that GDASS presents itself as being inclusive for all victims and survivors of domestic abuse such as including LGBTQ+ logos on their emails.</p> <p>GDASS publicity material has specifically included supporting LGBT victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>GDASS are committed to develop literature and comms to encourage victims who are LBGTQ+ to access the service.</p>	
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4. Completed Actions

Set out how the proposed activity has already been amended following the equality assessment, to maximise the positive impact or minimise the negative impact:

Completed actions which the provider has already implemented are summarised in the Equality Assessment above.

Change	Reason for Change
GDASS updated their online referral form to include a free-text box for gender	To make the referral form more inclusive for trans and non-binary clients

5. Planned Actions

Set out improvements that will be undertaken, following the equality assessment, to further maximise the positive impact or minimise the negative impact:

Potential impact (positive or negative)	Action	By when	Owner
Positive - The service continues to improve its accessibility for all protected characteristic groups	Ongoing work by GDASS to raise awareness of the service and domestic abuse within underrepresented communities	Throughout two-year extension	GDASS

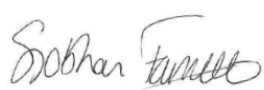
Negative – Continued lack of direct support to victims of domestic abuse aged 12 and under (considering that STREET provide support for victims aged 13-19)	This sits outside of the GDASS service specification. The DA LPB via the DA Delivery Plan will look at options to address this. Activity will consider the current approach to children as victims of DA in their own right considering service provision and gaps.	September 2023	DA LPB
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6. Monitoring and review

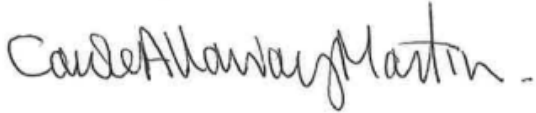
The following processes/actions will be put in place to keep this 'activity' under review:
Commissioners will use contract monitoring to evaluate increase in protected characteristic referrals into GDASS and consider any barriers or challenges as they arise.
The DA LPB will separately consider how to increase reporting amongst specific groups currently underrepresented in data across all commissioned domestic abuse services, to understand the true prevalence of domestic abuse and participation from these groups. This may include an analysis of the potential barriers to reporting amongst these groups and targeted campaigns to encourage reporting.
The DA LPB will monitor and engage with activity on how to best support victims of domestic abuse aged 15 and under in their own right.

7. Officer / Decision-maker Sign off

Officer: By signing this statement off as complete you are confirming that 'you' have examined sufficient information across all the protected characteristics and used that information to show due regard to the three aims of the general duty. This has informed the development of the activity

Signature of Senior Officer	
Name of Senior Officer	Siobhan Farmer, Director of Public Health
Date	15.08.22

Decision maker: I am in agreement that sufficient information and analysis has been used to inform the development of this 'activity' and that any proposed improvement actions are appropriate and I confirm that I, as the decision maker, have been able to show due regard to the needs set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Signature of decision maker	
Name of decision maker	Cllr Carole Allaway-Martin, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care Commissioning
Date	5.9.22

8. Publication

If this document accompanies a Cabinet report or an Individual Cabinet Member (ICM) decision report it will be published, as part of the report publication process, on the GCC website. If this statement is not to be submitted with a Cabinet report or an Individual Cabinet Member (ICM) decision report, please maintain a copy for your own records that can be retrieved for internal review and also in case of future challenge.

Appendix 1 – Service User Data

Details of service users affected by the proposed activity

Protected Characteristic	Service User Data and Information
Age <i>percentage/profile of service user ages</i>	<p>Gloucestershire Context: Source: GCC <i>Population Profile</i> (2021): https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</p> <p>In 2019, the resident population of Gloucestershire was estimated to be 637,070 people of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22.4% were aged 0-19 • 56.0% were aged 20-64 • 21.6% were aged 65 and over.

Gloucestershire has a lower proportion of 0–64year-olds and a higher proportion of people aged 65+ compared to England. There is considerable difference at district level with the highest proportion of children and young people in Gloucester, exceeding the county and national figure and a higher proportion of people aged 65+ in Cotswolds, Forest of Dean, Stroud and Tewkesbury, again exceeding the county and national figure.

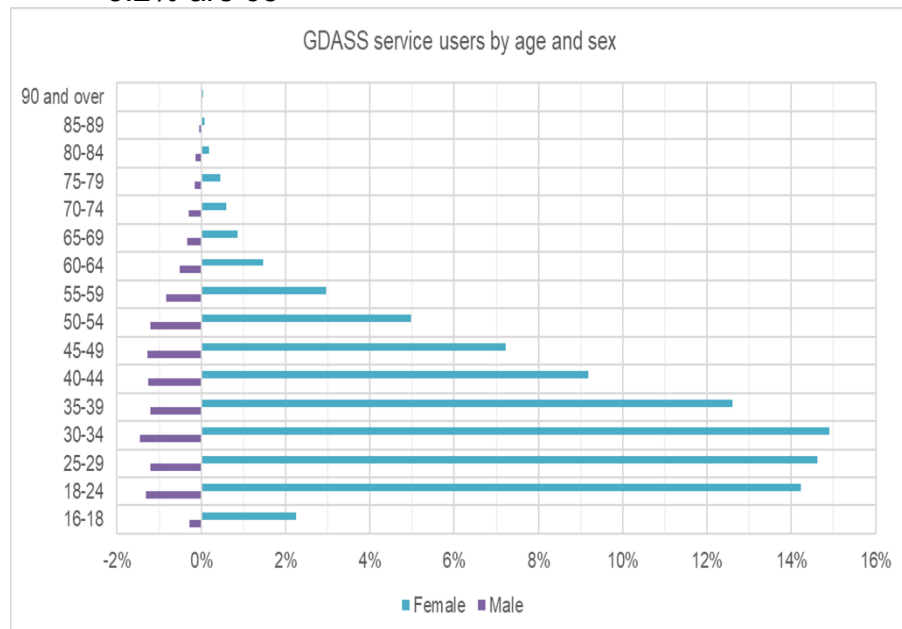
Service User Context: Victims of Domestic Abuse

Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021

The current service for victims of domestic abuse is accessible to victims/ survivors age 16+, in line with the government definition of domestic abuse. Children of victims are supported within the context of the family via the parent or guardian accessing the service and appropriate onward referrals for support being made.

The age profile of service users is as follows:

- 2.52% are age under 18
- 92.45% are age 18-64
- 3.2% are 65+



The largest group of users are aged 30-34, followed by those aged 25-29 years and 18-24 years. Service users in all age brackets between the ages of 18 and 49 are overrepresented compared to the Gloucestershire population accounting for

80.5% of service users but only approximately 45.5% of the total population. 2.52% of victims are aged 16-18, this compares with an estimated 2.7% of the Gloucestershire population. The proportion of service users aged 65+ is 3.2%, in contrast with the county population profile of 26.34%. Male service users are more evenly distributed across age groups than women. 64% of female service users are between the ages of 18 and 39, compared to 44% of men.

This is in line with prevalence data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), with the exception of those aged 16-18; who according to the CSEW are most likely to experience DA. For high-risk victims, the most likely age group locally is those aged 25-34.

The underrepresentation in older victims may be due to reluctance to report, not recognising their experience as abusive, or fewer services involved in their lives to identify domestic abuse other than health. This is similarly reflected in younger victims, with research indicating that younger people are more likely to see their experience of abuse as 'normal' and have limited experience of relationships, so are less likely to identify their experience as abusive.

The number of children associated with service users shows that the majority are aged 5 years or under (32.5%), followed by those aged 6-10 (31.8%). This is to be expected given that domestic abuse often starts or escalates in pregnancy or early childhood years.

Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Age

According to the CSEW year ending March 2020, women aged 16 to 19 years were more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse in the last year than women aged 25 years and over. For men there were few differences by age.² Though abuse can begin earlier; a survey of 13- to 17-year-olds found that a quarter of girls and 18% of boys reported having experienced some form of physical violence from an intimate partner. Younger people experiencing domestic abuse may have additional vulnerabilities

	<p>associated with transitioning to adulthood and abuse may look different with the use of technology and social media. A SafeLives study found that almost a quarter of young people in contact with specialist domestic abuse services were demonstrating harmful behaviours.³</p> <p>Research around children and domestic abuse suggests 1 in 5 children are exposed to domestic abuse.⁴ Evidence on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) indicates that exposure to domestic abuse and other traumatic events as a child increases the likelihood that they will demonstrate health harming behaviours, have poorer educational outcomes and are more likely to be a perpetrator or a victim of violence in the future.⁵</p> <p>There is limited data on the numbers and experiences of domestic abuse amongst older people (60+); however, it is acknowledged that older people are often ‘hidden’ victims of domestic abuse. People aged 60+ are more likely to be abused by a current partner or adult family member and, on average, experience abuse for longer, than those aged 60 and under.⁶</p> <p>Gloucestershire Police data indicates that the majority of offenders are aged 25-34, followed by 35-44.⁷</p>
<p>Disability percentage/profile of service users who have a disability</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Context Source: GCC Population Profile (2021): https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</p> <p>In the 2011 Census, 16.7% of Gloucestershire residents (all ages) and 18.8% of adults reported having a long-term limiting health problem or disability. 7.3% reported that their activities were limited ‘a lot’ and 9.5% reported their activities were limited ‘a little’. The Forest of Dean had the highest proportion of residents reporting a long-term limiting health problem at 19.6% of the total population and was the only district that exceeded the national figure of 17.6%. Cheltenham had the lowest</p>

³ <https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Safe%20Young%20Lives%20web.pdf>

⁴ Radford, L et al. (2011): Child Abuse and neglect in the UK Today

⁵ <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/cafcass-cymru-impact-on%20children-experiencing-domestic-abuse.pdf>

⁶ Safe Lives: Safer Later Lives Older people and domestic abuse:

<http://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Safe%20Later%20Lives%20-%20Older%20people%20and%20domestic%20abuse.pdf>

⁷ [Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment](#)

proportion of residents reporting a long-term limiting health problem at 15.1%.

As age increases, the proportion of respondents reporting a limiting health problem increases. In Gloucestershire 18.3% of people aged 50-64 reported a limiting long-term health problem, this increased to 49% of respondents for the 65+ age group. A similar picture is observed at district, regional and national level.

Estimated projections suggest that in 2021 in Gloucestershire, there will be:

- 12,095 people aged 18+ living with a learning disability equating to 2.3% of the adult population. Of this group, about 2,473 are estimated to have moderate or severe learning disabilities, equating to 0.5% of the adult population.
- 10,076 people 65 + living with dementia.

In 2020, approximately 1.4% of the 16+ population in Gloucestershire reported blindness or partial sight. During the same period, 6.9% of the population in Gloucestershire aged 16+ reported deafness or hearing loss.

Service User Context: Victims of DA

Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021

Available data shows that 81.1% of service users for whom information was recorded did not consider themselves to have a disability. 18.9% service users consider that they have a disability (including sensory impairment). 1.6% reported a physical disability, 12.1% recorded mental health issues, and 1.4% reported a learning disability.

Overall, the number of people disclosing disabilities is on par with the Gloucestershire average for adults. Though the more detailed breakdown of specific conditions shows that the proportion of service users reporting a mental health condition, sensory impairment or autism is below the Gloucestershire average. The only specific disability for which there is comparable data to the Gloucestershire population that is overrepresented among service users is learning disability.

	<p>GDASS have an IDVA with a specialty around learning disability and are looking to appoint an IDVA with specialty around physical disabilities too.</p> <p>Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Disability</p> <p>A report in 2015 by Public Health England states that disabled people experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic abuse. They also experience domestic abuse for longer periods of time, and more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people. The report also states that disabled people experience more barriers to accessing support for domestic abuse.⁸</p> <p>For the year ending March 2020, the CSEW showed that men and women aged 16 to 74 years with a disability¹ were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those without.⁹</p> <p>SafeLives found that disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse than non-disabled women and that, even after receiving support, disabled victims were 8% more likely than non-disabled victims to continue to experience abuse. For one in five (20%) this ongoing abuse was physical and for 7% it was sexual. Additionally, intimate partners or family members often act as carers and this position of power can be exploited, leading to widespread and pervasive means of coercive control and social isolation.¹⁰</p> <p>SafeLives also notes that services or change programmes for perpetrators may not be easily accessible to disabled perpetrators. Stereotypes may impact professionals' perceptions of what an abuser 'looks like', leading to the misconception that disabled people do not perpetrate domestic abuse.¹¹</p>
<p>Sex percentage/profile of service users who are male and who are female</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Context: Source: GCC Population Profile (2021): https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</p>

⁸ [Disability and Domestic Abuse: risks Impacts and Response \(Public Health England \(2015\)\)](#)

⁹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

¹⁰ [SafeLives Spotlight #2: Disabled People and Domestic Abuse](#)

¹¹ Ibid

The overall population split by sex in Gloucestershire is slightly skewed towards females, with males making up 49.1% of the population and females accounting for 50.9%.

Service User Context: Victims of Domestic Abuse

Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021

88.1% of service users are female, reflecting national trends and the gendered nature of domestic abuse. 11.9% of service users are males. See the Age section above for a breakdown of the sex of GDASS service users. The proportion of male service users has increased every year since 2017/19, reaching a high of 14.2% in 2020/21.

Through awareness raising GDASS have emphasised support for male victims and have tailored their marketing to reach underrepresented groups; in the case of male victims this appears to be working given the higher proportion seen locally compared to the national average and increases over recent years.

Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Sex

1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.¹² Of crimes recorded by the police in the year ending March 2020, the victim was female in 74% of domestic abuse-related crimes and between the year ending March 2017 and the year ending March 2019, 77% of victims of domestic homicide were female.¹³

Whilst domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, income, class, mental or physical ability or lifestyle, women and girls experience more repeated, severe abuse and sexual violation, as well as more coercive control, injuries and fear of their partner.¹⁴

¹² [Living without abuse](#)

¹³

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

¹⁴ Home Office, 2014; NICE 2014a

	<p>Harmful gender norms, shame or honour, and stereotypes of masculinity and sexuality can act as barriers for male victims and survivors to seek support and can impact on reporting. For example, some male victims have found that harmful gender stereotypes around masculinity prevent them from discussing these issues or reaching out for help until they're in crisis.</p> <p>Gloucestershire Police data for the years 2017/18 – 2020/21 indicates the following and is in line with national findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • between 75-78% of victims were recorded as female, • perpetrators are predominately male (90.5%), <p>between 90-92% of individual victims discussed at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) were female, compared with 99.9% across England and Wales.¹⁵</p>
<p>Race percentage/profile of service users who are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Context</p> <p>Source: GCC Population Profile (2021): https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</p> <p>The 2011 Census found that 91.6% of Gloucestershire residents were White British, 2.1% were Asian or Asian British, 1.5% were from a Mixed or Multiple Ethnic group, 0.9% were Black or Black British, 0.6% were White Irish, 0.1% were of Gypsy or Irish Traveller origin, 3.1% were in an 'other White' category and 0.2% were in another ethnic group.</p> <p>The county's population is however, becoming increasingly diverse. The Black, Asian and minority ethnic population has increased by 70% since 2001. The number of people classed as White Other, which includes migrants from Europe, increased by 105.9% during the same period. Gloucestershire's 0-19 and 20-64year old populations are more diverse than age 65+ as shown in the table below:</p>

¹⁵ [Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment](#)

Ethnic Group	% of age group		
	0-19	20 - 64	65+
White British	89.4%	91.0%	96.1%
White Irish	0.2%	0.6%	1.2%
White Gypsy or Other	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%
White Other	2.6%	3.9%	1.2%
White Total	92.4%	95.6%	98.6%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group	3.6%	1.0%	0.2%
Asian/Asian British	2.8%	2.3%	0.7%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1.0%	0.9%	0.5%
Other ethnic group	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%
BME Group Total	7.6%	4.4%	1.4%

The 2011 census showed that 3.3% of people in Gloucestershire do not speak English as their main language. Polish was the most common language, followed by Gujarati and then Chinese.

Service user context: Victims of Domestic Abuse

Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021

GDASS record the ethnicity of victims where possible. Of those who's ethnicity is recorded, the majority are White British (86.5%), below the county figure. This is followed by White Other (6.3%), Black or Black British (2.5%), Asian or Asian British (2.3%), and mixed (1.9%), which are all higher than the Gloucestershire average.

A more detailed breakdown shows that the service has a notable underrepresentation among those from an Indian or Indian British, Chinese or Chinese British, and Gypsy and Traveller background compared to the Gloucestershire population.

In 2019/20 forced marriage was referenced as an additional concern for victims in fewer than 5 cases, and for 'honour' based violence, fewer than 10.¹⁶

The service has a worker who has specialist knowledge around domestic abuse and ethnic minority communities. There are also staff with specialist knowledge around 'honour' based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. GDASS leaflets

¹⁶ <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2110543/gloucestershire-domestic-abuse-needs-assessment-final-august-2021.pdf>

are available in the five most commonly spoken languages in Gloucestershire.

Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Race

For the year ending March 2020, the Crime Survey of England and Wales showed that those in the Mixed ethnic group were the most likely to experience domestic abuse, followed by those in the White ethnic group.¹⁷ However, research shows that the level of disclosure for Black, Asian and minority ethnic victims of domestic abuse is far lower than that of the general population. SafeLives national data shows that victims from ethnic minority communities typically suffer abuse for 1.5 times longer before getting help than those who identify as White and face more barriers to accessing support such as the need for an interpreter, no recourse to public funds, and a lack of knowledge about their rights. SafeLives evidence also suggests that a third of clients from an ethnic minority background are at risk of 'honour' based violence and they're three times more likely to be abused by multiple perpetrators.¹⁸

While there is no statistically significant difference in terms of ethnicity for those at risk of domestic abuse and sexual violence; female genital mutilation, forced marriage and so called 'honour' based violence are more prevalent in ethnic minority communities. Nationally in 41% of incidences of reported forced marriage, the person forced to marry is under 18.¹⁹

There is strong evidence of disproportionate effect on women and girls. It is also recognised that some cultural beliefs around honour and reputation can act as barriers to seeking help and can play a role in controlling women and children's behaviour, just as stigma and shame prevent many from seeking help.²⁰ However, 'honour' based violence is experienced by both men

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

¹⁸ http://www.safelives.org.uk/practice_blog/supporting-bme-victims-%E2%80%93-what-data-shows

¹⁹ [Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence \(DASV\) Joint Strategic Commissioning Strategy and Outcomes Framework](#)

²⁰ <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/2006/11/01/a-look-at-domestic-violence-among-families-from-ethnic-minorities>

	<p>and women, with factors such as sexuality and disability putting some men at particular risk.²¹</p> <p>Nationally, there is a call for domestic abuse services to be intersectional in their approach and demonstrate that they are able to meet the needs of individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds. This involves having services run by those from the same backgrounds as those seeking support.</p> <p>Gloucestershire MARAC is consistent with the Southwest average, with 6% of individual victims being from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups in 2019/20.²² This is proportionally higher than the county average of Black, Asian and ethnic minority population but is consistent with CSEW prevalence data and issues such as ‘honour’ based violence are escalated to high risk status for consideration at MARAC.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment percentage/profile of service users who have indicated they are transgender</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Context <i>Source: GCC Population Profile (2021): https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</i></p> <p>There are no official estimates of gender reassignment at either national or local level. Currently the best estimates on gender reassignment come from the Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES). GIRES estimates that approximately 1% of the population in the UK are experiencing some degree of gender diversity. By applying the same proportion to Gloucestershire's 16+ population, we can estimate that there may be approximately 5,220 adults in the county who are experiencing some degree of gender diversity.</p> <p>Service user context: Victims of Domestic Abuse <i>Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021</i></p> <p>95.8% of service users said their gender was the same as assigned at birth, 0.2% said their gender was not the same as assigned at birth and some 4% of service users preferred not to respond to this question.</p>

²¹ <https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Spotlight%20on%20HBV%20and%20forced%20marriage-web.pdf>

²² [Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment](#)

	<p>GDASS have a worker in the GP development team with a LGBT+ specialism. They sit on local LGBT+ groups and forums and have been instrumental in ensuring GDASS involvement in community activities such as pride, staff training and awareness raising. They have also been working on our literature and website to make these more accessible. There is an action plan for the next year around building up our LGBT+ profile and accessibility.</p> <p>Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Gender Reassignment</p> <p>There is limited research on how many trans people experience domestic abuse in the UK; the best studies have small group samples. However, these figures suggest it is a significant issue. A report by The Scottish Transgender Alliance indicates that 80% of trans people had experienced emotional, sexual, or physical abuse from a partner or ex/partner.²³</p> <p>Trans and non-binary people can face additional forms of abuse based on their gender identity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening to disclose the person's gender identity, gender history, or HIV status without their consent. • Using hormones or gender-affirming medication to control. • Trying to undermine, change or suppress the person's gender identity.²⁴ <p>Research by Galop, the national LGBT+ anti-violence charity, found that trans and non-binary people faced additional barriers in accessing domestic abuse support, including not recognising their experience as abuse, fear of transphobia from professionals or past negative experiences with services, and belief that non-LGBT+ services are not for LGBT+ people.²⁵</p>
<p>Marriage & civil partnership percentage/profile of service users who are married or in a civil partnership</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Context: Source: GCC Population Profile (2021): https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</p> <p>Among residents of Gloucestershire:</p>

²³ https://www.scottishtrans.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/trans_domestic_abuse.pdf

²⁴ <https://galop.org.uk/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>

²⁵ <https://galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Barriers-Faced.pdf>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30.5% are single and have never married or registered a same-sex civil partnership • 50.2% are married • 0.3% are in a registered same-sex civil partnership • 2.3% are separated but still legally married or still legally in a same sex civil partnership • 9.5% are divorced or formerly in a same sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved • 7.2% are widowed or a surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership. <p>There is considerable variation in marital status between age groups, with those aged 16-24 most likely to be single. Gloucestershire has a lower number of people who are single or separated when compared with the national figure. In contrast, the proportion of people who are married, divorced or widowed exceeds national figures.</p> <p>Service user context: Victims of Domestic Abuse <i>Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021</i></p> <p>40% said they were married/partnered and 18.8% said they were single, lower than the county population figures, however, 38.7% said they were separated/divorced, higher than the population profile. Information was not known for 2% and 0.3% were widowed. This is in line with what would be expected for this type of service.</p> <p>Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Marriage & Civil Partnership</p> <p>According to the CSEW, year ending March 2020, adults who were separated or divorced were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse compared with those who were married or civil partnered, cohabiting, single or widowed.²⁶</p>
<p>Pregnancy & maternity percentage/profile of service users who</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Context</p>

are female and who are pregnant or on a maternity leave

Source: GCC Population Profile (2021): <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf>

There were 6,124 live births in Gloucestershire in 2019. The largest proportion was among the 30-34-year-old age group (34.1%), with 27.8% in the age band 25-29. This is not a perfect measurement of pregnancy in the population as not all pregnancies result in a live birth. Conversely, all pregnancies begin with conception and the 2011 census data on conceptions per capita indicate that 2.9% of the Gloucestershire population had conceived in the previous year.

Service user context: Victims of Domestic Abuse

Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021

2% of service users disclosed that they were pregnant during the period that they used the service. Although this data is not directly comparable to any recorded statistics on the Gloucestershire population, it might suggest that service users are less likely to be pregnant than the population as a whole, especially when the age profile of service users is taken into account. However, it might also be that victims may not share this information with the service or may not yet be aware that they are pregnant.

GDASS have a Health IDVA who's specialism is maternity and they work with the women's centre to ensure appropriate training is given.

Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Pregnancy & Maternity

Pregnancy is a high-risk indicator of domestic abuse. Around 30% of domestic abuse begins during pregnancy, while 40–60% of women experiencing domestic abuse are abused during pregnancy.²⁷ Abuse during pregnancy can have health and wellbeing implications for both mother and child. Recent research has highlighted that babies are particularly vulnerable to experiences of domestic abuse. Pregnant women also find it

²⁷ https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/SAFJ4993_Themis_report_WEBcorrect.pdf

	harder to leave, particularly because of concerns about finance and housing. ²⁸
<p>Religion and/or belief percentage/profile of service users religious beliefs</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Context <i>Source: GCC Population Profile (2021):</i> https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</p> <p>According to the 2011 census, the most reported religion in Gloucestershire was Christianity, accounting for 63.5% of the total population, which is higher than the national figure. This was followed by No Religion which accounts for 26.7% of the population. Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Sikh and Other Religion together make up 2.4% of the population, lower than the 8.7% nationally.</p> <p>Between 2001 and 2011 the number of Christians in the county declined. This was accompanied by an increase in the number of Muslims, Buddhists and people following no religion.</p> <p>Service user context: Victims of Domestic Abuse <i>Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021</i></p> <p>Information on religion was collected for 40% of service users over the time period studied. 24.2% of those service users for whom information was collected said they were Christian, with 73.2% saying they were Atheist or had no religion, in contrast to Gloucestershire population data. This may be explained by broader population trends as noted previously but it is not clear to what extent.</p> <p>2.5% said they were either Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, or Buddhist. More specifically, Muslim and Hindu people are overrepresented in the service compared to the adult population of Gloucestershire, whereas Jewish, Buddhist and Sikh people are underrepresented.</p> <p>Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Religion or Belief</p>

²⁸ <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Supporting-women-and-babies-after-domestic-abuse.pdf>

	<p>Research from 2015 found no significant differences between all of the religions but did find differences when comparing some groups against others. Women with no religion were more likely to have experienced partner abuse in the last 12 months (7.4%) than Christian women (5.7%), Muslim women (2.9%) and Hindu women (1.8%).²⁹</p>
<p>Sexual orientation percentage/profile of service users who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Context: Source: GCC Population Profile (2021): https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2105981/equality-profile-2021.pdf</p> <p>There are no official estimates of sexual orientation at a local or national level. National evidence suggests between 2.3% and 7.0% of people are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB). Young people (aged 16-24) are more likely to identify as LGB than older age groups, who make up a larger proportion of the client group.</p> <p>Service user context: Victims of Domestic Abuse Source: Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) Service User Monitoring Information April 2016 – March 2021</p> <p>Information on sexual orientation was collected for 96% of service users during the time period. 98.4% said they were heterosexual and 1.6% said they were lesbian (0.7%), gay (0.6%) or bisexual (0.3%), lower than the lower bound population estimate would indicate.</p> <p>GDASS have a worker in the GP development team with a LGBT+ specialism. They sit on local LGBT+ groups and forums and have been instrumental in ensuring GDASS involvement in community activities such as pride, staff training and awareness raising. They have also been working on our literature and website to make these more accessible. There is an action plan for the next year around building up our LGBT+ profile and accessibility.</p> <p>Information to provide further context on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Orientation</p>

	<p>Research from Stonewall suggests that 11% of LGBT+ people have faced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year. This increases to 17% of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT+ people. Bi women are more likely to experience domestic abuse than heterosexual women and lesbians.³⁰</p> <p>LGB people can face additional forms of abuse based on their sexual orientation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats to disclose the person’s romantic or sexual orientation, or HIV status without their consent. • Pressure to keep the person’s identity or relationship secret. • Denying that LGBT+ people in intimate relationships can experience domestic abuse. • Attempts to undermine, change or suppress the person’s romantic or sexual orientation.³¹ <p>SafeLives research suggests that LGB people face further barriers to accessing domestic abuse support and are underrepresented compared to the general population. LGB people are more likely to present with higher levels of risk and complex needs by the time they access support.³²</p>
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Appendix 2 – GCC Workforce Data

Details of Gloucestershire County Council staff affected by the proposed activity

Protected Characteristic	Total number of GCC staff affected:0
Age	N/A
Disability	N/A
Sex	N/A
Race	N/A
Gender reassignment	N/A

³⁰ https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/lgbt_in_britain_home_and_communities.pdf

³¹ <https://galop.org.uk/types-of-abuse/domestic-abuse/>

³² <https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Free%20to%20be%20safe%20web.pdf>

Marriage & civil partnership	N/A
Pregnancy & maternity	N/A
Religion and/or belief	N/A
Sexual orientation	N/A