

Article

Domestic abuse victim services, England and Wales: 2023

Information on services that are available to victims of domestic abuse in England and Wales.

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1 . Other pages in this release

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2 . Main points

- The National Domestic Abuse Helpline was contacted 171,490 times in the year ending March 2023; a decrease of 10.7% compared with the year ending March 2022.
- New data from Respect Men's Advice Line for the year ending March 2023 show they were contacted 39,417 times via calls, emails and webchats, while the Respect Phoneline for perpetrators of domestic abuse were contacted 8,955 times.
- Welsh Women's Aid's Live Fear Free Helpline received 22,785 calls, webchats, emails and texts where support was given in the year ending March 2023; over half (54.7%) of contactors who shared their identity were survivors of domestic abuse.
- The number of refuge bed spaces has increased in recent years in England to 4,385 in 2023, but remains 22.2% below the minimum number of bed spaces recommended by the Council of Europe; only London and the West Midlands exceeded the minimum recommended bed spaces.
- The number of clients accessing Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) services that use the SafeLives Insights tool decreased by 21.8% to 2,246 in the year ending March 2023, compared with 2,873 in the year ending March 2022.
- The number of cases discussed at multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) in England and Wales decreased by 2.3% to 111,418 in the year ending March 2023, compared with 114,067 in the year ending March 2022.

3 . Domestic abuse victim services data

[Domestic abuse victim services](#)

Dataset | Released 24 November 2023

Data from different organisations on the availability of domestic abuse services and the characteristics of service users.

4 . Glossary

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is not limited to physical violence and can include a range of abusive behaviours. It can also be experienced as repeated patterns of abusive behaviour to maintain power and control in a relationship. The [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#) defines domestic abuse as any incident or pattern of incidents between those aged 16 years and over who:

- are a partner
- are an ex-partner
- are a relative
- have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 outlines the following behaviours as abuse:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional, or other abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises children aged under 18 years who see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse as victims of domestic abuse if they are related or have a parental relationship to the adult victim or perpetrator of the abuse.

Helpline

A helpline is a telephone service that offers information, advice or support to callers about particular issues. A domestic abuse helpline offers these services to victims of domestic abuse and their families, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf. Local, community-based helplines are distinct from the 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline. Many survivors may speak to both services, as the national helpline provides referrals to services in their local area, alongside refuge referrals, emotional support, risk assessment and safety planning, and information on rights and options.

Independent domestic violence advisors

Independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs) are professionally qualified, specialist domestic abuse workers, who support high-risk victims of domestic abuse.

Multi-agency risk assessment conferences

A multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) is a meeting where information is shared on the highest-risk domestic abuse cases between representatives from a range of agencies. After sharing all relevant information about the circumstances for a particular victim, the representatives discuss options for increasing the victim's safety and turn these into a coordinated action plan.

Refuge service

A domestic abuse refuge service provides emergency temporary accommodation for victims of domestic abuse with a planned programme of therapeutic and practical support.

5 . Data sources and quality

This publication is part of our domestic abuse statistics release. It presents information on services that are available to victims of domestic abuse in England and Wales. For other commentary discussing domestic abuse in England and Wales, see our [Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview bulletin](#).

Data sources

To provide insight into how domestic abuse services respond to victims of domestic abuse, we have sourced data from a range of organisations. These data are sourced from non-governmental, administrative datasets and are not classified as official statistics.

The following services are included in this publication:

- [Karma Nirvana](#)
- [ManKind Initiative](#)
- [The National Domestic Abuse Helpline, run by Refuge](#)
- [Respect](#)
- [SafeLives](#)
- [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#)
- [Welsh Women's Aid](#)
- [Women's Aid Federation of England](#)

For further information about the data sources available from the victim services, see Section 7: Data sources and quality of our [Domestic abuse victim services, England and Wales: November 2020 article](#) and Section 6: Methods of our [Domestic abuse quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#).

Quality

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our [Domestic abuse QMI](#).

6 . Related links

[Domestic abuse QMI](#)

Methodology | Released 24 November 2023

Quality and Methodology Information for domestic abuse detailing the strengths and limitations of the data, methods used and data uses and users.

[How domestic abuse data are captured through the criminal justice system](#)

Article | Released 24 November 2023

Information on the stages of the criminal justice process in England and Wales, and how data are captured at each stage.

7 . Cite this article

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