



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA



City of Westminster

Violence Against Women and Girls Services Directory

FOR RESIDENTS



2026

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1. How to Read This Guide Safely

1. In case of immediate danger

If you are in immediate danger, call 999 (UK emergency services).

If it's not safe to speak, dial 55 when prompted to let operators know you need help.

2. Quick safety note

If you believe someone might be monitoring your phone, computer or tablet, open this document only when it is safe to do so. You can delete it after use or view it in a private browsing window.

3. Protecting your privacy

- Delete this file after reading, or move it to a secure folder.
- Clear your Recent Files list or Downloads history.
- Avoid opening it on shared or work devices if possible.
- If you print pages, keep them in a safe place or dispose of them securely.

4. Browsing discreetly

This directory does not track you and contains only safe, direct links. However, visiting external websites will leave traces in your browser history. Consider using private/incognito mode when following links.

5. Need help using this safely?

If you're unsure how to delete files or clear your history, visit:

www.womensaid.org.uk/cover-your-tracks-online

(This page explains, step by step, how to stay safe online.)

2. How to use this directory

You can use this directory if you are affected by any VAWG issues and want advice and support.

You may also find the directory helpful if you suspect someone is being affected by any of the VAWG issues, for example a neighbour or a friend.

This directory lists free, anonymous, and confidential support services. They are listed by type of VAWG abuse so you can find the right one easily.

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger

Here are some basic steps if you or someone you know are at risk and need immediate support.

- Call 999 immediately or call 999 on their behalf.
- If it is unsafe to talk, call 999 and ask to 'order a pizza'. The police will know you need urgent help but cannot speak openly.
- Silent Solution: If you are unable to speak, after calling 999 press 55 after dialling 999. The police will try to help silently.
- For non-emergency police help, call 101. You can also report non-emergency crimes and information online via www.met.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime
- To report crimes anonymously, you can contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or through the website www.crimestoppers-uk.org



Getting support from a professional

If you're experiencing or have experienced VAWG but are worried about how to speak or work with a professional, the following information may help you understand what to expect:

- The professional will want to speak to you in a safe way, ideally when you are on your own in a safe space.
- If you speak a different language, you can ask for a professional interpreter. You don't have to use a family member or friend.
- You can ask to speak to someone of the same gender as you if that makes you more comfortable.
- Professionals are there to support and listen to you without judging you.
- A professional can explain the support available to you and help you understand your options.

- It's your choice what to do next having been given the options available to you. No-one will pressure you into doing something that you are not comfortable with.
- If you don't want help right away, you can always ask for help again in the future.

Please note that, if you are in serious danger, the professional may need to contact other services like the police or social care to help protect you. They should still explain what is happening and why, though consent may not be required.

If a professional believes a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or is at serious risk, they must make a safeguarding referral even if you don't want them to. You can still be part of the conversation and they should still explain what they're doing and what help is available.

3. Introduction

This directory is for all residents living in Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea (known as the Bi-Borough). It helps those who want information about services for violence against women and girls.

Inside you will find short summaries and contact details of specialist support services. These services help people rebuild their lives. Violence and abuse are complex issues with deep roots, so getting good support is very important.

Many of the services not only offer help with violence and abuse but also offer support with mental health, wellbeing, money, and legal advice. Some services are designed for specific cultures and communities.

Many of the services you will find in this directory are for women and girls as they experience violence and abuse more often. However, men and boys can also be victims, and you will find services to support men and boys too.



4. What is Violence Against Women and Girls? (VAWG)

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) covers a range of abuses, behaviours and crimes that mostly affect women and girls because of their gender. However, men and boys can also be victims of violence and abuse.

VAWG is about power and control. This means that the abuser(s), whether that be a family member, wants to control their partner or victim and feel that they have the right to hurt and abuse them. There are various forms of abuse and types of controlling behaviour someone might experience.



A full list of the different issues that constitute VAWG are:

Domestic Abuse

The law (Domestic Abuse Act 2021) states that domestic abuse is 'an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading, and/or violent behaviour, including sexual violence.'

Domestic Abuse can include, but is not limited to:

- Emotional abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Physical abuse
- Violent and threatening behaviour
- Sexual abuse
- Financial and economic abuse
- Coercive control (making someone do things through pressure or threats)
- Stalking and harassment (both in person and online)
- Online/digital abuse
- Forced marriage
- Honour-based abuse

Domestic Abuse usually happens between partners or ex-partners, but it can also happen between family members or between people who are personally connected and are aged 16 or above, or people in any close or intimate relationship no matter their gender or sexuality.

Children and young people can be victims of violence and abuse. The law also recognises them as victims of abuse if they have witnessed abuse of a family member:

"Children (0 to 18 years) are recognised as victims of domestic abuse if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, abusive behaviour falling within the above definition if they are related to the victim or the alleged perpetrator."

"Whilst young people under the age of 16 can experience abuse in a relationship, it would be considered child abuse as a matter of law", and that "ultimately, in responding to cases of abuse involving those under 18, child safeguarding procedures should be followed."

Any abuse of any child or young person under 16 is treated as child abuse by law and will be handled by children services.

Coercive and Controlling Behaviour

Also called 'coercive control', controlling behaviour is a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation, and control, which often involves the use or threat of physical or sexual violence. It is designed to punish or frighten the victim and create a dependence on the perpetrator.

Acts of coercive control can include:

- Manipulation;
- Intimidation;
- Sexual coercion; and
- Gaslighting

Gaslighting is a form of psychological abuse where a person intentionally makes someone question their memories.

Rape, Sexual Violence and Sexual Exploitation

Sexual abuse is physical abuse of a sexual nature using force or threatened sexual contact.

Sexual exploitation means using someone's vulnerability, power, or trust to abuse them sexually, often for money or other benefits. Sexual exploitation can also include forcing someone, without consent, to participate in:

- Street prostitution;
- Massage parlours or brothels;
- Escort services;
- Strip clubs;
- Phone sex;
- Pornography; and
- Domestic and international trafficking.

Rape is unwanted, forced, or non-consensual 'sex'. Sex and rape are two very different things. If there is no consent, then it's not sex, it's rape – no matter the circumstances, even if you are married to each other for example.

Forced Prostitution/Sex Working

This is when someone is made to exchange sexual acts for money, food, rent, drugs, or something else of value. Forcing a person into prostitution can be one way that an abuser commits domestic abuse and/or VAWG against their intimate partner or family member.

In England and Wales, it is an offence to pay for sex with a sex worker who has been "subjected to force".

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which makes someone feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated, or which creates a hostile or offensive environment which leaves a person scared or worried. It can be from strangers or people you know. You do not have to have said no for it to be considered unwanted or count as harassment.

Stalking and Harassment

Stalking and harassment is unwanted attention that happens two or more times and which makes you feel worried, scared, threatened, or fear that violence may be used against you.

Honour-Based Violence

'Honour'-Based Violence is violence, intimidation, coercion, or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse) used to protect or defend an individual's, family's, or communities 'honour'. It is a form of domestic abuse which happens when someone is thought to have brought shame on their themselves and their family. This is a form of domestic abuse.

Harmful Practices

Harmful practices are harmful traditions which take place in some cultures, such as child marriage, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing, acid attacks, and witchcraft rituals. They are discriminatory practices that have been committed regularly over such long periods of time that some communities and societies begin to consider them acceptable. They are wrong and hurt women and girls. They are not unique to any religion or culture.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Modern slavery describes a situation where someone is made to do something, and another person gains from this. Exploitation can include:

- Forced labour – being forced to work
- Sexual exploitation – coerced or forced into selling and exchanging sex
- Domestic servitude – forced to work within a home for little or no pay
- Criminal exploitation – forced to break the law for someone else, such as by begging or selling drugs
- Organ harvesting – organ removal for financial gain

Adults must be controlled or threatened to be considered victims. This might be someone controlling their movements, threatening them or their loved ones, using violence or abuse, withholding documents and earnings or other methods to keep them in the exploitation. Children and young people under 16 are always seen as victims if exploited.

Gendered Gang Violence (girls in gangs)

Girls are often not seen as gang members but are often subject to some of the most serious crimes including county lines activity and modern slavery. Girls may be groomed to gangs with promises of romance or gifts. When they try to leave the group, gang members may threaten the victim's family with kidnapping and violence. It is common that gang members use sexual abuse including rape to control the girls.

5. Directory of Services

6. Violence Against Women and Girls Directory, including Domestic Abuse Services

I. National Services

Refuge National Domestic Abuse Helpline

Free, confidential helpline available 24/7 as a female staffed helpline. Staff can help you understand your options, find local services, and access emergency refuge spaces. Support available in multiple languages.

📞 **Telephone:** 0808 2000 247

🌐 **Website:** www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

National GALOP - the LGBT+ anti-abuse charity

Free, confidential helpline offering support for LGBTQIA+ people aged 18+ affected by domestic abuse, hate crime, sexual violence or 'conversion therapy.' Help available via phone, email and online chatbot.

📞 **Telephone:** 0800 999 5428

🌐 **Website:** www.galop.org.uk/helpline

Victim Support

24/7 helpline for victims of crime, offering emotional and practical support.

📞 **Telephone:** 0808 1689111

🌐 **Website:** www.victimsupport.org.uk

National Suicide Prevention Helpline

Free and confidential helpline for those experiencing poor mental health and thoughts of suicide. Open every day from 6pm until midnight

📞 **Telephone:** 0800 689 5652

🌐 **Website:** www.spuk.org.uk

Safe Horizons, Pan London: Domestic Abuse Service - London Victim and Witness Service

Safe Horizons London Partnership is a collaboration of 13 specialist organisations, providing free; confidential information and guidance, trauma-informed support, advocacy, and safety-planning to survivors of domestic abuse (any gender) aged 16 years and over in London.

Safe Horizons includes various "by and for" partners, who can offer targeted support with a focus on specific communities, such as services for: Black, South Asian, Latin American and Eastern European survivors, services for Deaf and Disabled survivors, services for LGBT+ survivors and services for male survivors.

You can access support via self-referral, police referral, or referral from other support services e.g. Housing or Social Care.

📞 **Telephone:** 0808 168 9291

➡ **Online self referral link:** bit.ly/LVWSReferral

II. Bi-Borough Services (RBKC and Westminster)

The Angelou Partnership

(For referral pathway, see pg.10)

Support for women and girls aged 13+ affected by domestic abuse, sexual violence and abuse, stalking and harassment, and harmful practices such as Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and 'Honour-Based Violence.' Specialist support service for Black, Asian and Arabic speaking women as well as LGBTQIA+ communities. Delivered by ten specialist organisations, known as the Angelou Services, including: Advance, GALOP, Standing Together, IKWRO, Woman's Trust, Hestia, DVIP, Women and Girls Network, Solace and Al Hasaniya.

📞 **Domestic abuse telephone:**

0800 059 0108

✉️ **Domestic abuse email:** angelou@advancecharity.org.uk

📞 **Sexual violence telephone:** 0808 801 0660

✉️ **Sexual violence email:** advice@wgn.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.angelou.org

Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

This is a multi agency process where a range of multi agencies meet to discuss high risk cases. All cases are assessed to determine the level of risk. If your case is high, it will be discussed at the MARAC. We would encourage you to engage and give consent to this. However, please note, you have every right not to consent. However, a professional can still make a referral without your permission if they feel that you might be at risk. You can discuss this with the professional before making the assessment.



The Angelou Partnership Referral Pathway

All referrals require consent from the client

Advance

All risk levels.

Advance supports survivors of domestic abuse, stalking and harassment, and multiple disadvantages.

Referral+ Assessment Line and specialist support offer via:

- Core IDVA
- Mental Health IDVA
- Problematic Substance Use IDVA
- Young Persons IDVA (aged 13+)
- DA Caseworker (standard-medium risk)

Domestic Abuse Referral + Assessment Advice Line:

☎ 0800 059 0108

Send Angelou referral to:

✉ Angelou@advancecharity.org.uk

Al-Hasaniya*

Support VS who speak Arabic or are from an Arabic/Moroccan background. People who speak both Kurdish and Arabic (or Arabic and any language also held by IKWRO) should be offered a choice of being transferred to either Al Hasaniya or IKWRO.

1FTE IDVA who supports majority high risk cases.

Accept Angelou Partnership referral forms.

Forward on to IDVA: Zainab

✉ zainab@alhasaniya.org.uk

And CC Nadia (centre manager):

✉ nadia@alhasaniya.org.uk

Galop

Support LGBTQIA+ VS.

Practical support for Low-High risk clients.

16+ yrs.

🌐 galop.org.uk/make-a-referral

IKWRO**

Support BAME VS experiencing all forms of VAWG.

Offer VAWG Advice Casework, counselling and a BAME specialist refuge.

Can provide counselling in English, Arabic, Kurdish, Farsi and Dari.

16+ yrs.

Send Angelou referral to:

✉ advice@ikwro.org.uk

Solace Rape Crisis ISVA

Practical support through CJS process for VS impacted by sexual violence who are contemplating reporting to the police or in the CJS process.

Can offer support up to and including the trial. Specialist advocates, consellers, group therapists and helpline workers. Support for friends/family of VS.

13+ yrs.

Send Angelou referral to:

✉ rapecrisis@solacewomansaid.org

Helpline:

☎ 0808 801 0305

Women and Girls Network

Support for girls/young women.

VAWG Advice Line and a casework service, including gangs and schools, multiple disadvantages.

- 1FTE Young Women's Advice Caseworker: Ages 14-25yrs for 3-6 months.
- 1FTE Sexual Violence Advice Caseworker: Practical Support for low-medium risk VS impacted by SV. Ages 16+yrs for 3-6 months.

Send onward referrals to:

✉ casework@wgn.org.uk

Helpline:

☎ 0808 801 0660

Woman's Trust

Offers free specialist therapeutic services to women VS of domestic abuse in London.

One-to-one counselling Support Groups, Psychoeducational workshops. A legal clinic, run by a specialist solicitor.

For referrals, call:

☎ 020 7034 0303

* **Al Hasaniya** supports Arab women who may come from or have a background from several Middle Eastern and North African countries, including Libya, Mauritania, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, The United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan. People who speak Kurdish often also speak Arabic. Kurdish people often come from: Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Lebanon.

** **IKWRO** has specialisms linked to language - Kurdish, Farsi, Arabic, Dari, Pashto, Turkish and English. They work with women and girls of all ages, inclusive of gender expression and sexuality. Women who speak these languages are often linked to: Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Russia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Afghanistan. People who speak both Kurdish and Arabic (or Arabic and any language also held by IKWRO) should be offered a choice of being transferred to either Al-Hasaniya or IKWRO.


III. Specialised 'By and For' Services


Some survivors may prefer to speak and engage with professionals who have a better understanding of their culture, language and the range of incidents that are deemed high risk for them. 'By and for' services are specialist services that are led, designed, and delivered by and for the communities they aim to serve. For example victims and survivors from ethnic minority backgrounds, Deaf and disabled survivors, and LGBTQIA+ survivors).

Specialist services understand how sex and other intersectional inequalities - including ethnicity, class, gender identity, age, ability, sexuality, religion, and belief – drive wider patterns of VAWG.

Sistah Space


National charity offering support for African and Caribbean heritage women affected by domestic abuse by tackling the intersectionality of racism and gender-based violence.


 **Website:** www.sistahspace.org


 **Email:** info@sistahspace.org

Ashiana Network

Support for South Asian, Turkish and Middle Eastern women and girls (14+) affected by domestic abuse, sexual violence, Forced Marriage, 'Honour-Based' Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and women who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF).


 **Telephone:** 020 8539 0427

 **24/7 Helpline:** 0808 2000 247

 **Website:** ashiana.org.uk


Asian Women's Resource Centre (AWRC)


Culturally appropriate advice and support, including housing, benefits, immigration and for those with no recourse to public funds. They provide services for BME, women and girls on domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour based violence and faith based abuse. Support offered in a range of languages and formats.

 **Website:** www.awrc.org.uk

Middle Eastern Women & Society Organisation (MEWSO)

Women's charity offering support for women from Middle Eastern, North African and Asian backgrounds. Help with domestic abuse, welfare, immigration, and harmful practices. Support offered in English, Farsi, Arabic, Kurdish and French. Classes offered to help survivors make new friends and learn new skills, including: Crafting, English, and Healthy Cooking.

 **Westminster Address:** Church Street Neighbourhood Centre, Cherwell House, Penfold Street, Westminster, NW8 8PT


 **Telephone:** 07780 983 152

 **Email:** office@mewso.org

 **Website:** www.mewso.org

Chinese Information and Advice Centre (CIAC)

Free, confidential support for Chinese women who live, work or study in London affected by domestic abuse.


 **Telephone:** 0300 201 1868 (10am – 6pm)

 **Email:** info@ciac.co.uk


 **Website:** ciac.co.uk/our-services/women-and-children-support

Jewish Women's Aid

Support for Jewish women across London affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence.


 **Telephone:** 0808 801 0500 (Monday – Thursday, 9.30am - 9.30pm)


 **Email:** advice@jwa.org.uk


 **Website:** www.jwa.org.uk

Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS)

Support for Latin American women (16+), including women with no recourse to public funds (NRPF). Services in Spanish and Portuguese. Help with domestic abuse, sexual violence, housing, benefits and psychotherapy.

 **Telephone:** 0808 145 4909 (Tuesday to Friday, 11am to 1pm)

 **Email:** referrals@lawrs.org.uk

 **Website:** lawrs.org.uk

Latin American Women's Aid (LAWA)

Refuges run by and for Latin American women and children fleeing gender based violence. Provide advice services and refuges. Includes advice on housing, immigration, and counselling. Inclusive of all backgrounds, abilities, and identities. Online and WhatsApp chat available.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 7275 0321 (Monday – Friday, 9.30am - 5.30pm)

✉️ **Email:** info@lawadv.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** lawadv.org.uk

The Traveller Movement

A specialist Domestic Abuse Helpline for Romani (Gypsy), Roma, and Irish Traveller women looking for help in the UK. Delivered by and with Irish Traveller women.

📞 **London referral helpline:** 07541 637 795

📞 **Telephone:** 0207 607 2002

✉️ **Email:** info@travellermovement.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** travellermovement.org.uk/
women-and-girls

Iranian, Kurdish, Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO)

Support for Middle Eastern and Afghan women and girls in the UK. Support available in Farsi, Kurdish, Arabic, Dari, Pashto, Turkish, and English.

🌐 **Advocacy:** ikwro.org.uk/advocacy

✉️ **Email:** info@ikwro.org.uk

📞 **Telephone:** 0207 920 6460

Kurdish / Arabic/ English: 07846 275246

Farsi / Dari / English: 07846 310157

Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre

Support for Moroccan and Arabic-speaking women and girls experiencing domestic abuse. Services are culturally sensitive and includes advice on domestic abuse, sexual violence, and faith-based violence.

🌐 **Website:** www.al-hasaniya.org.uk/
domesticviolence

✉️ **Email:** contact@al-hasaniya.org.uk

📞 **Telephone:** 0203 048 4488

**East European Resource Centre**

Support for Eastern European women affected by domestic abuse. Staff speak Romanian, Polish, Ukrainian and Russian, with translation support offered for other Eastern European languages. Help with housing, benefits, legal and emotional support.

They can:

📞 **Telephone:** 07521 857 415
(Monday–Thursday, 10am–4pm)

✉️ **Email:** advocacy@eerc.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** eerc.org.uk/domestic-violence

IV. Support for Children and Young People

Domestic abuse affects children and young people directly and indirectly. Children and young people may witness abuse, experience domestic abuse and have to deal with the effects of abuse on them and their family. If you have children in your household, please do not minimise the impact that domestic violence can have on them and please ensure that they receive the right, age appropriate support for them.

Children and young people may experience:

- seeing someone they care about being injured and/or distressed
- hearing the abuse from another room
- a lack of care and support from their parents or carers who have experienced abuse
- finding damage to their home environment like broken furniture
- being hurt from being caught up in or trying to stop the abuse
- being denied access to parts of their home, such as rooms being locked
- being forced out of or losing their home

Young people aged 16 or over can also experience domestic abuse in their own relationships.

Psychological effects of experiencing domestic abuse can include:

- Anxiety, depression, aggression
- Difficulty interacting with others
- Withdrawal or fearfulness, including fear of conflict
- Suicidal thoughts or feelings

Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship. It can continue even after the relationship has ended, for example during contact visits, over the phone or on social media.

Children and young people can be abused or be abusers.

Children can find it difficult to talk about domestic abuse for many reasons. They might feel ashamed, afraid, or not have the language to describe what they've experienced. If they have been living with domestic abuse since they were very young, they may not realise that it's wrong and they might think it's their fault.

If you are a child or young person who is experiencing domestic violence or sexual abuse, we recommend that you speak to a trusted adult, whether that is a trusted parent or carer, a teacher, or friend who can help you in reporting the abuse and in getting you the right support for you.

The Maia Project (Westminster only)

Support for young women and girls aged 9 to 25 years at risk of domestic abuse and other vulnerabilities including poor mental health, alcohol and drug use, risk of exclusion from school, and risk of exploitation. Support includes mentoring, group work, and one-to-one counselling sessions.

➔ **Referrals:** www.advancecharity.org.uk/what-we-do/young-women-girls-services/maia-lift

✉ **Email:** maia@advancecharity.org.uk

☎ **Telephone:** 0800 0590117

Working Chance

Employment advice for young women and girls with convictions.

✉ **Email:** info@workingchance.org

🌐 **Website:** www.workingchance.org

Woman's Trust

Mental health support and counselling.

✉ **Email:** office@womanstrust.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.womanstrust.org.uk



CouRAGEus

The CouRAGEus Programme offers a safe, confidential space for young women, LGTBQIA+ and disabled young people (14 – 24) from Black and Global majority communities in London. This is delivered by the Women and Girls Network Includes mental health and wellbeing support, discussions around relationships and consent, and how to be resilient. Webchat available via website.

📞 **Women and Girls Network Advice Line:**

0808 801 0660

✉ **Email:** couRAGEus@wgn.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.wgn.org.uk/young-womens-services/courageus-project

Safer London

Support for young people aged 11–24 (up to 25 for those who are Neurodiverse) who have been a victim of sexual violence (recent or historic). If the young Londoner has an active or upcoming court case this must be indicated on the referral form for them to access the required support.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 7021 0301 (option 1)

✉ **Email:** info@saferlondon.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** saferlondon.org.uk/sexual-violence

Childline

Support for children and young people (up to the age of 19) with whatever is worrying them. Confidential support available by phone, email, and 1-2-1 counsellor chat.

📞 **Telephone:** 0800 1111

🌐 **Website:** www.childline.org.uk

V. Services for Older People

Domestic abuse affects people of all ages. However, older victims' experiences often differ to those of younger people, due to a variety of social, cultural and physical factors that require attention. If you are an older victim of abuse, victim support is available.

For older victims, abuse is more likely to come from family members than intimate partners.

Many older women may feel pressure to keep the family unit together by staying with their abuser, fearing the loss of relationships with adult children, family and friends if they speak out.

Abuse may become normalised over time, making it harder to recognise or report. Some may rely on their abuser for care or, in some cases, be a carer for the person abusing them. Economic abuse is particularly common for older people which can make it more difficult to leave their abuser. If a partner, spouse, or family member takes money, threatens, frightens, or mistreats someone, it is abuse. It is never their fault and support is available.

The Silver Project - Solace Women's Aid

Practical support for women aged 55+ with current needs related to domestic or sexual abuse. Telephone or face-to-face support available.

☎ **Telephone:** 020 3875 6288

✉ **Email:** silverproject@solacewomensaid.org

🌐 **Website:** www.solacewomensaid.org/our-services/silver-project-older-women

Hour Glass

Confidential support for older people at risk of, experiencing, or recovering from any form of abuse or neglect.

☎ **24/7 Helpline:** 0808 808 8141

☎ **Free text:** 0786 005 2906

✉ **Email:** helpline@wearehourglass.org

🌐 **Website:** wearehourglass.org/who-we-are

VI. Support for LGBTQIA+ communities

While mainstream conversations often focus on heterosexual relationships, it's important to recognise that abuse can affect anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Domestic abuse in LGBTQIA+ relationships can present in similar forms, including physical violence, emotional abuse, financial control, and sexual abuse. There are also forms of abuse that are specific to LGBTQIA+ people including threats to 'out' someone to their family, friends, or employers as a form of control.

GALOP

Specialist support for LGBTQIA+ people affected by domestic abuse, hate crime, sexual violence, honour-based violence, forced marriage, and conversion therapy.

☎ **Telephone:** 0800 999 5428

✉ **Email:** help@galop.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.galop.org.uk

Stonewall Housing – Domestic Abuse Resettlement Service (DARS)

Stonewall's Domestic Abuse Resettlement Service (DARS) enables them to support LGBTQIA+ people who have fled abuse and work to ensure they get settled and established in their new homes. Support includes dedicated team members to support with housing assessments and resettlement, and trauma-informed person-centred care.

☎ **Housing advice line:** 0800 6404 404 (Monday – Thursday, 10am – 1pm)

➔ **Self-referral form:** stonewallhousing.org/referralform

🌐 **Website:** stonewallhousing.org/dars

Star Refuge/Star Recovery Programme

Star Refuge offer safe accommodation and support for LGBTQIA+ people experiencing domestic abuse. They work in tandem with the Star Recovery Programme which offers an 11-week programme of support Thursday mornings providing skills and knowledge to help survivors gain back control and independence.

🌐 **Website:** www.starsupport.org.uk/star-recovery

VII. Services for Men and Boys

Abuse can affect anyone regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, sexuality or class background. This includes men and boys who also face sexual violence and abuse and who deserve access to care and support. If you are a male victim and wish to seek advice and support, even anonymously, there are a range of agencies that can help you.

Cranstoun Male Domestic Abuse Services (Westminster only)

Free, practical support for male survivors of domestic abuse (16+) based in Westminster. Support includes access to housing advice, employment services, emotional and wellbeing support and services for the most vulnerable and hard to reach groups.

📞 **Telephone:** 0203 326 8764 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday)

✉️ **Email:** wmvs@cranstoun.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** cranstoun.org/help-and-advice/domestic-abuse/male-victims-service

Respect Men's Advice Line

Confidential support for men experiencing domestic abuse available by Freephone or webchat.

📞 **Freephone:** 0808 8010327

🌐 **Website:** mensadviceline.org.uk/contact-us

ManKind

National helpline for male victims of domestic abuse. Calls welcome from those supporting or suspecting someone of being abused.

📞 **Freephone:** 0808 800 1170 (10am – 4pm excluding bank holidays)

📞 **Helpline:** 01823 334 244 (for those with inclusive minutes)

🌐 **Website:** mankind.org.uk



7. Housing and Homelessness Support Directory

Solace Housing First (Westminster only)

Trauma-informed support for women impacted by street homelessness and multiple disadvantage.

- Support is separate from housing offer
- Housing provided via partner housing associations (1-bed flats across London)
- Weekly visits from VAWG-trained keyworkers
- Help with income, bills, furniture, safety planning, and referrals

📞 **Phone:** 0808 802 5565

✉️ **Email:** swahousingfirst@solacewomensaid.org
advice@solacewomensaid.org

🌐 **Website:** www.solacewomensaid.org/our-services/housing-first

The Passage - Single Persons Hub

Support for single people experiencing homelessness in Westminster. Includes a dedicated domestic abuse specialist.

📍 **Address:** The Families Hub is at:
Housing Solutions Service
82 Bruckner Street, W10 4BD

🕒 **Opening Hours:** Monday to Friday,
10am – 4pm

📞 **Telephone:** 0207 5921850

✉️ **Email:** HSSCustomerServices@westminster.gov.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.westminster.gov.uk/housing/homelessness/homelessness-and-domestic-abuse

St Mungo's

Support for people affected by homelessness, including providing tailored support, outreach and accommodation.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 3856 6000

✉️ **Email:** info@mungos.org

🌐 **Website:** www.mungos.org

The Connection at St Martin's (Westminster only)

Day and night centre offering housing advice, mental health support, and street outreach.

📍 **Address:** 12 Adelaide Street,
London, WC2N 4HW

🕒 **Opening Hours:** Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday and Friday, 9am – 1.30pm

📞 **Telephone:** 020 7766 5544

✉️ **Email:** services@cstm.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.connection-at-smartins.org.uk

Safer Renting

Specialist advice and advocacy for people exploited by private landlords and at risk of homelessness.

✉️ **Email:** SaferRenting@ch1889.org

🌐 **Website:** www.ch1889.org/safer-renting

Shelter

Free, personalised housing and homelessness advice, including legal support for those facing eviction.

📞 **Telephone:** 0808 800 4444

🌐 **Website:** england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice

Advance – Housing Specialist Project

The Housing Specialist Project supports women and girls residing within the Tri-Borough who are experiencing domestic abuse, have housing issues and complex support needs. They aim to provide support for women and girl to access safe and secure housing whilst working collaboratively to support their needs.

To access this service, you must:

- Be aged 18 or over
- Have experienced domestic abuse at any risk level within the past 3 months
- Experiencing multiple and complex disadvantages (e.g. mental health, substance use or criminal justice involvement)
- Present with a housing need (e.g. currently in temporary accommodation or street homeless)
- Be a resident of London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea or Westminster City Council

📞 **Telephone:** 0800 059 0108

✉️ **Email:** angelou@advancecharity.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.advancecharity.org.uk

8. Multiple Disadvantage and Support for Women in the Criminal Justice System

Multiple Disadvantage refers to the experience of facing several complex and overlapping challenges at the same time. These may include:

- Violence including domestic abuse
- Poor mental health
- Housing insecurity or homelessness
- Substance misuse (alcohol and/or drugs)
- Contact with the criminal justice system

These multiple challenges may stem from experiences of trauma such as:

- Childhood abuse or neglect
- Domestic abuse as a young people or adult
- Sexual abuse as a young person or adult
- Involvement in prostitution or sexual exploitation

Specialised services providing trauma-informed support are available to those who experience multiple disadvantages.

The Minerva Wraparound Service – Advance Charity

Support for women and girls (15+) with complex needs who have committed crime or are at risk of re-offending. Support services include group work, mentoring and keyworker support. Referrals from probation, statutory and voluntary partners.

📞 **Minerva helpline** (If you have a conviction or caution)

- **London North:** 020 3981 8486
- **London West:** 020 8563 2225
- **London East:** 020 3096 6488

✉ **Messaging available via website:**
www.advancecharity.org.uk/get-help

Women in Prison (WIP)

National charity supporting women affected by the criminal justice system in prisons, in the community, and through Women's Centres.

🌐 **Website:** www.womeninprison.org.uk



9. Services for Substance Misuse (Alcohol and Drugs)

Domestic abuse and substance misuse often go hand in hand. In some cases, abusers may deliberately get their victims addicted to drugs or alcohol as a way to control them. They may withhold substances or money, using them as tools of manipulation and coercion.

For many survivors, drugs or alcohol may also be used as a coping mechanism to manage the trauma of abuse. In some situations, the perpetrator may also be struggling with addiction.

While substance misuse is not the cause of domestic abuse or violence against women and girls, it can increase the frequency and severity of abuse. It can also have long-lasting effects on a person's physical and mental health.

Turning Point

Free support for people affected by drug and alcohol dependency, including heroin, cocaine, cannabis, and more.

☎ **Telephone:** 020 8740 6815 (Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm)

🌐 **Website:** www.turning-point.co.uk/westminster-kensington-chelsea

The Alcohol Service, Change Grow Live

Free, confidential support for people wanting to reduce or stop drinking. Support offered in safe spaces including at your GP practice. Also supports those affected by someone else's drinking.

☎ **Telephone:** 0800 014 7440

✉ **Email:** thealcoholservice.info@cgl.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.changegrowlive.org/service/the-alcohol-service/westminster



10. Disability and Domestic Abuse

People with physical and/or mental disabilities are at greater risk of experiencing domestic abuse. Research has shown that they are more likely to experience abuse for longer periods of time, and experience more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people.

Domestic abuse involving disabled people can include specific forms of control or coercion, particularly when the abuser is also a carer. Abuse may involve:

- Withholding or damaging medical equipment
- Restricting access to medication or communication aids
- Denying personal care, food, or transport
- Isolating the person from support networks

People with disabilities may face additional barriers to recognising or escaping abuse, such as:

- Physical limitations that make it harder to leave
- Communication or cognitive difficulties that affect understanding or disclosure
- Social isolation due to stigma or inaccessible environments
- Fewer trusted individuals to confide in or seek help from

Some victims may be reluctant to report abuse if they rely on the perpetrator for care and fear being placed in institutional settings. Others may be concerned about losing access to adapted housing or essential support.

Accessible, inclusive, and trauma-informed services are available to support victims of violence who identify as disabled to ensure that they receive help in a safe and respectful way.

SignHealth

Specialist support for Deaf people affected by domestic abuse. Prevention workshops in BSL and dedicated support workers available.

📞 **Text support:** 07800 003421

✉️ **Email:** da@signhealth.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.signhealth.org.uk

Stay Safe East

Advocacy and support for survivors of domestic abuse run by and for disabled people.

🌐 **Website:** www.staysafe-east.

org.uk/services-support/
domestic-and-sexual-violence

Respond

Support for people with a learning disability, autism or both who are experiencing domestic abuse.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 7380 8257
or 07821 578 190

🌐 **Website:** www.respond.org.uk/
independent-sexual-violence-advocacy-
isva-service-2

11. No Recourse to Public Funds

In the UK, many migrants including those on visas, without legal status, or seeking asylum are usually ineligible for welfare benefits or social housing. This is known as having No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).

In domestic abuse cases, women may be on spousal visas. Abusers often exploit this insecure immigration status by withholding passports and using the threat of deportation to control and isolate victims. This can make it harder to access support or leave an abusive situation. However, support is available and insecure immigration status should never be a barrier to seeking help. Specialist services can help victims access short-term accommodation and support and Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse Concession (MVDAC) can be applied for to victims can access benefits and refuge accommodation or apply for alternative housing because of domestic abuse.

Praxis

Free immigration advice for people in London, focused on applications made on human rights grounds. Priority is given to those on a very low income or people experiencing destitution. Praxis cannot assist with asylum claims, entry clearance applications, naturalisation, or student/skilled worker visas.

Telephone: 020 7749 7605 (available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday)

Website: www.praxis.org.uk/get-help

Southall Black Sisters (SBS)

Advice and information including support for women with no recourse to public funds. Emergency No Recourse Fund (NRF) for migrant women across the UK. Supports access to safe accommodation and refuge for women escaping abuse, trafficking, forced marriage and Honour-Based Violence.

Website: southallblacksisters.org.uk/our-services/sbs-no-recourse-fund

Asian Women's Resource Centre (AWRC)

NRPF helpline for survivors and professionals supporting survivors.

Freephone: 0300 373 1155 (Monday – Friday, 10am – 5pm)

Website: www.awrc.org.uk

Solace Women's Aid – NRPF Advocacy

Telephone advice and casework support for women with NRPF.

Telephone: 07485 31484

Telephone: 0808 803 5565

Email: advice@solacewomensaid.org

Website: www.solacewomensaid.org

12. Harassment, Stalking and Online Abuse

Harassment involves two or more incidents that leave the victim feeling distressed or fearing violence.

Harassment may include:

- Abusive text messages or images
- Abusive posts on social media
- Offensive or threatening phone calls

It is harassment if the unwanted behaviour has happened two times or more and made you feel distressed or threatened.

Stalking is also a form of harassment, where the stalker will have an obsession with the person they are targeting.

Stalking may include:

- following someone
- going uninvited to their home, place, or work
- hanging around places the person regularly visits
- watching or spying on someone
- identity theft (signing-up to services, buying things in someone's name)
- Posting about someone online without their consent

It is stalking if the unwanted behaviour has happened two or more times and made you feel scared, distressed, or threatened.

Online stalking or harassment involves using technology to monitor, stalks, threaten, control or impersonate someone. Online stalking or harassment may include:

- Monitoring internet use, emails, or messages
- Accessing someone's email or someone's email accounts without permission
- Sending unsolicited sexual images or messages
- Spamming and sending viruses
- Stealing someone's identity
- Threatening to share someone's private information, images or messages
- Adding tracking software to someone's devices

It is online stalking or harassment if the unwanted behaviour has happened two times or more and made you feel scared, distressed, or threatened.

It is important to recognise that the separation from a relationship is a high-risk time. Many incidents of stalking and harassment take place after a relationship ends. Support is available to help you stay safe.

Suzy Lamplugh Trust

Specialist support and advocacy for people affected by stalking.

📞 **National Stalking Helpline:** 0808 802 0300

🌐 **Website:** www.suzylamplugh.org

Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Group

Paladin offers trauma-informed support for high-risk victims of stalking by their team of accredited Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworkers (ISACS). They help develop a coordinated community response locally to keep victims and children safe.

📞 **Telephone:** 02038664107

✉ **Email:** info@paladinservice.co.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.paladinservice.co.uk/get-support

13. Economic and Financial Abuse

Economic abuse is a form of control over someone's income, spending, bank accounts, bills and borrowing. It can also include controlling access to and use of things like transport and technology, which allow us to work and stay connected, as well as property and daily essentials like food and clothing.


Financial abuse often occurs alongside emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. It may be present throughout a relationship or begin when a survivor tries to leave. These behaviours are used to manipulate, intimidate, and trap someone in a relationship, making it harder for them to seek help or gain independence.

Recognising economic and financial abuse is essential to ensure survivors can access support that can help them rebuild their lives safely and securely.

All domestic abuse organisations can provide support, advice and guidance on economic abuse issues.

Financial Support Line

Free telephone line offering advice and guidance to victims of financial abuse Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am-5pm.

 **Freephone:** 0808 196 8845


14. Tech Abuse Including Online Sexual Abuse


Tech abuse is when someone monitors, stalks, harasses, threatens, controls, or impersonates another person using technology. This could involve stalking through social media, harassment by text message or humiliation by posting pictures or videos.


The term "technological abuse" means an act or pattern of behaviour that occurs within domestic abuse, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking and is intended to harm, threaten, intimidate, control, stalk, harass, impersonate, exploit, extort, or monitor movements.

Revenge Porn Helpline

Support for adults (18+) who have had intimate images or videos of themselves shared without their permission.


 **Helpline:** 0345 6000 459 (Monday to Friday, 10am - 4pm)

 **Email:** help@revengepornhelpline.org.uk

 **Website:** www.revengepornhelpline.org.uk

Refuge Tech Abuse

Support for women experiencing tech abuse, including stalking via smart devices, social media, and tracking tools.

 **Website:** www.refugetechsafety.org/contact

15. Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Support Services

Abuse can happen in any intimate relationship, whether between partners, extended family, or involving a child. If you recognise any of the following behaviours in yourself or someone else, it may be a sign of abusive behaviour:

- Jealousy or needing to know where your partner is at all times
- Controlling behaviour linked to jealousy
- Fast-tracked declarations of love early in a relationship
- Isolation from your friends, family, or support networks
- Blaming others for personal feelings or problems
- Hypersensitive to criticism or personal attacks
- A history of an unhappy or abusive childhood

If you are concerned about your own behaviour or someone else's, support services are available to help you understand and address patterns of abuse.

Culturally Integrated Family Approach (CIFA in the Bi Borough)

Specialist culturally grounded support for men from racialised, marginalised, and disadvantaged communities (including LGBTQIA+) who want help to change abusive behaviour. Additional programmes to support women who are violent and adults who commit elderly or spousal abuse. Referral needed.

🌐 **Website:** risemutual.org/women-and-victims

✉ **Email:** cifa@risemutual.org

16. Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA)

Parental Education Growth Support (PEGS)

Support for parents, carers, and guardians experiencing child-to-parent abuse.

🌐 **Website:** www.pegssupport.co.uk

Child and Adolescent to Adult Parent Abuse (CAPA) First Response

Direct 1:1 support for whole families impacted by child/adolescent-to-parent violence and abuse.

🌐 **Website:** apafirstresponse.org

17. Counselling and Therapeutic Support Services

The trauma of enduring an abusive relationship can linger for many months, if not years, after the relationship has ended. Many survivors find that counselling allows you to discuss your feelings, problems, and associated issues with a trained counsellor confidentially and safely.

The goal is to help you understand yourself better and come to terms with what has happened to you, gaining greater self-esteem and self-confidence in the process.

Counsellors will not tell you what to do, but they may ask questions that help you talk about your experiences and emotions and explore ways to move forward and gain control of your life.

Ascent Pan London Counselling Services

Specialist counselling for women and girls who have experienced gender-based violence, including rape, childhood sexual abuse, trafficking, and domestic violence.

☎ **Telephone:** 020 7610 4678

✉ **Email:** AscentCounselling@wgn.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.wgn.org.uk/service/ascent-counselling

Woman's Trust

Confidential counselling and emotional support for women affected by domestic abuse. They offer individual counselling available via phone/zoom, with face-to-face options also available, alongside support groups and workshops.

☎ **Telephone:** 020 7034 0303

✉ **Email:** office@womanstrust.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.womanstrust.org.uk



18. Sexual Violence

Sexual violence and abuse is any behaviour thought to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted and takes place without consent. Sexual violence and abuse can be physical, psychological, verbal or online. Any behaviour of a sexual nature that causes you distress is considered sexual violence or abuse.

Sexual violence is any kind of sexual activity or act (including online) that was unwanted or involved one or more of the following:

- pressure
- manipulation
- bullying
- intimidation
- threats
- deception
- force

In other words, any kind of sexual activity or act that took place without **consent**.

SurvivorsUK

Support for men, boys, and non-binary people affected by sexual violence.

📞 **Telephone:** 0203 598 3898

✉️ **Email:** help@survivorsuk.org

🌐 **Website:** www.survivorsuk.org

North London Rape Crisis Service

Support for women affected by rape, sexual assault, trafficking, FGM, and sexual exploitation. Referrals also available via The Angelou Project.

📞 **Helpline:** 0808 801 0305

✉️ **Email:** rapecrisis@solacewomensaid.org

The Havens – Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)

24/7 support for anyone in London who has been raped or sexually assaulted in the past 12 months. Referrals via

📞 **Urgent advice or appointments:**

020 3299 6900

Chelsea & Westminster Hospital

Support available for survivors of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence. The hospital has a team of domestic abuse links across the main hospital supported by specialist support provided by Victim Support and GALOP.

📍 **Address:** 369 Fulham Road, SW10 9NH

🌐 **Website:** www.chelwest.nhs.uk

Refugee Council - My View

My View is a talking therapy service for separated asylum-seeking children (12-21) offering 1:1 and/or group work for young people who may have experienced trafficking, war, conflict, displacement, bereavement, sexual violence, physical violence & torture, cultural alienation, and FGM.

🌐 **Website:** www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/get-help/my-view-childrens-therapy

19. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures involving the removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Most often, FGM is practiced on girls and young women under 18. FGM is not prescribed by any religion and has no health benefits. On the contrary the practice can cause life-lasting physical and psychological trauma.

It is illegal in the UK and is child abuse.

It is very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls.

It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth, and mental health.

Forward

Support for women and girls affected by FGM, forced marriage, domestic abuse, and other harmful practices.

📞 **Telephone:** 0208 960 4000

✉️ **Email:** support@forwarduk.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.forwarduk.org.uk

MIDAYE

Support in FGM offered at St Mary's Hospital, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, and Queen Charlotte Hospital including health and wellbeing groups, family support, community workshops.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 8969 7456

✉️ **Email:** contact@midaye.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.midaye.org.uk

20. Prostitution/Sex Working

'Sex work' can be prostitution, stripping or lap dancing, performing in pornography, phone or internet sex, or any other sexual services in return for money, goods, or other agreed items.

The exchange of sexual services for money is legal in the UK.

But these related activities are illegal under the Sexual Offences Act 2003:

- soliciting (trying to get clients) on the street or other public place, including someone in a vehicle
- paying for the services of a sex worker who is forced or threatened into it
- owning or managing a brothel (any premises which is used by more than one person for sex work)
- pimping (someone who has control over sex workers and the money they earn)
- advertising sexual services, including putting cards in phone boxes

A sex worker may be the target of rape, physical and sexual abuse, and robbery as offenders (often pimps or clients) as they think the crime will not be reported.

Beyond the streets

Charity offering support for women involved in the UK sex industry and working more broadly to end violence against women and girls.

📞 **Telephone:** 0800 133 7870 (Monday to Thursday, 9am-4pm, Friday 9am-12.30pm)

✉ **Email:** support@beyondthestreets.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** beyondthestreets.org.uk

National Ugly Mugs (NUM)

UK-wide charity working with sex workers to do research, design and deliver safety tools, and to provide support services to people in adult industries.

📞 **Telephone:** 0800 464 7669 (Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 4pm)

🌐 **Website:** nationaluglymugs.org

Tamar

Support for those in the sex industry affected by sexual exploitation, modern slavery, or trafficking.

🌐 **Website:** tamarwestminster.org

Rahab

Support for women involved in prostitution and survivors of sexual exploitation.

Support ranges from helping you to find somewhere safe to stay, to legal advice and support, and help accessing education, learning and job opportunities.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 7370 3901

✉ **Email:** contact@rahabuk.com

🌐 **Website:** www.rahabuk.com

Daria House (Nia)

A refuge for women who have been sexually exploited, with a particular focus on supporting women who have been exploited through their involvement in prostitution.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 7683 1270

or 07884 886 901

🌐 **Website:** niaendingviolence.org.uk/get-help/domestic-violence-and-abuse/specialist-refuges

Emma Project (Nia)

Refuge and outreach for women affected by domestic and sexual violence, including those involved in prostitution and with substance misuse.

📞 **Telephone:** 07590 712872

🌐 **Website:** niaendingviolence.org.uk/get-help/domestic-violence-and-abuse/specialist-refuges

SASH (Support and Advice on Sexual Health)

Sexual wellbeing services for people in Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham. Specialist support for people involved in sex work and the sex work industry.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 7851 2955

📍 **In-person clinic:** John Hunter Clinic, St Stephen's Centre, 369 Fulham Road SW10 9HN (Thursday, 9.30am-5pm)

✉ **Email:** info@SASHLondon.org

🌐 **Website:** www.sashlondon.org

21. Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not, or cannot, give their consent (agree) to the marriage. It is different from an arranged marriage, where both individuals freely agree to getting married.

Forced marriages can affect people of any age, gender, background, or nationality. It is not limited to young people. Adults can also be victims too.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will may be:

- **Physical:** for example, threats, physical violence, or sexual violence
- **Emotional and psychological:** for example, making someone feel like they are bringing 'shame' on their family
- **Financial abuse:** for example taking someone's wages, may also be a factor.

It is illegal in the UK to:

- Force someone to marry
- Take someone abroad to force them into a marriage (even if the forced marriage does not take place)
- Marrying someone who cannot legally or mentally consent to the marriage

Forced Marriage Unit

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and Home Office unit. It provides support both in the UK and overseas. The FMU can help with:

- Safety advice for victims and professionals
- Provide assistance when an unwanted spouse is due to move to the UK ('reluctant' sponsor cases)
- Assistance repatriating victims overseas (help returning people home).

📞 **Telephone:** 020 7008 0151

✉ **Email:** fmu@fcdo.gov.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage



22. Honour-Based Abuse

Honour-based abuse is a crime or incident committed to protect or defend the 'honour' of a family or community. It is often used to justify controlling, harmful, or violent behaviour.

This type of abuse may occur when someone is seen to have brought 'shame' or dishonour' by:


- Having a relationship or marrying someone not approved by their family or community
- Being in an LGBTQIA+ relationship
- Separating or divorcing someone your family or community approved of
- Talking to certain people
- Having sex before marriage
- Becoming pregnant or giving birth outside of marriage
- Wear clothes your family or community think are inappropriate
- Misusing drugs or alcohol
- Accessing higher education
- Challenge religious or cultural expectations


People who carry out honour-based abuse are often close family members but may also include extended family or community members.

Honour-based abuse may be difficult to identify but it is a serious crime. Support is available to help victims stay safe and access protection.

Karma Nirvana


Support for individuals facing Honour-Based Abuse.

 **Telephone:** 0800 5999 247

 **Website:** karmanirvana.org.uk

Sharan Project

U.K. based charity providing support and advice to vulnerable women, particularly of South Asian origin, who have been or are at risk of being disowned due to abuse or cultural conflict. This includes forced marriage, domestic abuse, honour-based abuse, dowry violence and sexual identity.


 **Urgent telephone:** 0844 504 3231


 **Email:** info@sharan.org.uk

 **Website:** www.sharan.org.uk

Shpresa

Support for the Albanian speaking community including the 'Breaking the Chains' project aimed at children and young people fleeing traffickers, blood feuds, honour-based violence, and organised crime in Albania.

 **Telephone:** 020 7511 1586

 **Website:** shpresaprogramme.org

23. Girls in Gangs and Criminal Exploitation

Girls and young women are increasingly targeted and affected by gang involvement and exploitation. They may be:

- Used to transport drugs or weapons
- Emotionally or financially dependent on gang members
- Recruited to exploit others to avoid their own abuse at the hands of gang members
- Subjected to sexual abuse and coercive control

Coercive control is often used to manipulate and dominate victims, Historically associated with domestic abuse, coercive control is built on a foundation of trust, where the victim shares intimate experiences and information with the perpetrator, including personal dreams and fears. It is different from other forms of abuse, because abusers leverage the trusted information to exert influence or control over their victim. As such, women and girls involved in gangs are often both perpetrator and victim, actively recruiting other young people to avoid their own sexual and criminal exploitation.

Abianda

Abianda is a charity that works with young women and girls (up to 25) providing direct services to those affected by criminal exploitation and violence.

🌐 **Website:** www.abianda.com/contact-us

Westminster Integrated Gangs and Exploitation Unit (IGXU)

Multi-agency service aiming to reduce youth violence and exploitation in Westminster.

☎ **Telephone:** 0797 1920 552

✉ **Email:** integratedgangsunit@westminster.gov.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.westminster.gov.uk/igxu

St Giles Trust

National charity providing specialist services for young women and girls at risk of criminal exploitation including those impacted by poverty, unemployment and the criminal justice system.

🌐 **Website:** www.stgilestrust.org.uk

Redthread

National charity delivering youth work in hospitals and health settings for young people affected by violence, exploitation, grooming, and modern slavery.

☎ **Telephone:** 020 3744 6888

✉ **Email:** info@redthread.org.uk

🌐 **Website:** www.redthread.org.uk/young-womens-service


24. Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Modern slavery is an umbrella term which encompasses human trafficking, slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. Simply put, modern slavery describes a situation where someone is made to do something, and another person gains from this.

Support is available for survivors, including emergency accommodation, legal advice, and long-term recovery services.


The Amari Project (Solace)

Second stage supported housing for women sexually exploited through trafficking or prostitution. Referral required.

 **Website:** www.solacewomensaid.org/our-services/amari-project


Modern Slavery Helpline

24/7 confidential support for survivors or modern slavery.

 **Telephone:** 0800 808 3733


The Connection at St Martins


Support for people rough sleeping in London, including survivors of modern slavery.

 **Website:** www.connection-at-stmartins.org.uk/get-help-homelessness

Caritas Bakhita House


Caritas Bakhita House is a safe house for women who have been trafficked, enslaved or exploited. They offer a safe environment and tailored, trauma-informed support to help guests begin their journey of recovery.


 **Email:** bakhitahouse@rcdow.org.uk


 **Website:** www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/bakhita-house

Hope at Home

Hope at Home provides move-on accommodation by matching survivors of modern slavery with volunteer host households. This is an independent, voluntary, adult to adult living arrangement facilitated by Hope at Home.


 **Telephone:** 07877447341


 **Email:** info@hopeathome.org.uk


 **Website:** www.hopeathome.org.uk

Olallo House

Olallo House offers short-term accommodation for people affected by homelessness of all genders who have migrated to the UK. The house provides hot meals, job search support and 1 to 1 keyworker support.

 **Criteria:** No recourse to public funds and those not entering the NRM are welcome

 **Telephone:** 07725927908
or 020 7380 6020


 **Email:** enquiries@sjog.org.uk

 **Website:** www.sjog-olallo.uk

The Passage – Modern Slavery Support Service


Support for homeless survivors of modern slavery in Westminster. Includes one-to-one key workers support, access to health and mental health support, and help with welfare, benefits and signposting to legal aid. Emergency accommodation can be provided under a multi-agency case conference (MACC).


 **Email:** modernslavery@passage.org.uk

 **Website:** www.passage.org.uk/modern-slavery

Barnardo's Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service


Barnardo's provides an Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service (ICTGs) for children who have been trafficked. All trafficked children residing in London should be referred to Barnardo's ICTG Service.


 **Telephone:** 0800 043 4303 (available 24/7)

 **Website:** www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/protecting-children/trafficked-children

ECPAT UK

Tailored support for trafficked and exploited young people (aged 15–25) in London that enables them to learn valuable life skills, access peer support, ease their trauma and understand their rights.

 **Email:** youth@ecpat.org.uk

 **Website:** www.ecpat.org.uk

Helen Bamber Foundation

Human Rights charity which offers support for survivors of modern slavery, including legal and therapeutic support.

📞 **Telephone:** 020 3058 2022

✉️ **Email:** referrals@helenbamber.org

🌐 **Website:** www.helenbamber.org

Hestia Phoenix Project

Hestia provides safe houses and outreach support to victims of modern slavery in London. Includes legal and mental health support.

✉️ **Email:** phoenixproject@hestia.org

🌐 **Website:** www.hestia.org

Justice & Care - Victim Navigators

Victim Navigators acts as a bridge between survivors of modern slavery and the Police, providing advice on victim care and safety.

✉️ **Email:** hello@justiceandcare.org

🌐 **Website:** www.justiceandcare.org

The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army can provide emergency accommodation to victims/survivors of modern slavery who are destitute. They also act as the prime contractor for managing support for adult survivors of modern slavery in England and Wales.

📞 **Telephone:** 0800 808 3733 (available 24/7)

🌐 **Website:** www.salvationarmy.org.uk/modern-slavery

Sophie Hayes Foundation

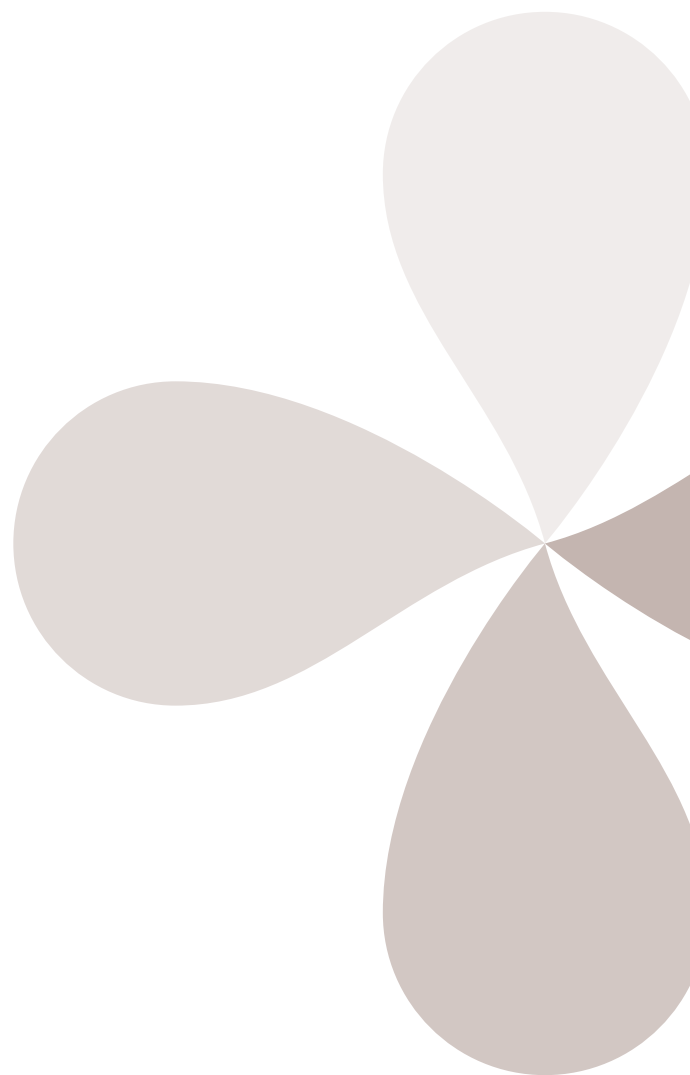
Charity helping women survivors (18+) of modern slavery and exploitation to rebuild and develop the skills and confidence to help them become self-sufficient and independent.

🌐 **Website:** www.sophiehayesfoundation.org

The Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Project – British Red Cross

Specialist project working across London with women with insecure immigration status who have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, modern day slavery, forced marriage, and FGM. Support includes one-to-one advocacy and help with immigration, safety, housing, health and integration.

✉️ **Email:** LondonGBVproject@redcross.org.uk



25. Legal Advice

Legal Advice Centre (South Westminster)

Free, independent legal advice to Westminster residents on a low income.

🌐 **Website:** www.swlac.org

✉ **Email:** swlac@live.com

Legal Advice Clinic (The University of Westminster)

Free legal advice in four areas: housing, family, employment and immigration

🌐 **Website:** www.uowlegaladviceclinic.org.uk

☎ **Phone:** 020 3506 9626

Rights of Women

Free legal advice for women experiencing all forms of violence.

🌐 **Website:** www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

☎ **Phone:** 0207 251 6577



26. Other Services

Cats Protection Lifeline

Free fostering service for cats whose families are fleeing domestic abuse

🌐 **Website:** www.cats.org.uk/what-we-do/cp-lifeline

☎ **Phone:** 0300 012 1212

Dogs Trust Freedom

Free fostering service for dogs whose families are fleeing domestic abuse

🌐 **Website:** www.dogstrustfreedom.org.uk

☎ **Phone:** 0303 003 0000

Citizens Advice (Westminster)

Support for anybody needing independent advice for their problems.

🌐 **Websites:** www.citizensadvice.org.uk and www.westminstercab.org.uk

☎ **Phone:** 0808 278 7834 (Westminster)
0800 144 8444 (National)

The Listening Place

In-person emotional support for those who feel that life is no longer worth living.

🌐 **Website:** www.listeningplace.org.uk

☎ **Phone:** 020 3906 7676

27. Glossary

BAME: Black Asian Minority Ethnic

BAME is an acronym that stands for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic.

Global Majority

The “global majority” refers to people who are not white, encompassing various ethnic and racial groups. It’s a term used to describe the collective group of Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and/or those who have been racialized as “ethnic minorities,” representing a significant portion of the world’s population.

CAPVA: Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse

The dynamic where a young person (8 years -18 years) engages in repeated abusive behaviour towards a parent or adult carer. Abusive behaviour can include physical violence; emotional, economic or sexual abuse; and coercive control. It may also include damage to property and abuse towards other family members, particularly siblings.

CCE: Child Criminal Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation (CCE) takes a variety of forms but ultimately it is the grooming and exploitation of children into criminal activity.

CJS: Criminal Justice System

A broad term encompassing all the agencies and institutions involved in enforcing criminal laws, prosecuting offenders, and rehabilitating those who have committed crimes.

CSE: Child Sexual Exploitation

“Child sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they’re in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol.

They may also be groomed online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

NSPCC

CSA: Child Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

HM Government, 2015

CSP: Community Safety Partnership

A collaboration of local organisations and agencies working together to reduce crime and disorder in a community. It’s established by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and involves “responsible authorities” such as police, local authorities, and other key services. The core function of a CSP is to develop and implement strategies to address issues like crime, anti-social behavior, and drug misuse, often by pooling resources and expertise.

CYP: Children and Young People

DARDR (previously DHR): Domestic Abuse Related Death Review

A review carried out when a person has died as a result of abuse, violence or neglect by a relative, intimate partner or member of the same household.

DASH: Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment

DASH stands for domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'- based abuse. The DASH risk checklist helps practitioners identify and understand the risk that victims of domestic abuse are facing.

MVDAC (previously DDVC): Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse Concession

The Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse Concession (MVDAC) enables certain people who have leave to enter or remain as a partner to gain access to public funds following a relationship breakdown with their partner due to domestic abuse.

DV/DA: Domestic Violence/ Domestic Abuse

A pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. In extreme cases this includes murder.

Home Office

FGM: Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but there's no medical reason for this to be done. FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts. It's illegal in the UK and is child abuse. It's very painful and can seriously harm the health of women and girls. It can also cause long-term problems with sex, childbirth and mental health.

NHS

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is a marriage, which takes place against your will; or a marriage that you agreed to, but you did not really have a choice.

Rights of Women

GBV/GBA: Gender Based Violence/ Gender Based Abuse

Violence that is directed against a women because she is a woman, or that affects women disproportionately and declares it to be a form of discrimination against women that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedom on a basis of equality with men.

The Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) definition

Harmful Practices

Harmful practices are forms of violence which have been committed primarily against women and girls in certain communities and societies for so long that they are considered, or presented by perpetrators, as part of accepted cultural practice. The most common are forced or early marriage, so called 'honour' based violence and female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM).

NHS Health Scotland

HBV/HBA: Honour Based Violence/ Honour Based Abuse

The concept of 'honour' is for some communities deemed to be extremely important. To compromise a family's 'honour' is to bring dishonour and shame and this can have severe consequences. The punishment for bringing dishonour can be emotional abuse, physical abuse, family disownment and in some cases even murder.

Karma Nirvana

IDVA: Independent Domestic Violence Advocate

These are trained professionals who provide specialist support and advocacy to victims of domestic abuse, helping them to become and remain safe. IDVAs are not part of a court and work independently from other agencies to ensure the best support for victims.

ISVA: Independent Sexual Violence Advocate

ISVA stands for Independent Sexual Violence Advocate. These are professionals who are independent from the police and criminal justice system, who can support you through

the criminal justice process if you chose to report an incident of sexual violence that has been committed against you.

LGBTQIA+

An acronym commonly used to describe people who are lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace.

MARAC: Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference

A meeting held to discuss and share information about high-risk domestic abuse cases, with the goal of developing a coordinated safety plan to protect victims from serious harm or murder.

MAPPA: Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements

A system in England and Wales designed to protect the public by managing the risks posed by certain violent and sexual offenders living in the community. It involves different agencies, including the police, probation, and prison services, working together to assess and manage these risks

Multiple Disadvantage

Multiple disadvantage refers to experiencing a combination of two or more significant challenges or problems, such as homelessness, mental illness, substance misuse, or criminal justice involvement. These issues can often overlap and compound, making it difficult for individuals to address their needs and improve their lives.

NRPF: No Recourse to Public Funds

A person will have no recourse to public funds when they are 'subject to immigration control'. A person who is subject to immigration control cannot claim public funds (benefits and housing assistance), unless an exception applies.

NRM: National Referral Mechanism

The NRM, or National Referral Mechanism, is a UK government process for identifying and supporting potential victims of modern slavery and human trafficking. It's a framework that ensures individuals believed to be trafficking

victims receive appropriate protection, support, and guidance, including a 30-day "rest and recovery" period if deemed a victim.

Perpetrator

The perpetrator is the person who has committed the act of violence against another person.

SARC: Sexual Assault Referral Centre

A Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is a specialised facility that provides medical, practical, and emotional support to individuals who have experienced rape or sexual assault. SARCs offer services like forensic medical examinations, medical help for injuries, pregnancy and STI tests, and support from trained professionals. They are designed to be a safe and confidential space for individuals to access services and support.

SV/SA: Sexual Violence/Sexual Abuse

"Any physical, visual or verbal sexual act, or attempt to carry out a sexual act, that is experienced by the woman or girl (at the time or later) as a threat, invasion or assault that has the effect of hurting her or degrading her and /or takes away her ability to control intimate contact."

Liz Kelly 1984

VAWG: Violence Against Women and Girls

Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

UN General Assembly, 1993

VS: Victim Survivor

Victim-Survivor acknowledges the reality of vulnerability and triumph as well as the need to acknowledge various connected oppressions that can further complicate the already traumatic experience of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and abuse.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this directory. However RBKC and Westminster (Councils) do not accept any responsibility or liability for any errors, in accuracies or omissions, nor for any loss or damage or inconvenience caused by relying on this information.

Inclusion in this directory does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement of any service providers. Users are advised to verify all details directly with the provider and ensure they meet their own requirements before engaging services.

**If you need further information,
please email: VAWG@RBKC.gov.uk**

Get in touch if:

- You are not sure which service is the most appropriate for you and you would like further guidance
 - You have any questions, comments or concerns
-

Footnote

This Directory produced by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council – VAWG Team

Disclaimer:

We take no responsibility for any of the referrals or for any of the services listed.