



A Multi-Agency Approach to Prevent Gender-Based Violence

The Tackling Gender-Based Violence Conference 2023

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What I'll cover

- National data
- What are women experiencing?
- Multi-agency working ensure wrap-around, coordinated support for victims
- Local commissioning – ensuring quality specialist service provision for women and children
- Priorities for government



170 organisations in our
national federation running
over 300 local life-saving
services

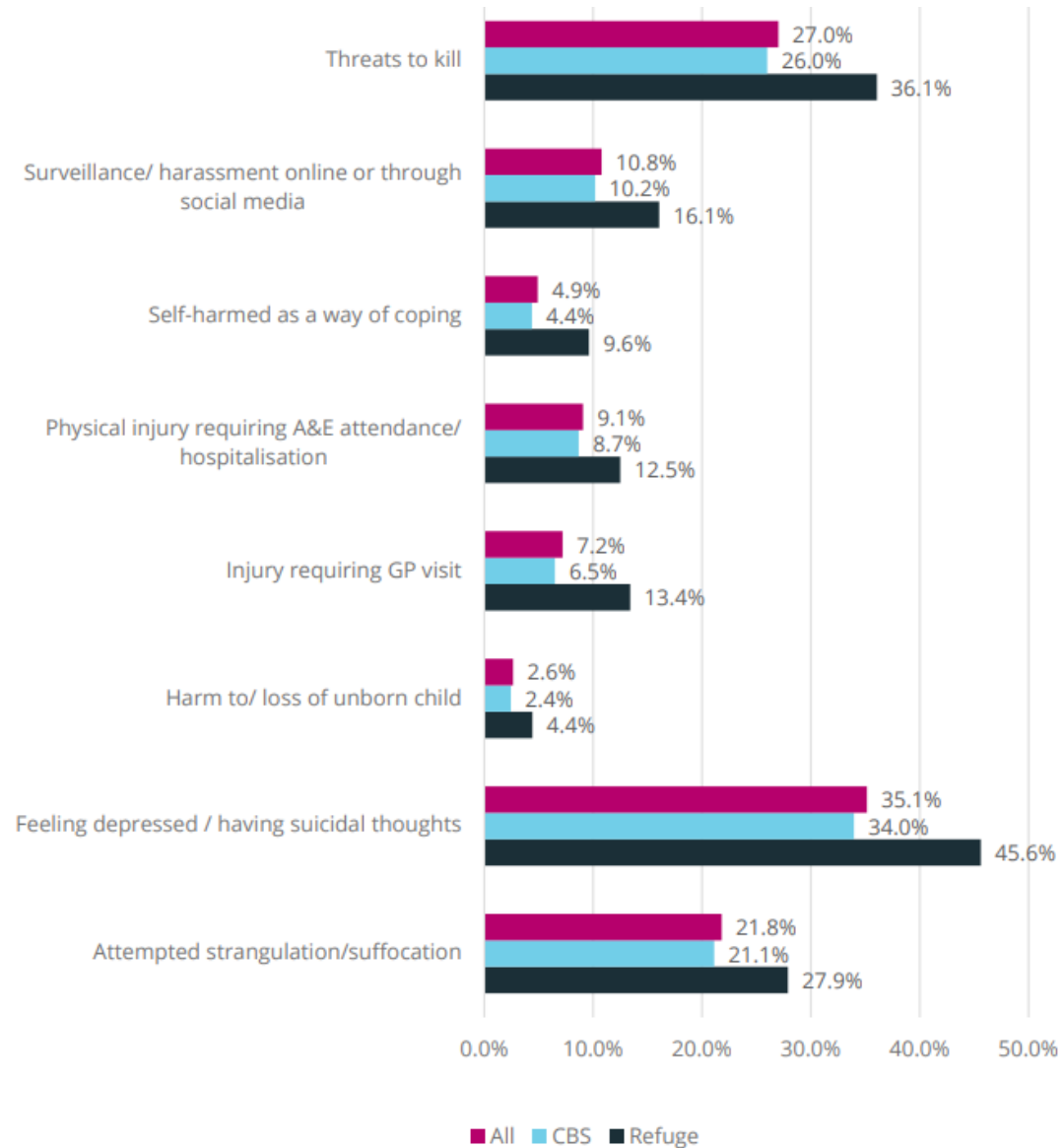
Women's Aid is the national charity for women and children working to end domestic abuse in England.

We help women and children escape abuse, and to recover. Our support services, which include our Live Chat Helpline, help thousands of women and children every year.

Our National Training Centre delivers expert training, qualifications and consultancy to a range of agencies and professionals working with survivors.

We use our national datasets and ground-breaking research to campaign for changes in policy and law that protect women and child survivors.

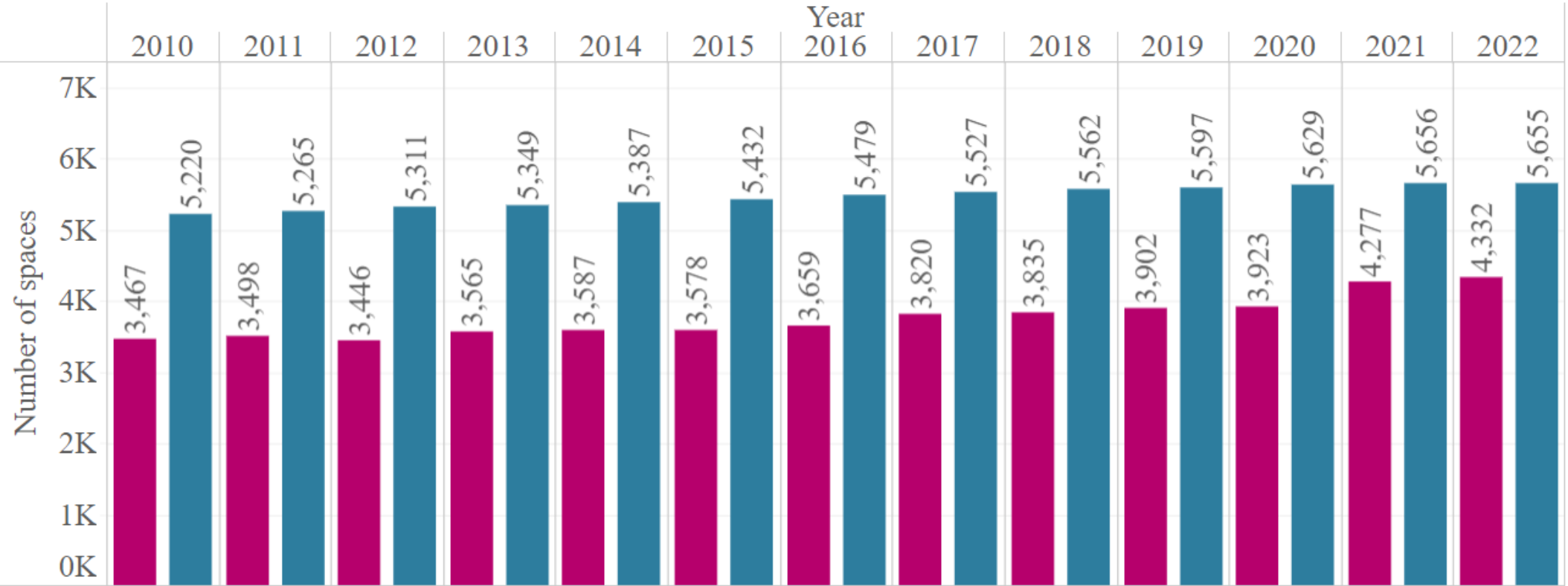
Who is experiencing domestic abuse?



Gaps in provision

Actual refuge spaces #
Min spaces recommended

Region
(All)



The No Woman Turned Away Project

184 women were supported by the **No Woman Turned Away** project this year



34.9% of the women who were supported were **Black and minoritised women**, reflecting the **structural inequalities** that they face when escaping domestic abuse.



What happened while waiting for a refuge space?



60 experienced **further abuse** from the perpetrator

24 experienced abuse from (an) **additional** perpetrator(s)



6 women **slept rough**



10 were **physically injured** as a result of an **attack** by the perpetrator(s)

Melia's story

MELIA'S STORY



Melia, who is a recent amputee and wheelchair user, fled her perpetrator after a long period of severe abuse.

She was placed in temporary hotel accommodation by a local housing authority in another area. Unfortunately the hotel closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and Melia was offered different temporary accommodation.



Multi-agency approach at local level



Local commissioning for quality services

"I'd seen someone who went to a service that [does] provide domestic violence support but they provide lots of different services as well - and she said that she just couldn't connect with the service'

But when she came to us she said 'Oh, this is what I needed'.

Women's Aid member service

Quality and specialism

“All support provided under the duties must be provided to victims of domestic abuse, including children, who reside in relevant safe accommodation And as such support should meet the DLUHC Quality Standards (See Annex B), Women’s Aid National Quality Standards, Imkaan Accredited Quality Standards, Male Domestic Abuse Network Service Standards and / or DAHA Accreditation Framework for Housing Providers.”

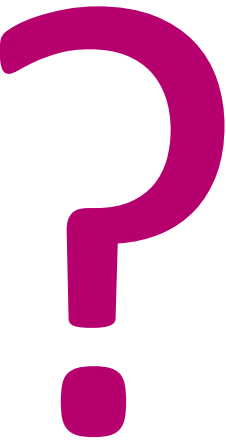
Section A3.7, DLUHC Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities in England



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Questions for commissioners

- How have the commissioning process informed by an understanding of **local need and existing provision**?
- Which **specialists are you consulting** during the commissioning process?
- What do **survivors, including those from minoritised groups, say** about how best to meet their needs?
- Are you allocating **specific provision for Black and minoritised women and girls**?
- How will you ensure a **level playing field** for specialist providers?
- What are the objectives for the service provision and how does the **commissioning process** used (competitive tendering, grant-making, other) support this?
- Is the **time-frame** for the process sufficient to ensure smaller specialist providers can participate?
- What support are you providing for the development of partnerships, alliances or consortia?
- What is your **price – v – quality ratio**?
- How are you embedding **quality standards** into the commissioning framework?
- What evidenced **track record** do organisations bidding for the contract have of meeting the specific support needs of survivors in your local area, including minoritised groups?
- Is the **primary purpose** of the bidding organisation to address domestic abuse/violence against women and girls?



Public opinion

VAWG is a top three election priority for 14% of people, rising to 33% amongst young women (16-24) for whom only health is a higher priority

Only 1 in 5 women who experience partner abuse report the abuse to the police

The economic and social costs of domestic abuse in England in 2022 were just under £78 billion

Priorities for government

- **Support for specialist domestic abuse services** given current economic pressures
- **Part 4 of the new Domestic Abuse Act** – urgent oversight of the statutory duty for accommodation based services
 - **Sustainable funding for community based services** in the Victims Bill
- A strategic response from health, including the 10 Year Mental Health Plan

Save Our Services #SOS campaign

- Women's Aid have launched a new campaign ahead of the May 2023 local election-
#SaveourServices



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Invest to save

For every £1 invested in domestic abuse support services we will see a saving to the public purse of at least £9.

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Evidence, guides and toolkits

- Women's Aid, [Funding Specialist Support for Domestic Abuse Survivors](#)
- Women's Aid, [Fragile funding landscape: the extent of local authority commissioning in the domestic abuse refuge sector in England 2020](#)
- Imkaan and Women's Aid, [Successful Commissioning: a guide for commissioning services that support women and children survivors of violence](#)
- Home Office, [Violence Against Women and Girls Services: supporting local commissioning](#)
- Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance, [Whole Housing Approach Toolkit](#)

Thank You!

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