

ACHIEVEMENT  
AWARDS 2020

THE **MJ**

# MJ AWARDS **SUBMISSION**

*Delivering Better Outcomes*

**East Riding of Yorkshire Council**

*Bridlington Partnership Approach  
to Tackling Domestic Abuse*



## BACKGROUND

The Bridlington Early Intervention project was commissioned towards the end of 2016 by Humberside Police in partnership with East Riding of Yorkshire Council. The initial scope of the project was to explore how agencies could work more effectively together to develop partnership approaches to reduce demand on frontline activity, ensuring people feel safe and are safe, and improving future prospects.

The project aimed to understand the link between vulnerability within the community and the demand this generates on frontline services. Although the project focused on a range of presenting issues, it became apparent over time that domestic abuse was a recurrent theme. Domestic abuse was not always the primary presenting issue, but a picture began to emerge of it being a significant contributing factor in many fractured or troubled families.

A target cohort for consideration emerged, comprising individuals experiencing domestic abuse who have previously refused, or were unable to engage with, existing support services due to the chaotic nature of their lifestyles.

## METHOD

**In March 2018, a partnership workshop was facilitated by East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Transformation Team to identify existing datasets to provide intelligence in Bridlington and understand the town's issues and priorities. Seven overarching, multi-agency themes were identified.**

One of these was Domestic Abuse. Sixteen different services attended the workshop and discussed data for each of the themes. This exercise could only identify six existing datasets relating to domestic abuse. These datasets related to **confirmed** incidents of domestic abuse. It became apparent that this information was recorded post-incident and therefore highly reactive. There was no way of identifying in which cases a preventative approach may have averted the incident or where offers of support from agencies had been unsuccessful. This felt like a significant gap in both data and provision.

To understand what the existing partnership offer looked like, Humberside Police's Early Intervention Team (EIT) attended MARAC, the multi-agency risk assessment conferences for high-risk domestic abuse cases. Additionally, time was spent working alongside colleagues in East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Domestic Abuse Team (DVAP). It soon became clear that, inevitably, those refusing to engage received very little support and were often repeat frontline service users. On many occasions service reliance was linked directly to underlying issues including mental health, substance misuse and coercive control.

These individuals require intensive support and DVAP were not sufficiently resourced to provide this level of intervention. This cohort often failed to engage with other much needed support such as substance misuse services or mental health services. Owing to the cyclical nature of their chaotic lifestyles they failed to attend appointments, or even engage at all, compounding their vulnerability.

They became trapped in a revolving door where services were not able to provide support effectively or intensively enough. Although this behaviour was evident in domestic abuse survivors, perpetrators often exhibited the same presenting issues.

## RESPONSE

An appropriate intervention was required to tackle domestic abuse-related vulnerability within the community. Initially, the EIT struggled to establish a rapport with and buy-in from service users. On self-reflection, their approach of adopting traditional policing methods derived from a position of authority, was ineffective with this cohort. On the contrary, it had an alienating effect. The target cohort, experiencing chaotic and difficult lifestyles, required a far more intensive and personalised intervention.

### **Training**

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The EIT and East Riding of Yorkshire Council colleagues undertook specialised engagement training designed and delivered by psychotherapists. This provided a new skillset and altered perspectives to suit this kind of activity. The EIT also undertook bespoke coaching skills training delivered by Humberside Police coaching network. Originally this network was used to improve staff resilience and performance within the organisation. However, the EIT saw an opportunity to utilise these skills while working with service users.

Conventional attitudes towards domestic abuse were challenged in the EIT, providing an opportunity to reframe perceptions. Further training was arranged exploring the drama triangle, a social model conceived by Stephen Karpman to map conflicted or drama-intense relationships. It defines three roles in conflict: persecutor, rescuer and victim. Customised training was developed and delivered in-house to encourage officers to understand their position when intervening into complex intensive relationships.

### **Engagement**

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Application of these new skills and techniques has made a demonstrable difference. Engagement with service users has been far more fruitful.

To build on this breakthrough an intervention package was designed, drawing on clinical research into domestic abuse by Dr Lynn Hawker, Roark, Karpman and Choy and others. The resulting package consisted of:

- **planting seeds with service users to understand the dynamics of a toxic relationship against a healthy relationship**
- **raising awareness of criminal aspects of that relationship, including coercive control legislation**
- **giving clarity about what support, pathways and options are available**
- **respecting a service user's responsibility to make informed choice**
- **conducting personal safety plans with service users to encourage safety while highlighting the potential danger in their current situation.**

The team also created a practical 'follow-up welfare visit' pack, used as an aid to stimulate meaningful conversations about domestic abuse. It also provides an opportunity to build rapport with service users and to assess what longer term support might be required to assist them into targeted services, build their own personal resilience or keep them safe in the community.

## **Referrals**

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Through MARAC, cases are identified and allocated relating to high risk survivors who have not previously engaged with other MARAC partners, either through choice or because of their vulnerability. As part of the MARAC discussion, strategies of engagement are agreed which often requires liaison with other services to explore opportunities for establishing contact. This is highly important in that it establishes partner engagement and joint-working.

Secondly, the project receives direct referrals from DVAP for those assessed as medium risk who have not engaged with the service. An approach in the community is made as a 'follow up welfare visit' as described above. This presents an excellent opportunity to assess further safety needs, gather intelligence and assess opportunities for support.

## **Partnership ownership**

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Initially, there was difficulty in gaining full partner engagement. For example, those individuals with a dual diagnosis of mental health and substance misuse had difficulty accessing services. Mental health services would refuse to engage with the individual because of intoxication, while substance misuse services would struggle to engage because of their chaotic mental health presentation.

In reality those who were arguably the most vulnerable were receiving little or no support, effectively falling between the cracks of services. To resolve this problem, an Adults' Operational Meeting (AOM) was established with attendance from statutory stakeholders. This provides a platform for agencies to meet and discuss hard-to-reach complex cases and plan appropriate support. These conversations are now happening in real time in the spirit of collaboration, and reducing duplication of effort across partners.

## **Review mechanisms**

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A data-recording system was developed by East Riding of Yorkshire Council and the EIT to allow accurate recording and monitoring of activity, recording individual-level data for every case the EIT holds. Progress is monitored and evaluated throughout the intervention and beyond, culminating in post-closure evaluation in order to learn lessons and adapt practice as appropriate.

The approach taken with establishing rapport, building confidence and offering support has effected change and Humberside Police are now looking to mainstream this approach. Many of the vulnerable people the project works with already form multi-agency's core business. The culture change achieved can be replicated through the acquisition of new skills, perspectives and strategies. This will allow us to achieve outcomes in different, more effective and cost-effective ways.

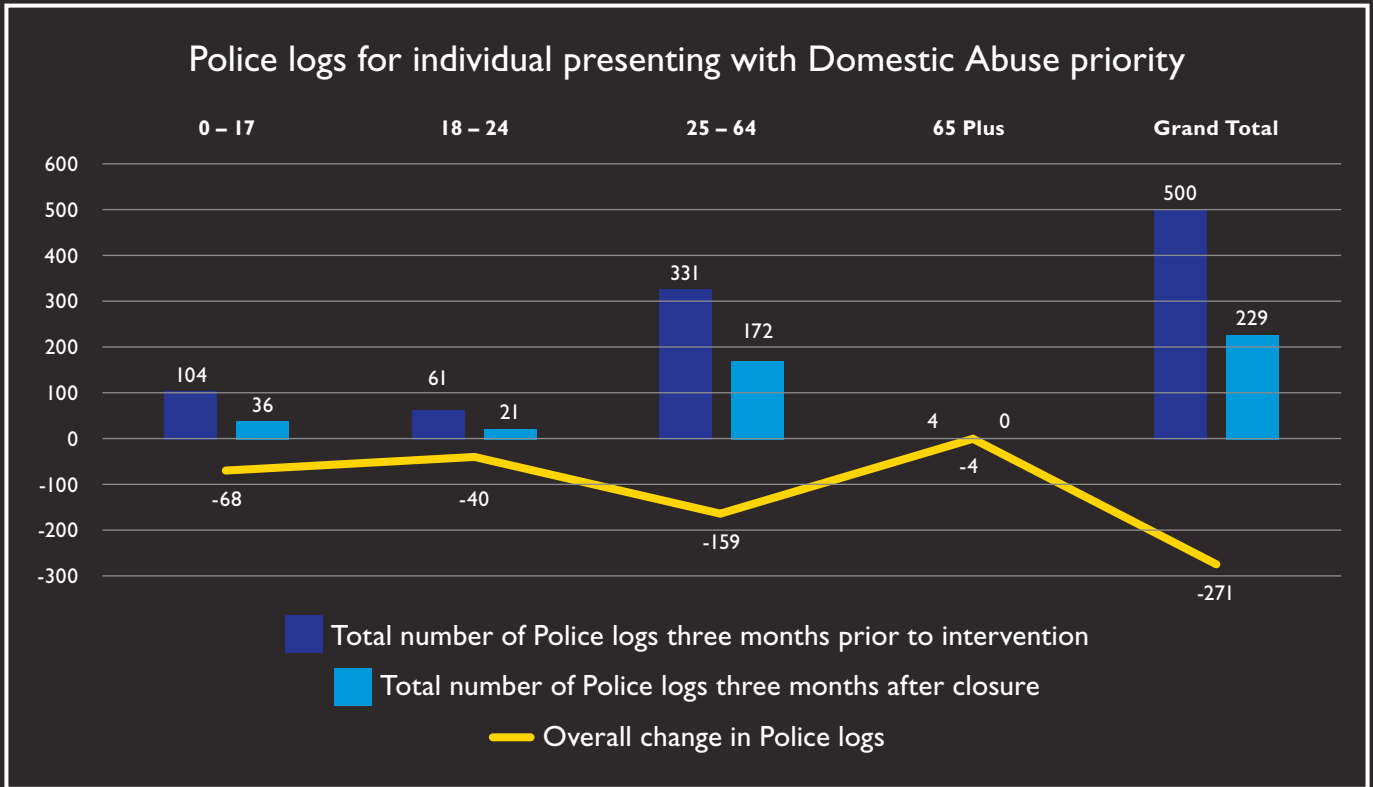
# **EVALUATION**

**The working relationships forged through addressing the gap in provision for this vulnerable group in the Bridlington community are producing positive results in tackling domestic abuse.**

The data recording system itemises police logs and crime logs for all individuals worked with, along with a detailed account of the presenting needs of the case and the desired outcomes. Intervention work is not time-bound, as it is not restricted by any statutory duty. Support provided is tailored to the individual needs of the service user, and can be short-term or intensive according to need. Individuals can, of course, refuse an offer of support. Case details are documented in the recording system to allow data to be analysed and outcomes measured.

## Evidencing impact

Our data evaluation evidences reduced demand on frontline police resources for the cohort with a presenting priority of domestic abuse:



Using unit costs for the impact on victims of domestic abuse established by the Home Office in January 2019, the average cost per victim is £34,015, broken down as follows:

Costs in anticipation	Costs as a consequence				Costs in response				Total
	Physical and emotional harm	Lost output	Health services	Victim services	Police costs	Criminal legal	Civil legal	Other	
£5	£24,300	£7,245	£1,200	£370	£645	£170	£70	£5	£34,015

The Police costs figure of £645 has been used to demonstrate cost reduction in relation to DA incidents. The project has overseen a reduction of 278 police logs up to June 2019. This compares log activity during the three months prior to intervention, and then three months post intervention closure. Using these figures this represents a Police cost prevention of £179,310.

The same cohort can also be tracked against crime log data. This demonstrates an overall reduction in crime logs of 174 for the same period.

From the outset, partnership working has been key, it is important that partners can also evidence improvement. The council's DVAP team data evidences a marked decrease in referral rates from the area as the approach has become embedded:

	Referrals	Reduction
2016	816	—
2017	771	-6%
2018	457	-41%

## Social Value

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As part of our evaluation process, a Social Value report has been commissioned by East Riding of Yorkshire Council to quantify wider social, economic and environmental outcomes. The Social Value Engine (SVE) uses the Bristol Accord to evaluate the impact of intervention work on Bridlington as a place and a community. The Bristol Accord establishes eight key characteristics which combine to create communities in which people would want to live and work. These are:

- 1 Active, inclusive and safe
- 2 Well run
- 3 Well connected
- 4 Well served
- 5 Environmentally sensitive
- 6 Thriving
- 7 Well designed and built
- 8 Fair for everyone

The SVE works with those involved in the project and looks to evidence outcomes and their tangible value. It takes into account external influencing factors, looking at what might have happened anyway, or any other attributable support which could have had an impact. Finally, it calculates the Social Return on Investment by establishing a monetary value for the outcomes delivered by the project.

The value of the collaborative approach in Bridlington is evident in both qualitative and quantitative evidence. The SVE report states that for this cohort of domestic abuse affected individuals, there is a resulting social return on investment of £5.17 per £1 spent.

To ensure a full range of evaluative information was available for the SVE, individuals were revisited for additional discussions on their experiences. The outcomes from these discussions provided valuable insight into how their life had changed. It demonstrates the worth of the intervention work, and the progress individuals have made in their life. Below are some of the extracts provided by service users in these discussions:

### Person A

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*“Depressed on anti-depressants from the doctor due to bullying at school. I had stomach ache a lot and was tired all the time. I was getting physically hurt trying to protect me mum from my dad due to the fights and arguments between them. I was getting into fights with friends. I was smoking a lot and going missing from home. I did not go to school for a whole year due to the bullying. I was not sleeping well as I was going missing in the early hours of the morning when mum and dad came home from their night out that’s when the fights started so I was wandering the streets at 1a.m in the morning which after working with the PCSO I realised how dangerous this was but at the time I just didn’t think about it I just had to get out of the house.*

*After the PCSO got involved she got social services involved with the family and DVAP. I am now back in school full time and I am not on any medication from the doctor. I still smoke but not as much. I don’t go missing at all from home as I am happier now. I still see my dad and enjoy spending time with him.”*

## Person B

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*“At present my health is improving after a detox from alcohol. I have hospital and GP visits as per appointments but I have not any recent A&E visits which was common place whilst drinking alcohol. I have not had any DV incidents since ending a violent relationship and I am currently abstinent from alcohol which I intend to stick with after years of alcohol abuse which has resulted in health and relationship problems”*

## Person C

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*“The changes that have taken place have made me a better person. I no longer have the issues with my mother so the abuse I would show to my mum has stopped I have also stopped getting into trouble at school and my education has improved of which now my grades for GCSE will be better than projected. All of this has taken place over the last six months.”*

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