

# The Wish Centre Behaviour Change Programme Newsletter – Issue 19

*Welcome to the latest installment of the WCBCN. This is an opportunity for us to share with you, the referrers, information relating to our perpetrator work monthly – namely the Gateway to Change workshop and the Make the Change programme. This will allow us to share case studies with you, not only on how the programme works, but how important your referrals are to making a difference in the lives of those affected by DA/DV by enabling them the chance to make changes to their behaviours and, ultimately, their lives and the lives of those affected.*

## Important Updates for September 2024

- We have a new team manager overseeing the behaviour change team! We are delighted to welcome Rebecca Jones to the team. She can be reached on [Rebecca.j.jones@thewishcentre.org](mailto:Rebecca.j.jones@thewishcentre.org)
- The Primary aggressor training can now be booked. It is an in-person training session. The session runs from 9.30am - 2.30pm. Please feel free to book on to the venue nearest to you by dropping me an email at [Andrew.mcauliffe@thewishcentre.org](mailto:Andrew.mcauliffe@thewishcentre.org)

Central	Tuesday 26th November	Moor Nook Family Hub, Ribbleson, PR2 6HN
East	Friday 29th November	Eanam Business Development Centre, Eanam Old Road, Blackburn, BB1 5NL
North	Friday 6th December	Poulton Children's Centre, The Old Fire Station, Clark Street, Morecambe, LA4 5HR

## INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING REFERRALS

We understand that time is precious when supporting people in the work we all do. In order to save you waiting time with referrals, there are a few key bits of information you may need to know.

- *There is a distinction between Make the Change and Gateway to Change. Gateway is a 2-session awareness raising workshop and comes with no report on completion. Make the Change is the full perpetrator programme which runs between 16-22 weeks (depending on the outcome of the assessment) which comes with a court accepted report upon completion.*
- *Make the Change and Gateway to Change are not anger management courses. They are for behaviour change in relation to DA and DV.*
- *We can only look at referrals relating to DA/DV towards an intimate spouse or ex/current partner.*
- *It is vitally important to complete the referral forms in as much detail as possible, providing relevant contact details where applicable. This saves time when processing the forms and enables the facilitator to have as clear a picture before going into any assessment.*
- *If open/known to Family Court/CAFCASS additional information/documentation will be requested.*
- *Men must acknowledge that their behaviour is or could be classed as abusive and want to change this.*
- *It's important to know that a referral does not guarantee a place. Acceptance on GTC and MTC is subject to assessment.*

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## Domestic Abuse in the Media

**The Independent to start building refuge after anonymous £25,000 donation boosts “Brick by Brick” campaign.**



The Independent has partnered with Refuge to launch the "Brick by Brick" campaign, aiming to raise £300,000 to build a secure safe house for survivors of domestic abuse. The initiative addresses the national shortage of refuge spaces, which forces many women to face homelessness or return to abusive situations. The campaign is supported by high-profile figures like Dame Helen Mirren and Olivia Colman. Donations will help create a safe space for women and children, providing them with much-needed security and a chance to rebuild their lives. As of today, £72,000 has been raised and work is to begin on the building of the refuge.

To follow The Independent's campaign, click [here](#)

## Domestic Abuse in the Media

**Artwork to show the 'deep impact' of domestic abuse.**



Sharon Livermore MBE, from Domestic Abuse Education, has collaborated with Anglia Ruskin University on “Breaking the Silence: Art Against Abuse”, an exhibition showcasing the profound effects of domestic violence. The exhibit, featuring poetry, paintings, prints, and digital art, highlights the issue through powerful works, including Holly Ringrose's unfinished portraits of women who lost their lives to gender-based violence. The exhibition, held at ARU's Cambridge campus, includes trigger warnings and emphasises the need for action.





*"It showcases the deep impact domestic abuse has on people's lives and that we need to do something about it,"* Ms Livermore said.

She said counsellors, wellbeing teams and experts will be on hand, including police, Women's Aid, council, Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre, the Kite Trust which supports LGBTQ+ young people and the Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

*"There's a fine line between educating people, raising awareness and shocking, but we need the balance. I'm a survivor, if we hide away from the true facts of the impact that domestic abuse has on people's lives, then we're not giving the right message. The longer we sugar coat it, the harder it will be to raise awareness and make a positive change,"* she added.

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### School honoured for efforts in domestic abuse education.



A primary school has been recognized for its efforts in addressing domestic abuse and educating children about healthy relationships. Oaktree Nursery and Primary School in Park South, Swindon, has received an award for completing the Hope programme offered by the Swindon Domestic Abuse Support Service (SDASS).

In addition to providing age-appropriate lessons on relationships, the programme includes staff training on domestic abuse and features dedicated workers who facilitate drop-in sessions for local families at the school. Deputy headteacher, Kate Howard, said: *"We're really proud of what we've achieved as a school through the Hope programme and the very special work that SDASS do."*

She added that through taking part in the programme staff at the school have increased their knowledge and awareness of domestic abuse and the impact that it can have on children.

Emma MacLennan, the children and young people manager for SDASS, stated, *"Education is crucial in ensuring that the next generation can lead lives free from domestic abuse."*

## Domestic Abuse Around the World

### Domestic violence in Israel: One-in-10 suffers from intimate partner violence – study



A recent study reveals that one in ten Israelis experiences intimate partner violence (IPV), a type of domestic violence. Conducted by the interministerial committee on domestic violence, the Welfare and Social Affairs Ministry, and the Red Lines initiative, the research aimed to assess IPV trends and develop prevention and treatment strategies. The findings indicate that 5.3% of women—approximately 142,000—experienced physical violence from a partner in the past year.

*"The study shows that IPV is a widespread phenomenon that we see in one out of ten couples in Israel. There is no doubt that the way to reduce the occurrences is by widespread and methodical prevention [efforts],"* said Yasmin Rubin Cooper, the head of the Red Lines initiative.



## **Domestic Abuse and Lingchi**

**Lingchi**, or "death by a thousand cuts", was a particularly brutal form of execution practised in Asia in ancient times: the condemned person was tied to a post and body parts were slowly sliced off one by one. The Indian-born photographer Sujata Setia uses this barbaric practice in her series A Thousand Cuts as a potent metaphor for a different kind of brutality – **domestic abuse**.

In collaboration with the charity Shewise, Setia spent two years photographing survivors of abuse among the UK's south Asian community.

Using saanjhi, the Indian art of paper-cutting, she makes vivid red cuts in her portraits to express her subjects' anguish: "I wanted to show how the scars are not only external but internal," she says. Having grown up witnessing domestic violence, Setia initially resisted turning the camera on herself. "But there came a point where I realised, I had to own my own scars."

Taking her own portrait and placing it alongside the others in the series has been "absolutely the most healing process," she says.



## **Let's Talk About...**

### **Rehabilitation of perpetrators.**



The British justice system faces the challenging task of addressing domestic abuse crimes in a way that both protects victims and deters future abuse. Traditionally, responses to domestic abuse have focused on retribution—punishing perpetrators through prison sentences or restraining orders. While necessary in many cases, there is growing evidence that rehabilitation offers a more effective, long-term solution to reducing domestic abuse and breaking the cycle of violence.

#### **Understanding the Complexity of Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse is often rooted in complex psychological, social, and behavioural factors. Many perpetrators of domestic violence exhibit patterns of learned behaviour, mental health issues, or substance abuse problems, which contribute to abusive tendencies. Retribution-based approaches, such as imprisonment, may provide short-term relief and protect victims, but they often fail to address the root causes of the abuse. Without rehabilitation, many offenders return to old patterns of behaviour after serving their sentences.





In the UK, prison sentences for domestic abuse offenses typically result in offenders being released back into the community, often with little to no behavioural change. This creates a high risk of reoffending, particularly in cases where underlying issues like anger management, trauma, or substance abuse have not been adequately addressed.

#### **Reducing Reoffending Through Rehabilitation**

Rehabilitation can play a critical role in breaking the cycle of domestic abuse by addressing these underlying issues. Specialised intervention programmes, such as those offered by the "Domestic Abuse

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Perpetrator Programme” (DAPP) in the UK, aim to change the behaviour of offenders by helping them understand the impact of their actions and learn healthier ways to manage their emotions and relationships. These programmes focus on developing empathy for victims, improving communication skills, and teaching coping mechanisms for stress and conflict.

Studies have shown that rehabilitation programs tailored specifically for domestic abuse offenders can significantly reduce reoffending rates. According to the “Respect Phased Evaluation Project”, participation in perpetrator intervention programmes in the UK led to a marked decrease in violent incidents, with 80% of female partners of participants reporting a reduction in physical violence.

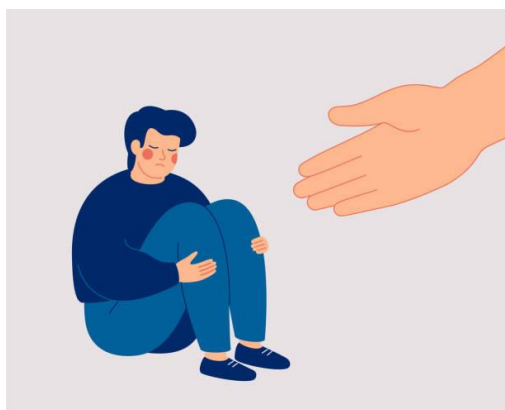
Unlike retributive justice, which often results in offenders returning to their abusive behaviour after release, rehabilitation aims to create lasting behavioural change. This not only protects current victims but also reduces the likelihood of future victims being harmed.

## **Victim Safety and Support**

One of the key arguments in favour of rehabilitation in domestic abuse cases is the long-term safety of victims. While imprisonment may offer immediate protection, it is often a temporary solution. If the offender is not rehabilitated, the risk of further abuse remains high upon their release. In contrast, rehabilitation programs offer a more sustainable solution by addressing the underlying factors that lead to abuse, helping to prevent future incidents.

In addition to focusing on offenders, some rehabilitation programs work alongside support services for victims. These services, which often include counselling, legal advice, and safe housing, help survivors of domestic abuse recover and rebuild their lives. The combination of offender rehabilitation and victim support is crucial for breaking the cycle of abuse and fostering healthier family dynamics.

Moreover, rehabilitative approaches that involve restorative justice, where offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and understand the harm they’ve caused, can empower victims. Restorative justice, practiced carefully in cases of domestic abuse, can lead to emotional closure for survivors and may help prevent further harm.







## **The Economic Argument for Rehabilitation**

Domestic abuse places a significant financial burden on the UK’s public services, including healthcare, social services, and the criminal justice system. According to a 2019 report by the Home Office, domestic

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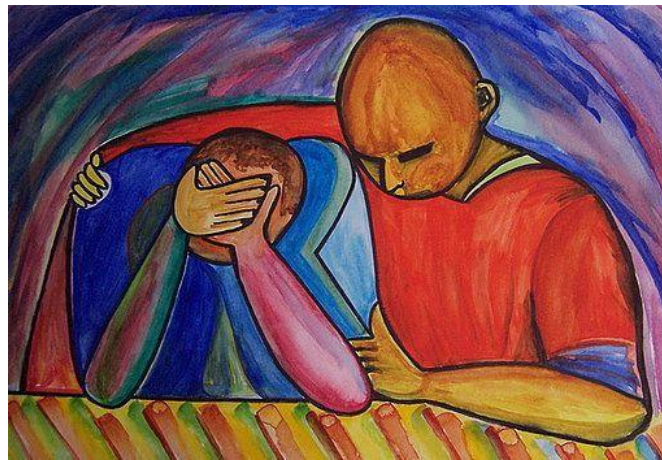
abuse costs the UK economy approximately £66 billion each year, with much of this cost stemming from the impact on health and wellbeing, lost productivity, and the criminal justice system.

Punitive measures alone, such as incarceration, do little to reduce these long-term costs, as they often fail to prevent reoffending. Rehabilitation, however, offers a more cost-effective solution. By reducing the likelihood of repeat offenses, rehabilitation programmes help decrease the demand on police, courts, and prisons. Furthermore, successful rehabilitation allows offenders to return to the workforce and contribute to the economy, while victims who feel safe and supported are better able to rebuild their lives.

## **Rehabilitation in the UK: Examples of Success**

Several UK-based programs have demonstrated the effectiveness of rehabilitation in domestic abuse cases. The “Building Better Relationships (BBR)” programme, run by the HM Prison and Probation Service, is one such initiative. It targets male domestic abuse offenders and aims to reduce the risk of reoffending by helping participants develop better relationship skills, manage anger, and recognise harmful behaviours. Early evaluations of BBR have shown promising results, with many participants reporting changes in their attitudes and behaviours toward women and relationships.

Similarly, “Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP)” works with perpetrators of domestic abuse to help them recognise and take responsibility for their actions. DVIP focuses on promoting accountability, teaching non-violent relationship skills, and creating safer environments for families. Participants in these types of programmes are more likely to avoid reoffending, leading to better long-term outcomes for both the offenders and their victims.







## **Human Rights and the Moral Argument for Rehabilitation**

Domestic abuse cases are deeply emotional and can leave victims and society calling for harsh punishments. However, the broader moral and human rights perspective must also consider the potential for rehabilitation. In a justice system that values both accountability and the possibility of redemption, rehabilitation offers a pathway for offenders to change and make amends for their actions.

While punishment is often necessary, particularly to protect victims in the immediate aftermath of abuse, rehabilitation recognises that people are capable of change. Programmes that focus on educating offenders and addressing psychological factors like trauma or learned behaviour acknowledge the humanity of the individual, promoting long-term change rather than merely focusing on punishment. This

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aligns with the UK's commitment to human rights and the recognition that all individuals deserve the chance for reform.

In the context of domestic abuse, rehabilitation is a more effective, sustainable, and humane approach than retribution alone. While punishment plays a vital role in ensuring justice and protecting victims, rehabilitation addresses the root causes of abuse, reduces reoffending, and promotes long-term public safety. By investing in programs that focus on changing offenders' behaviour and supporting victims, the UK can better tackle the ongoing issue of domestic abuse and build a justice system that not only punishes but also heals.

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**Featured Article**

**'I'm a gay man who was a victim of domestic abuse – it doesn't only happen to women'**

**By James Barr**



I first met Scott\* in a nightclub. I had been in an on-off relationship with another guy who wasn't really committing. I broke up with him and then, within a month, bumped into Scott. I felt like he was able to be vulnerable with me in a way that my ex hadn't; we had lovely, deep chats. And he was hot, so yeah, that helped! We spent a lot of time together.

We looked after each other; he bought me thoughtful gifts. We spent our first Christmas together and it was like: "Oh, so this is what love is!" Love is this thing that gay people often really aspire towards. To finally have that opportunity to do what straight people do and have a monogamous relationship where we were a team was amazing. I felt really lucky.





I believed at the beginning that I had found someone who was a soulmate; someone sweet and kind; someone I was going to marry. I genuinely didn't notice any red flags. And that's because – and this is an important part of abuse – people can be completely normal until they're close to you.

It started off small. We'd play Mario Kart a lot, but he didn't like losing. If I beat him, then he would literally beat me. Or if he lost a card game, he would punch me, and it would hurt. I didn't find it funny, and I'd call it out. He'd say, "It's just a joke, it's nothing." At this stage it wasn't excessive enough for me to recognise it as real violence but looking back now I can see that it was, and that it was a precursor to a more serious threat.

Then it escalated into other things. He would get angry if he had burnt something when we were cooking, or if I accidentally dropped a potato in the sink – small things like that would

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become a trigger for a violent reaction. He would push me or punch me. There was an occasion where he put his hands around my throat. I'm honestly not sure why.

He would say he was more upset than I was about these incidents – that he was sorry, and he didn't want to do it. He would position himself as the victim, albeit of his own actions. But he wouldn't do anything to address his anger, and then, of course, it would happen again.

We'd get into arguments about other things – politics or people in my life that he didn't like – and sometimes that would get physical too. There was an occasion where he pushed me when we were at the top of the stairs. At that point I realised he could accidentally kill me, or really hurt me. I started becoming scared all the time. I didn't enjoy being near him; I felt constantly unsafe.

It was a long period of unexpected but expected physical violence, on and off. It was rotting away at me, making me feel less and less confident, less and less myself. But I had that feeling you get when you're on an aeroplane in turbulence and you think, well, I could die this time – but actually, it might be fine, and I'll land in Florida. I was really hoping we'd somehow land in Florida.

I told two people in my life about what was going on, but completely minimised it. I just said, "He gets angry sometimes." One of them understood though, because she'd been in something similar. She told me it was not OK; she kept pushing me, asking whether he'd got a therapist yet, telling me I needed to leave him if it didn't happen within a month. She gave me very clear instructions, and I think that did help me eventually find a way out. I'm lucky that she saw through me.

One day, I was at a Botox appointment. The woman was coming towards me with a needle, and I had a massive panic attack, crying and out of control. I felt really unsafe suddenly. She asked if I was OK and I said, "No, I think I have to leave my boyfriend." And then she shared a story about her ex-husband – how she'd had to escape him to protect her and her daughter because he was violent. Her story saved me because she saw what was going on somehow, in a way that I guess only survivors can see it.





Very quickly from there, my wall that I had built to protect our relationship came tumbling down. I finally really saw everything and realised what was happening. Within a week, I told him I couldn't live like this. I left.

It was incredibly emotionally difficult to walk away, not least because it meant fully admitting what was happening to me. But at the same time, I couldn't understand why I hadn't been able to leave earlier. And this is the cycle that traps many people in domestic violence situations. I'm eternally thankful that I found the strength to leave when I did.

It was hard for me to recognise what had been happening to me, because I'd always heard about domestic abuse being a man hurting a woman. I'd never heard anybody talk about it being a woman hurting a man, or a man hurting a man, or a woman hurting a woman. I'd never

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seen it or heard of it in queer spaces. I always thought, my entire life, I was going to get gay-bashed on the street. It was completely in my blind spot to think that I could get gay-bashed in my own home. Because why would that happen with a boyfriend?

As queer people, we all have quite a lot of trauma; there is still a lot of homophobia in the world and almost every queer person encounters it regularly. So, you understand why people have issues, because you have issues too, and that answers why you stay with someone like Scott – you think, “Well, they’re a victim of their past.” But you can quickly become a victim of their present.





Sometimes I still feel pretty sad about it, because I think, if only he had been brave enough to deal with his unresolved historic trauma, we wouldn’t be here. He wouldn’t have hurt me. We could have had a really good relationship. But he didn’t want to face that. And I don’t want to live my life focusing on the “what ifs”.

I don’t think there is accountability for a lot of abuse in the world, because so many people that experience it are silenced. It’s a huge, huge number of people who suffer this kind of thing, and we’re all just expected to be quiet about it. I think it’s important for people who’ve experienced abuse to say, “Me too” – because then, hopefully, it will happen less.

Someone sharing their story helped me to leave my abusive ex. Hopefully me sharing my story might help others recognise the situation they’re in and take steps to do the same. And just maybe, someone perpetrating this kind of abuse may read this, recognise this behaviour in themselves, and take it as a sign that they need to change.

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## **End of Programme Participation Feedback – SH**



**MAKE THE CHANGE**

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**What has been the main thing you have learnt from attending the Make the Change programme?**

About the effects on all parties in the circle of abuse. It affects people differently, you might not think that it's done any damage what you've said or done but it could down the line impact your partner or children, such as partner in future or kids going up, which is a big thing.

**Looking back, do you recognise your role in perpetrating abuse in relationships and do you accept responsibility for it?**

Yeah, I do. I shouldn't have done it, I should have walked away and let things cool down. She said some things that I don't agree with that got me angry, but I should have reacted in a different way – went about it in a different way rather than treating her like crap.

**Do you feel you have a better understanding and control of your own feelings?**

Yeah – I don't overthink as much as I did before. I did overthink too much. I was putting all my time into a partner and ignoring other things – was obsessive behaviour. This programme will help me to control that in future relationships, rather than obsess over one person, wait for it to happen, don't chase it.

**Do you feel you have a better understanding of other people's feelings and perspectives?**

Yes, I can't understand what they're feeling but can see their reactions and expressions, on their face etc. Feel like I can better put myself in someone else's shoes. The videos that we watched showed the effects that other people were experiencing, it was upsetting.



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### **What do you hope to achieve in future relationships?**

Want to be the best I can, for partner and for kids, providing for their basic needs, give them what they need. Want to be happy and stable relationship with no problems. If there is a problem, I don't want to overact, compromise, use time out and do what we need to do.

### **What part are you going to play in having a non-abusive relationship in the future?**

Not going to react to stuff I've overreacted to in the past, leave it and walk away. Accept things for what it is and walk away. Deal with it at a later time they're when ready to talk about what's happened. Compromise and think from her view – what is fair, not just think about myself.

### **How do you feel about the victim now you have completed the programme?**

Nothing – not together.

### **Can you identify any of your belief systems that have been challenged on the programme?**

No – don't think so.

### **What was difficult for you on the programme?**

When discussed the past (kidnapping offence) it's shit to talk about because it is something that I did a long time ago and bringing it up again – don't walk to talk about it again – seeing self in bad light. Pisses me off, it's something that I shouldn't have done. It is a chapter in my life that I would like to forget. Comes from a place of shame and embarrassment.

### **What did you find less helpful? Less relevant?**





The physical abuse stuff – don't punch and stuff ever, other behaviours I have done. The sexual abuse work less helpful/relevant as never done that but it is all part of the programme.

### **Future recommendations for the programme e.g. content, resources etc.**

Maybe some music video stuff – what's said in lyrics in songs. And in films. Abusive lyrics and messages in media.

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