



Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group



THE LONDON BOROUGH  
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# **BROMLEY JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2017 Domestic Violence**

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## Introduction

Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) is a complex and multi-faceted issue that touches many people's lives in many different ways. Domestic violence is like no other crime insofar as the perpetrator has intimate and constant access to the victim. Domestic violence and abuse can be experienced by adults and children from all backgrounds, and many domestic incidents remain unreported<sup>i</sup> and often result in devastating consequences for long-term mental and physical health<sup>ii</sup>. DVA crosses all ethnicities, sexual orientations, class and age, with the impact of abuse on the elderly and those with complex and multiple needs often poorly reported.

In this section we focus on the needs of women and girls due to the disproportionate number of cases of DVA against women and girls<sup>iii</sup>. A study based on police reports, which accounted for the dynamics of domestic violence, found that only 5% of domestic violence incidents were perpetrated by women in heterosexual relationships<sup>iv</sup>. However, this does not mean that men are never victims of domestic violence, rape or forced marriage nor that women are not occasionally the perpetrator.

## **Forms and Definitions of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)**

The UN defines violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”<sup>v</sup>. This includes physical, sexual and psychological/emotional violence, economic abuse and sexual exploitation. VAWG can take place at home, work or in public places such as on the street or public transport. In March 2013, the Home Office introduced a new official definition of domestic violence, this was expanded to include 16 to 17-year-olds<sup>vi</sup>.

**Forms of violence against women and girls can include, but are not limited to<sup>vii</sup>:**

- Domestic violence and abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- ‘Honour’-based violence
- Prostitution and trafficking
- Sexual violence including rape
- Sexual exploitation
- Sexual harassment
- Stalking
- Faith-based abuse

# Domestic Violence – A National Profile

## Estimated Incidence

It is estimated that 1.9 million adults (aged 16-59 years old) experienced domestic abuse in the last year, equating to a prevalence rate of 6 in 100 adults<sup>viii</sup>. It was also estimated that in 2015, approximately 120,000 older people (age 65+) had experienced at least one form of abuse<sup>ix</sup>.

An estimated 7.5% of women (1.2 million) experienced domestic abuse last year compared to 4.3% of men (713,000)<sup>viii</sup>. Approximately 3 women are killed every fortnight in England and Wales by a current or former partner.

The difference between the estimated number of male and female victims is at its lowest compared to previous years<sup>i</sup>. However, the estimates do not take account of the context and impact.

For all age groups, 16 to 19 year olds were the most likely to say they had experienced domestic abuse in the last year (11% women, 7% men)<sup>i</sup>.

The most common type of domestic abuse experienced in the last year was partner abuse (4.5% of adults), with a greater proportion of women (5.9%) reporting partner abuse than men (3%)<sup>i</sup>. However, there were similar proportions of men and women who reported experiencing family abuse which includes; non-physical abuse, threats, force, sexual assault or stalking<sup>i</sup>.

Linking across all sub categories of intimate violence, estimates for women were statistically significantly higher than estimates for men<sup>i</sup>. Overall, 26.3% of women and 13.6% of men had experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16 years old, equivalent to an estimated 4.3 million female victims and 2.2 million male victims a year<sup>i</sup>.

Research by the NSPCC found that 1 in 5 children in England had witnessed domestic abuse<sup>x</sup>. A third of these children will also experience another form of abuse. There is a growing amount of evidence of the long-term effect is of domestic abuse on children which includes; aggressive, anti-social, fearful and/or inhibited behaviour and depression or trauma-related symptoms<sup>xi</sup>.

Research by SafeLives found that older victims of domestic violence (aged >60) experience abuse for twice as long as younger victims but they are under represented among domestic abuse services<sup>ix</sup>. They are also more likely to have a disability, much more likely to experience abuse from an adult family member or current intimate partner and more likely to be living with the perpetrator after seeking support<sup>ix</sup>.

## Reported Crimes

Most recent figures estimate that 79% of victims of partner abuse did not report the abuse to the police<sup>i</sup>.

According to the Violent Crime figures, police recorded 511,319 offences that were domestic abuse related in the year ending June 2017, an 18% increase on the previous year's record<sup>xii</sup>. However, it is important to note that the increase is likely to be driven by improved recording and reporting practice<sup>xii</sup>.

Violent Crime figures for the year ending June 2017 showed that violence against the person offences were the most likely to be flagged as domestic abuse related (32%), followed by sexual offences (13%)<sup>xii</sup>. However, as the "flagging" of offences relies on manual intervention, local area statistics are variable and maybe subject to recording bias<sup>xii</sup>.

Nationally, violent crime figures show that despite a downward trend in violent crime, police recorded domestic abuse continues to rise<sup>xii</sup>.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) provided statistics on domestic violence cases referred to the CPS by the Police. The latest statistics show<sup>i</sup>:

- There were 110,833 police referrals of domestic abuse-related cases to the CPS, a 6% fall from the previous year.
- Of the cases referred, 93,590 proceeded to prosecutions and convictions were secured for 76% of court prosecutions.
- 92% of defendants were men and 65% of victims were female, reflecting the profile of victims and perpetrators.

## **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)**

The MARAC is a process which aims to allow statutory and voluntary agencies to give a consistent and structured response to managing the risk in cases of domestic abuse<sup>xiii</sup>. MARAC is used to consider cases of domestic abuse that are categorised as high risk<sup>xiv</sup>. The MARAC is generally held on a monthly basis and relevant agencies are able to share up to date risk information, with a comprehensive assessment of a victim's needs and decide upon the most appropriate way to lower or manage the identified risks<sup>xiv</sup>.

A total of 83,136 high-risk cases were discussed at multi-agency risk assessment conferences in the year ending March 2017, equating to 36 cases per 10,000 adult females<sup>i</sup>.

Data from the pan London Domestic Violence Needs Assessment Report 2016 shows that across London the number of referrals to MARAC has risen annually since 2013, from 6,995 referrals to 9,919 in December 2015<sup>xv</sup>. In 2015 all 33 local authorities held at least one MARAC meeting per month with an average of 310 cases discussed per borough indicating a rise in MARAC referrals<sup>xv</sup>. Referrals to MARAC are an indication of the need across London for high risk support.

## **Economic impact**

Domestic Abuse cost the UK an estimated £15.7 billion in 2008<sup>xvi</sup>. Domestic abuse has a significant impact on a wide range of services including housing, criminal justice and social services provision<sup>xvi</sup>. The Trust for London and the Henry Smith Charity estimated the total costs of domestic violence in England at £5.5bn, which comprises of<sup>xvii</sup>:

- £1.6bn for physical and mental health costs
- £1.2bn in criminal justice costs
- £268m in social services costs
- £185.7m in housing and refuge costs
- £366.7m in civil legal costs
- £1.8bn in lost economic output

It is estimated that £918 million of the total cost is incurred in London<sup>xvii</sup>.



## Domestic Violence – A Local Profile

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory requirement on local authorities to monitor the level of domestic abuse in their communities and establish partnerships in order to reduce the problem as well as work together with other agencies to highlight the issue and coordinate a response<sup>xviii</sup>.

Due to the hidden nature of violence against women and girls, there is limited data locally to enable accurate mapping of the prevalence, and wider issues of violence against women and girls in Bromley.

### Reported Crimes

The reported Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence incident rate in Bromley from September 2016 to September 2017 was 13 victims per 1000 of the local population, this equates to roughly 4426 victims and of these 2568 were domestic abuse offences. In contrast, the rate across London from September 2016 to September 2017 was 144,594 of which 76,297 were domestic offences (September 16-September 2017).

Data from the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) shows that between September 2016 and September 2017 there were 2568 reported domestic abuse offences in Bromley<sup>xix</sup>. This is a rise of nearly 60 % since the same period in 2011/12.

### Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)

From October 2016 to September 2017, 166 cases were discussed at MARAC in Bromley, this is an annual increase of 6% (see **Table 1**). This rise was predominantly driven by an increase in the number of referrals from the police (rising from 39% in 2015/16 to 48% in 2016/17).

The rate of cases discussed is lower in Bromley than the national average (1.3% compared to 3.5%) but a higher proportion are repeat cases in Bromley (38% compared to 27% nationally). Bromley also had a higher proportion (22%) of cases from Black and Asian Minority Ethnic groups compared to England (16%).

The majority (52%) of the referrals locally were from partner agencies compared to nationally where the majority (65%) were from police. This could be indicative of good local partnerships and domestic violence support networks in Bromley.

**Table 1** also shows that there is a small proportion (3.6%) of the cases with a disability. Disabled people experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic abuse. They also encounter differing dynamics of domestic abuse, which may

include more severe coercion, control or abuse from carers<sup>xx</sup>. The risk is exacerbated by the fact that disabled people experience more barriers to accessing support, such as health and social care services and domestic abuse services<sup>xx</sup>.

**Table 1: Bromley MARAC Data October 2016-September 2017**

	National	Bromley
Cases discussed	88,740	166
Cases per 1000 population	35	13
Children in household	114,222	240
Year on year change in cases	4% ↑	6% ↑
Repeat cases	27%	38%
Police referrals	65%	48%
Partner agency referrals	35%	52%
BME	16%	21.7%
LGBT	1.1%	0.6%
Disability	5.7%	3.6%
Males	4.8%	0.6%

*Source: MARAC, 2018*

## Referrals to Domestic Abuse Support Services

### The Independent Domestic Abuse Advocacy Project (IDAAP)

The Domestic Abuse Advocacy Project is part of local action to tackle domestic violence which aims to:

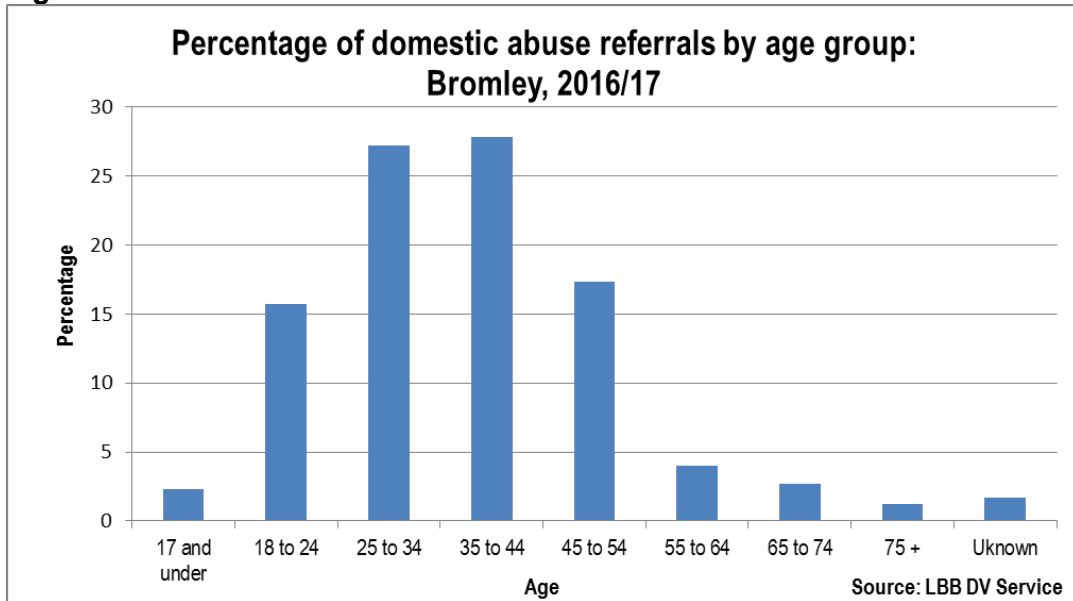
- Increase victim safety
- Improve conviction rates for domestic abuse crimes
- Provide dedicated support, advocacy and advice to victims
- Streamline reporting from community and police

This section describes the characteristics of referrals to the local Domestic Abuse Advocacy service.

In 2016-2017, there 476 referrals to the domestic abuse support service, of which 82% were females. It should be noted that, this is not a count of people but volume of activity as an individual can be referred more than once.

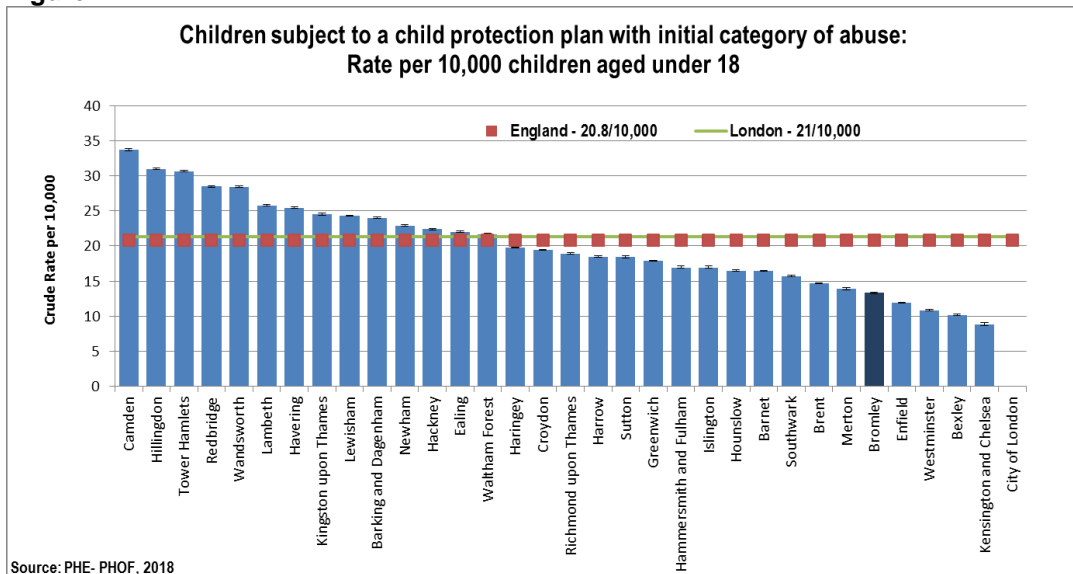
Over half (55%) of the referrals were from residents aged between 25 and 44 years old. It is noteworthy that, women in their childbearing years form a huge part of the referrals (**Figure 1**). This in turn has implications for the children born into those homes.

**Figure 1**



There was a combined figure of 212 dependants of the victims of domestic abuse known to this service in 2016/17. **Figure 2** shows the rate of children subject to a child protection plan with initial category of abuse. Although Bromley has significantly lower rates (13.3/10,000) than the region and England at 21/10,000 and 20.8/10,000 respectively, no child should be exposed to abuse<sup>xxi</sup>.

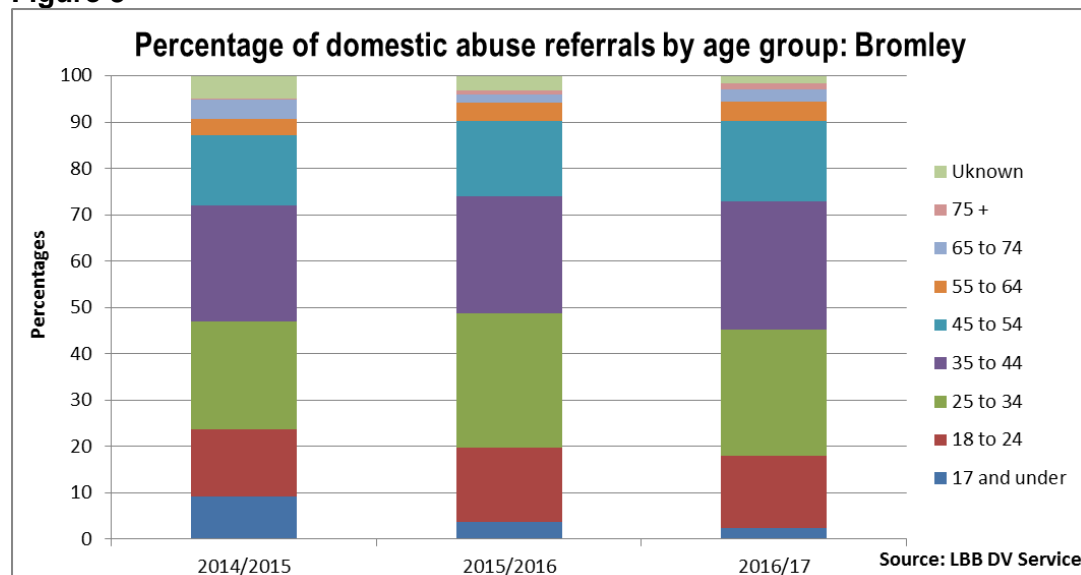
**Figure 2**



**Figure 3** shows that, on average, referrals for domestic violence increase with age until 44 years of age and then the reverse is seen. There is an upward trend in all age groups except those under 18 years of age. However, it is not known if this is a reflection of the recurrent nature of domestic violence, good signposting to service, or an accurate representation of trends.

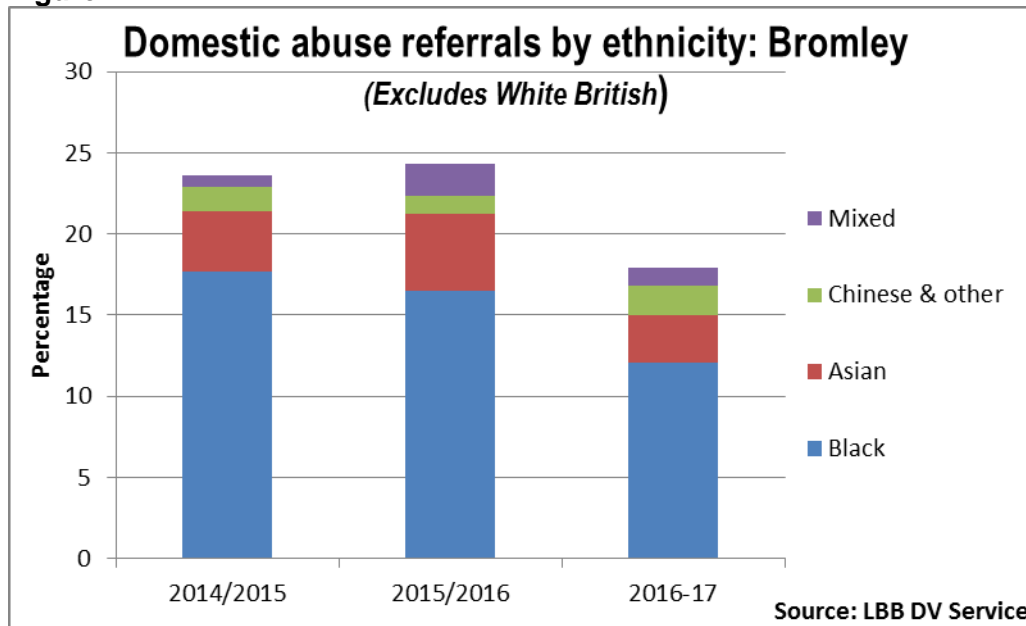
**Figure 3** shows a declining trend in the referrals of those under 18. However, according to a UK survey, a quarter (25%) of girls and 18% of boys 13-17 years reported having experienced some form of physical violence from an intimate partner in 2009<sup>xxii</sup>. The local trend is therefore likely to be a reflection of changes in the provision and access to domestic violence support services for children and young people. This has recently been addressed and therefore levels of referrals for those 17 and under are likely to rise again.

**Figure 3**



In keeping with the general ethnic profile of Bromley, 82% of referrals to the service in 2016/17 were among the White British. The data for White British is excluded from **figure 4** below to allow for visibility of the difference within and between the other groups. **Figure 4** shows the proportion of domestic violence referrals within the Black and Ethnic Minority group. People from Black or Black British background make up the highest proportion of BME referrals, but there has been a year on year decrease in the proportion of referrals from this group since records began. This is worth monitoring to see if the trend is enduring.

**Figure 4**

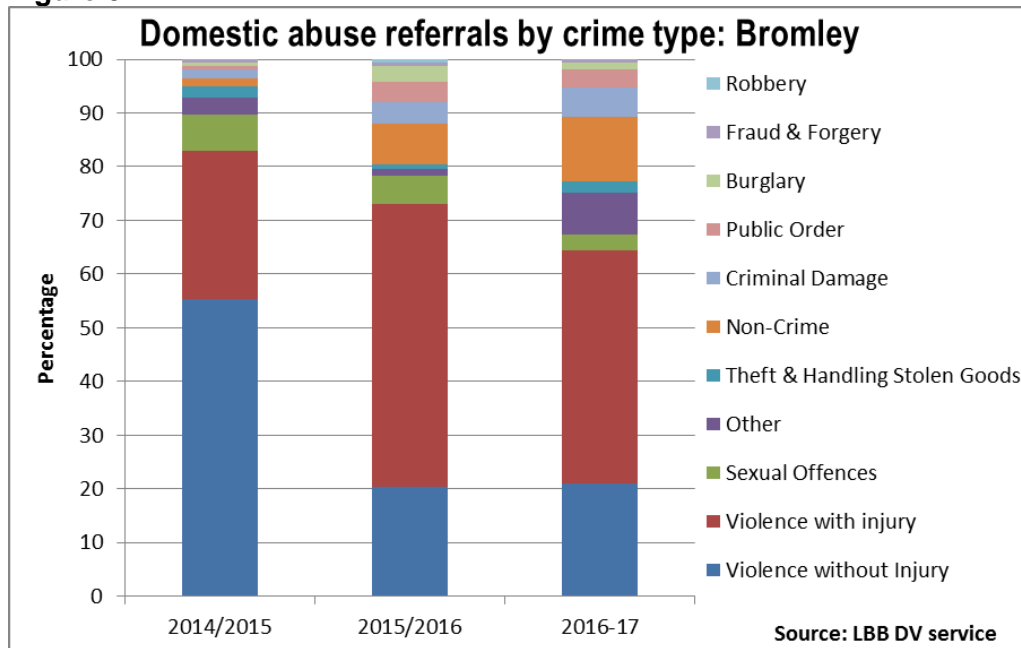


**Figure 5** shows analysis of the referrals by crime type where violence with injury contributed 3 out of every 7 referrals in 2016/17. The high volume of violence with injury referrals has implications, not only for the physical health of the affected person but also for the local health services especially A&E services.

Research has shown that the NHS is often the first or only point of contact for women experiencing domestic abuse<sup>xxiii</sup>.

**Figure 5** also shows a shift in the crime burden, from violence without injury to violence with injury. Over half (55%) of referrals in 2014/15 presented with violence without injury but by 2016/17 the rate was more than halved (21%) and violence with injury was 1.6 times the rate in 2014/15. Referrals citing sexual offences have reduced.

**Figure 5**

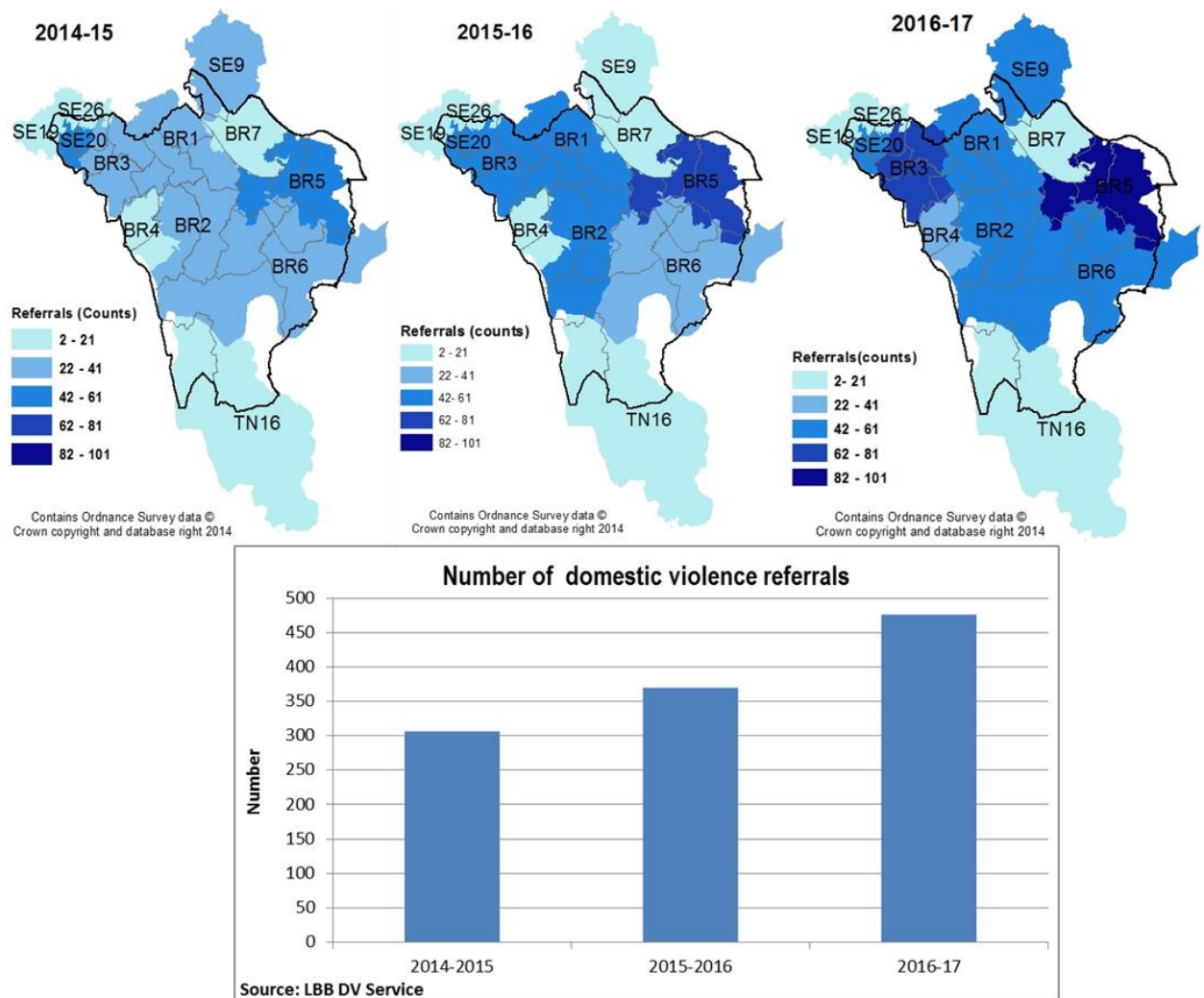


**Figure 6** shows the geographical analysis of the referrals. The highest volume of referrals in 2016/17 was from residents living in the Cray Valley area at 1 in 5 of all referrals in that time period, followed by the areas of Clock House and Penge & Cator. It should be noted that postcode district areas mask the variation at a lower geography, making it difficult to pinpoint more accurately the areas of highest need in the borough.

**Figure 6** also shows a year on year increase in the volume of referrals. It should be noted that the increase seems to be concentrated in the same areas. It is possible that, due to the recurrent nature of domestic violence, these victims have found a safe place to go, or this is a reflection of improved service capacity.

The relationship between deprivation and domestic violence is unknown; however, locally there is a leaning to a high volume of referrals in areas of deprivation as shown in the map below. There is a need for further analysis to understand if the differences seen are significant.

**Figure 6: Number of Domestic Violence Referrals by Postcode District in Bromley**



### Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP)

The Domestic Violence Intervention Project is part of local action to address intimate partner domestic violence through interventions for the perpetrator.

In a two year period (2015/2016 and 2016/2017)

- 80 Perpetrators were referred to the project
- There were 7 self-referrals in a two year period
- 42 of the referred perpetrators attended assessment meetings
- 38 perpetrators were assessed as suitable for the programme
- 17 men completed 30 hours of treatment

### One Stop Shop (OSS)

The OSS is a crucial starting point for both male and female victims on domestic abuse because in many cases the victim has probably never spoken to anyone about their situation before. The OSS supports vulnerable victims by offering a wide range of services under one roof including a Police Officer, a family law

solicitor, Bromley Metropolitan Police and other DV service providers. In the year 2016/2017 324 clients attended the One Stop Shop. The figures below demonstrate the range of support received by those attending:

- 219 sought advice from a solicitor
- 102 sought advice from housing
- 51 sought advice from the Police
- 147 sought advice from specialist domestic violence/abuse services

### Victim/Survivor Support Group (VSSG)

Victim/survivor support groups are of a similar design to the 'Freedom Programme'. The programme is a 12 week course with the overarching aim to:

- To help women who have experienced domestic violence make sense of and understand what has happened to them.
- To recognise potential future abusers.
- To help women gain self-esteem and the confidence to improve their lives.

The support groups are available in Children and Family Centres and cover all parts of the borough. In 2016/2017 the support group received:

- A total of 109 referrals
- 21 referrals from Bromley Children's Social Care
- 23 self-referrals
- 11 referrals from the Bromley Children's Project

### Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS)

The IRIS project is a GP based domestic violence and abuse training programme provided in collaboration with Bromley CCG and Victim Support. It was relaunched in October 2016. The training includes; safe enquiry, providing immediate support and onward referrals to specialist agencies.

Since the relaunch of the project in October 2016:

- 25 GP practices within the borough have been awarded IRIS Accreditation
- IRIS Bromley has received 122 referrals from GP Practices
- At least 12 service users have reported the domestic abuse to the Police and have continued through the criminal justice system



### **What this means for residents in Bromley:**

There were 2568 domestic violence offences reported in Bromley between October 2016-September 2017. This is a rise of nearly 60% over the previous 5 years.

The number of high risk domestic violence cases referred to MARAC in Bromley rose by 6% in the last year, predominantly driven by an increase in referrals from the police.

The rate of cases discussed at MARAC is lower in Bromley than the national average (13 cases per 1000 population compared to 35 cases per 1000 population nationally).

There were 476 referrals to the Bromley Domestic Abuse Advocacy Project (BDAAP). The number of referrals has increased consistently from just over 300 in 2014/15.

The highest volume of referrals was from residents living in Cray Valley Clock House and Penge & Cator.

82% of the referrals to BDAAP were women. Women of childbearing age form a significant proportion of referrals received. In 2016/17, 212 dependents of the victims of domestic abuse were known to the BDAAP.

There has been a decline in the proportion of referrals from people from a Black or Black British background over the last 3 years. However, the highest proportion of referrals from the BME community still comes from this group.

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