

Wales Safer Communities Network response to: Welsh Government- Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance

Closed 14 September 2021

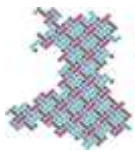
Questions:

- 1. Are you responding as an individual or as an individual on behalf of, or as part of, an organisation?**
An individual as part of an organisation
- 2. If you are responding on behalf of or as part of an organisation, what is the type of organisation?**
Other
- 3. What is the name of the organisation?**
Wales Safer Communities Network, hosted by Welsh Local Government Association.
- 4. From the list below, where are you or your organisation based?**
Wales
- 5. Do you have any comments on Chapter 1 ('Objectives') in terms of content or clarity?**
No comments
- 6. Do you have any comments on Chapter 2 ('Understanding Domestic Abuse') in terms of content or clarity?**
Child – to – Parent Abuse; whilst it identifies parents, and those with parental responsibility, siblings or extended family. We think there should be specific mention for Special Guardianships and Child Arrangement Orders, as additional support may be needed to assist the dependent following the reason for the arrangements.

We understand the reasoning for why there is no data for victims over the age of 74, however we believe that the Crime Survey of England and Wales needs to be updated to capture information on victims and perpetrators who are aged 75 and over.

Whilst the chapter is very detailed on a number of issues, there is no mention of domestic abuse in response to sporting fixtures. Especially where evidence shows that a team (especially national) losing can increase incidences of domestic abuse.

- 7. Do you have any comments on Chapter 3 ('Impact on Victims') in terms of content or clarity?**
We are pleased to see a focus on children as victims. However, there is very little detail on the support that should and will be provided for them. There is nothing around the impact where there has been a homicide (specialist



bereavement support) or the additional support that may be required when they are placed under Special Guardianships and Child Arrangement Orders.

8. Do you have any comments on Chapter 4 ('Agency Response to Domestic Abuse') in terms of content or clarity?

There is limited mention of the Welsh context in this section. It needs to be clearer when it is referring to England only or where it applies to England and Wales. For example, in the Safeguarding information there is no mention of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2015.

We are pleased to see a focus on children as victims. However, there is very little detail on the support that should and will be provided for them. There is nothing around the impact where there has been a homicide (specialist bereavement support) or the additional support that may be required when they are placed under Special Guardianships and Child Arrangement Orders.

There is a lack of discussion nor mention of target hardening of properties to enable victims and their families to stay in their own homes. If we are genuine about enabling and empowering people to remain in their homes then ensuring advice, support and services to make the homes as safe as possible needs to be part of the support package.

9. Do you have any comments on Chapter 5 ('Working Together to Tackle Domestic Abuse') in terms of content or clarity?

We are keen to see Community Safety Partnerships identified as a key mechanism for tackling Domestic Abuse. A failure to do so, may mean that some opportunities for identifying victims or for partnership solutions may be missed. We are in support of the multi-agency approaches that are referred to in the chapter and the close working with safeguarding teams.

Whilst mentioning Domestic Homicide Reviews we think it may also be worth referencing the Single Unified Safeguarding Review process which is being developed in Wales, and potential links with the pilot Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews, where a prior relationship may come to light during the review process.

10. Do you have any comments on Chapter 6 ('Commissioning Response to Domestic Abuse') in terms of content or clarity?

There needs to be clearer separation between what is required in England and what is England and Wales. Many of the items that are England only are already in place in Wales through existing legislation.

11. Are there any overarching ways you think the guidance could be improved? Please provide comments.

There needs to be clearer separation between what is required in England and what is England and Wales. Many of the items that are England only are already in place in Wales through existing legislation. This could be done by adding a paragraph in regards to Wales within each of the different chapters.



12. Do you think the case studies are helpful? If there are any case studies which you did not find helpful, please provide additional comments ensuring you refer to the case study to which your comment relates.

No comments

13. Is there anything missing in the guidance that you would like to see included?

We think there needs to be a stronger reference to devolved areas, such as education, and the changes already being planned. For example the new curriculum with a focus on healthy relationships.

Healthy relationship education as part of early prevention and identification seemed to be missing from the framework. If potential victims can identify unhealthy relationship behaviours early on then help earlier should be possible.

Introduction to the Wales Safer Communities Network

The Wales Safer Communities Network was established in January 2021 following the recommendations of the Welsh Government's Working Together for Safer Communities Review. The Network aims to become the strategic voice for community safety in Wales, working collaboratively to champion and support community safety partnership working, and influence the shaping and development of national policy and local practice. This response is on behalf of the Network and not WLGA.

Consultation response sent to:

DomesticAbuseConsultation@homeoffice.gov.uk