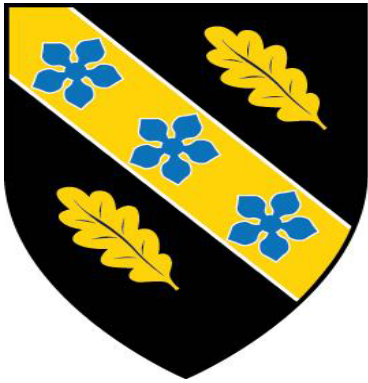




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In light of academic research into the policing of domestic and intimate partner abuse of women, how far could Gwent Police's policies and procedures be said to be a model of good practice?

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Degree title - Policing Practice

Word count – 7,081

Declaration

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed: E Marsh

Date: 07/04/25

STATEMENT 1

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of BA.

Signed: E Marsh

Date: 07/04/25

STATEMENT 2

This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed: E Marsh

Date: 07/04/25

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I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for interlibrary loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

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Abstract

Two women a week in the United Kingdom die by femicide, most at the hands of a current or former intimate partner. In most cases, there has been a previous history of domestic violence, which forms part of a recognised pattern of escalation. As such it is a policing priority.

This dissertation analyses policies and practice at one police force, Gwent, and compares them to best practice as established by comprehensive literature review.

A number of areas were identified where Gwent's practices fell short of best practice.

In particular, the policy lacks transparency or purpose with regard to training; it does not appear to take account of gendered differences in domestic violence; and opportunities for sharing local knowledge and good practice are not taken.

It is recommended that Gwent consider a domestic violence portal to give access to local expertise; that refresher training be put in place and regularly flagged; that champions be embedded within local teams, to promote the importance of policing domestic violence and impart expertise on a regular basis; and that colocation of the force's specialist team with local teams be considered.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate if Gwent police's Domestic Violence policy is considered a good model of practice in comparison to what existing literature and research shows. This chapter aims to provide the background and context for this research.

1.1 Background

Men murder two women a week in the UK, 62% of these being at the hands of a current, or former, intimate partner (Long et al., 2009).

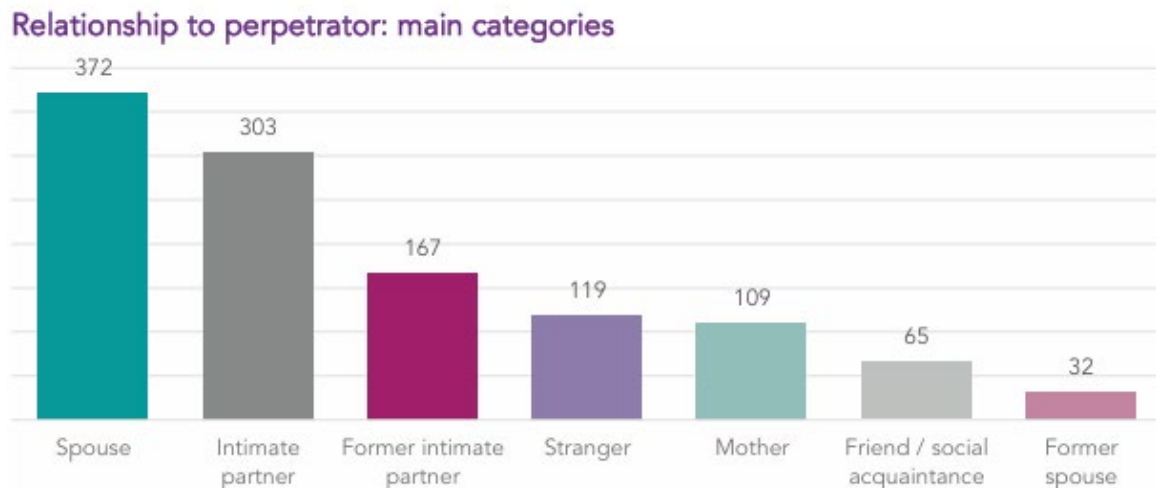


Figure 1 – Relationship to perpetrator: main categories (Source: Long et al., 2009, p11)

In at least 59% of femicides, prior abuse is evident; in almost a quarter, the police had been involved (Long et al., 2009, p17). Domestic abuse reports are part of the daily life of most police officers. It is all too easy to see them as “just a domestic”, but studies show that male abuse of women forms an escalatory pattern evident in many femicides (Monckton Smith, 2020, p12).

Domestic abuse statistics count incidents of a wide range of events, from pushing to physical injury (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2024). The headlines do not distinguish between violence and abuse, and frequently count abuse of men and of women together. While there is evidence that domestic abuse as a whole is falling, albeit slowly, femicides are not (ONS, 2018). Throughout this dissertation, literature will be presented that suggests male-on-female and female-on-male domestic violence and abuse are very different crimes which require different policing.

In short, domestic violence against women should be - and in many ways is - a priority for both government and police (Home Office, 2022b); this dissertation seeks to explore ways of doing that and test how effectively it is happening in one police force, Gwent.

1.2 Aims

This dissertation examines the following questions:

1. What does research suggest about good practice in this area, including policies, training and working with other agencies?

2. What are Gwent police's policies, how are they distributed to officers and how are officers trained?
3. How far do Gwent's practices, policies and procedures mirror best practices, and why might there be differences?

1.3 Structure

The dissertation begins with a review of academic research into policing domestic violence in the UK and elsewhere, looking for examples of good practices that make a difference in outcomes.

It then moves on to a methodology exploring how policies can be analysed. Because some policies were, surprisingly, not publicly available, the methodology encompasses two main parts: a review of available policy documents and the results of conversations with responsible officers in Gwent police, and a qualitative survey of employees focused on their experiences of policing domestic violence.

1.4 Analysis of Results

The results of the analysis of Gwent's policies and practices are then presented with reference to the literature review. These are then explored further with reference to the survey data, looking for areas where there could be links.

1.5 Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Finally, the findings are presented, including observations made of regular practice at Gwent. Several areas are explored where Gwent's practices fall short of best practice, and a series of recommendations made to improve the ways in which domestic violence is policed in Gwent.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

This chapter aims to review important and trusted research on the topic of domestic and intimate partner abuse ('DV'), as well as recommended policies and procedures for police handling these cases. It will identify critical practices and frameworks for supporting victims and examine whether these ensure an effective policing response. It is divided into four sections: the changing nature of our understanding of DV; policing difficulties identified by the review; issues around putting good policies into effect; summarising what academic research suggests about good practice in this area.

A wide variety of sources were consulted, not all of which are referenced here, but which are in the bibliography. The most pertinent and relevant sources are presented in this chapter.

2.1 The changing way we understand DV

The changing nature of our understanding of DV, particularly in seeing it as an accumulative problem rather than a series of discrete incidents, and especially the more recent development in the UK of laws around often non-violent DV, such as coercive control, and the inclusion of female-on-male DV in training, emerged immediately as a theme. Hester, (2012, p2) writes that "research from a range of methodologies not only indicates that both women and men can be violent but also highlight gender differences in the extent, severity, and impact of [DV], with women less likely to use the ongoing pattern of "battering" involving "coercive controlling tactics along with systematic threats and use of violence."

Aldridge (2020, p1824) critiques the reasoning behind and effect of "the removal of "violence" from the title of the British government's Domestic Abuse Bill". She notes "there has been no official explanation" for it; in particular she highlights that "the Home Affairs Committee called for the government to widen the DAB "to be a Violence against Women and Girls and Domestic Abuse Bill"" but that this had not happened. By equating "abuse" and "violence" in counting the numbers of incidents, important information is hidden; because a series of incidents is counted in the same way as one, "the serious repetitious and escalatory nature of male VAW in intimate relationships that points to the gendered nature of DVA" (p1835) is lost.

She reviewed the international data and found that violent abuse was highly gendered: "If you preach that it happens to men and women equally, you will not be able to understand the gender stereotyping and sexism element" (p1826). The UK government "failed to mention or acknowledge the serious violence women experience at the hands of current or former male partners, or that DVA is a gendered issue". As Aldridge says, "Kelly and Westmarland (2016) argue, "framing domestic violence in terms of incidents—whether in research, policy definitions or practice responses—reflects how violent men describe their behaviour rather than what we know from survivors"" (Kelly & Westmarland, (2016, p114), cited at Aldridge, (2020, p1825).

This framing has had serious consequences for the way in which police forces and other agencies approach DV. For example, as Aldridge says, major agencies such as the Royal College of Nursing misleadingly state that there is near parity; and tends to "...propagate the myth that men and women use violence and abuse equally in intimate relationships" (p1827).

McPhee (et al., 2021) conducted an extensive review of case attrition data across several forces in the UK. The evidence highlights significant differences between male-on-female DV and female-on-male DV.

The paper breaks down reports based on sex. The headline figure is that 20% of perpetrators were female. However, looking at it in more detail, where a female was the perpetrator, there had been previous incidents between the parties where the man was the perpetrator in more than half of cases. The reverse was not true: male victims of female reported DV tended to be one-off cases.

Women were also far more likely to be the victim of multiple incidents of recorded DV, especially where there had been a conviction. Interestingly, the study found that male-on-female violence is more likely to be prosecuted, but this is perhaps because physical assault is more likely to be prosecuted, too.

There are valuable lessons to be learned here about what a good DV policy should look like in terms of how it considers gender-based DV. The idea, embedded in UK legislation, that DV is not a gendered crime is shown to be controversial but may get carried forward into training and policy.

2.2 Policing difficulties

Bates and Hester (2020) provide an overview of this theme. The data used are from a decade ago but indicate the difficulty in developing model policies and procedures in this area.

In particular, the study looks at how civil and criminal proceedings are intertwined in the field of domestic violence.

One especially valuable insight is how patchily the civil and criminal systems connect. For example, the authors draw attention to “a mismatch in approaches to domestic violence between the family and criminal courts” (p145). Moreover, simple, practical problems are shown: the authors report that it was felt to be working well where the civil courts inform the police of (in general terms) restraining orders directly (p145) and centrally so that they know if there is a call and know to monitor the address; however, this often does not happen. Resolving such a difficulty would not be entirely within the power of a police force.

The study also shows that the shifting burden of proof between civil and criminal law is confusing for victims and police. It opens the way to possible abuse by a perpetrator, obtaining a civil order that is then criminally enforced. Another area the authors highlight is that while victims like the way that the civil orders give them control, they also fear the consequences of criminalising their partners, with the sense that because they have power, it is much more their choice.

2.3 Making a policy effective

Assessing policy effectiveness is far from straightforward. As McPhee (et al., 2021) points out, simply because there are not that many convictions, or even prosecutions, or even that many incidents that reach the threshold to be recorded as “crime”, it doesn’t mean that the system isn’t working. Often, a victim may not be seeking a conviction. For example, the authors report (p974, p977) that victims sometimes want to pull the perpetrator up short and make them think seriously about their behaviour, or they might want to save the relationship. Also, most withdrawals are because the victim withdraws support.

The study found (p977) that this sets up a clash with target driven police. Knowing, as they do, that the odds are it will fizzle out into nothing, there is a nudge towards not having it on the books. This is an area where training and policy could help because even though it might not make the figures look good, it is the right outcome to treat all incidents seriously.

Bates and Hester (2020) show sound training in this area also needs to be detailed and nuanced. Another, also shown in McPhee (et al., 2021) is that officers have a lot of discretion, so cultural and procedural shifts are required. Finally, the simple fact of the number of different initiatives in this area brings home that whatever the policy is, regular review and reinforcement of it is necessary because of the rapidity of developments in the law.

Brennan (et al., 2021) examine this difficulty in more detail. While it only looks at one small aspect of DV, coercive control, it does so in great detail. In particular, it examines arrests for coercive control before and after "model" training was given force-wide.

As expected, there was a considerable increase in the number of arrests, but much of the increase happened in the six-month run-up to the training being given. The authors speculate this was because of a cultural shift with the forces being aware that they would be scrutinised - the so-called "anticipation effect". One could infer from this that it was at least possible that simple awareness of training in areas that are culturally impacted - as DV is - would bring about improvement.

The study also finds that the effects of training fade away over time, from around eight months. "In the eight months following the initiation of training, relative rates of arrests were, in general, statistically significantly higher than yet-to-be-trained forces. After approximately eight months, the relative rate of arrests began to decrease." (p1182). Again, this feeds the inference that continual awareness of the topic is what keeps at least arrests happening. While an arrest is not necessarily a "good" outcome, it is a reasonable inference that a good policy would have an iterative approach to training, so that regular revisits and scrutiny keep the subject in officers' minds.

The model training here included things intended to produce a cultural shift, such as appointing champions within each force.

Another interesting study is Henning (et al., 2021). This is an American study which looks at how DV is policed from a very different perspective. The police force concerned had resources to respond appropriately to about 1 in 10 reported incidents, so had to prioritise. Henning used a model to predict, at the first response stage, how likely it was that a given perpetrator will recidivate.

This seems counterintuitive to the narrative that all DV should be taken seriously. Still, the paper points out that criminalising a first-time DV perpetrator might be counterproductive: his brush with the law might drive him to further incidents: "Being arrested, booked into jail, prosecuted, and convicted can have an iatrogenic effect on some individuals via lost employment opportunities, financial strain, housing instability, and reduced social support".

The suggested course of action here seeks to build on some significant differences between DV and most other crimes. In DV, there is rarely any doubt about the identity of the suspect. The authors of the report analysed pre-existing factors that would be known about a perpetrator and their victims. For example, age, ethnicity, previous reports of violence, prior convictions, known MH issues, whether there were children, how many, and who those children were, drug or alcohol abuse, and so on. They also factored in things about the incident itself - injuries sustained, use of weapons and so on.

The study found strong predictive ability in this model, something not improved upon much by, for example, interviews with the victim.

It is, therefore, worth considering whether a DV policy on the type of response should include some sort of automated triage of the suspect.

Hamilton, Harris and Powell (2019), focus on Australia, but it is relevant to this dissertation because it looks at how to deal with high-profile or repeat DV instances.

The programme being looked at, Alexis, ran in one state. It has some similarities with the MARAC system in England and Wales. MARAC is a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference, where representatives from different agencies, such as police and social services, meet to discuss high risk domestic abuse cases and develop plans for safeguarding victims.

The study is qualitative in nature - it looked at perspectives and perceptions of the professionals involved, it did not look at outcomes, such as more arrests or reduced recidivism, in a structured or quantitative way. Those interviewed included social workers, police, key workers and members of child protection services.

Stakeholders in the police in particular reported that more widely in the force, the initiative had found favour because a smaller number of better trained individuals were dealing with the more high-profile DV incidents. This meant lower stress for other officers, whose workload was reduced.

Improved collaboration was noted, largely as a result of embedding staff from different teams, such as police and social workers, together, and colocation of those responsible, so that each was aware of ongoing issues: "members emphasised that co-location was most effective when social workers were embedded within a police team (as opposed to a multidisciplinary hub model)". Having an embedded social worker relieved the police of many duties for which they felt ill qualified, leaving them more free time to do actual police work. In addition, repeat incidents were more likely to be disclosed to social workers than to the police, so reporting improved.

Respondents in this study strongly felt that having a social worker embedded in the police was preferable to co-location at a multidisciplinary hub. However, the report warns that this can result in the social worker feeling disempowered or talked over. In any event, co-location would be beyond the scope of mere policy change.

The study highlights elements of good practice that could be adopted. For example, meetings regularly were beneficial but best practice, according to this report, would ensure that all voices were equally heard, with chairing and an agenda to enable this. Some agencies were inclined to sit on information, rather than dealing with it. Finally, there were issues of accountability. For example, some agencies repeatedly missed the meetings so good policy might include senior accountability, particularly for agreed actions.

The study also suggests that good policy might require that each "address" was owned by a specific officer within the force, rather than being part of the general free-for-all of response policing. This led to better outcomes, participants felt, with more proactive approaches and officers actively reporting keeping an ear out for one of "their" addresses. Officers reported having a sense of emotional attachment that they didn't get with the more usual approach of dealing with things on an incident by incident basis.

2.4 Conclusion

There is ample literature on what makes a good policy; areas of particular concern relate to how male-on-female and female-on-male violence is addressed. While including coercive control is a positive benefit, conflating this with violence can cause problems.

There is a huge gap between making a policy and that policy being effective. Some of the barriers will be beyond the scope of a written document, and some would probably be prohibitively expensive to address. Three major sub-themes emerged here: repeatedly, under-resourcing was a problem; measuring the effectiveness of policy changes was difficult because a good outcome for a given policy might not be easily measurable; and the problem of training frequently to reinforce culture shifts.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

This dissertation explores, rather than setting out with a theory or hypothesis.

The methodology is therefore in three sections: reviewing the literature on domestic violence, especially academic research into how it is policed; analysing Gwent's policies and comparing them to the findings of that review, including exploring how effectively they are implemented; and finally, considering the reasons for any gaps or shortfalls.

A more detailed breakdown of the methods in each section follows.

3.1 Literature Review

This dissertation is qualitative rather than quantitative. Its purpose is to assess the cumulative knowledge available to inform DV policies. Because there is a vast body of such literature available, the review was iterative (Denney and Tewksbury, 2024).

Some of the basic groundwork in "reviewing the literature" involves reading textbooks on the subject. The literature review itself did not cover these but they enabled a more detailed review of academic research. The review is confined mainly to journal articles. The landscape is also affected by data on incidence, criminality and victimisation, and the review includes data published by reputable sources, such as the ONS, reports to Parliament and His Majesty's Inspectorate and so on.

3.2 Analysis of Gwent's policies

Gwent's policy is available to staff but is not publicly available.

Eugene Bardach in *A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis – The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving* (Bardach, n.d.). suggests the following steps to analyse a policy:

1. Define the problem. In this case, the problem is policing Domestic Violence in the UK
2. Assemble evidence. This consisted of the literature review, obtaining Gwent's policies and having discussions with specialists in the force (p16)
3. Consider options. What are Gwent's policy options at this time? Why? (p22)
4. Select criteria. When the options available are clear, how can we decide which to take? This will involve considering upsides and downsides to all options. (p33)
5. Project the outcomes. (p50). I had hoped to talk to those within Gwent's specialist teams, but this was not forthcoming.

The remaining steps (Decide, Confront and Tell a Story) are outside the scope of this dissertation.

3.3 Exploring Gaps and Shortfalls

This phase will consist of a staff survey and attempts to approach staff with responsibility for policy.

3.3.1 Survey of Staff

I sent out questionnaires to force members. I asked a combination of multiple-choice questions about their experiences and open questions about their attitude to the policy and to the subject. The aim was to gain useful insights into what the barriers to an effective policy might be. The precise questions (see Appendix 1 and 2) were informed by the literature

review and review of policies. Many responses, being open text, did not offer an objective critique of the policies but being subjective and discursive, were useful in guiding my findings.

3.3.2 Discussions with DV specialists

I had hoped to present my preliminary findings to the Domestic Abuse Safeguarding Team (DAST), the team that specialises in DV work, and where my assessment of good practice varies from Gwent's policies, ask them through structured questions for qualitative input. However, despite repeated requests, no-one made themselves available for this discussion.

3.3.3 Discussions with other specialists

I also contacted officers with responsibility for training. Redacted responses received are in Appendix 3.

Chapter 4 - Analysis of Results

4.1 Gwent's Policy

I had expected to find a detailed policy on subjects such as categorising calls and cases, how cases would be recorded, what agencies were available, and what training was required. The policy is however, largely administrative. There was very little that addressed anything around how DV should be policed. This was something of a blind alley as far as analysis was concerned.

Much of the policing aspect of Gwent's policy is, in effect, included in a second document, the Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment Risk Assessment (DASH). The DASH is not publicly available, but it is available to staff and has been reviewed. It is completed by the attending officer. It is a 30-question risk assessment completed with the victim of a DV incident that aims to gather more information about the relationship and helps officers provide an appropriate risk grading and safeguarding. The DASH is voluntary. Arguably, completing the DASH is part of Gwent DV policy.

Henning (et al., 2021) suggested an automated triage. The DASH goes some way towards this but is neither universal nor compulsory, and the weightings of different factors are not considered. As a result, there is a separation between attending officers, who are responsible for most of the DASH assessments, and specialists; feedback is, therefore, limited and usually merely formal. In addition, risk assessments under the DASH are not reviewed by the DAST, but high-risk assessments are reviewed by a Detective Sergeant. These, however, are patchy - whether something will be downgraded is very dependent on which Sergeant does the review, there is no formal mechanism in the policy for giving the Sergeant feedback, and, of course, because high-risk assessments are passed to CID, there is a perverse incentive for the sergeant to downgrade assessments.

4.2 Training Policy

According to the literature review, the following things were important in training on domestic violence.

1. A detailed understanding of the law in this area
2. A clear understanding of how male and female DV differed
3. Frequent refresher training
4. Training to be well-signposted

As can be seen from the response (Appendix 3), it is difficult to assess how effectively points 1 and 2 are addressed, because details of the training are not transparently available. They are subject to copyright and only a brief outline could be given. In particular, I was told that the focus is on coercive control and the following three areas:

1. Understanding the dynamics of domestic abuse
2. Understanding the reality of domestic abuse
3. How to respond effectively to reports of domestic abuse

With regard to the gendered nature of DV, nothing was apparent, although this might be included in “dynamics”.

What was clear, and surprising, was there was no compulsory refresher training; most officers receive only training in their induction year, and there is no schedule for keeping officers up to date or scheduling retraining. The response said “there is no current refresher training for the course” in reference to DA Matters, and further DA training is “sporadic”; it is not signposted.

The same officer indicated that there were some DV Champions who received training. However, I was unable to identify any Champions either through personal contacts or via the intranet.

4.3 Survey Data from Employees of Gwent Police

Based on the literature review, a series of questions was designed to see how effective Gwent’s policies were.

From the review, the themes that emerged were: there is a clear difference between male-on-female and female-on-male domestic violence; training, retraining, and culture shifts were important in making a policy effective; and there are everyday policing barriers to making the policy effective, around the length of time the incidents took, victim cooperation, and whether a conviction was perceived to be likely.

The questions are set out in Appendix 1. They were intended to address those key themes so asked about knowledge of the policy, training received, views on the gender basis of DV, and questions intended to explore why officers might discontinue investigating a DV incident.

What is your length of service?	Drop-down
Which age bracket are you in?	Drop-down
What is your gender?	Drop-down
Which department do you work in? E.g. Response, CID...	Free text
How often do you have involvement with Domestic Violence related incidents?	Drop-down
What type of involvement do you have in Domestic Violence incidents?	Free text
Are you aware there is a force DV policy?	Drop-down
Do you know where to find a copy of the force DV policy?	Drop-down
Have you received training on Domestic Violence?	Drop-down
What training have you received on DV?	Free text
How long ago did you receive this training?	Free text
Have you received refresher training?	Drop-down
If yes above, which input have you received refresher training on?	Free text
How effective/useful did you find the training you have received? (1 not useful - 5 extremely useful)	Drop-down
What barriers, if any, do you experience when dealing with Domestic Violence?	Free text
How would you respond differently to male-instigator and female-instigator Domestic Violence incidents?	Free text
If you could change one thing about how Gwent Police responds to DV, what would it be?	Free text

Figure 2 – Survey questions asked of Gwent police employees

35 responses were received. This is not sufficient for a quantitative survey but is helpful qualitatively. Both sexes were represented fairly equally; there were responses from officers and support staff; and the full range of length of service was represented. The two major groups who responded were the response team, who deal with everyday calls, and CID, who investigate crimes. It had been hoped to have specific input from the DAST, but they did not respond.

4.3.1 Demographic Breakdown

Sex of respondents

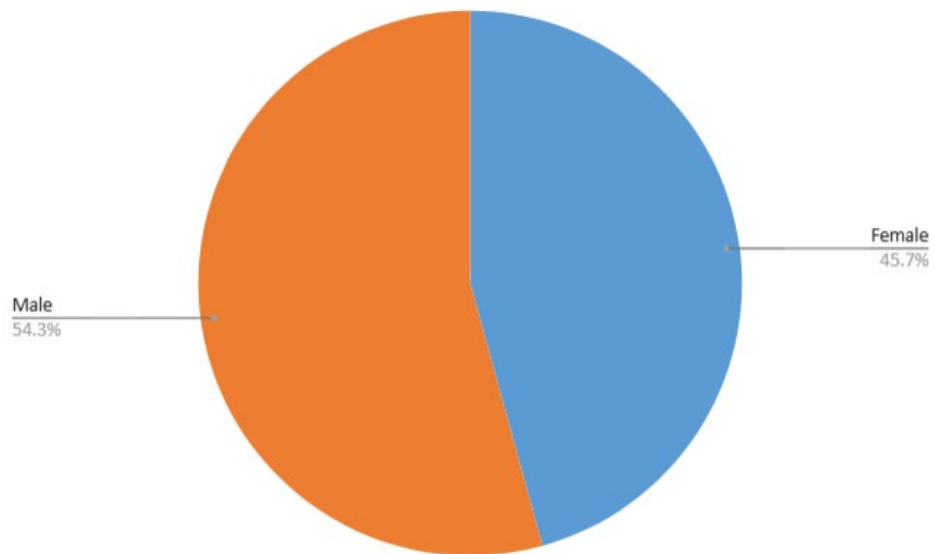


Figure 3 – pie chart showing the sex breakdown of the respondents to the employee survey

Length of Service

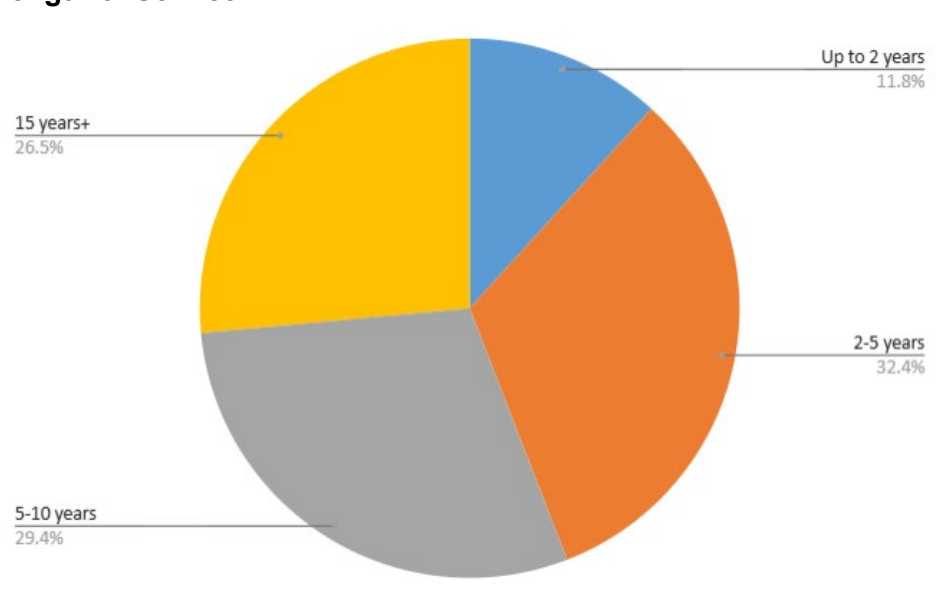


Figure 4 – pie chart showing the length of service breakdown of the respondents to the employee survey

Age

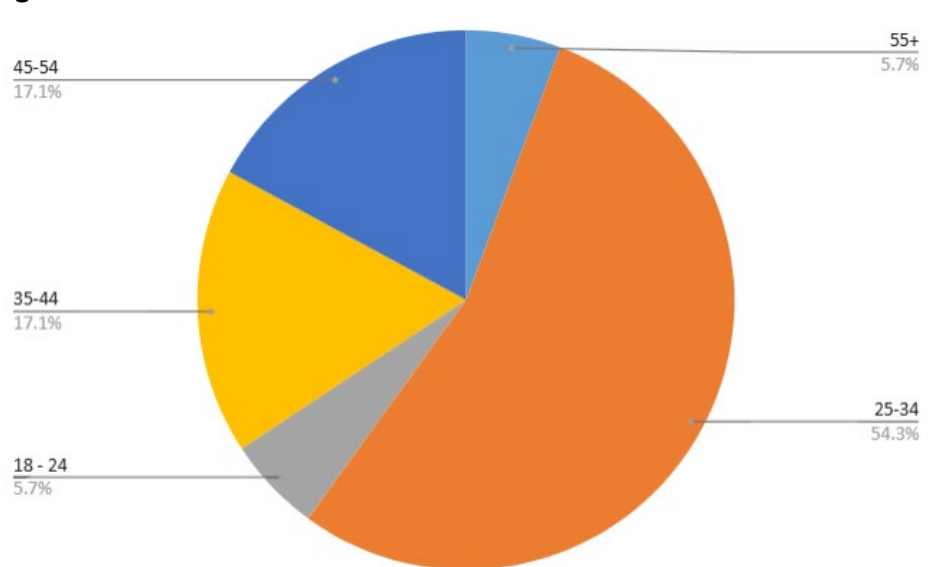


Figure 5 – pie chart showing the age breakdown of the respondents to the employee survey

Teams

The commonest team that responded was Response - these are the officers who deal with calls made. The second commonest was CID.

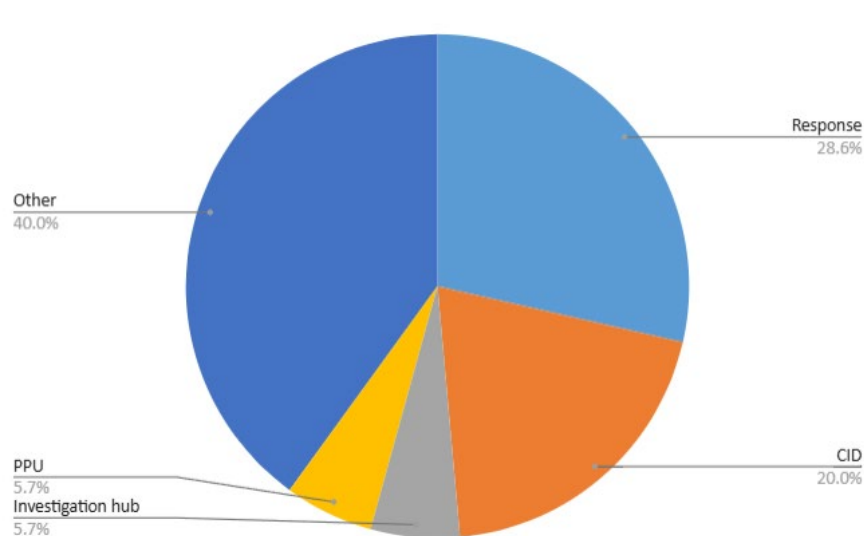


Figure 6 – pie chart showing the team breakdown of the respondents to the employee survey

4.3.2 Staff Perceptions of Barriers to Dealing with DV

The question about barriers to dealing with DV was one of several questions where the answers were free text boxes. The question was an open one: “what barriers, if any, do you experience in dealing with Domestic Violence incidents?”

The responses were mixed in terms of both detail and nature. The average response length was 160 characters, but some wrote almost ten times that amount.

Initially, a word cloud was generated to analyse themes arising from these. This displays repeated words or phrases in a bigger font, proportional to how many times they have been used. The results are here shown in figure 7:

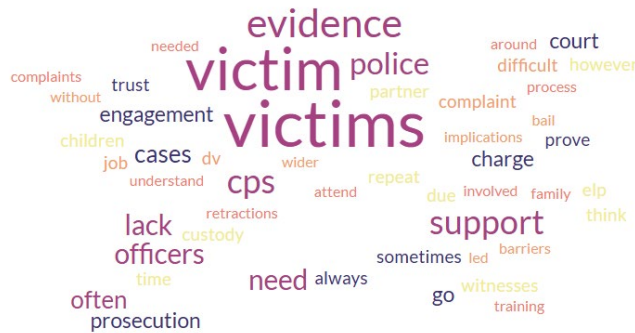


Figure 7 – word cloud showing common terms mentioned in employee survey results

It can immediately be seen that “victim” and “victims” were most often cited as the barrier to dealing with DV. This accorded with the literature review, for example the suggestions made in McPhee et al., (2021, p977) that there was often a mismatch between what those reporting DV wanted to achieve and what the police were targeted on, so that victims might call the police but not want to pursue the latter.

4.3.3 Detailed breakdown of this data

17/35 (49%) respondents used phrases like “lack of victim engagement” or “lack of victim support”. The word “victim” is used 33 times, compared with “evidence” 10 times and “support” 8 times. However, within the “victim” category, there was also considerable variation. The word was mentioned often, but for example, some officers were concerned about the victim’s welfare; some mentioned that they would pursue a case, but the victims withdrew; and some had gone a step beyond that and felt DV was not really worth pursuing as victims often withdrew. This accords with the many reasons for DV being so hard to police set out in the literature review (McPhee et al., 2021 p974, Bates & Hester, 2020)

Only 9/35 (26%) cited a lack of victim engagement as the sole reason, however, so while it features strongly, most officers on this dataset appear to think that there is at least something else that was a barrier.

Women respondents were more likely to cite victims’ lack of cooperation (85%) compared with male respondents (57%). With relatively small numbers this is probably not significant, but would be an interesting area to pursue.

There was a strong correlation between the perception of barriers and length of service. For example, 75% of officers with 1-2 years service (n=4) replied “none”. Officers with greater

seniority, in the 5 or more years range (n=17), gave a wider variety of reasons and tended to cite multiple reasons. 95% of respondents with 2-10 years' service mentioned victim cooperation as an issue, while the most experienced officers (15+ years' service) were more likely to mention resource constraints. This might reflect the different roles each officer is fulfilling. Very junior officers are all on "response" in Gwent, so they would pass on high risk cases elsewhere: this alone could account for this difference. It could, also, be because of a higher degree of reflection on the part of those officers. This is outside the scope of this dissertation.

Two respondents also suggested training as an issue. Brennan (2021) demonstrated the importance of training. Gaps identified in the survey varied from not knowing how to deal with victims (for example "officers don't know about Evidence Led Prosecutions") to charging with the wrong offence or failing to gather sufficient evidence. One respondent, however, said that the failure to gather sufficient evidence was not a training issue - he felt that the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) standards were too high, saying "...that isn't enough to satisfy the evidential test for full code/threshold, let alone for a charging decision from CPS".

Seven responses (20%) mentioned resource-related issues, such as lack of time, inability to gather evidence, and issues at the custody suite. "Time" was not a feature in the word cloud. It would have been expected, given that Brennan et al., (2021) had found that in their study area, police had the resources to respond fully to only around 1 in 10 reported incidents. However, on closer reading, while only one respondent listed "time to investigate" as a barrier, many cited things suggesting that the problems were often more accurately categorised as process related, rather than simply time-related. This also reflects the problem highlighted in the literature review that there is a complex legislative framework in operation (Bates & Hester, 2020).

4.3.4 Gender Bias

The survey asked "How would you respond differently to male-instigator and female-instigator Domestic Violence incidents?" The literature review demonstrates a difference in the nature of these types of DV. In particular, female victims are more likely to see an incident escalate (Aldridge, 2020, p1825), and in many cases a male complainant is himself a repeat perpetrator (McPhee et al., 2021, p970). However, in this survey only 9% of respondents said that they would treat a complaint differently if it was made by a man instead of a woman. One - a call handler - said that they would be more reassuring to a male complainant. Two, notably, said that where there was an alleged female perpetrator, they would try to be mindful of the possibility of a bigger picture; this suggests a deeper understanding more in accordance with academic research. Both these officers were more experienced.

4.3.5 Perceptions of training

The survey asked "How effective/useful did you find the training you have received? (1 not useful - 5 extremely useful)"

Overall, perceptions of training were high. Only one officer, a senior with 15+ years' service, said they had not been trained in DV, so around 97% of officers who responded had been trained.

The average score of 3.82 was high. 8 officers ranked the training as 5, and none ranked it 1. Only one officer ranked the training as 2, with a comment elsewhere (that they felt the training should take place in duty time) suggesting their issues were possibly procedural.

Most respondents had received further training of some sort in various modules, such as how to complete a DASH, but only one respondent mentioned refresher training, and they had not received it - they were a trainer.

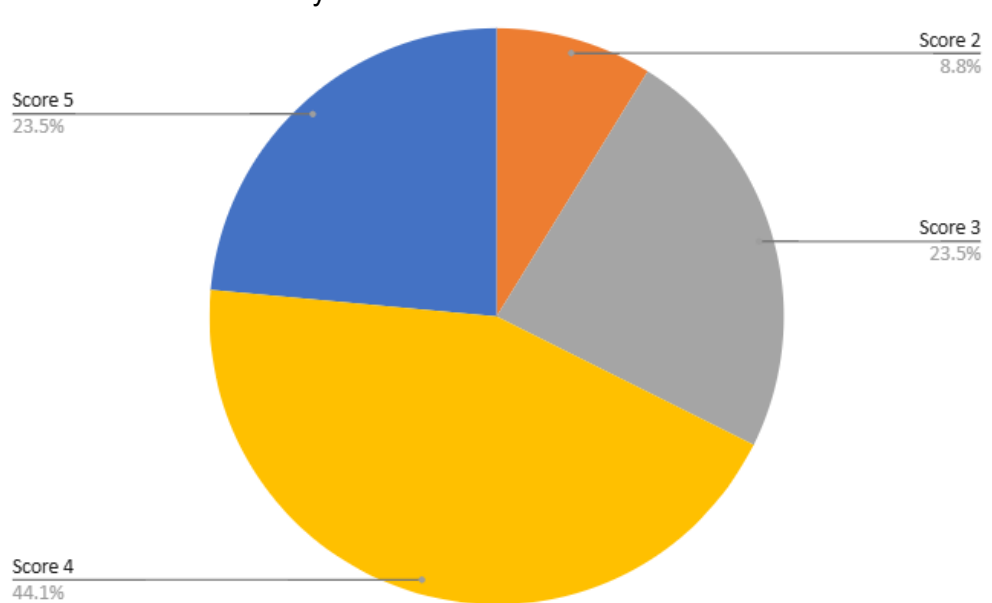


Figure 8 – pie chart showing breakdown of how effective employees found training on a scale of 1-5

4.3.6 Question: What would you change?

The survey asked “If you could change one thing about how Gwent police responds to DV, what would it be?”. The responses to this were the longest - 1165 words in total compared with 885 for the responses to the “barriers” question. The length of responses probably indicated reflectiveness on the part of the respondents and a keenness to improve, and of course, a chance to vent.

Needing more time or resources was a repeated theme (13/35) - interesting as this was not perceived as a barrier; maybe a lack of time is simply taken as read. A plurality of respondents (about 40%) wanted a more victim-led approach.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion and Recommendations

This dissertation seeks to answer three research questions, and this conclusion is framed around those questions.

5.1 What are Gwent Police's policies, how are they distributed to officers and how are officers trained:

The policy is available on the force intranet. It is, therefore, available to all officers and distributed via the intranet but it is not flagged to them nor apparently routinely intended to be consulted. The policy is administrative and directs officers to the DASH. The DASH, as discussed, is used regularly. It is in effect a checklist of factors to be considered by officers. It is not automatically weighted for seriousness of each factor nor does it trigger particular actions, and its interpretation is within officers' discretion.

I had hoped to discuss this further with the DAST, but I have not received any substantive response to my approaches.

The training team did respond. The only compulsory training is initial training, the content of which is not fixed and has changed over the years, so newer officers would receive different training to older ones; the current initial training policy on the intranet is not up to date as it still refers to older entry routes. There is no further apparent compulsory training and no mandated refresher training for officers not in the DAST team. There are occasional ad hoc training days and modules. This is also reflected in the varied responses to a question about training experiences on the survey.

I was advised that some DV Champions had been trained but could not identify any.

5.2 What does research suggest about good practice in this area, including policies, training and working with other agencies?

Revisiting the literature review, three main themes emerged. These were:

The rapidly changing nature of domestic violence presents challenges to policing, particularly around approaches to male-on-female and female-on-male violence.

Contrary to what might be expected, DV is not a gender-neutral crime (Aldridge, 2020). Violence and Abuse are not the same, nor are they similarly likely to escalate, but the legislation in the UK conflates the two (Aldridge, 2020). Both of these areas need training, a need highlighted in the literature review (Bates and Hester, 2020), to separate coercion, abuse, and violence, and to distinguish between male and female perpetrators of DV.

There is a complex legislative framework. The interplay between civil and criminal proceedings can cause considerable problems; for example, domestic violence might be proven on a civil burden of proof but not at a criminal level. This results in a complex legislative field, and some cases fall between the cracks. Again, training is highlighted as key.

Implementing a good policy can be a problem. Even the best policy can fall apart if it is not implemented well. For example, regular, comprehensive training is needed, with revisits regularly and nuanced, detailed help with changes in the law.

Best practice would likely seek to embed or co-locate services with social services.

Model training policies would include cultural shifts - for example, through “champions” - and evidence suggests this can also be achieved where retraining is flagged well in advance, universal, and regular.

5.3 How far do Gwent’s practices, policies and procedures mirror best practices, and why might there be differences?

There are a number of areas where Gwent’s policy does not appear to mirror best practice.

One area where it falls short is that it does not refer to the sex of either the victim or the perpetrator. It is expressed in gender-neutral terms. Initial training does not appear to delve into the details of the way domestic violence escalates. Because there is no compulsory further training, understanding in this area is not guaranteed.

One of the striking results of the survey data is that no officers seemed to think that they should think differently about male-on-female violence in the way suggested by the literature review. If anything, respondents seemed to think that they needed to reassure male complainants more than they would female. Only two respondents mentioned seeing a bigger picture and it is not clear what this meant. Whilst it is undoubtedly true that men who have suffered violence should be afforded sympathy and protection, prioritising this risks ignoring the well-evidenced possibility that such complaints might be part of a pattern of male abuse and means that the escalatory nature of male-on-female DV is not considered.

The DASH, the force’s major tool for assessing risk, has many good features to identify factors that might lead to escalation, but it is not gendered except for including information about pregnancies and births and for some questions about “honour based” violence. Within the policy, a lot of weight is given to the DASH. However, there is nothing in the policy about ensuring the DASH is updated nor are there different versions, for different kinds of DV, or any calculation of thresholds such as suggested in Henning et al., 2021.

Advice to victims on safety - much of which is set out in the policy - is explicitly the responsibility of the attending officer, not a DV specialist. The policy and DASH is largely a “one set of plans fits all” approach; officers will likely reel off the same responses. This might be an issue more for training than policy but the safety planning advice in the policy is vague.

The policy itself makes no mention of training. There are compulsory force training days and online learning packages, but a list of DV-related ones is not listed in this policy, is not easily available and they are not universal. The Learning and Development department response suggests there is no policy on who should be trained in what, how, or how often. The survey indicates very patchy training; no one reported receiving refresher training.

With regard to the legislative framework, there is nothing in the policy. Some information on the interplay between different orders is available on the intranet if you search for it. Again, the need highlighted in the literature review is for training (Brennan et al., 2021), not just the availability of information, and this is not there.

The lack of consistent training is one obvious area where Gwent falls short. As revealed by the survey, for example, even at a basic level not everyone knows all the agencies on offer to victims and what they help with. I have been unable to identify anywhere on the intranet where such information is collated.

There is no co-location of police with social services in Gwent. The DAST is located in police headquarters, not a police station.

Overall, there are major gaps in Gwent's policies, particularly in the area of training and in the "gender-neutral" approach it takes. While some of the shortfalls, such as co-location, are perhaps not practicable, there are several areas where Gwent could make small changes that would, based on this examination of good practice, be effective, as set out in the recommendations below.

5.4 Recommendations

Domestic abuse is estimated to cost the UK some £66bn a year - £1000 for every inhabitant in the country (Home Office, 2019). Even leaving aside the human costs, it goes without saying that it should be a priority.

Because of the restrictions on what was made available by Gwent police, it was impossible to present the full review of how DV is policed that this dissertation anticipated. One recommendation is, therefore, for greater transparency. However, possible improvements to policing have been identified.

The policy itself is a framework. It does not help an officer know how DV should be policed. It is recommended that Gwent considers creating a DV portal. This could be a starting place for including everything to do with DV and giving links to other resources, rather than ad hoc on-the-job learning, where inaccuracy can multiply, especially because the DAST team are separately located, not available 24/7, and not responsive to enquiries, and the differences highlighted between officers in their understanding of DV, especially officers with different length of experience.

Based on the limited survey results, further academic study of the effects of longevity of service on attitudes to domestic violence could be worthwhile.

If there are 'DV champions', who they are should be made available on the intranet page and promoted so those dealing with DV are aware. Ideally if they are 'champions' they should be leading training and raising awareness.

The role of the DAST team could be expanded, so that they became a dedicated DV team who liaise with other agencies and deal with investigations, as opposed to only looking at high risk cases. The evidence suggests that accuracy in identifying genuinely high risk cases is unpredictable. This could be helped by upgrading the DASH into a better tool, as suggested in Hamilton, Harris and Powell (2019) .

Hamilton, Harris and Powell (2019) found that regular meetings were helpful. Some use could be made of daily briefing time, having domestic violence as a regular feature.

In accordance with best practice, it is recommended that co-location of local services or at least of the specialist domestic abuse team be considered. This would, according to the evidence explored in this dissertation, likely deliver more effective but also more efficient services, because officers could work within their own specialisms.

Consideration could be given to making certain addresses the key responsibility of individual officers, as suggested in Hamilton, Harris and Powell (2019). In addition, some evidence suggested that best practice in approaching male-on-female as opposed to female-on-male DV was not being followed. While it is important that male victims of domestic violence are acknowledged, training should emphasise that femicide makes male-on-female DV very different to any other sort of DV.

Finally, the most significant finding was that whereas training needs to be frequent and well-signposted, this study found that training was often infrequent, patchy, and poorly recorded. It is recommended both these are addressed.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Survey questions on MS Forms

An examination of Gwent Police's response to Domestic Violence

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

The aim of this questionnaire is to explore employee's knowledge of our force's DV policy, experience of training and response to DV incidents, particularly those relating to intimate partner relationships.

1. What is your length of service?

- ☐ 1-2 years
- ☐ 2-5 years
- ☐ 5-10 years
- ☐ 10-15 years
- ☐ 15 years+

2. Which age bracket are you in?

- ☐ 18 - 24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55+

3. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

4. Which department do you work in? E.g. Response, CID...

5. How often do you have involvement with Domestic Violence related incidents?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

6. What type of involvement do you have in Domestic Violence incidents?

7. Are you aware there is a force DV policy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. Do you know where to find a copy of the force DV policy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9. Have you received training on Domestic Violence?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. What training have you received on DV?

11. How long ago did you receive this training?

12. Have you received refresher training?

☐ Yes

☐ No

13. If yes above, which input have you received refresher training on?

14. How effective/useful did you find the training you have received? (1 not useful - 5 extremely useful)

15. What barriers, if any, do you experience when dealing with Domestic Violence?

16. How would you respond differently to male-instigator and female-instigator Domestic Violence incidents?

17. If you could change one thing about how Gwent Police responds to DV, what would it be?

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.

 Microsoft Forms

Appendix 2 - Survey responses spreadsheet

What is your length of service?	Which age bracket are you in?	What is your gender?	Which department do you work in? E.g. Response, CID...	How often do you have involvement with Domestic Violence related incidents?
5-10 years	25-34	Female	CID	Weekly
2-5 years	25-34	Male	PDU	Daily
2-5 years	35-44	Male	PPU	Rarely
1-2 years	35-44	Male	Response	Weekly
2-5 years	18 - 24	Female	CID	Weekly

5-10 years	25-34	Female	L&D - prior in PPU as a DC	Rarely
5-10 years	25-34	Male	Investigation hub	Weekly
15 years+	45-54	Male	NPT	Daily

5-10 years	25-34	Male	RIT	Daily
5-10 years	25-34	Female	Response	Weekly
2-5 years	25-34	Female	Control room	Daily
1-2 years	25-34	Male	response	Weekly
15 years+	45-54	Male	CID	Weekly

15 years+	45-54	Male	Response	Daily
15 years+	45-54	Male	Protected Services	Rarely
10-15 years	35-44	Male	POLIT	Never
15 years+	35-44	Female	PPU	Weekly
5-10 years	25-34	Female	Professional Standards	Monthly
2-5 years	25-34	Male	Response	Daily
15 years+	45-54	Male	NPT	Rarely

5-10 years	25-34	Female	CID	Weekly
2-5 years	25-34	Female	Response	Daily
2-5 years	25-34	Female	Domestic Abuse Safeguarding Team (Central Public Protection)	Daily
5-10 years	35-44	Female	CID	Weekly
5-10 years	35-44	Male	Response	Daily
15 years+	45-54	Male	RPSO	Rarely

2-5 years	25-34	Male	Response	Daily
1-2 years	18 - 24	Male	Response	Daily
5-10 years	25-34	Female	response	Daily

2-5 years	25-34	Male	CID	Weekly
15 years+	55+	Male	CID	Weekly
15 years+	55+	Female	mit	Rarely
2-5 years	25-34	Female	Investigation Hub (Response)	Weekly
2-5 years	25-34	Female	Response	Daily
1-2 years	25-34	Female	victim care officer	Daily

What type of involvement do you have in Domestic Violence incidents?	Are you aware there is a force DV policy?	Do you know where to find a copy of the force DV policy?	Have you received training on Domestic Violence?
HIGH RISK DV - Dealing with victims, taking statements or ABE, dealing with witnesses, interviewing offenders, file build, managing investigations and attending court	Yes	Yes	Yes

Attending all types of Domestic Abuse from on-going assaults to historical incidents	Yes	No	Yes
Experience of DV Incidents primarily came from my time on Response, where involvement would be a daily occurrence.	Yes		Yes
Initial response to live incidents, statement taking, completing DASHRA, case file building, evidence gathering, assisting colleagues with arrest enquiries, signposting, MARAC referrals, liaising with DAST team to obtain victim packs/mobile phones	Yes	No	Yes
- High Risk DV	Yes	Yes	Yes
i very rarely have any involvement with front line policing of DV incidents now. However i now cover DV related incidents from a teaching perspective. DV is interwoven into lots of the inputs new recruits and detectives received.	Yes	Yes	Yes

I have had involvement in various roles. This includes initial attending officer, Officer obtaining disclosure, arresting officer, interviewing officer, charging officer, witness in court and ABE interviewing officer	Yes	Yes	Yes
First responder, reviewing domestic violence type incidents, ensuring that safeguarding and positive action where applicable takes place.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reviewing and dealing with DA offending and RASSO offending	Yes	Yes	Yes

dealing with all kinds of DV that come through storm logs	Yes	Yes	Yes
Taking the call and speaking to the victim as first point of contact	Yes	No	Yes
provide initial response/ safe guarding	Yes	No	Yes
Dealing with victims and offenders	Yes	Yes	Yes
Review for DVPN and risk	Yes	Yes	Yes
Intelligence	Yes	Yes	Yes

N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes
review/dip sampling/supervision	Yes	Yes	Yes
Police perpetrated domestic violence - initial assessment, investigation plan, investigation, interview, safeguarding etc.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Attending officer and at times, arresting officer.	No	Yes	Yes
RARE NOW	Yes	Yes	Yes
DV investigations (can be from the start or post response attendance) and safeguarding around domestic violence incidents.	Yes	No	Yes
Initial response, completing DASH, PPN, statements, arresting suspect, interviewing, CPS advice	Yes	No	Yes

I am an ISO on the domestic abuse safeguarding team, and complete all the safeguarding for all domestic abuse incidents. Our team reviews the DASH completed by officers to ensure it has been filled in correctly, and consider safeguarding measures for the victim	Yes	Yes	Yes
OIC for high risk DV cases	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oversee response to DV incidents	Yes	Yes	Yes
Initial response when division are short of officers. Or when the Dv incident involves a vehicle	Yes	Yes	Yes

investigations following ratification of domestic violence being high risk	Yes	Yes	Yes
Evidence gathering	Yes	Yes	Yes
disclosure officer dealing with MIT investigation that end up in crown court	Yes	Yes	No
Interviewing the subjects of the incident. Sageguarding Victims. Implementation of Bail Conditions. File Building and CPS Advice	Yes	Yes	Yes
Responding to incidents, completing golden hour enquiries etc.	Yes	Yes	Yes

Any victim of crime I offer support via connect Gwent	Yes	No	Yes
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What training have you received on DV?	How long ago did you receive this training?	Have you received refresher training?	If yes above, which input have you received refresher training on?
DV Matters training	Approximately one year ago	No	

Training on force training days	Around 9 months ago	No	
DA Matters Training	18 months ago.	No	
Initial training including definitions, trauma models, barriers to reporting, DVPN/O	During 6 month classroom based training as a student	No	
- Initial Training in your first 6 months - Training Days (sometimes)	Over a year ago.	Yes	As above
i have received DA Matters training. I deliver inputs in relation to DV, Stalking & Harassment, co-occurring crimes	i last attended training in approx 2024	Yes	DA Matters from the vulnerability trainer

Initial training regarding DV DV matters course DV matters course DV investigation workshop	The most recent specifically domestic related course was february 2024, although most courses will reference DA in their training	No	
Internal NCALT packages as well as DV inputs including the signs to look out for regarding DV.	Twelve months ago.	Yes	Signs to look out for. New legislation and the like including coercive and controlling behaviour legislation.
DA matters course in 2022	3 years ago	No	None that I can recall of specific note

DV Matters	last year	No
DV matters- a day on how to speak to victims and identify DV	over a year ago	No
input in training school.	5-6 months	No
first responder - force training inputs	5 yrs	No
Force training day, previous force had input from the DV team but also as a supervisor from the multi agency hub around DASH/PPN's	training day with last year, previous force about 3 years ago.	No
CoP	8 years	No

Inputs on training days, workshops, Ncalt packages	Before COVID	No	
DA Matters and DA Champion		No	
DV matters	9-12 months	No	
DV training from training school. Refreshers on DA matters during Force training days.	4 months ago	Yes	DA matters
MANKIND , DV CHAMPION , DVPO / DVPN	3 YEARS	No	
Force training day at least one/two a year is around domestic violence or stalking and harassment. Also have NCALTS around it, and inputs from different departments on it	most recent training was around 6 months ago	Yes	Force training day around stalking and harassment
DA matters training Initial training in training school	1 year	No	n/a

DA Matters and DA Champions within the force, and IDVA training outside of the force.	within the last year for DA matters / champions	No	
DV champion training	18 months	No	
Lots - initial and DV Champion	Through service. Last one year ago	Yes	Training Day input
Previous inputs at force training days and NCALT packages	Probably over four to five years ago	No	

PEQF + DA matters	6 months ago	Yes	DA matters
Online, RFD, GFD	6 months ago	Yes	RTD
DV matters	less than 12 months	No	

Training days, DA matters, PNLD, DASH training, MDT meetings, MARAC meetings	one month ago	Yes	DV policy
Lots most recently controlling and coercive behaviour.	2022	Yes	not since 2022 but all aspects
Initial 6 month training on Domestic Incidents. Further Force Training days usually have some content on Domestic Incidents, such as stalking / harassment seminars	Yearly domestic training	Yes	Stalking / SPO's. Difference between Stalking and Harassment. Looking for evidence, safeguarding.
Training school, training days, updates on the beat, updates given in daily briefing regarding dv incidents	Last training less than 6 months ago	Yes	I have had refresher training for domestic incidents
N/A		No	

How effective/useful did you find the training you have received? (1 not useful - 5 extremely useful)	What barriers, if any, do you experience when dealing with Domestic Violence?	How would you respond differently to male-instigator and female-instigator Domestic Violence incidents?
4	Lack of victim / witness engagement We always consider an evidence led prosecution but sometimes without victim support / lack of victim consent for medical evidence etc, this can prove challenging	All domestic violence incidents are treated fairly and equally whilst understanding and being considerate of individual needs.

4	There are limited barriers	I don't think I would
4	Engagement from victims.	I don't feel i respond any different whoever the perpetrator/instigator is.
5	None	Male and female instigator would be treated the same way a male or female survivor would be. That being said, given that statistically, men are more likely to be a DV perp, if a report comes in of a female instigated DV incident, then I would give consideration to the wider picture i.e. is this retaliatory after a long period of abuse?
2	- Engagement from victim	- Should be treated the same.
5	1. victims trust in the police 2. the wider implications of bail conditions on the suspect if there are children involved - with this often leading to retractions by victims 3. the wider implications of retractions	i always try to keep an open mind when it comes to manag

3	victim support, family support, neighbour support. Unwillingness to compel witnesses to attend court Poor sentencing. Hostility from witnesses and victims. Intra-departmental arguments over ownership	I would like to think that i would not respond noticeably differently and would give care, compassion and support to the victim. I would remain conscious of the expected under-reporting of female instigator DV matters and that statistically the victim is female and the suspect male. While i would bear this in mind to thing of the 'bigger picture' I would of course put a greater weight on the evidence and accounts given to me at that time as this would likely provide a better image of the incident that had occurred.
4	Victims not wishing to pursue formal complaints although I understand the complexities surrounding this and at times, it is not the be all and end all.	I would like to think that my judgement, empathy and consideration would be of the same level and that there would be no judgement regardless of the victims gender. DV affects both genders.
4	Non engagement of the potential victim, lack of evidence, undermining material	By virtue of my role the weight of the DA offending is male based as there is a requirement of a penis to commit rapes in law. However, I feel there would be no real difference in terms of response in how I would deal with an incident.

4	no complaints from victims being refused at custody	respond the same
5	victims can sometimes be very hesitant to speak to us	males tend to need more reassurance on the phone that we will take them seriously and deal with the incident if they are the victim
3	N/A	my initial response is the same, in regards to safe guarding.
4	conflict between giving the victims time and space they need and the pace clock when someone is in custody and it need to be dealt with now	no different
4	Being able to prove the cases, I am finding that officers dont always understand ELP so I think further training is needed around this. The DVPN process is also not fully understood and the need to follow up with the victim after a DVPO is issued. It has improved over the years but more training is needed for front line officers and supervisors.	Wouldn't mind either way
3	Legislation	I wouldnt

3	Victims and witnesses co-operating with the investigation. Suspects being released by the courts after being remanded. Suspects being released on Police bail due to lack of evidence to go for a charge. Evidential difficulties, when it comes to mobile phones/digital devices.	I wouldnt
5		
4	Trust of victim, given that we investigate offenders who are officers. Victim often feel that we will support the perpetrator as their 'one of us'	Response is the same
3	Lack of options provided to the police and repeat victims who turn to offenders or the other way around.	I would not respond differently.
5	TIME TO INVESTIGATE	SAME LEVEL OF SERVICE
3	Victims often do not want to engage due to the vulnerable state they are in at the time and them still loving / caring for their partner / family member so not wanting to get them in trouble. Pushing evidence led cases comes with a lot of barriers, often breaks trust with the victim and often if it gets as far as court they are dropped due to the victim not being onboard so it is a lot of work for no reward	No difference, approach with an open mind.
4	CPS support with ELP prosecution	Would deal with them in the same way

5	Victim's not engaging or officers not properly identifying risk / offences.	Deal with victims better, update them regularly, explain all the options available to victims - ensure further safeguarding is done by officers
4	Victims not being confident enough in the police / cps / court process	i wouldn't respond differently to either
5	Officer confidence in dealing with reluctant victims	No difference
4	Issues between police and social services when children are involved or when looking to take out PPO	Wouldn't respond any differently regardless of age, sex, race religion etc. I treat everyone the same as if it was me in the situation?

3	Force expectations over reality: You are scrutinised if no charge is brought upon the defendant after arrest however domestic violence cases are generally the most difficult to prove as it usually happens behind closed doors. It results in 1vs1, usually with no other corroborating evidence, and that isn't enough to satisfy the evidential test for full code/threshold, yet alone for a charging decision from CPS (where all DV cases need to go if charging decision is being sought). You are also constantly reminded that there is a DV NFA panel and that is your fault as a PC if you don't get the evidence. This makes officers scared to do their job effectively but sometimes there simply isn't evidence there (We don't need to go on all these investigations workshops). CPS: The CPS naturally have to be careful about who they charge. However, I think they are too lenient in some cases and don't take into account the fear element of bringing a complaint against their partner and/or going to court. I don't think the CPS use Res Gestae evidence satisfactorily which could be the difference in a charge being secured or not. All this together: All this together means that trying to provide an effective response to DV is difficult. Yes we can keep getting calls somewhere and deal with the there + now however that simply shows that the justice service as a whole is not doing an effective job. We should not need to go back and forth to the same addresses as this means there is a repeat victim. A repeat victim of something they are reporting to us but we appear to be doing nothing	No difference. I attend calls and use the NDM to provide me with the most effective response. The NDM does not discriminate between males and females.
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about. This then later affects their confidence in making a complaint, making our job even harder as the CPS generally don't prosecute without a victim. In the eyes of the CPS, no complaint = no victim.

2	Inconsistency at custody Prospect of actual prosecution	I wouldn't
4	Lack of victim support	Wouldnt respond differently

3	partner agencies not supporting ELP	There would be no difference
4	Reluctance of victims to support prosecution	Each would be unique according to the persons involved. equally the same
5	Arresting for the wrong offence, officers not identifying victims / offences during disclosure, not obtaining evidence properly or in its entirety and not being exhibited in their statements. Safeguarding isn't adequate so further always given. Not safeguarding the children / No Child at Risk PPN submitted.	I wouldn't respond differently and I don't. I attend and act based on evidence and information given. I act on warning markers rather than their gender.
4	Victims not supportive of police action, victims not wanting police to attend home address, victims that are difficult to get hold of when they report something very serious that needs to be addressed.	
2	N/A	N/a

If you could change one thing about how Gwent Police responds to DV, what would it be?

For "positive action" to be considered on a case by case basis depending on the situation

There should be a dedicated team that investigations at least intimate DA incidents.

Response should attend the initial call and deal with it but any investigations should then be given to a Domestic Abuse team to investigate so they have the dedicated time to deal with it and not be a slave to the radio.

Nothing to note.

Being new in service, I find this question quite difficult to answer. What would be useful though would be a single website/portal/info booklet or whatever that has all the useful signposts that we could give to a victim and things we could recommend i.e. BrightSky app, Women's Aid, recommended home security measures. Even though all that information is out there and available to find, to be able to give it to a victim in one concise and safe way would be so useful

- The training should be within duty time. People will take more notice.
- DASH/ PPN is not fit for purpose. It is catered towards couples and women with its wording. Does not account for e.g. if you have a domestic incident with your sibling etc.

protected time for OIC to complete majority of investigative actions as soon as possible to date of offence, the longer between the incident and completing follow up investigative actions - the less likely we are to keep victims engaged, we lose evidential opportunities, witnesses are less likely to engage with us if they know that the victim is retracting etc

A greater awareness and appreciation of the time it takes to suitably deal with a DV incident. Outward pressures will often affect officers and investigations, meaning that either insufficient time is given to the case, or things are rushed.

Those trained in DV matters to be more involved in this complex area of Police work. The example I give is that when officers are asked to attend DVPO hearings at court, officers / staff from the DV department are no longer involved in that vital piece of work. (resourcing issues)

More victim-led. Whilst there are absolutely legitimate reasons to arrest against a victim's wishes, the reality is that evidence-led prosecution requires evidence. Some victims come forward as they want support but no police involvement and then we run completely contrary to their wishes despite no realistic prospect of conviction. A disclosure of an assault months on, not under duress, is not admissible hearsay so there is no admissible evidence of an offence unless we have witnesses. Therefore, an arrest to interview is of questionable ethical position one a one word case with no admissibility and increases risk to the victim. If the suspect is a DA offender, they now have reason to be angry towards the victim once released and poses increased risk. If they aren't, we have arrested someone with no real evidence under the position it is better to 'do something'. Onward safeguarding and no police action if a legitimate positive response to DA and is completely consistent with the principles of risk.

we are victim led however sometimes this is not followed
not to put stalking/harassment calls on the diary car as they are then often
forgotten about because you have to go deal with the next appt
have a dedicated DV team that take on all DV

as a control room operator I feel more understanding is needed for DASH
gradings. Sometimes we take a horrific call that sounds violent and the
officers come back with a standard grading which to us doesn't really match
up.

attitudes towards DV's always being male perpetrators. i have experienced it
firsthand where a male has made a complaint, and the officers treat him like
the aggressor.

the way domestic violence is graded and reviewed - very time consuming -
should be evidence led

Improved understanding of risk and ELP.

Have a dedicated team of investigators/Officers within DAST to deal specifically with domestics

more staff dealing with preventative work around DA.

More individually catered safeguarding plans and follow up appointments

Creating a DV team that can take ownership of DV cases. This is in place in other forces and reduces demand on response and provides a better service to the victims.

ALLOW MORE TIME ALLOCATION

I believe domestic violence cases fall more so from a justice point of view / through courts as it is very difficult to obtain stalking orders and evidence led prosecutions etc. I think Gwent approaches it appropriately in it requiring positive action.

I think working with partner agencies more in person in the sense of them taking further ownership for intervention such as women's aid would be good. Also believe that medium but complex domestics for example that are stalking and require a lot of work should be given to a different department and not response as they're too complex and time consuming (although now case file team should reduce the burden with this)

Specific DV team as demands on response can lead to delays in progressing own work load due to high call volume and logs.

How we update victims, I feel that we do not provide victims with regular updates on their cases.

More support for victims who aren't happy / confident to engage with police

More arrests and more trust in initial disclosures from victims at first contact

Don't really know as haven't really been involved too much over past six years due to being on traffic

Stop making officers scared of attending DV incidents by saying they will be heavily scrutinised. I appreciate that it's meant to make you alert and do the relevant enquiries, however, there is a line. We are a very young force in respect of response which means we have low experienced officers attending the majority of calls (majority of calls being DV). At the end of the day, an offence is an offence. The basic principles of effective crime investigation apply to every incident, not just DV. Support these officers and allow them to learn, rather than scare them out of the job. They will naturally become better over time with correct mentoring and guidance. You don't expect the works of Picasso or Michelangelo from someone who's only been painting for a year or two.

The use of CR/ Caution without the need for CPS for low level / first time etc.

.

More effective working with partner agencies to support ELP allowing for a greater number of successful prosecutions protecting victims.

Not rely on criteria to determine whether to investigate matters. These approaches often lead to failing victims.

Everything seems to be a race at the moment to attend the job and then leave ASAP. Spend some time with your victims, speak to them, allow them to open up. It seems daunting receiving disclosure, especially if it dates years, however you may be the first person someone has ever spoken to, just be empathetic and listen.

More sympathetic towards DV victims

Appendix 3 - Emails from training department (redacted)

Hello [REDACTED]

I'm completing my dissertation on Gwent's DV policies and I have been trying to find out what training policies apply in this area and I have a few questions I'd be grateful if you could help with please:

Is there a schedule for training officers on DV during initial training/tutorship/probation?

Is there compulsory refresher training?

Is there a log kept of who is trained?

Is there different training for different kinds of officers?

Hi Liz,

I don't really have much to do with the ongoing requirements after training school, but most training needs are then captured by training days.

[REDACTED],

Is there any current ongoing DV related training being delivered outside of the school as a routine element mate?

Cheers

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

That's really helpful, thank you!

Is there anyone I could ask (unless you know) about training for officers outside of their probation – would it be the same that any training is set by the college of policing and those courses that are logged are force wide initiatives? And there isn't any set refresher training on DV beyond initial training and what you're shown in tutorship, it would just be whatever you would have on a Red Training Day which could be any topic?

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Hi liz,

In short, all student officers have DV training that meets the objectives set by the college of policing in their curriculum (which can be obtained on college learn if needed).

As for refresher training – no such specific training as such is compulsory.

There isn't a log as such as all student officers have to meet all elements of the college curriculum so we don't log each section – only things we log are force wide initiatives outside of this such as RASSO, upstander etc and of course PPST etc.

All student officers have this training.

I would contact [REDACTED] however to find out what gets delivered on TIER 2 as that may be additional in this area also.

-is it only available to all frontline staff or is it compulsory for all frontline staff?
-are you able to tell me the course outline/what topics are included in the training session? Or is this only available to the staff who are trained to deliver it?
-do officers receive refresher training on this course as it updates and their service goes on?

Are you aware of any other DV training that all officers receive other than what is delivered in initial training regarding legislation etc, DA matters/champions, and anything you are taught from your tutor in tutorship?

Thank you!

■

■
■
■
■

Hi Liz,

In respect of further DA training, we deliver DA Matters first responder training and DA Champions Training which are licensed products written by the College of Policing and Safe lives domestic abuse charity.

The first responder courses were delivered during red training days between Sept 23- March 24, and also on standalone dates provided for staff not on FTD.

The DA Champions courses were standalone courses delivered from Dec 23 – Sept 24.

The numbers trained are available via our admin team if required and both courses are available to all frontline staff.

If you require anything further let me know.

Hi Liz,

It was compulsory initially in force 2019-2022 and you were allocated courses (in a frontline role).

Then re-introduced it in May 2023 to FCR staff, before FTD from Sept 23 till March 24 on FTD, and added more courses afterwards. The course is a licensed product (College of Policing) and I can't provide you with the slides unfortunately.

We focus on three areas below and coercive control;

1. Understand the dynamics of domestic abuse
2. Understand the reality of domestic abuse
3. How to respond effectively to reports of domestic abuse

There is no current refresher for the course, however the content is refreshed when required by the College Of Policing/Safe lives charity. We have recently began providing to Tier 2 courses as they would have missed the FTD (and it's not provided in Initial training).

There is sporadic DA training – DA Champions and there will be 20 weeks x FTD on Stalking from June 25.

Hope that makes sense, any questions let me know.

Appendix 4 - Ethics Form

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

RESEARCH STUDENTS

This form is to be completed by the student within **SIX** months for full-time students and **TWELVE** months for part time students, after the commencement of the research degree or following progression to Part Two of your course.

Once complete, submit this form via the ***MyTSD Doctoral College Portal*** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

This document is also available in Welsh.

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk, with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity. Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Elizabeth MARSH
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2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☒	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student

3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	University of Wales Trinity St David
4	Campus:	N/A - online
5	E-mail address:	2134354@student.uwtsd.ac.uk
6	Contact Telephone Number:	
For students:		
7	Student Number:	2134354
8	Programme of Study:	BSC Honours Professional Policing Practice
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Jane Davies

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☒	NO	☐
					Date
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
		Institute Research Committee	☐		
		Other Jane Davies	☒	26/08/24	

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.
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1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice	☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy	☒
3	<i>[List any other relevant documents here]</i>	☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

If there are external collaborators then you should gain consent from the contact persons to share their personal data with the university. If there are no external collaborators then leave this section blank and continue to section E.

1	Institution	Gwent Police				
2	Contact person name	Richard Blakemore				
3	Contact person e-mail address	Richard.blakemore2@gwent.police.uk				
4	Is your research externally funded?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
5	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
6	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
7		Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
8	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)?	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	YES	☐	NO	☐
9	Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

10	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate).				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	How have three police forces responded to the challenges presented by male on female domestic intimate partner violence since 2019?		
2	Proposed start date:	26/08/24	Proposed end date:	07/04/25
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i>			

	<i>Proposed Research Question</i> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how Existing Research has informed the proposed activity and explain <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>
3	Purpose of Research Activity To clarify whether there are material differences between the ways forces approach intimate partner violence and how these have changed around COVID. (this box should expand as you type)
4	Research Question How have three police forces responded to the challenges presented by male on female domestic intimate partner violence since 2019? (this box should expand as you type)
5	Aims of Research Activity To obtain data on each force over the relevant times and analyse this alongside a study of the force's published policies in this area. (this box should expand as you type)
6	Objectives of Research Activity My intention is to obtain data from three police forces about reports and follow-up of domestic violence over a 5 year period. I will then compare the data between forces and over time to see if there are any patterns or apparent differences. Simultaneously I will obtain policy documents or otherwise discover policies operated by the three forces, compare them to see where there are consistencies or differences, and relate these to the results. Finally I will try to assess the availability of outside agency support for each force – including how this has changed over time – and relate this to the results. Limiting the study to male on female violence will make this aspect of the task slightly easier as it will be easier to identify the agencies available, and I hope the local coverage available will be more consistent than might be the case for mixed-sex studies. (this box should expand as you type)
	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words)

	Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	I will use the Knowledge Hub and Local and National leads within the police for MVAWG/DV, as well as contacting experts in the field such as Feminists and others working with DV charities. My intention is to be systematic in asking the same questions initially and then follow up informed by that. This is best suited as they actually have access to statistics/relevant information and are in a position to use it to make changes and implement/advise on policies etc. I do not want to interview survivors as this would not serve my purpose and would be ethically difficult and potentially traumatic for them. Overall I will use structured interview and standardised questions, and possible FOI requests. (this box should expand as you type)
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
8	Online and from my home or work. (this box should expand as you type)
	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this.
9	N/A (this box should expand as you type)

10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐
11	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales.		
	Police policies are in the public domain, and all the data that I seek would be available to the public via freedom of information request. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Does your research relate to one or more of the seven aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	YES	NO
12	A prosperous Wales	☐	☒
13	A resilient Wales	☒	☐
14	A healthier Wales	☒	☐
15	A more equal Wales	☒	☐
16	A Wales of cohesive communities	☐	☒
17	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☐	☒
18	A globally responsible Wales	☐	☒
19	If YES to any of the above, please give details:		
	Resilient, because DV IPV against women is a burden on much of the population. Healthier, because women's health, lives and happiness are all impacted. More equal, because women are disproportionately victims of DV/IPV compared to men. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
3	Use of focus groups?	☐	☒
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☒
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒

11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☒	☐
	Details of any other primary data collection method: FOI requests (this box should expand as you type)		

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒
7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	☒
	Details of any other participant groups: (this box should expand as you type)		

	Participant numbers and source
--	---------------------------------------

	Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?	3 <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
11	Who will the participants be?	Unknown at present <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
12	How will you identify the participants?	With the aid of my supervisor <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>			

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them. If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.		
1	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes	☐
		No	☒
2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
	Risk to participants: None <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
3	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities		
	N/A		

	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	
4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest	
	Risk to the investigator: N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Disclosure and Barring Service			
	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
7	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐
8	If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "Pending"; in this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number.			

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	Informal feedback on how each force responded will be given and a copy of my dissertation provided. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	I will send them a copy of the proposed questions. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.
	There is no confidential data. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?	YES	NO
1	“Personal data” means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	☐	X
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	N/A		

	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	X
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☐	☒
8	Home or other personal computers?	☒	☐
9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☒	☐
10	“Cloud” storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☒
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	There is no GDPR data to be stored. The data are all in the public domain. I will use the University Cloud. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Data Protection		
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒

17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
19	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
20	Data archiving?	☐	☒
21	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and any international equivalents, where appropriate):		
	None of the data are subject to GDPR. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Only myself and my supervisor. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
23	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	None of the data are subject to GDPR. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
24	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		
	None of the data are subject to GDPR. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	None of the data are subject to GDPR. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
27	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES	☒

SECTION K: Declaration

	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
1	Signature of applicant:		Date: 19/08/2024

For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:		Date:
3	Signature:		

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
5	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.

RESEARCH STUDENTS ONLY

Once complete, submit this form via the **MyTSD Doctoral College Portal** at (<https://mytsd.uwtsd.ac.uk>).

RESEARCH STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

Appendix 5 - Research Proposal



UNDERGRADUATE DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM

Please complete the following research proposal and submit it to Turnitin.

Which project option are you taking? Please tick:

8,000 word project

NAME: Elizabeth MARSH	STUDENT ID No.: 2134354
DRAFT RESEARCH TITLE QUESTION: How have three police forces responded to the challenges presented by male on female domestic intimate partner violence since 2019? INTRODUCTION: Domestic violence (DV) and particularly Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a major issue nationwide, apparently on the rise despite being the focus of many police forces and considerable government concern. From my policing experience it seems to me that there is still more to be done to recognise that violent/coercive behaviour is happening in the early stages, and the seriousness of it, and scope to develop the law/policing powers and for different forces to pool their understanding of the issue. The period interests me because lots of services and agencies lost funding and/or stopped completely during lockdown, and many women were unable to leave violent or coercive relationships or get respite while they or their partners left the home for work, so during lockdown, Male Violence Against Women and Girls (MVAWG) victims would have been impacted. A woman is killed by a man every three days in the UK. MVAWG accounts for almost 20% of crimes reported to the police. It does not discriminate and can happen to anyone, regardless of where you live and your societal status. Occurrences and reports of it are on the rise however	

there is still a lot more to be done by relevant agencies, the CJS and the police to deal with DV, signpost to agencies, educate officers and the public/women. As it is a nationwide problem, women and girls deserve a joined up, consistent approach and response from police and I want to find out what stage we are at, what was lost (if anything) during lockdown, have improvements/progress been made, what future plans there are, would it work to have a nationwide standard response, is there actually one already? To date - see the literature review - I have not seen any research with a policing focus on this.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

My intention is to obtain data from three police forces about reports and follow-up of domestic violence over a 5 year period. I will then compare the data between forces and over time to see if there are there any patterns or apparent differences. Simultaneously I will obtain policy documents or otherwise discover policies operated by the three forces, compare them to see where there are consistencies or differences, and relate these to the results. Finally I will try to assess the availability of outside agency support for each force - including how this has changed over time - and relate this to the results. Limiting the study to male on female violence will make this aspect of the task slightly easier as it will be easier to identify the agencies available, and I hope the local coverage available will be more consistent than might be the case for mixed-sex studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

There are no text books on this specific area although there are many texts on domestic violence itself - the seminal work is Judith Herman's "Trauma and Recovery".

There are numerous relevant government reports and I would pick out as most relevant these three:

- GOV.UK. (n.d.). *Annual Report of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales*. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-report-of-the-domestic-abuse-commissioner/annual-report-of-the-domestic-abuse-commissioner-for-england-and-wales>.

is one of a series of annual reportage on domestic violence at a national level.

- gov.uk (2023). *Government response to 'A Patchwork of Provision: how to meet the needs of victims and survivors across England and Wales' (accessible version)*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-a-patchwork-of-provision->

mapping-report/government-response-to-a-patchwork-of-provision-how-to-meet-the-needs-of-victims-and-survivors-across-england-and-wales-accessible-version.

is a very useful government response to the critique of patchy services and the 'postcode lottery' of agency availability.

- Office for National Statistics (2023). *Domestic Abuse in England and Wales Overview*. [online] Office for National Statistics. Available at:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesoverview/november2023>.

gives annual statistics countrywide.

There have been many recent studies on domestic violence but none really covers this precise area.

For example,

- Panovska-Griffiths, J., Szilassy, E., Johnson, M., Dixon, S., De Simoni, A., Wileman, V., Dowrick, A., Emsley, E., Griffiths, C., Barbosa, E.C. and Feder, G. (2022). Impact of the first national COVID-19 lockdown on referral of women experiencing domestic violence and abuse in England and Wales. *BMC Public Health*, [online] 22(1). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-12825-6>.

reviews referrals to see how these are followed up, but this is not broken down on a force by force basis and crucially doesn't look at police policy and how that impacts.

- McPhee, D., Hester, M., Bates, L., Lilley-Walker, S.J. and Patsios, D. (2021). Criminal justice responses to domestic violence and abuse in England: an analysis of case attrition and inequalities using police data. *Policing and Society*, [online] 32(8), pp.1–18. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2021.2003358>.

does take a similar approach to mine, but is over a shorter period and does not link to policies.

- Bates, L. and Hester, M. (2020). No longer a civil matter? The design and use of protection orders for domestic violence in England and Wales. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, [online] 42(2), pp.133–153. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/09649069.2020.1751943>.

gives a detailed view of DVPOs in action but it is not quantitative in the same way that my study would be.

Similarly,

- Hester, M., Walker, S.-J. and Myhill, A. (2023). The Measurement of Domestic Abuse – Redeveloping the Crime Survey for England and Wales. *Journal of Family Violence*, 38. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-023-00507-9>.

critiques the way recording and reporting are done, which is useful and will inform my work but it is not quantitative and does not join up the dots.

There is a useful piece of work in

- Walklate, S., Godfrey, B. and Richardson, J. (2021). Changes and continuities in police responses to domestic abuse in England and Wales during the Covid-19 ‘lockdown’. *Policing and Society*, [online] 32(2), pp.1–13. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2021.1896514>.

which has quantitative data but looks only at the lockdown period, not larger lessons.

- Hadjimatheou, K. and Grace, J. (2020). ‘No Black and White Answer about How Far We Can go’: Police Decision Making under the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme. *Policing and Society*, [online] 31(7), pp.1–14. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2020.1795169>.

is a useful review of police policy thinking.

More peripherally,

- Sivarajasingam, V. (2001). Trends in community violence in England and Wales 1995-1998: an accident and emergency department perspective. *Emergency Medicine Journal*, 18(2), pp.105–109.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1136/emj.18.2.105>.

is local to me (in Cardiff) but only gives the point of view of Accident and Emergency departments and their policies and follow up.

- Bates, L. (2020). Honor-Based Abuse in England and Wales: Who Does What to Whom? *Violence against Women*, 27(10), p.107780122095216. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801220952168>.

gives a perspective on cultural aspects of non-partner domestic abuse and guided me in deciding to look only at intimate partner abuse, as non-intimate partner DV has profound cultural variances and might result in distorting data.

Finally,

- Bates, E.A. and Douglas, E.M. (2020). Services for Domestic Violence Victims in the United Kingdom and United States: Where Are We Today? *Partner Abuse*, 11(3), p.PA-2020-0019.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1891/pa-2020-0019>.

looks at Male and LGBT victims and while interesting for comparison resulted in my feeling that the problems of those communities are quite different in nature to male-on-female IPV and therefore would be best excluded from my review.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH –SURVEY METHOD:

I will use the Knowledge Hub and Local and National leads within the police for MVAWG/DV, as well as contacting experts in the field such as Feminists and others working with DV charities. My intention is to be systematic in asking the same questions initially and then follow up informed by that.

This is best suited as they actually have access to statistics/relevant information and are in a position to use it to make changes and implement/advise on policies etc. I do not want to interview survivors as this would not serve my purpose and would be ethically difficult and potentially traumatic for them.

Overall I will use structured interview and standardised questions, and possible FOI requests

SUMMARY OF SAMPLING FRAMEWORK:

I hope to interview officers from each force, and experts. No intention to interview survivors or perpetrators as this is a study of demand, policy, and outcomes.

ETHICAL ISSUES:

No major issues anticipated but see the ethics form attached.

TIME SCALE:

Designing questions and pre-reading, literature review 6 weeks

Send out questionnaires and interview officers 3 months

Review responses 3 weeks

Further questions as informed by review 2 months

Draft research paper 2 months

REFERENCE LIST:

Please follow the Harvard referencing system

As literature review.