

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls

Joint Meeting of the Community Safety
Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board

8th December 2022

Haringey Council VAWG team

Haringey
LONDON



Context

'Violence against women and girls' refers to acts of violence or abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls. Crimes and behaviour covered by this term include rape and other sexual offences, domestic abuse, stalking, harmful practices (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage) as well as many others, including offences committed online.

- Large percentage of VAWG is committed in private places, behind closed doors. This has wide ranging and long lasting impacts on the survivors and their families.
- Pandemic has shone a light on both existing problems of accessing services easily and quickly and strains on support services across the whole area of hidden harms.
- National statistics outline the scale of the issue:
 - 7.3% of women in England and Wales have experienced domestic abuse in the past 12 months.
 - 15.2% of all recorded crime in England and Wales and 35.5% of all recorded violence against the person crimes is domestic abuse-related.
 - 25% of women are affected by domestic violence in their lifetime, with estimates suggesting well over a million women suffer from domestic abuse each year.
 - Two women are killed every week in England and Wales by a current or former partner. These figures have remained constant over the past decade.
 - A recent report by UN Women UK found that 97% of women aged 18-24 have been sexually harassed, with 96% not reporting those situations because of their belief that it would not change anything. Women should feel confident about reporting, and that their report will be taken seriously by the police.
- Tragic murders of women across London such as Sarah Everard, Sabina Nessa, Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman have amplified national discussions about women's safety and the role that men and boys must play in addressing this issue.
- Everyone's Invited platform has enabled many young women and girls from schools and universities to anonymously share their experiences of misogyny, harassment, abuse and assault.

A Global Public Health Issue



Haringey
LONDON

VAWG is a global epidemic. World Health Organisation estimates 1 in 3 women will experience physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or sexual violence by a non partner.

VAWG describes violent and oppressive patterns of behaviour and practises, which achieve power and control over women and girls. It impacts on the physical safety, health and emotional well-being of individuals and impacts on families, carers, children and the community.

Violence damages physical and emotional health and can have long-lasting negative impacts across a wide range of health, social and economic outcomes. It increases individuals' risks of a broad range of health damaging behaviours including further violence and can reduce their life prospects in terms of education, employment and social and emotional wellbeing.

Violence is an outcome of interactions of a range of risk factors at the individual, relationship, community and the societal level. To successfully prevent VAWG in the future it is essential to tackle the root causes of violence, which includes challenging societal and cultural norms that can lead to violence.

Abuse can take place regardless of gender, class, income levels, ethnicity, faith, ability, sexuality or age although some people are at greater risk of some of the forms of violence including BAME women, disabled women, young women, LGBT women and men and older women.

There is a need to place greater emphasis on the wider determinants of health and address wider system issues such as parenting, poverty, unemployment, education, housing and homelessness.

Haringey Issues



- All forms of VAWG are underreported and many survivors do not come to the attention of services.
- VAWG crimes are very prevalent, complex, largely hidden and varied in nature.
- 780 reported incidences (to the police) of Domestic Violence with injury occurred from August 2020- July 2021. This is the 12th Highest in London.
- In 2021 there was an increase in Domestic Abuse call outs to the police in North Area (Enfield and Haringey).
 - Increase in level and severity of risk at the point of referral
- Over 640 women were supported through specialist domestic abuse services from April 2020 - March 2021.
- Tragic murders of women across London such as Sarah Everard, Sabina Nessa, Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman have amplified local discussions about women's safety and the collaborative working which will be required in addressing this issue.

Progress on the 4 key areas of VAWG Strategy

Developing a Coordinated Community Response

- 100+ VAWG Community Champions and 30 Safe Spaces e.g. schools, job centres, children's centres and libraries
- Community based work to dispel myths through a range of workshops
- Links with different organisations and forums including multifaith forum

Prevention

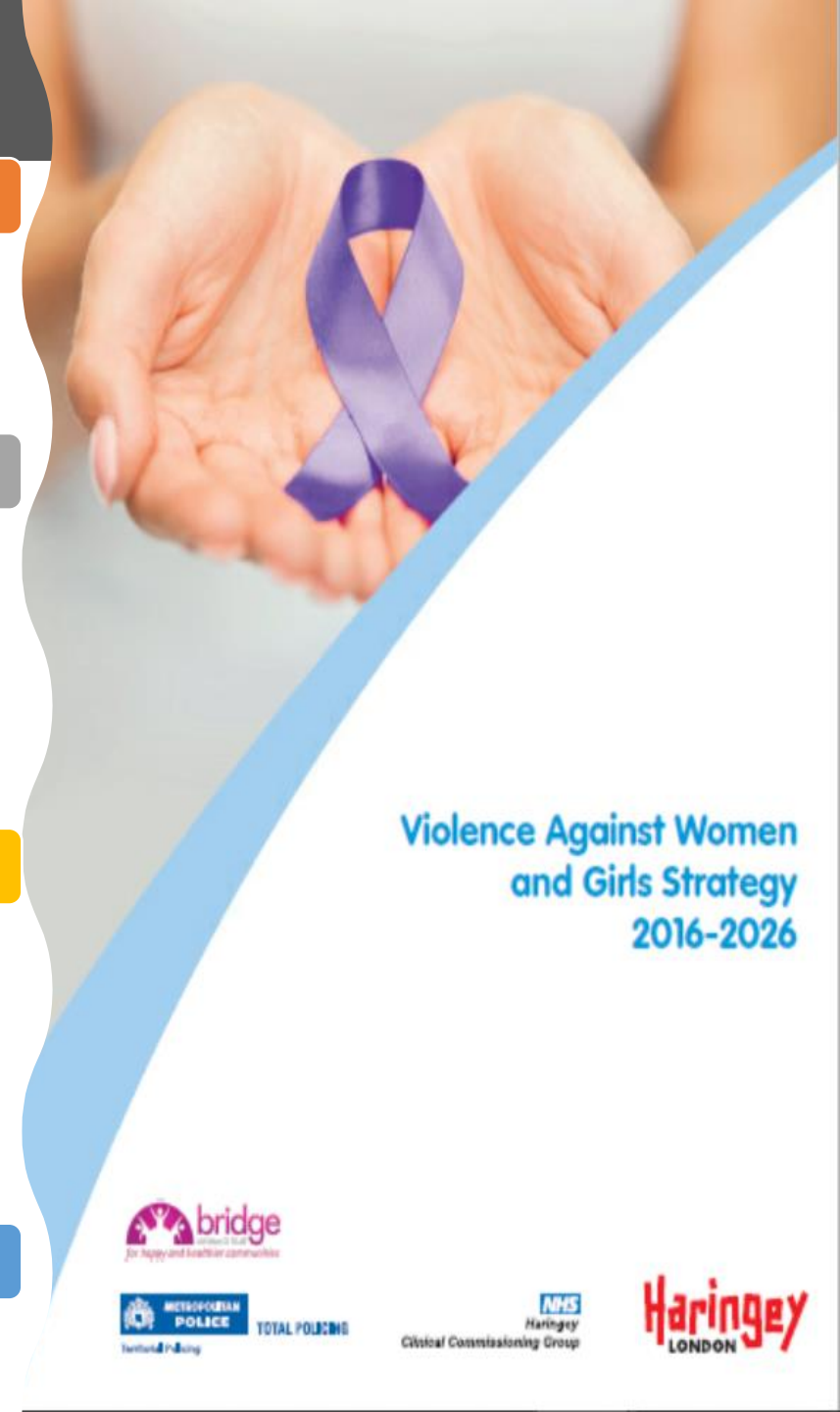
- Awareness raising campaigns including 16 days of action and international women's day
- 172 professionals and frontline workers/volunteers have been trained in how to identify and respond to domestic abuse in the context of COVID-19
- 110 young people have engaged in a VAWG educational programme
- Developing an approach for young people to make disclosures safely
- Co-production of videos for young people

Support for victim/survivors

- Developed a directory of VAWG services for professionals
- Commissioned services include:
 - Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service (IDVA)
 - IRIS support service for GP practice staff to support DA patients
 - Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to discuss all high risk cases

Holding perpetrators accountable

- Different models for perpetrator programmes are being explored to address behaviour and ultimately reduce further domestic abuse incidences

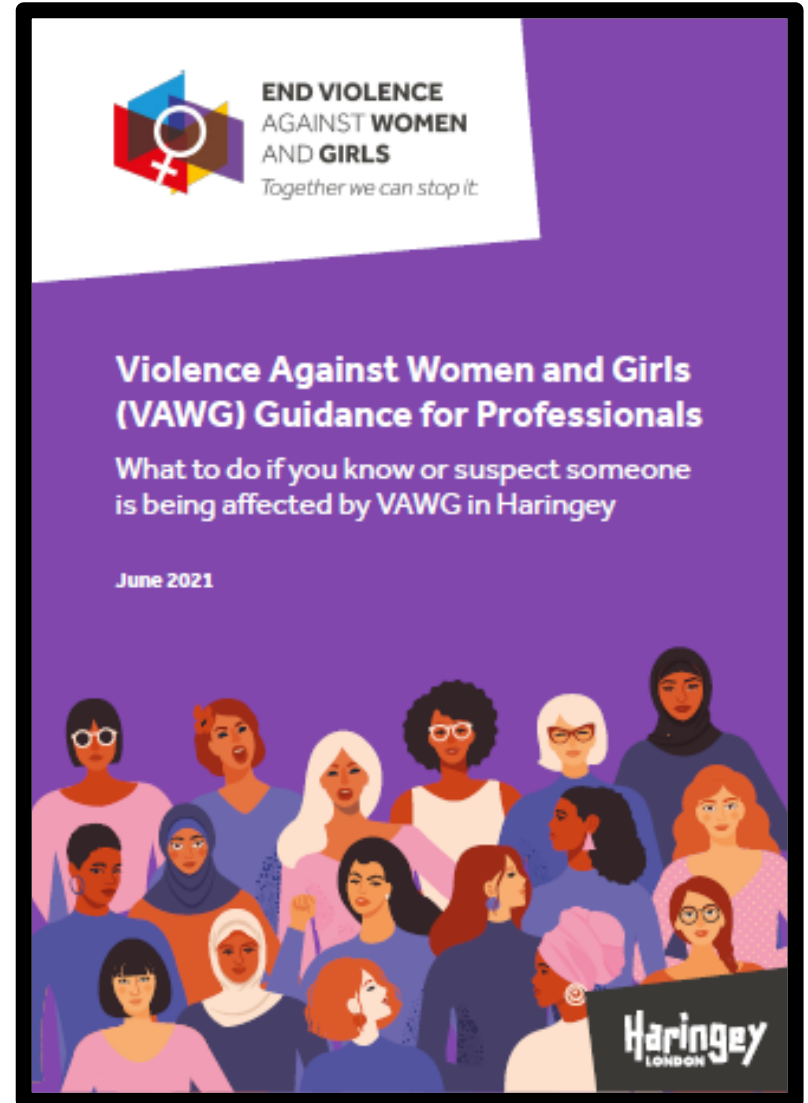


Violence Against Women
and Girls Strategy
2016-2026



How we are working with residents

- Consultation with BAME communities during the pandemic highlighted key barriers and issues such as the need for culturally tailored support. A new BAME Independent Domestic Violence Advocate was commissioned to provide specialised support to those from BAME communities.
- A new VAWG and COVID-19 webpage has been developed. (www.haringey.gov.uk/vawgcovid19)
- Regular newsletter with VAWG information and updates has been circulated to services and community partners
- We are continuing to help ensure victims and survivors are supported, including through funding specialist helplines and services. A revised referral pathway and directory of VAWG services has been produced to help professionals across a range of agencies to signpost residents to the most appropriate agency more efficiently.
- A Mental Health Domestic Violence Case Worker has been recruited to provide enhanced support for victims of domestic violence with mental health problems
- Round-table on women's safety was held with representatives from a diverse range of women's groups following a local women's safety survey which had high numbers of responses (see later slides in pack)



Developing the strategy with partners and residents going forward

Through our Haringey multi-agency VAWG strategic board we are engaging on the existing priorities in our VAWG strategy and how we work with residents and communities on strengthening our partnership response

Implementing VAWG strategy – broad areas proposed

Prevention:

- Identify opportunities to work with partners to address root causes of VAWG, reduce known risk factors and increase protective factors.
- Increase engagement and co production with victim survivors, communities, women and girls and men and boys.

Co-ordinated community response:

- Continue work with community groups and champions to provide safe spaces for disclosure and raise awareness about how to respond appropriately.

Support for victims/survivors:

- Recommission VAWG services including offer for schools, MARAC and IDVA services.

Holding perpetrators to account:

- Commission a new evidence informed service model for perpetrators to support behaviour change.

Key principles:

- Co-production – We will develop an approach to co-producing our work.
- Equalities – We need to ensure equality is always considered when addressing the diverse needs of women and girls
- Communication- We will clearly communicate what we are doing and promote VAWG services and support.
- Outcomes- We will measure our progress, impact and changes.
- Partnerships – We need action from all partners to have an effective response to VAWG.

Responding to national drivers which impact VAWG

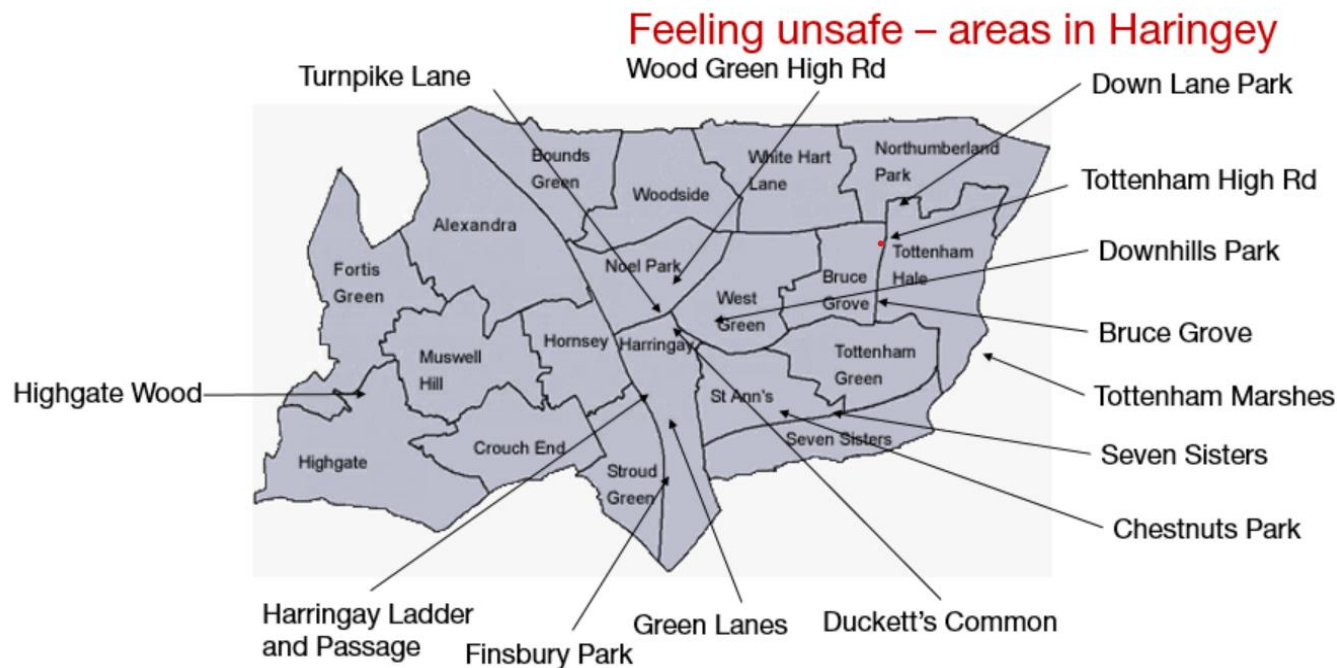
- Domestic Abuse Act (30 April 2021) bolsters the police and partnership response and strengthens protection for victims.
- Forthcoming Online Safety Bill and Policing and Crime Bill, and the recent Government's Beating Crime Plan have clear links to VAWG.
- Mayor's draft Police and Crime Plan which will go through public consultation imminently sets a strategic direction and aims to make "London a city in which women and girls are safer and feel safer".

Women's Safety At Night Survey

Survey carried out from 18th- 27th August 2021, to understand where and when women feel unsafe at night in Haringey and how we could make spaces feel safer. 1712 responses in total.

Summary of findings:

- Outdoor spaces were, by far, considered the most unsafe areas for women at night. Women also highlighted serious concerns around walking on the high street or along roads on their route home.
- Public transport-women identified safety concerns in travelling on the bus and tube as well as at stops or stations when waiting for them.
- Areas which are: poorly lit or have poor surveillance; quiet with low footfall or traffic; poorly designed or maintained; poorly policed or monitored by transport staff; and frequented by men who might behave inappropriately or criminally, including those with mental health or addiction problems.
- Safety black spots such as spaces in the Wood Green, Tottenham, Seven Sisters, Haringay and Highgate wards were highlighted as feeling particularly dangerous.
- Survey highlighted the particular vulnerability women from disabled or older age groups, as well as mothers, feel when out alone, in the daytime as well as at night.



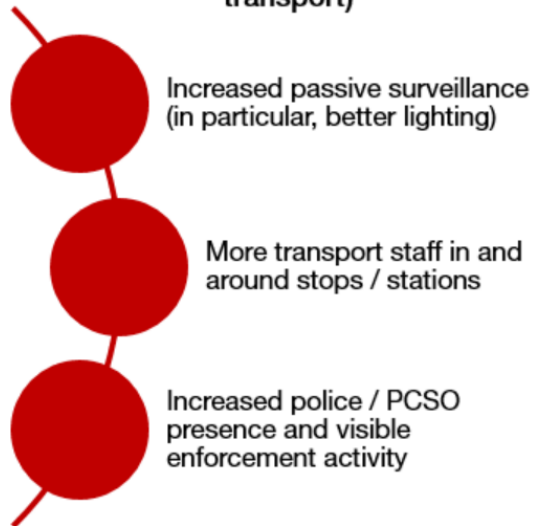
Which public spaces in Haringey at night may feel unsafe to you and when? Please be as specific as possible about: Particular locations; approximate times the place is/feels unsafe; reason why those spaces feels unsafe to you. If possible, please list things that have happened, or you are worried that may happen in those locations because they feel unsafe.

Potential Interventions

Responses centred around the following interventions:

Potential interventions

On streets and routes home (including transport)



Inside venues



E
D
U
C
A
T
I
O
N

Q.3. Would you be able to suggest specific interventions you feel would help in certain locations that you consider unsafe? Base: 1712

Making spaces feel safer:

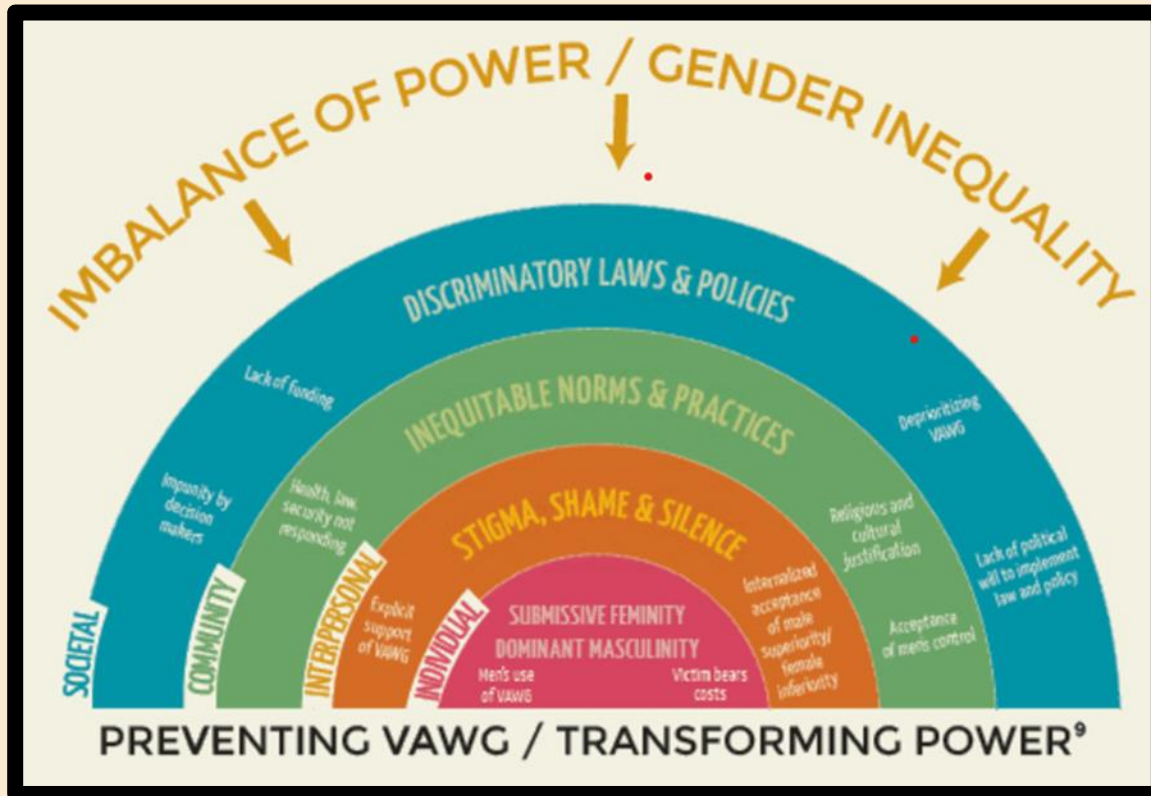
- Situational measures, such as lighting and CCTV, that would help women feel safer when out at night. Greater police and transport staff presence would make a difference, on the streets as well as at bus stops and tube stations.
- Training for staff in venues to spot the signs of harassment and intervene, alongside robust policies on expectations of patrons and enforcement measures for those who do not comply.
- Implementing covert processes in venues that could be used by women to raise the alarm with staff if they feel uncomfortable or are in trouble.
- Prevention through education, bringing about a cultural shift and a change in the behaviour and attitudes of men.

A Call To Action

- More needs to be done to prevent women and girls becoming victims, tackle perpetrators behaviour and improve education about consent, boundaries and impact change at a societal level.
- VAWG occurs due to gender inequality and other forms of discrimination such as race, class, caste, sexuality, ethnicity, HIV status or disability. All of this is enabled by unequal gender power relations and resulting norms that tolerate or even encourage violence.
- We must ensure that awareness is kept high and that all parts of society are encouraged to play their part in tackling VAWG, be it service providers, employers, schools, friends or neighbours.
- Beyond the work of public agencies in responding to abuse and supporting victims, societal change is urgently required to challenge the misogyny, prejudice, harassment and abuse that remains common.

Discussion points for board:

- ❖ What more can we do collectively to tackle VAWG in Haringey
- ❖ What part can your organisation play – we would like the joint CSP and HWBB to own this agenda?
- ❖ How do we involve women and girls?
- ❖ How do we involve men and boys?



Police Approach

Our ambition

- We want to bring more perpetrators of violence against women and girls to justice. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Crime, Fire and Rescue Services stresses that a "whole system" response is required to tackle VAWG offences and we will strengthen our links with partners to ensure the process is as effective as possible.
- We will work to reduce case attrition. The length of investigations, the impact of an investigation, particularly the intrusion of the examination of phones and other digital devices and media, as well as attending court can all affect victim and witness participation. We will work to address the concerns of victims, improving their experience, our service, investigations and outcomes.

Operation Hartsholme

- A dedicated team of 15 investigators. The team is composed of a 50/50 split of female and male officers.
- Commenced on November 2021 and exclusive to Enfield and Haringey.
- Focused on tackling exposure and sexual touching offences.
- Use of Stalking Protection Orders, Sexual Risk Order and Domestic Violence Protection Orders.
- Pro-active operations targeting sexual predators utilising 'drone deployments' in public spaces.

