

# The Whole Picture



Our strategy to end domestic abuse,  
for good.



**“We must talk about it more - in the media, in places of work, normalise it without accepting it and helping people have the courage on the outside to challenge it. If we can fundamentally change attitudes around drink driving and smoking - surely we can start to raise awareness and address domestic abuse in the same way. If survivors, children and young people get behind this - we can change the future.”**

**Survivor**

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# Our Strategy

## Contents

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<b>Ending domestic abuse, for good</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The risk-led model</b>	<b>8</b>

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<b>Section 1:</b> A whole picture approach: Ending domestic abuse, for good	<b>10</b>
<b>Section 2:</b> The capabilities	<b>12</b>
<b>Section 3:</b> The funding	<b>13</b>
<b>Section 4:</b> The role for SafeLives	<b>15</b>
<b>Section 4a:</b> The way we work	<b>21</b>
Internal capabilities	<b>22</b>
<b>Section 5:</b> Measuring progress	<b>24</b>
<b>Section 6:</b> Contributions	<b>26</b>

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# Ending domestic abuse, for good

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We believe that domestic abuse can be stopped. Stopped before it starts. Stopped before it ruins lives.

Every year, over two million people in the UK experience domestic abuse. Not one of them should have to wait until they're in crisis before we pay attention.

In the last fifteen years, we have worked with thousands of frontline services, partners and survivors. They are tireless in their efforts to tackle domestic abuse, and we are privileged to work alongside them. Through these partnerships and foundations, we have created a new strategy with insight and expertise from colleagues all over the UK. This strategy aims to not only make more people safe, but to reduce the number of people who experience abuse in the first place.

We have listened to survivors about what they want. We have heard that we need to stop abuse happening in the first place, that children remain hidden from support, services do not feel inclusive and that perpetrators remain invisible from the solution, despite being the cause of the problem. We also know that family and friends remain the trusted network for most people, and yet people do not know what to do or say when they are worried about a loved one.

We are ambitious. But we cannot and will not do this alone. Work with us, talk to us, tell us what needs to change and we will do everything we can to make it happen. Our new strategy is more than a piece of paper; it's a living, breathing, ambitious programme of work that indicates our belief that it is possible to end domestic abuse, for good.

# What do we mean?

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Ending domestic abuse for good is what motivates us every day.

We often get asked what constitutes domestic abuse. There are Government definitions, but in real terms if you feel afraid of someone in your life who is supposed to care about you, it may be that you are experiencing domestic abuse. It does not have to be a spouse, it does not have to be physical. It can happen in any relationship (intimate partner, child, sibling, ex-partner, casual partner, spouse, family member). It can happen to anyone of any background, and it can include a range of behaviour. While Government definitions may vary in different parts of the UK, if someone in your life is making you feel afraid of living your life in the way you want, if someone is trying to control you - we urge you to speak to someone and get support. There is no shame in experiencing domestic abuse and no one should live in fear of someone else.

And why do we say “for good”? Because we want to stop it before it starts. And if it does start, we want a response that provides long-term, wraparound support to decrease the chance it will happen again. Too many perpetrators repeat their behaviour, too many children grow up impacted by the long-term effects of domestic abuse. This cycle needs to stop. **Forever. For everyone.**

**“He even started a fight because I was sleeping not looking at him but turned on the other side. He woke me up and made me change the side of the bed because he believed that my sleeping position was disrespectful.”**

**Survivor**

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# Background

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From the point we were founded in 2004 to our first major strategic review in 2014, SafeLives was focused on increasing safety for the primary adult victim. This is represented by Lexi, Jessica, Emma and Paige in our family picture on pages 6 and 7. Each of these four women was at high risk of serious harm or murder, from Oliver and Charlie. Each woman accessed support from an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (Idva) – a highly skilled professional – who walked alongside her to understand her specific situation and acted as a determined advocate on her behalf. Each woman’s situation was then addressed by a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference, or Marac, where her Idva worked with other agencies to create a safety plan to meet the needs of her and her children. All four women were supported to become safe.

In 2017/18 these vital processes, the Idva (in Scotland an Idaa – Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate) and the Marac, led to coordinated safety planning for over 60,000 adult victims of abuse and more than 100,000 children. 95% of the adult victims supported were women, who are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse.<sup>1</sup>

In 2014 we reviewed how the approach to domestic abuse had changed - assessing both our own impact and the impact of the many other organisations engaged in the mission to end domestic abuse. This assessment showed that while the average time it took for someone to get effective help with abuse had significantly reduced, the overall number of people experiencing domestic abuse had not changed. We remain proud of the crucial contribution made by Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates, and Maracs. We believe they are a significant part of the reason the duration of the highest risk domestic abuse had come down so significantly, freeing so many people from dangerous situations sooner.

Our review led us, however, into a period of consultation with a wide range of frontline specialists, universal services and with survivors, to find out what more was needed. In 2015 we published a 2015/18 strategy and entered into partnerships to develop i) an intensive intervention for high-harm perpetrators like Oliver and Charlie; ii) enhanced methods of working with adult victims such as Lexi, and her children, including those with the most complex needs and those intending to stay in their relationship; iii) a more coordinated multi-agency approach to a whole family, addressing the harm experienced by adults and their children as deeply connected.

<sup>1</sup>ONS data release on domestic abuse in England and Wales, year ending March 2017, Table 48 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crime-andjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017>

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The 2015/18 strategy is concluded by the publication of our Annual Impact Report 2017/18.<sup>2</sup> Both independent evaluation and the response of survivors and professionals indicate that we have continued to improve the approach to domestic abuse. There are signs that those who perpetrate abuse, like Oliver and Charlie, are more likely to get a response which challenges them to change. The case for seeing families as just that – whole families – has been bolstered by thoughtful reports like the 2017 Joint Targeted Area Inspections. The funding, innovation in practice, research and quality assurance for these changes will probably not be settled for many more years to come. And the foundation work we did with so many others from 2004-2015 is under significant pressure. This new strategy assumes that any further innovation must be built on the successful change that we and so many others have achieved over many years; adding to it, not replacing it.

The work we have done in partnership has built on the long history and current effort of thousands of frontline specialists and other first responders all across the UK, and that must continue. Charities doing specialist, frontline domestic abuse work deserve huge credit for the commitment and ambition they continue to show when they face so many challenges, as do many statutory services.

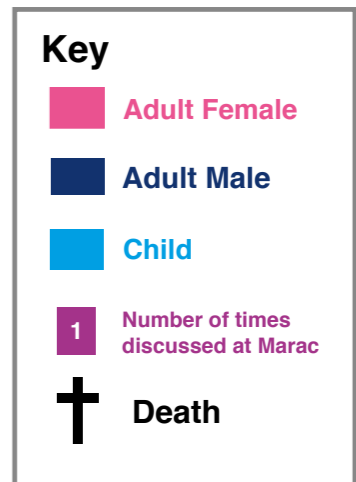
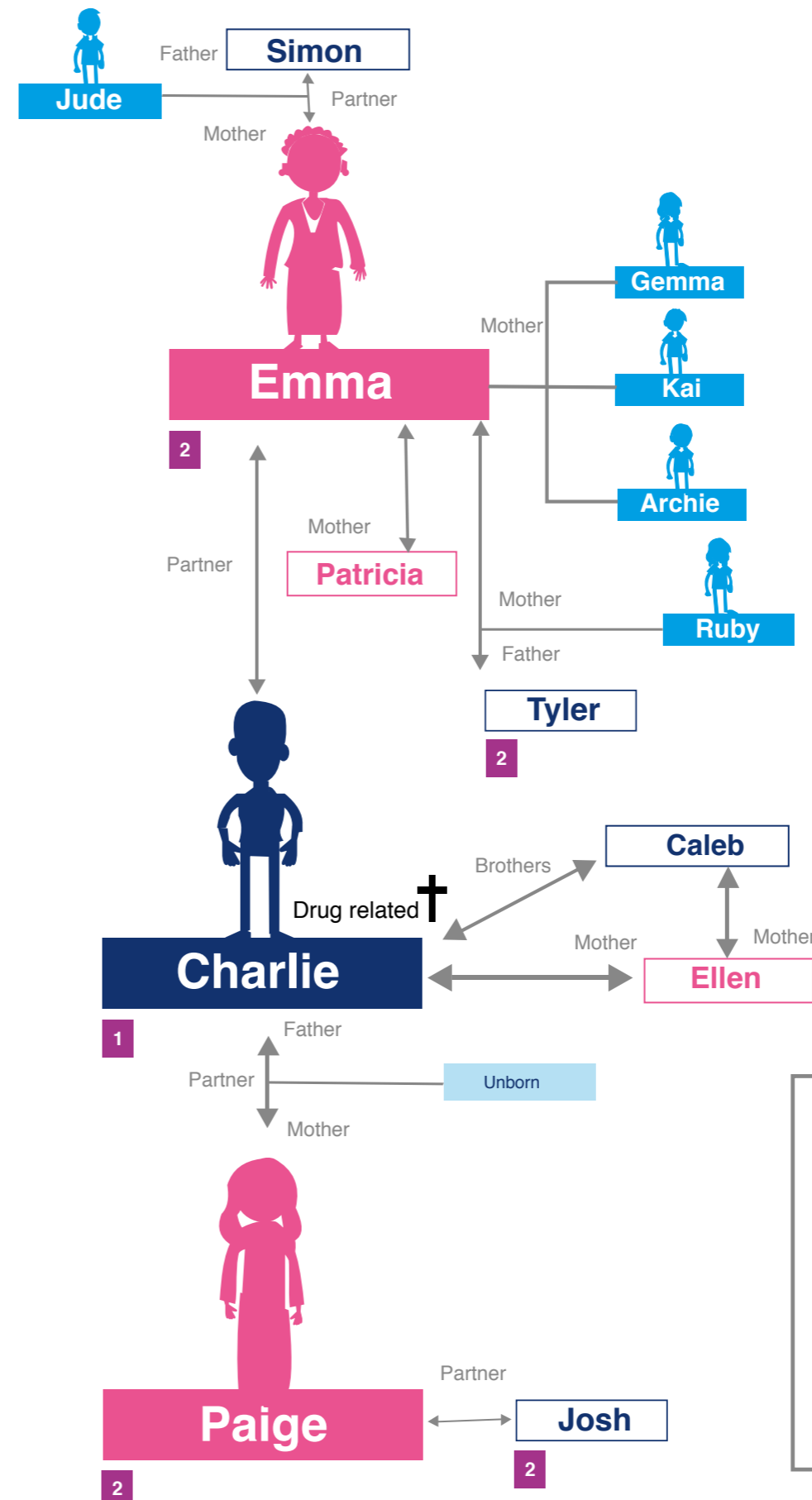
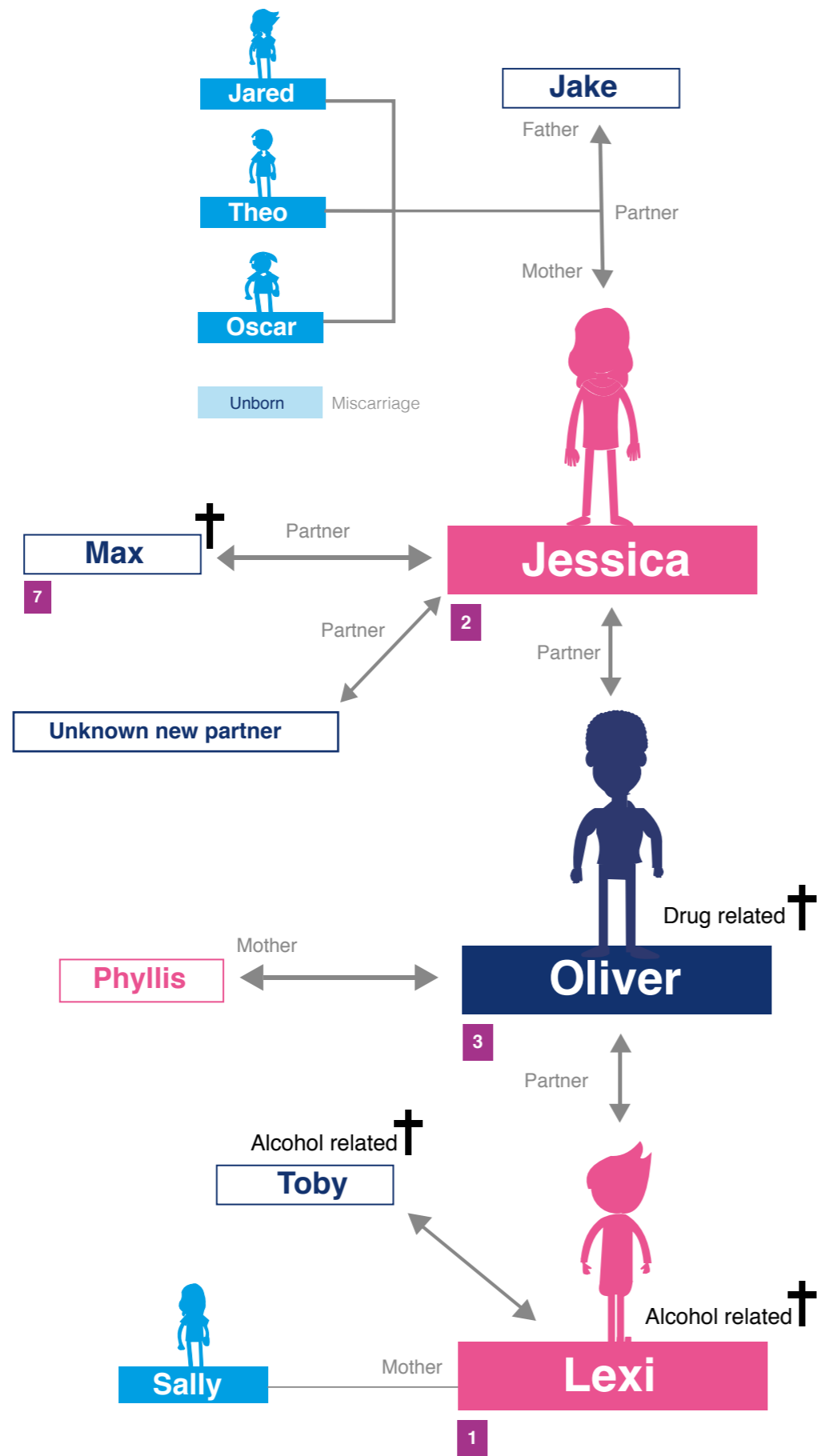
In our response to the UK Government's consultation on a prospective new Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill, submitted in May 2018, we were proud to reflect the fantastic work of many organisations around the UK who are improving the identification of and approach to abuse<sup>3</sup>. We also heard nearly 1,000 voices – survivors and practitioners – calling for further change, through our Every Story Matters platform and associated work. We have listened to those voices and built this strategy from their expertise and insight. It is survivors who tell the truest, most compelling picture, and who are clearest about what still needs to change.

The strategy which follows is not time-bound. We believe that a whole picture approach, set out on page 10 and 11, is an enduring framework which needs to be in place for domestic abuse to end, for good. In Section 4 we set out what we hope to do in partnership in the near and medium term to achieve a whole picture approach. In particular we identify work which responds to the urgent need to work with partners to better understand, and respond to, those who use abuse. We will keep the strategic priorities set out in Section 4 under close review, with survivors, frontline practitioners and others, and adjust when we need to.

<sup>2</sup>SafeLives annual impact report, 2017/18

<sup>3</sup>SafeLives response to the Domestic Abuse Bill consultation, May 2018  
[http://safelives.org.uk/domestic\\_abuse\\_bill](http://safelives.org.uk/domestic_abuse_bill)

# A family picture\*



\* This genogram relates to a white, heterosexual set of families living in an English town. This was a specific piece of work; SafeLives is committed to ending abuse for all families, whoever and wherever in the UK they are, whatever form their family takes. All names have been anonymised.



# The risk-led model

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We are passionate about supporting all those whose lives are, or could be, damaged by a domestic abuse experience. We believe every single person at risk of abuse needs an effective, empathetic response that is tailored to their particular circumstances and helps them become safe and well in the long-term, in a way that is right for them.

We believe that these responses must be grounded in the risk-led model. This means ensuring the effective assessment of risk for each individual, in each individual circumstance, and tailoring safe responses to meet their needs in line with that risk. It means that someone can talk about their own specific circumstances and receive an individually tailored risk-led response.

We therefore urge all agencies to ensure that their frontline staff are fully trained on how to assess risk; that control and coercion is at the centre of their understanding of risk; that they still use professional judgement appropriately and that the risk is viewed as being posed by the perpetrator, not caused by the victim.

As we go through this strategy we make it clear how vital it is that professionals really see the person – the whole person – to support them to best effect. In supporting people earlier and in more sustained, suitable ways we will see fewer people suffering the impact of domestic abuse at its most severe.

**“I was taken to hospital and I met an Idva there. And suddenly I could talk to someone who understood. The Idva had the patience, the understanding. She knew what I was trying to say even when I couldn’t get the words out. I trusted her, and she started to put me and my family back together again. If I hadn’t met that Idva I hate to think what might have happened – someone might have been killed.”**

**Survivor**

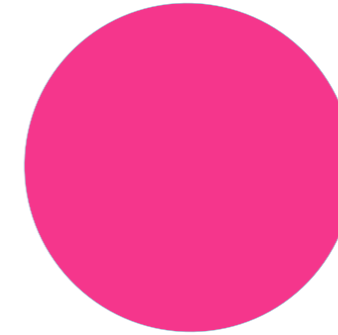
**“I wish people had been able to understand that it is possible for someone to be charming to everyone else, and a different person at home.”**

**Survivor**

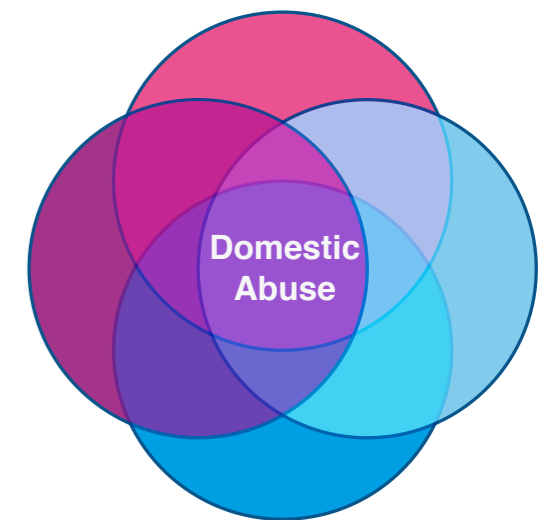
We believe the following framework sets out the comprehensive and enduring whole picture approach that needs to be in place for domestic abuse to be ended for good. In Section 4 we set out what role we will play in delivering this approach.

# Section 1

## A whole picture approach: Ending domestic abuse, for good



**The whole person:** domestic abuse is never all of someone's experiences or situation.



	<b>Whole Person</b> Seeing and responding to the whole person, not addressing a series of issues	<b>Whole Family</b> Adult victims, survivors, those who harm, individuals connected to the victim/perpetrator including extended family	<b>Whole Community</b> All communities of geography, identity and online spaces	<b>Whole Society</b> The general public and those who influence them: the media, politicians, employers, key opinion formers and commentators
<b>1</b> Act before someone harms or is harmed	People are treated as just that – people, and not issues. The complexity of domestic abuse and links to other adverse experiences are understood. <sup>4</sup>	Protective factors are put in place for those at risk of abusing or being abused – people and services sufficiently understand domestic abuse and what makes it more or less likely to happen.	Communities <sup>5</sup> of geography, identity and online spaces are equipped to identify and act on early risk factors and warning signs of abusive situations.	Gender stereotypes are challenged and deconstructed – particularly those of masculinity – supporting boys and men to break these norms. Societal shifts see a reduction in the motivation and opportunity for different types of power to be abused.
<b>2</b> Identify and stop harmful behaviours	Harmful behaviour is addressed by proactively identifying <i>all</i> motivating factors and consequences, such as other violence, abuse and criminality.	Individuals who abuse any family member are appropriately assessed for the risk they pose to <i>all</i> family members – and themselves.	Community members know they are more than passive bystanders – there is low tolerance and high urgency about identifying and holding to account those who abuse.	
<b>3</b> Increase safety for those at risk	The protection offered to people means proactively checking that all risks posed have been addressed, not just the initial presenting issue.	The safety and wellbeing of all non-abusive family members – physical, mental and emotional – is defended from those who pose a risk to them.	Communities of geography, identity, online spaces and employers/businesses understand the risks posed by those who abuse and their role in protecting the safety and wellbeing of those at risk.	
<b>4</b> Support people to live the lives they want after harm occurs	People are responded to as people, not an issue or series of issues. Both crisis and longer-term responses to people who have experienced abuse are sensitive to their possible vulnerability to future adverse experiences.	When an immediate experience of abuse is over, all family members' safety and wellbeing – physical, mental and emotional – are (re)built. People are supported to live the lives they want, drawing strength from each other.	People who speak about their experience of abuse are believed. Communities and society validate their experience and support their process of creating safety, wellbeing and resilience so they can live the lives they want. The voices, strengths and needs of survivors are paramount, and survivors draw further strength from one another.	

<sup>4</sup>Such as child abuse, child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, sexual violence, trauma, mental ill health, substance use, or economic disadvantage

<sup>5</sup>Individuals might form an identifiable community; we work on the basis that within that community will also be a range of views, backgrounds and experiences.

# Section 2

## The capabilities

To deliver a whole picture approach, the following capabilities must be commonly in place across all those organisations and individuals with a role in prevention and response.

**“You feel so weak inside. Your dad takes you to one side and tells you to get a grip, to be a man and act like one. There are no trannys in our family he says.”**  
Survivor

Capability	Means of achieving it
<b>Understanding</b>	Hearing the individual and collective voice of those with lived experience, and also the voice of those who didn't survive
<b>Knowledge</b>	Research, analysis, effective communications
<b>Skills</b>	Training, practice development guidance, innovation
<b>Confidence</b>	Supportive networks, validation of good practice and attitudes
<b>Motivation</b>	Supportive networks, effective communications, status for the work, methods to combat compassion fatigue, incentivisation of good practice and suitable commissioning/funding
<b>Provision</b>	Sustainable, adequate resources for specialist and universal organisations, commitment to common goals
<b>Breadth of perspective</b>	Proactively seeking to attract, retain or otherwise work with staff from a range of backgrounds, experiences and viewpoints
<b>Accountability and standards</b>	Quality assurance and scrutiny, research evaluation and analysis, inspection procedures
<b>Continual learning</b>	Peer and critical friend review, lifting the voices of lived experience
<b>Leadership</b>	Validation at all levels, not just the commissioner, the CEO, or the community leader
<b>Collaboration</b>	Creating communities of citizens and professionals whose well-coordinated local work creates a multi-agency, whole system approach

# Section 3

## The funding

### The funding gap

Domestic abuse funding has declined sharply in the last decade as national and local budget holders make savings to meet shortfalls. Statutory services are thinly stretched, whether those are early intervention programmes for children in need or community mental health services. Meanwhile, the volume of reported domestic abuse cases is increasing year on year. Recent and forthcoming legislation and accompanying work by the Welsh, Scottish and UK Governments aims to keep increasing awareness of abuse, with an emphasis on it being ‘everybody’s business’ including all statutory agencies, employers and wider civic society. This level of ambition and focus is very welcome, but appropriate funding to match the ambition isn’t available.

We hear from professionals and survivors: the squeeze on frontline resources is stark. Quite simply: more money is needed.

### The impact - false economies

Our research shows that almost all parts of the UK lack the required number of specialist domestic abuse professionals, including those who work with children and perpetrators. There is little evidence of integrated provision which responds to the whole family and our data shows the time domestic abuse specialists and other professionals can spend with people is shortening despite a rise in people presenting with multiple needs. This weakens the impact of an intervention and reduces the opportunity to make someone sustainably safe and well.

The lack of funding is short-sighted. It is costing lives, and costing money:

**The NHS: £1.73 billion**  
**Criminal justice: £1.2 billion**  
**Social services: £268 million**  
**Housing: £187.5 million**  
**Lost economic output: £1.86 billion<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>6</sup>Sylvia Walby: Sylvia Walby (2009), The Cost of Domestic Violence Update, 2009  
[http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/88449/1/Cost\\_of\\_domestic\\_violence\\_update\\_4\\_.pdf](http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/88449/1/Cost_of_domestic_violence_update_4_.pdf)

## The solution

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We will continue to advocate for the additional funding so urgently needed. We also believe that budget holders could do far more with the money they do have, for example pooling and coordinating budgets. New opportunities are emerging to coordinate budgets and achieve more through increased devolution to 'metro mayors' and other local and regional leads.

Lack of visibility and transparency is also hugely damaging, meaning that accountability is weak and opportunities to maximise the money are hard to grasp. We will work with any local or national budget holder who wants to better understand what they're spending, and what impact that is having.

We need investment now to save lives and money later. For example, after a survivor receives support from a hospital based Idva, costs to the health service reduce by over 40%, equivalent to an estimated £2,000+ annual reduction in health service use. Spending just 15% of the annual cost of responding to the highest risk perpetrators of domestic abuse would provide a response which addresses their behaviour. The 'spend to save' argument is crystal clear.

Domestic abuse becomes a criminal justice problem when we don't address it sooner. Only one in five people experiencing abuse ever calls the police, but it impacts every hospital, GP surgery, workplace, school and street. While police involvement is slowly rising as a proportion of all cases, we need to train and resource frontline services - both voluntary and statutory - on the basis that people must have help where and when they first need it, as well as when they're in crisis. This means coordinating available funding to maximise impact for whole families and communities, and society as a whole, and ensuring a distributed model in which every individual and organisation plays their part.

We will advocate for greater funding and greater transparency – to ensure every pound available is working as hard as possible to support people impacted by domestic abuse.

**“There is no doubt that domestic abuse in the lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender community is a serious issue. However, despite high levels, it remains acutely underreported and LGBT+ survivors are disproportionately underrepresented in specialist domestic abuse services.”**

**Galop, specialist LGBT service**

**“There are so many holes in this system. I have had to fight hard and do things which go completely against what should have happened - all to keep my children safe and to be heard. I'm sure I'm not alone.”**

**Survivor**

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## Section 4

### The role for SafeLives

Survivors and specialists have told us the full range of work they felt was needed to end domestic abuse. That is captured in Sections 1 to 3 of this strategy. As we developed the strategy, we also consulted widely on what role SafeLives should play in the mission to end domestic abuse. We will not be the right organisation to lead work against all parts of the whole picture approach in Section 1. We are committed to targeting our resources where we can be most effective and acting in a spirit of joint venture with other organisations across the UK.

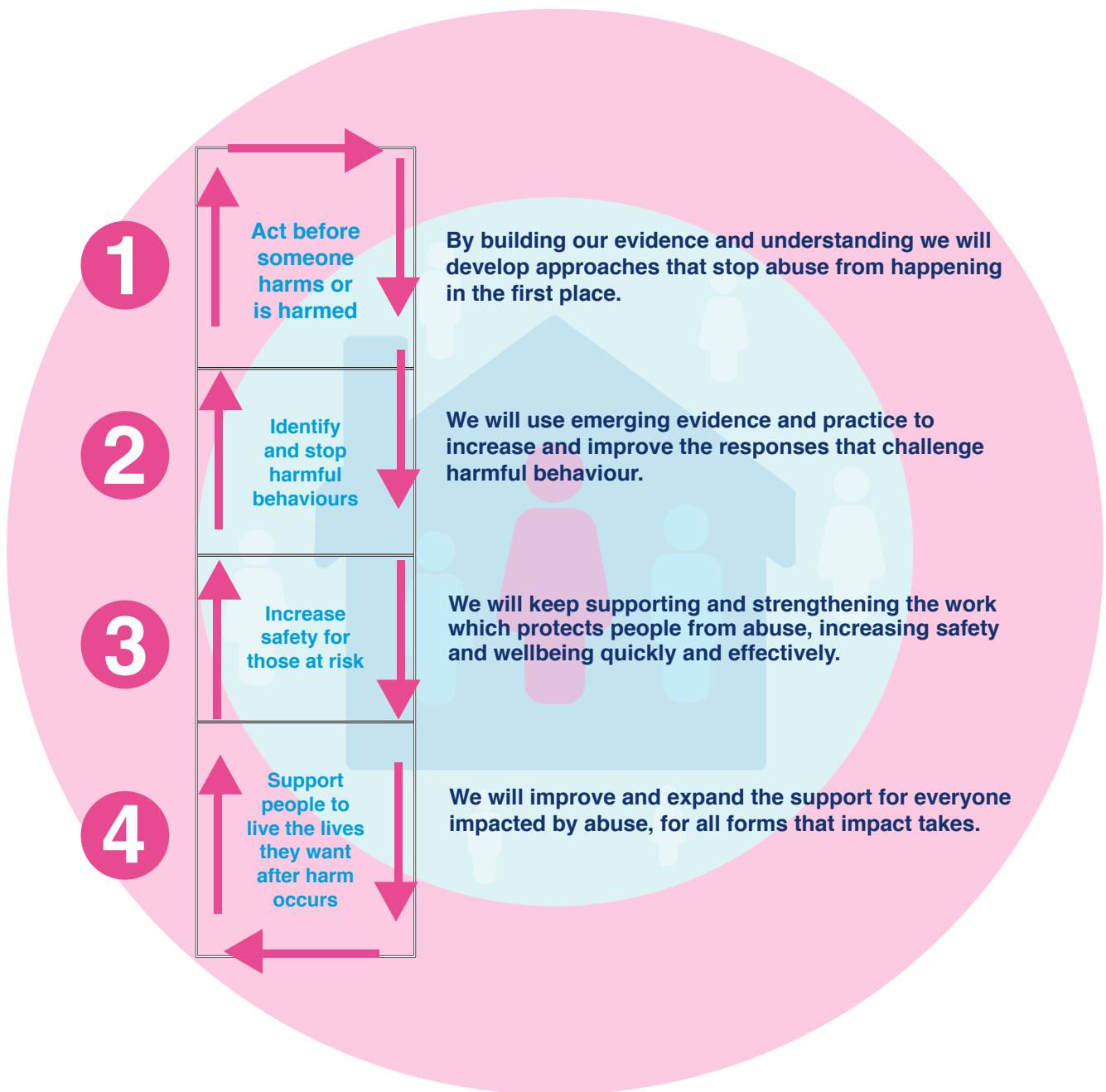
To determine the role for our organisation, we considered and weighted:

- what people said were their highest priorities for change
- what they felt our particular strengths were
- environmental factors, such as public policy
- the likelihood of being able to secure the partnerships and resources we would need to deliver

This allowed us to devise strategic priorities for 2018/21, which set out our role in delivering the framework for change set out in Section 1. These priorities will be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis.

Each year we will publish a new operational plan providing a detailed description of our activities, along with an annual impact report which looks back at the year just ended.

## During 2018/21 we will:



In everything we do, the expert voice of frontline practitioners and the authentic voice of survivors will be a prominent and vital part. We will keep expanding the opportunities for those with lived experience to speak for themselves, in their own voices, and be heard by those who can make change.



# 84%

of survivors told us they never talked about domestic abuse when they were growing up.

# 75%

of suicides in the UK are men; 95% of high-harm perpetrators of abuse are men. There is growing evidence that those who pose a risk to others also pose a risk to themselves.

# 49%

of boys aged 13 – 14 thought that hitting a partner would be 'okay' in at least one of twelve scenarios they were presented with.

# Under 50%

Our data shows that fewer than half of girls and boys being abusive in their own intimate relationships are known to children's services.

## Strategic priority **1** Act before someone harms or is harmed

- Build evidence about how abuse can be prevented from happening in the first place – including through hearing the voices of those who have used abuse.
- Work with partners to research how the early experiences of children and young people influence whether they go on to use abuse in their relationships, looking at the concept of the 'first 1,000 days' and later experiences.
- Work with partners to listen to and share the voices of young men – to build our understanding of how to challenge and deconstruct constricting stereotypes of masculinity.
- Use what we've learnt to develop practical approaches and increase the proportion of domestic abuse work that tackle the root causes of abuse. Building on previous primary prevention work and working with partners across traditional sector boundaries to recognise the complexity of domestic abuse and its links to other experiences.
- Support initiatives which increase the likelihood of individuals and communities spotting the early risk factors and warning signs of abuse.

**“He will go on to destroy the lives of other women and I feel powerless to stop him.”**

Survivor

**“It’s just someone that you can open up to, you know. And ... like I said, I’d have never thought that I could go and speak to someone, I just thought I was that type of guy, I withdraw to myself – bugger them off, you know. But I’m very happy we did speak.”**

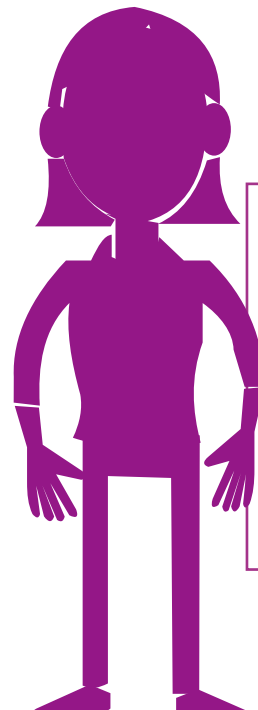
Drive service user

**“My ex-partner, was arrested for threats to kill and domestic violence against me. He was interviewed and told the police I had misinterpreted the messages and so he walked free. I do sometimes worry as we live pretty close to one another, but I don’t know why all charges were dropped against him, I feel let down and think maybe I done something wrong, it’s a sad, lonely situation to be in.”**

Survivor

## Strategic priority **2** Identify and stop harmful behaviours

- Build a picture of what works to stop someone’s abusive behaviour – including through the voices of those who have used abuse.
- Ensure that legislation enables services to identify and stop harmful behaviours. We will work with others to ensure that recent and proposed changes in legislation from UK and devolved governments become a reality.
- Increase and improve responses that challenge and change abusive behaviour. In partnership with Respect and Social Finance we will deliver and expand the Drive project and we will work with partners in our Beacon sites on responses that challenge abusive behaviour when a couple intends to stay in their relationship.
- Continue to influence the public conversation around abuse so that responsibility and the requirement to change are directed where they belong - with the person being abusive.



**< 1%**

Fewer than 1% of perpetrators of abuse get a specialist intervention to change.

**“One of our Idvas is at the Crown Court today supporting a young client for a grievous bodily harm trial. This is his first same sex relationship. His partner would frequently make him question his sexual identity and reinforced that no one would believe him if he reported the abuse, and that he would experience homophobia through the court process.”**

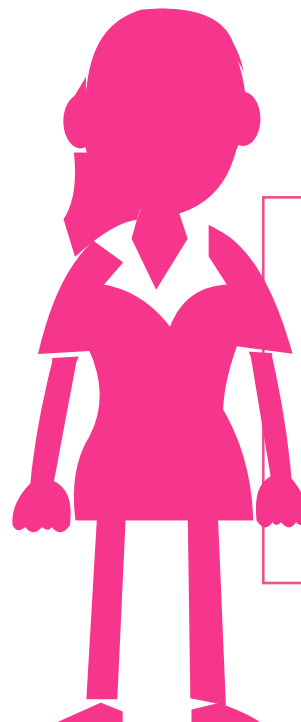
**Specialist worker**

**“I was 13 years old living at home with my family. I was suffering verbal (getting called names) and physical abuse from my parents and older brother. The physical assaults were mostly from my oldest brother who felt I should respect him and my parents and do everything they wanted me to do, even if I didn’t want to do it.”**

**Young survivor**

## Strategic priority **3** Increase safety for those at risk

- Ensure that the needs of survivors, both adults and children, are kept at the centre of protective responses, even when those responses are under pressure. We will train and champion specialist frontline professionals and support best practice in multi-agency forums such as Marac and MASH.
- Ensure that the protective response to children and young people is made more comprehensive and far better coordinated with the response to adults. Working with services in our Beacon sites, we will deliver new interventions that provide tailored support for all members of the family affected by abuse. We will also use what we learn about children’s early experiences to improve the support they receive.
- Work with others to change and improve a flawed system to better protect people from multiple types of harm. Building on our One Front Door model we will break down siloes so that people are treated as just that - people - not as one or a set of individual issues.
- Support work which highlights for individuals, families, communities, businesses and employers the risks to safety posed by those who abuse, and the role each of those groups can play in protecting the safety and wellbeing of others. We will keep highlighting the people and communities who face additional barriers to support.



**80%**

of victims never call the police about their abuse.

**“I don’t feel safe because my house is easy to break into and I worry every day that he will find us. I could not ever have another live-in partner because I do not know if it will happen again or not, there’s never a guarantee.”**

**Survivor**

**“Dealing with years of post-separation abuse is a nightmare and there is so little support once a mother has left the perpetrator. Continuing abuse is a massive issue and especially where the children and family courts are used to further the abuse.”**

**Survivor**

## **Strategic priority** **4** **Support people to live the lives they want after harm occurs**

- Work with others, including through interventions in our Beacon sites, to improve the range, suitability and accessibility of support for all people impacted by abuse - survivors and all family members affected.
- Support campaigning work to radically improve the experiences people have when an abusive situation is supposed to be over but is still being perpetuated through child contact or economic abuse.
- Create opportunities for our Pioneers (survivors and experts by experience), and other adult and child survivors to engage in peer networks and be part of other positive change they can create from their experiences.
- Support work by colleague organisations to improve the practical response to survivors, for example in their health and housing and financial situation, so their chance to thrive isn’t compromised.



Successful delivery against our first four strategic priorities requires a fifth:

## Strategic priority **5** SafeLives continues to be an effective and sustainable organisation

This section sets out what it will take for us to be effective, and to be sustainable.

### Lived experience

We will continue to place people with lived experience of abuse at the heart of all we do. This means making sure that every part of our work is informed by the lived experience and insight of survivors and that we amplify their voices. And in doing this there is no 'them and us' - we are proud to be an organisation in which anyone who wants to can talk about and use their own experience. Being both a staff member and a survivor is of value, and a source of tremendous strength. To deliver this strategy effectively, we will also find safe and appropriate ways to hear the voices of those who have used abuse, exploring how those voices can create change.

### Working in partnership and championing others

We will work with others to achieve the whole picture approach needed to end domestic abuse. And we will share expertise and learning about the best ways to tackle the causes and consequences of abuse. There is fantastic work going on across the UK and we will support and champion the work of others, united in the joint mission of ending domestic abuse and connected harm.

### Capacity building

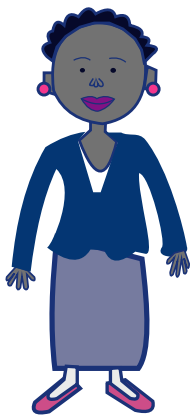
We will focus on capacity building - we want to support a broad range of organisations and individuals at a community level to be confident and proficient so that they can respond effectively to domestic abuse - its causes and its consequences. This means continuing to offer support, knowledge and tools to frontline workers and other professionals, including in ways that help them collaborate across historic siloes. It also means supporting initiatives to extend knowledge and understanding beyond professionals, building the capacity of all members of communities and our society to prevent, identify and respond to abuse.

### Building evidence and testing what works

We will continue to be informed by evidence - combining qualitative and quantitative data, wider research and frontline expertise and understanding. We will test innovative projects and replicate effective approaches that make people safe and well.

### Influencing for change

We will work with key colleagues locally, regionally, nationally and UK-wide to promote what is needed to deliver a whole picture approach to end domestic abuse, for good. We will also share learning with colleagues internationally, recognising that many causes and consequences of domestic abuse are global not local.

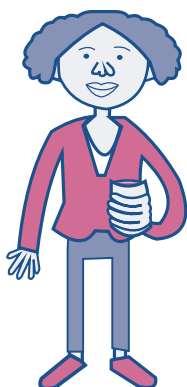


## Internal capabilities

In this strategy we propose that the breadth of SafeLives' focus evolves. We will take appropriate time to scope our way ahead, increasing our skills, knowledge and expertise and creating partnerships to deliver for the future, exchanging expertise with those who occupy space we don't, and only taking a lead when there is a clear case to do that.

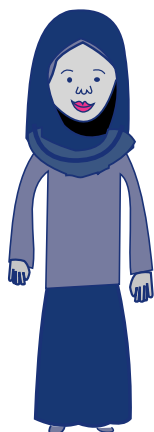
2018/19 will act as a foundation year, giving us time to better understand who is already doing work relevant to the delivery of a whole picture approach, what impact they are cumulatively having, and whether/how we can add value to complement that existing work, or to fill in gaps.

In 2018/19, we will build our capabilities in the following areas:



1. Map key colleagues and develop relationships to:

- Broaden our understanding of how harm can be prevented from happening in the first place and strengthen our connections with organisations with a proven record in primary prevention.
- Broaden our understanding of how best to respond to domestic abuse in the context of interrelated experiences including but not limited to experiences in childhood or youth, trauma, mental ill-health, sexual violence and exploitation, substance misuse, financial disadvantage, and the range of so-called 'honour' based abuses such as forced marriage.



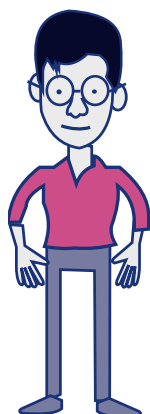
2. Grow, strengthen, diversify and amplify authentic voices of survivors, children and professionals:

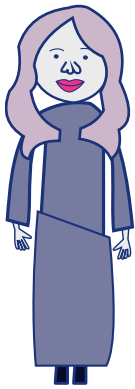
- Further develop the size, role and diversity of our team of colleagues, the SafeLives Pioneers, and live our commitment to co-create every part of our work with them and with thousands of others whose lives have been impacted by abuse.

3. Evaluate and reflect on our existing evidence and innovation in practice, inviting independent evaluators and critical friends to review our work and fostering a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

4. Build a team, culture and ways of working that align to the whole picture approach identified in Section 1 and the strategic priorities identified in Section 4.

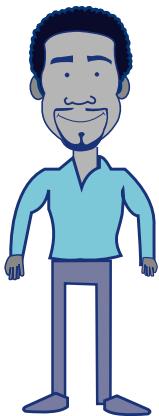
5. Evolve our communications – both content and channels – in line with the new strategy.



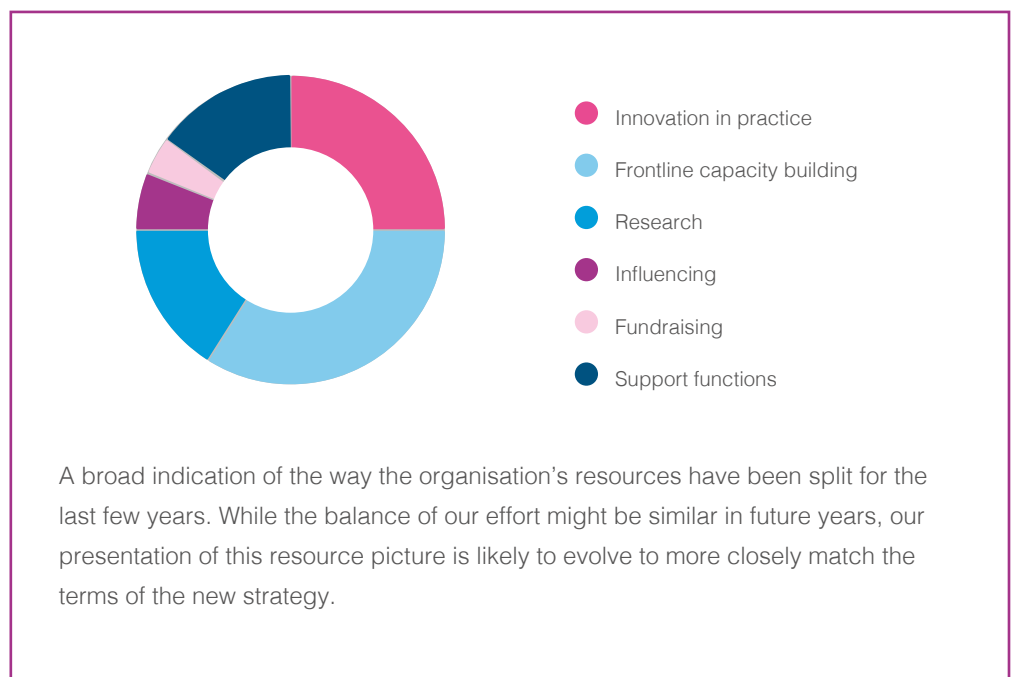
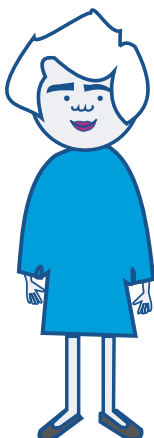
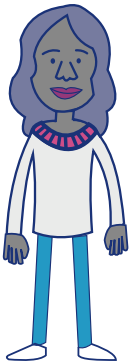


Our staff, associate and Pioneer team is full of exceptionally talented, committed people. We will continue to work on being an employer that can recruit, retain, develop and support the best people, from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences, and we will support people to be at their best.

This strategy is ambitious. To achieve the ambition will take appropriate resources and also support of other kinds. We will only pursue growth in our resources when we feel that is the necessary way to deliver the change that's needed.



- Survivors make clear that the goal of ending domestic abuse cannot be achieved without also examining the links between domestic abuse and other forms of harm. We will therefore seek to understand domestic abuse in this context, improving our understanding of relevant areas in relation to domestic abuse.
- We remain committed to working in partnership with organisations with common and overlapping aims. We want to learn from these organisations who have insight and capabilities that we don't, sharing expertise to build our collaborative strength.
- We will retain highly valued team members, redeploying from existing work and funding streams to new work, when that can suitably be done.
- We will continue to engage actively with supporters in person and online, making sure those who offer their support know how much we appreciate it, and respect the contribution they make.



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# Section 5:

## Measuring progress

As noted at the outset of this document, we believe the whole picture approach set out in Section 1 (the ‘what’) and the required capabilities noted at Section 2 (the ‘how’) are both robust and are unlikely to be the subject of major change in the coming years. Many organisations are already working to achieve them, and SafeLives hopes to act in a spirit of joint venture both with them and with people who could contribute but currently aren’t. We expect to assess the strategic, cumulative impact of all those efforts and the extent to which people are using those capabilities in their work.

At SafeLives we should also be accountable for the influence we have and impact we make. We will therefore also collect and analyse evidence ourselves, and ask others to do the same, in order to reflect on the progress we make against the initial strategic priorities set out at Section 4. This will give us the information we need to undertake a process of annual review, to assess what impact our work has made and what priorities should be set for the coming year. The following principles will guide our measurement of overall impact (Sections 1-2) and our own impact (the four strategic priorities in Section 4):

- **SafeLives brings together data, the expertise of practitioners and the voice of those with lived experience.** This combination should be at work in all our measurement of impact.
- In all our measurement, we will be looking for **evidence that we have supported organisations and individuals to move along the four stages of competence with regards to domestic abuse**, from unconscious incompetence, to conscious incompetence, conscious competence to unconscious competence.
- **Much of the evidence which is relevant to this strategy is gathered, analysed and published by other organisations.** They will be spread across the public, private and third sectors. For example, inspectorates will have a remit for the performance of statutory bodies. Large corporate organisations are starting to gather information both for the purposes of supporting their workforce, and to better respond to the needs of their users or consumers.
- In the third sector, **we will want to engage with an increasing range of colleagues who help us put together the whole picture.** This will include, for example, organisations for children, for young people, substance misuse organisations, mental health charities and those researching trauma.
- We will **set a firm baseline against which progress can be measured, or use data where that has been the case**, for example through timed series studies, or by giving a platform to people whose voice and story have never been heard before. In this way we will be clear about the problem we are trying to solve, and progress made.
- Measuring our own impact will be done (as far as funding and reporting arrangements allow) against strategic priorities, not individual projects. **Reporting will be against both work we directly deliver, and also instances where we have been able to influence or support the work of others.**
- **We will increasingly access evidence from data analytics** alongside more traditional sources, including those which can identify patterns of behaviour and how they’re changing in groups of individuals.
- Not everything we lead or contribute to, or done by others, will be fully effective. We will be **transparent about impact** even when that feels hard. As we identify what creates most impact, we will keep **(re)prioritising, so we reinforce positive impact** and use our resources efficiently.
- Funders often have their own requirements of measurement, when they provide funds. Our aim will be to **keep our process of impact measurement as streamlined as possible**, so we will work hard with each funder to agree as consistent a set of measures as possible.



To measure the impact and influence of our strategy we will gather evidence for ourselves, and also learn from academics, experts, commissioner and practitioners. This work is likely to include:



whole person

- Capturing the voice and story of those who have lived or are living an experience of abuse.

Does someone feel safer? What has had the biggest impact on that feeling of safety?



whole family

- Collecting data showing the co-occurrence of domestic abuse with other adverse experiences.

- Capturing the voice and story of those who respond when someone is living with abuse, both professionals, and friends and family.

How long did the experience of abuse go on for each family member before they got effective help?



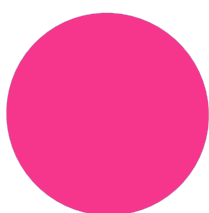
whole community

- Investigating the response for all those connected to a household once domestic abuse has been identified.

- Using localised information which shows regional variation in the response family members receive.

- Comparing the demographic information of those who are accessing services to the available data around expected prevalence for all groups.

Is the number of people previously considered 'hidden' rising as a proportion of those getting help?



whole society

- Accessing public attitudes data indicating societal views and the views of different communities (of geography, identity or online space).

- Gathering the authentic voice of survivors and monitoring how it is used to co-create and guide the provision of services and discussions around domestic abuse.

Is someone's use of abusive behaviours reducing?



whole picture

- Using all information available to create a baseline from which we can assess the impact of our activities.

- Working with and building on the quantitative data on overall prevalence of abuse such as the Crime Survey England and Wales, Scottish Crime and Justice Survey and Northern Ireland Crime Survey.

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# Section 6

## Contributions

This strategy has been created in collaboration with many friends, colleagues and supporters. The staff team and Trustees offer a huge thank you to each of them. It will take our whole society to deliver an end to domestic abuse, and we hope we can continue to work with everyone who has given their time to help devise this way forward.

- SafeLives Pioneers and wider Friends and Family Group, who keep us focused daily on what's really important.
- Contributors to both Every Story Matters and the psychological violence study. You have entrusted your 1,000+ experiences to us and we take that so seriously. We will remember your words and images every day and work to end domestic abuse in your name.
- All survivors who have got in touch with us on the phone or on social media, because you needed help or wanted to speak up in support of something we were doing; we have heard each experience and response and hope we have been able to show how we've listened to the change you're calling for.
- Frontline practitioners in specialist, statutory and community organisations, telling us in direct terms when you disagree or feel we've missed something, cheering us on when we wondered if we were getting overly ambitious; you keep us grounded and realistic, but you've also got a huge appetite for change and improvement. Your work, and the pressure you're under, is astounding.
- Organisations with whom we're already in partnership or can see a future partnership in prospect. We don't underestimate what it takes to create a meaningful partnership and keep it healthy; we're learning from you all the time and that makes the process stimulating as well as challenging.
- Strategic partners with a clear-eyed view of the policy and funding picture, from our Scottish Advisory Group to police leads in the four nations, to health specialists and policy leads, to our counterparts in other national charities. We're extremely lucky to have access to all the wisdom you offer.
- Supporters who offer resources while pushing our thinking, monitoring our impact, and connecting us with other individuals and organisations who you know will speed up the work to deliver common goals.

To end where we started, we are ambitious. But we cannot and will not do this alone. Work with us, talk to us, tell us what needs to change and we will do everything we can to make it happen. Our new strategy is more than a piece of paper, it's a living, breathing ambitious programme of work. We believe it is possible to end domestic abuse. The cycle needs to stop. **Forever. For everyone.**

**SafeLives**  
**October 2018**



**“It's a long process  
but me and my son  
are moving forward  
with life and I am  
able to see a future  
free from abuse.”**

**Survivor**

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