

# SAFER SOMERSET PARTNERSHIP & DOMESTIC ABUSE NEWSLETTER

Winter edition



## NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM MIKE PRIOR



2020 has been the most challenging year of my 32 year career in public service and the first half of 2021 will continue to test us all, most notably our heroic colleagues in the NHS and those of you with

frontline caring roles, especially those in residential care homes. The direct and ancillary effects of the Covid pandemic have affected us all and we do so for some time to come. I have been hugely impressed with the manner the partnership has coped, flexed and stood in the face of the extreme difficulties we have experienced. Much of this success in this is due to the pre-existing relationships we all had and the desire to do our duty. The work of the partnership has continued and also developed. One issue we were very concerned about was the effects on those who were already vulnerable before Covid and an acceptance that they would find the pandemic scenario even harder. We have done all we can to remove barriers to service and to reach out to people even though social contact has become such a challenge for us all. None of us like to hear or see of people suffering but worse than that is the fear that I often professionally have, is that someone is suffering in silence. So remember, every interaction is a chance to find someone who needs care, support or protection. We know that some are too scared to ask or concerned what our response will be

or even think that nobody cares for them. I think there has to be some positive messages from the pandemic. That society can pull together, that neighbours can support each other and that we can, when the time is right, take future intense pleasure from simple activities which have become restricted. So make plans for the future to play your part in community safety and also to enjoy that family meal, walk by the sea, holidays and see anew what we once took for granted and cherish it all the more. Stay safe and best wishes, Mike

## UPDATES

### SOMERSET VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT (VRU) LED COUNTY WIDE ACTIVITY



A mobile Bannervan ad campaign to raise awareness about County Lines was organised in the month of December 2020. This weeklong county wide campaign received an overwhelmingly positive response from the community at large in all the locations that it stopped, like; Chard, Frome, Shepton Mallet, Wilton, Minehead, Yeovil, Bridgwater, Highbridge, Minehead, Glastonbury and Taunton. This was a part of the overall awareness raising campaign on County Lines that was launched in September by the Partnership. During the activity, the PCSOs interacted with public and educated them about County Lines, adhering to government guidelines on social distancing. Online articles appeared in leading local news websites like Somerset County Gazette and Burnham on Sea news.

## SOMERSET VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT FUND NEW RESOURCES TO HELP VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE



At the beginning of 2020, Barnardos' Phoenix project in Somerset received a Violence Reduction Unit grant to help fund new support guides for parents and professionals who are supporting children effected by sexual abuse. The grant also paid for a new therapy room that will be used to continue interventions in a trauma informed setting. Barnardos are a specialist service supporting the development of professionals in Somerset. They aim to reduce the negative impact of child sexual abuse on the lives of children and families living in Somerset. More information can be found on:

<https://www.somersetphoenixproject.org.uk>

## ACEs AWARENESS

The next phase of the ACEs awareness campaign that the Violence Reduction Unit and Public Health team are working on will involve an all member workshop where a film on ACEs called Resilience will be shown to 40 councillors followed by a Q&A session to answer any questions on ACE's. If you want to know more about ACEs, do visit the Somerset Children and Young People Health & Wellbeing website where they have a dedicated page on the topic: <https://www.cypsomersethealth.org/>



**Somerset Children & Young People  
Health & Wellbeing**

[Home](#) [Contact](#) [The Wellbeing Audit](#) [Life Hacks](#) [Bulletins](#)

[Adverse Childhood Experiences and Emotion Coaching](#)

[Adverse Childhood Experiences - ACEs](#)

[Five Steps of Emotion Coaching](#)

[Emotion Coaching - Practice Examples](#)

[Emotion Coaching - Cascade Training Programme](#)

[Emotion Coaching - the Evidence Base](#)

## SOMERSET VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT DATA GROUP

The Violence Reduction Unit Data Group is a multi agency group made up of business intelligence and safeguarding professionals to deliver priority 5 of the Somerset Violence Reduction Strategy—"To improve intelligence and evidence base for serious violence in Somerset". The group does this by improved sharing and use of cumulative risk data, oversight and response to district data; supporting contextual safeguarding of those 'at risk', and providing insights and response to priority themes and includes representatives from SCC, AVON and Somerset Police and NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group

## VRU Data Group Case Study - Youth ASB and substance misuse in Sedgemoor

District agency's raised concerns about young people effected by Anti Social Behaviour and substance misuse in Sedgemoor and a potential risk of exploitation from County Line drug dealing. The Violence Reduction Unit Data Group shared relevant information through a multi-agency triage of concerns, contextual safeguarding around at risk individuals and a professionals soft intelligence survey about the risk of County Lines. This information led to a support plan being put in place around the local PRU and support and disruption activity to reduce harm to those most at risk, including a Violence Reduction Unit led multi-agency day of action to target criminal exploitation.



**46 professionals join Somerset VRU for Day of Action in Bridgwater**

The day of action included 40 other professionals that included OpTopaz, NPT, Children's Social Services, Barnados, Family Intervention Service, Teachers, School Nurses amongst others. The professionals were sent to all the schools in Bridgwater for the school leaving time. The staff and students were engaged with the VRU Banner van that was deployed around the schools.

The Banner van was used to offer some advice to the community and students around county lines, signs of exploitation and useful telephone numbers. Other Violence Reduction Unit Data Group

activities planned for this quarter include, improved data sharing regarding County Lines, a local violence reduction plan in partnership with North Taunton One Team and contextual safeguarding support to help reduce harm to vulnerable adults.

## COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING (CTP) WEBSITE LAUNCH



Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) launch new safeguarding

website to combat 'perfect storm' of online radicalisation. The impact of Covid-19, social isolation and a rise in hateful extremism online is creating a 'perfect storm' which is making more young people vulnerable to radicalisation and other forms of grooming. But parents,

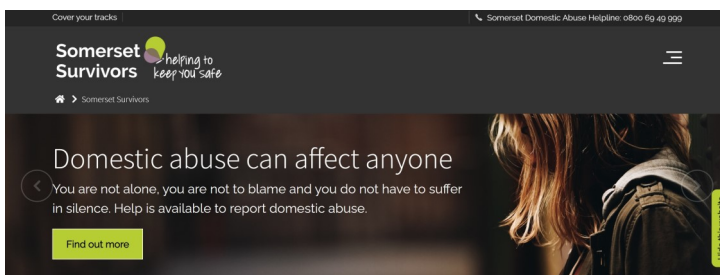
friends and families can now get specialist support to stop their loved ones being drawn into harmful activities or groups, with the launch of ACT Early - a new dedicated safeguarding website ([www.actearly.uk](http://www.actearly.uk)) and advice line from the specialists at (CTP). This new resource will provide advice, guidance and support for an one who is concerned that someone they know may be at risk from being radicalised by terrorists or extremist content [online](#).

## DOMESTIC ABUSE

**HEALTHY TEENAGE RELATIONSHIP** - Safer Somerset Partnership launched a county wide campaign in December during the 16 days of action period to raise awareness on spotting the signs of unhealthy relationships amongst teenagers. The campaign has so far received more than 100,000 views on Youtube and has reached more than 45,000 people through Facebook. Alternatively, there was a radio ad campaign on Tone FM and Greatest Hits Radio (earlier known as Breeze FM) and two print advertisements in leading newspapers like Somerset County Gazette and Western Gazette. The next phase of the campaign will focus on a month long ad campaign on Tik Tok (a social media platform most commonly used by teenagers who are our key target audience). To view the video on Youtube, click here:: [Unhealthy Relationships - YouTube](#)



## NEW SOMERSET SURVIVORS WEBPAGE



Somerset Survivors re-designed and re-launched the website with new content for both public and professionals.

To have a look at the new website, visit: [www.somersetsurvivors.org.uk](http://www.somersetsurvivors.org.uk)

## DOMESTIC ABUSE WORKSHOP

Domestic Abuse continues to be a top priority for us in Somerset, in the knowledge that anyone can suffer from this terrible crime. We are pleased that the Government have recognised the importance of tackling domestic abuse and in April 2021, we are expecting the first ever Domestic Abuse Act to come into force. It aims to

- promote awareness - to put abuse at the top of everyone's agenda, including by legislating for the first time for a statutory definition of domestic abuse
- protect and support victims, including by introducing a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Order

transform the justice response...

- improve performance – a new Domestic Abuse Commissioner will help drive consistency and better performance in the response to domestic abuse across all local areas and agencies

Key stakeholders in Somerset came together to consider the impact of the Bill, and begin planning to make sure the requirements of the new legislation are met.



Policy paper

## Domestic Abuse Bill 2020: overarching factsheet

Updated 17 August 2020

The new Domestic Abuse Bill is continuing to progress through parliament, with it scheduled for going live on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. This will make a legal definition for domestic abuse and introduce a range of measures for local authorities, the criminal justice system and other agencies to use to

safeguard victims and address perpetrator behaviour. The final guidance is yet to be issued. But factsheets are available on the gov.uk website at Domestic Abuse Bill 2020: factsheets - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

## CHANGING LIVES REPORT

CHANGING LIVES

### NOWHERE TO TURN:

Sexual violence among women selling sex and experiencing sexual exploitation during Covid-19

Report by Changing Lives  
October 2020

Changing Lives, a national charity, supporting over 14,000 people has released a report called NOWHERE TO TURN: Sexual violence among women selling sex and experiencing sexual exploitation during Covid-19. The Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group are going to this as an opportunity to raise awareness with GP practice to undertake routine enquiries for STIs, injury, self harm, unplanned pregnancy and so forth.

Link to the report: <https://www.changing-lives.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Nowhere-To-Turn-FINAL-REPORT.pdf>

## NO CLOSED DOORS CAMPAIGN

### Coronavirus restrictions may heighten domestic tension.

Help is, and will continue to be, available.

Somerset Domestic Abuse Service on 0800 69 49 999  
[somersetsurvivors.org.uk](http://somersetsurvivors.org.uk)

In an emergency always dial 999. If you are worried that an abuser may realise you are calling remain silent and press 55 for help.

We have extended our domestic abuse campaign, #NoClosedDoors2020, to run through the current lockdown and beyond. The main objectives of the campaign that was initially launched in March, was to increase awareness about how people can tackle the issue of domestic abuse during the current pandemic and its associated restrictions. Advertising campaigns were launched through multiple channels. These included television, radio, newspapers and magazines, digital and mobile channels, posters at supermarkets and pharmacies, pharmacy prescription bags, Bannervan and social media advertising. The campaign has been hugely supported by local media, with a number of radio interviews, public information broadcasts, a good take up on press releases both digitally and in print and a number of articles printed in magazines.

Since the beginning of the campaign unique visitors to the Council's domestic abuse website, [www.somersetsurvivors.org.uk](http://www.somersetsurvivors.org.uk), have almost quadrupled increasing from 6,295 March 2019 to January 2020 to 24,860 in the same period in 2020/21.



Search #NoClosedDoors2020 and retweet or repost to help someone experiencing domestic abuse.



## AGAINST VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

The charity Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) now have a new e-learning course around Child to Parent Violence. This course is £15 & covers:

- understanding of the issue
- supporting families
- trauma
- supporting yourself



For more information & to sign up - <http://ow.ly/NnKH50CTkHs>

AVA also have a variety of free webinars relating to domestic abuse, including links to alcohol, trauma informed practice and mental health. Find out more at [Training - AVA - Against Violence & Abuse \(avaproject.org.uk\)](http://avaproject.org.uk)

## BARNARDO'S REPROVIDE SERVICE

If you are working with any men who have concerns about their behaviour in relationships with women and who want to do something to change their behaviour – Barnardo's can help!

Barnardo's are delivering the REPROVIDE service. This is a 26-week group-based domestic violence perpetrator programme as part of a research study. It is being run by Bristol University, working with Respect accredited organisations (Splitz, Barnardo's and Phoenix DAS). This is an important study aiming to find out if DVPPs help prevent domestic abuse. Despite any coronavirus restrictions and lockdowns, Reprovide is continuing to be delivered. All partners and ex-partners of men on the Reprovide programme will be offered support by a Women's Safety Officer. To find out more information and make a referral please visit <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/primaryhealthcare/researchthemes/reprovide> and further information is also available on the Somerset Survivors website <https://somensetsurvivors.org.uk/barnardos-reprovide-service/>

## AVON AND SOMERSET DOMESTIC ABUSE CAMPAIGN

**Police officers share personal experiences of domestic abuse, telling victims: "You are not alone"**

Posted at 11:44 on 8th December 2020 in Campaigns



In a heartfelt and moving video, Sharon Baker, now a Chief Inspector, tells of how an affectionate relationship became one of controlling behaviour, erosion of self-confidence, and social isolation. Paralysed with fear, she felt unable to confide in friends or colleagues. Watch Sharon's video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fetKGL-eE1I&lc=UgwrNfu6I-IYbZAU1QR4AaABAq> .

Link to the Law and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme: <https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/report/domestic-abuse/>