



Domestic Abuse Bill Lords Briefing – Drive

About Drive

Drive challenges the behaviour of high-harm perpetrators of domestic abuse – those who have been assessed as at risk of murdering or seriously harming their partners – and holds them to account. It has been developed by domestic abuse specialist organisations, SafeLives and Respect, with not-for-profit innovation organisation, Social Finance. The Drive model was developed with innovation funding from the Home Office, amongst other sources. The BBC covered our work [here](#).

Drive has been shown by the University of Bristol to improve victim safety and reduce abuse, including police-recorded domestic abuse. Drive is continuing to work during the coronavirus epidemic, indeed our work to manage the risks that perpetrators pose to those around them is more important than ever.

Summary for Lords

The Drive Partnership - SafeLives, Social Finance and Respect – welcome the government's recent short-term investments in perpetrator work. These include a £1.2m fund for areas who want to implement Drive and a £5.9m fund for other perpetrator interventions. These funds have a 6-month delivery period – with all money to be spent by March 21. There will be some challenges in set up and delivery in such a short time frame. Moving forward, long term opportunities are needed to enable local areas to plan provision that is reliable.

If you were to only raise one thing, we would ask you to make the following point:

1. Government should publish a domestic abuse perpetrator strategy.

The government has hitherto concentrated its efforts on developing and improving responses to victims of domestic abuse. These efforts remain crucial. Alongside them a more strategic approach to prevent perpetrators from repeating their crimes time and time again is needed.

The development of a perpetrator strategy – which should sit under an overarching strategy on Violence Against Women and Girls – will help guide future investments to manage the risk that perpetrators pose and improve availability of perpetrator interventions across England and Wales.

An amendment to this effect was tabled in the Commons by Jess Phillips MP and withdrawn after debate. In the debate the government argued that it wants to wait to publish a Perpetrator Strategy until the conclusion of the pilots of the Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs). This will set the endeavour back by at least two years. We think victims can't wait that long for a concerted approach to the behaviour and tactics of perpetrators. Furthermore, DAPOs will just be one part of any perpetrator strategy so we think this represents an unnecessary delay.

The need for a Perpetrator Strategy is widely accepted and was discussed at Commons committee stage by the DA Commissioner and the Victims' Commissioner. Over 80 organisations have signed a ['Call to Action'](#), asking the government to publish a

strategy. This call is also supported by the CPS, the Victims' Commissioner for London, the Association of PCCs and the Royal College of GPs.

Additional amendments needed:

2. Statutory duty to ensure provision for community-based services: [We ask you to support Barnardo's amendment](#) calling for the statutory duty currently featured in Clause 55 to be widened such that public bodies, with the requisite funding, are required to provide a full range of services to victims of domestic abuse including children, and suitable specialist perpetrator responses. The Bill as it stands introduces a statutory duty on accommodation-based services (and we believe even this needs extending, as per below), but will not help people who desperately need other types of services. This amendment, led by Barnardo's and supported by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, SafeLives, Action for Children, NSPCC and End Violence Against Women, among many others, would ensure this Bill truly transforms the response to all victims by securing the life-saving services they need to get safe. It crucially includes a non-discrimination clause ensuring disabled, LGBT+, BME and migrant victims are able to access the support they need.

3. Amendment to ensure as local authorities assess the need for domestic abuse accommodation-based support in their area, they consider the full range of survivors' housing needs and circumstances (including their tenure type), and how they can best support survivors to be safe. This could be through support to remain within their own home, whilst removing the perpetrator, or support to access alternative accommodation, including specialist refuges. This is called the 'Whole Housing Approach'.

The '[Whole Housing Approach](#)' was developed by a group led by the [Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance \(DAHA\)](#), to provide survivors living in any tenure type with a range of housing support options to achieve the quickest route to safe and stable accommodation. Vitaly, this includes initiatives that support survivors including children to stay in their own homes and places the responsibility of relocating on the perpetrator.

We ask you to support an amendment developed by Imkaan¹ and Women's Aid Federation of England (Women's Aid) that ensures that local authorities will take this 'Whole Housing Approach'. It also covers a number of important issues relating to access to specialist refuge services, particularly those led 'by and for' Black and Minoritised women and other marginalised survivors. We can provide a copy of the full amendment on request.

¹ [Imkaan](#) is the only UK-based, second-tier women's organisation dedicated to addressing violence against Black and Minoritised women and girls.

Our three 'asks' in more detail

1. The need for a perpetrator strategy

Domestic abuse is a form of violent crime. Over a third of all 'violence against the person' crimes recorded by police are domestic abuse². As other forms of crime reduced during the lockdown, the share of domestic abuse as a fraction of all violent crime is likely to be even higher this year. If we want to make progress on reducing violent crime (as per the Prime Minister's 20% reduction target) we need to think about reducing domestic abuse, not just responding to it once it has already happened. There are proven ways of doing this.

Perpetrator interventions: The Drive Project has been shown to reduce the number of perpetrators using physical abuse by 82% and jealous and controlling behaviour by 73%. It is similarly effective at reducing other types of abuse.

Drive is for perpetrators who have been assessed as posing a very high risk. There are other evaluated programmes responding effectively to perpetrators at both high and lower risk levels. Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes (DVPP) use group work to change attitudes and challenge behaviour. Early intervention programmes build communities' ability to recognise abusive behaviour and get help. So far there is no national strategy to make this range of crucial interventions available everywhere, such a strategy should fit under a wider Violence Against Women and Girls strategy.

Changing the public narrative and upskilling professionals: There has been important work funded by the government on identifying victims of domestic abuse early, but less on perpetrators. We need to kick off a national conversation that gives people the confidence to say to their friends "actually, that's not ok" when they come across abusive behaviour. We also need to upskill a range of professionals – whether GPs or housing officers – to recognise signs of abusive and controlling behaviour and know what next steps to take. The Welsh government is ahead of England in this respect with published guidance for public servants.

These changes need to be brought together in a Perpetrator Strategy for England and Wales.

2. Statutory duty to ensure provision for community-based services

We ask you to support Barnardo's proposal that Clause 55 is widened out so that local authorities consider all the needs of victims, including children, rather than just the accommodation needs of those 'in relevant accommodation'. Accommodation is only one part of the picture for domestic abuse survivors and other interventions may be critical for their safety and wellbeing. The Drive Partnership, the DA Commissioner, Barnardo's and others supporting this amendment (such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission, SafeLives, Action for Children, NSPCC and the End Violence Against Women Coalition), recognise the importance of fully funded accommodation responses and wish to see that

Drive reduces abuse.

The number of Drive service users perpetrating abuse types reduced significantly:

82% fewer perpetrators using physical abuse;



88% fewer perpetrators using sexual abuse;



75% fewer perpetrators using harassment and stalking;



73% fewer perpetrators using jealous and controlling behaviours



DRIVE >

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabuseprevalenceandtrendsendlandandwales/yearendingmarch2019>

the needs of the survivor and the children are considered in the round and prioritised accordingly. This would include consideration of perpetrator interventions to reduce cases in which perpetrators offend time and time again.

Providing a full spectrum of services - such as refuge and other options under the 'Whole Housing Approach' (see no3 below), Independent Domestic Violence and Abuse Advisors (Idvas), outreach workers, helplines, counselling services, and young people and children's workers and perpetrator responses- is the right thing to do on a practical level. It allows women and their children to stay connected to their mortgage, job, friends, family, GP, school and wider life, whilst ensuring that relocation is always there as a last resort. In some cases, such services are provided in tandem with accommodation, however often the vital support that victims receive is provided in the community completely separately.

The need for specialist support for children experiencing domestic abuse is acute and provision in this area is going in the wrong direction. Young people (teenagers aged 13-17) experience some of the highest rates of domestic abuse at high levels of severity. They need tailored responses. However, the percentage of domestic abuse services providing dedicated support to children and young people fell from 62% in 2010 to 52% in 2017 and almost one in five police force areas have no specialist support for young people experiencing domestic abuse in their own relationships. This new duty would reverse the trend with immediate and long term benefit for young victims. Such adverse childhood experiences can have an impact for years to come. A significant proportion of the perpetrators Drive works with experienced abuse in their childhoods.

A widened duty would also enable an effective response for people who are already perpetrators, to try to stop and limit the harm they are doing, through extended provision of quality assured perpetrator programmes. Currently, fewer than 1% of perpetrators receive an intervention to change their behaviour. A lack of funding for perpetrator response was recently identified as the biggest issue by frontline practitioners across England and Wales. Survivors want this to change too. Taking part in SafeLives' Every Story Matters platform, 82% of respondents said that they supported the introduction of more perpetrator programmes, nearly 80% wanted tougher sentences, 74% wanted mental health support for perpetrators, and 73% wanted public awareness campaigns specifically targeted at perpetrators.

By missing out specialist workers/ programmes for perpetrators, the new proposed statutory duty misses the opportunity to place the emphasis on the person causing the harm – the perpetrator – and misses the opportunity to prevent further abuse from happening. A holistic approach which supports everyone affected by domestic abuse, including perpetrators is needed instead.

3. Requirement for local authorities to deliver a 'Whole Housing Approach' including vital initiatives that support survivors to stay within their own homes and place the responsibility of relocating on the perpetrator

The government has stated that where possible and safe "perpetrators should be the ones who have to leave the family home, not the supposed loved ones whom they torment and abuse"³. If Clause 55 is to remain only focussed on accommodation-based services an amendment to it is required to help give effect to this important intention, which otherwise

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretary-outlines-support-for-domestic-abuse-victims>

has very little mechanism for delivery, and is not – with some notable exceptions - being delivered in practice.

Many survivors need to stay in their own home to achieve safety and housing stability, rather than becoming homeless and bearing the financial, practical, and emotional burden of starting again, while perpetrators often remain in the family home consequence free. Tier 1 local authorities should consider how they will support survivors including children to remain in their homes as a core component of their new duty to deliver 'safe accommodation'. This is best achieved through the adoption of a '[Whole Housing Approach](#)' which prioritises the needs of the victim whilst holding the perpetrator to account, and where necessary, finding suitable accommodation for them.

“The offer has to be there for a victim to use refuge. But it should be choice alongside other choices – especially being able to be kept safe in your own home, where you’ve probably got a good set of neighbours who can look out for you. You know the layout of the house; you have a good network around you. My Nan lives on the corner. Neighbours can alert police.”
Rachel, SafeLives Pioneer.

Clause 55 also needs amending to ensure that the duty works for all victims, regardless of their immigration status; can respond to the specific needs of survivors with protected characteristics including race, sexuality and disability; and that there are sufficient refuge places nationally for survivors.

Imkaan and Women’s Aid’s amendment will ensure that the statutory duty on Tier 1 local authorities in the Bill works effectively and that all survivors and children can access a specialist refuge service when they need to and will not be accommodated in unsafe and unsuitable forms of housing. The changes make clear that local authorities must consider a range of other accommodation options to meet the safety needs of the victim alongside specialist refuges, including options that involve supporting the victim to stay in her own home and re-accommodating the perpetrator where safe, relevant and where that is the expressed wish of the victim. This will help ensure this statutory duty supports victims in the most appropriate way for her/him. A copy of the full amendment is available on request.

This amendment also has the potential to improve the effectiveness of the proposed new DAPOs (DA Protection Orders) in the Bill, which will include powers for professionals and survivors to remove perpetrators from a shared home with the survivor. Our experience is that similar orders that already exist (DVPNs and Occupation Orders) are often breached if there is nowhere for the perpetrator to go. Perpetrators can also present an ongoing risk to victims and children, including returning to the survivor’s home after such Orders inevitably end. A 'Whole Housing Approach' will embed more sustainable housing options.

Costs of adding a consideration of the 'Whole Housing Approach' to the needs assessment: The act of consideration itself has minimal costs, while the act of delivering a Whole Housing Approach is likely to create short and long term public savings, as homelessness of victims, including children, is avoided. A cost benefit analysis⁴ was applied to three survivors who accessed Whole Housing Approach interventions and showed a combined potential savings of £68,545.80⁵. Annex 1 illustrates how a Whole Housing

⁴ Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (2020). *Whole Housing Approach Toolkit. Chapter 2: A Cost Benefit Analysis*. Retrieved from https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/media/10879/2_-wha-cost-benefit-analysis.pdf.

⁵ Ibid. A certainty level of 70% was added to account for risk and uncertainty, which is in line with a certainty level applied by local authorities in the WHA pilot sites for other projects. This is an

Approach can be cost effective with a real case. Whilst research is still underway to measure the cost/benefit of rehousing models for perpetrators, the government's own research into the enormous costs of ongoing domestic abuse (£66bn for victims identified in a single year)⁶ and the costs of much-needed housing solutions for victims, point to the likelihood of this being a cost-effective approach.

allowance for outcomes of “what would have happened anyway” without the WHA intervention. This meant applying a 30% reduction from the total savings identified

⁶ “The Economic and Social costs of Domestic Abuse”, Jan 2019, published by Home Office
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/918897/horr107.pdf

