



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

Equality Impact Analysis

Title of policy, function or service	Domestic Abuse Policy
Lead officer	Justine Hoy
Person completing the EIA	Wendy Rollings
Type of policy, function or service:	Existing (reviewed) <input type="checkbox"/> New/Proposed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Version & Date	v.1 13.5.21

1. Background

The Domestic Abuse Policy aims to show how the Council responds to domestic abuse as a service provider and employer. Domestic violence and abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse regardless of sex or gender identity, cultural heritage or ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or disability.

2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of the Domestic Abuse Policy on the people in the groups or with the characteristics protected in the Equalities Act 2010.

These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership.

3. Engagement and consultation

Consultation on the amendment to the Policy was undertaken in 2019 with internal and external key partners and statutory services.

This included:

- Circulation with affected department Heads at Watford Borough Council, HR and Legal.
- Women's Centre

This was followed up by individual meetings as required and all responses to this consultation were available.

4. What we know about the Watford population

4.1. Ethnicity

Watford has a very diverse population, more so than the rest of Hertfordshire; it is one of the strengths of our town and what makes us such a vibrant and diverse town. For Watford, the Census 2011 shows the following main breakdown in terms of ethnicity: White British (61.9%), White other (7.7%),

Pakistani (6.7%), British Indian (5.5%), British other Asian (4.4%) and African (3.5%), White Irish (2.3%) and Caribbean (1.7%). The full breakdown from Census 2011 is at Appendix A. In 2016, the ONS published population estimates by ethnicity. This did not report ethnicities to the level of granularity that the Census reported ethnicity. The estimates for 2016 were: White British (59% - 57,000 residents), Asian / Asian British (19% - 19,000 residents), All Other White (12% - 12,000 residents), Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (4% - 4,000 residents), Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group (4% - 4,000 residents) and Other Ethnic Group (1% - 1,000 residents).

National insurance registration: Census information is now nearly 10 years old and it is likely that the ethnic profile of the borough has changed during this time. For example, it would not have captured the more recent EU arrivals to the borough (EU2 countries – Romania and Bulgaria, who were given residency rights in 2014). We know from other data such as National Insurance Registration that Watford has experienced a relatively high increase in nationals from the EU2 countries applying for National Insurance registrations as Watford residents. This follows a period of a high number from EU8 countries (including Poland, Latvia, Lithuania) who were given freedom of movement to the UK from 2004. Throughout the period the arrival of new residents from south Asia (e.g. Pakistan / India) has remained relatively constant.

The National Insurance Registrations for January – March 2020 shows there were 2,194 registrations in Watford, of which 640 were from Romania and Bulgaria, 527 from South Asia and 395 from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden. 148 came from sub Saharan Africa and 30 from North Africa.

Language spoken at home: Other data sources, including school language survey on the languages spoken by Watford school children at home, endorse the National Insurance findings that Watford remains a town with a diverse community with English still the predominant language (60%) followed by (in order of self-selection by Watford families): Urdu, Polish, Tamil, Romanian, Gujarati, Punjabi, Gujarati and Hindi.

The most selected African language spoken is Arabic (113 families – although not spoken exclusively in Africa) and Akan/Twi-Fante (78 families). Births and origin of parents: In 2018, nearly 60% (59.6%) of children born to Watford based parents, had one or both parents born outside of the UK, with 42% having both parents born outside of the UK. 52% of new mothers in Watford were born outside of the UK (1397 births in total, with 667 to mothers born in the UK and 730 born outside of the UK. Of these 257 mothers were born in the ‘new’ EU countries – those that had joined since 2004) and 252 in the Middle East and Asia. 88 mothers were born in Africa. EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) quarterly statistics (28 August 2018 to 31 March 2020) – experimental data: In May 2020, the Government issued data on the number of applications made to the EUSS from 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2020, and applications concluded during the same time period. This shows that up to March 2020, 11,630 people in Watford had applied for EUSS. Of these the following were the highest number of nationalities who had applied: Romanian (3,530), Polish (1,810), Portuguese (1,020) and Bulgarian (580). The largest populations by age band in Watford are:

1. 35-39 years (8,537)
2. 30-34 years (7,921)
3. 40 -44 years (7,458)
4. 5 -9 years (7,027)

Compared with other districts in Hertfordshire, Watford has fewer 65+ year old residents. The age profile of the borough is more comparable with cities who have younger age profiles and where younger people are attracted by lifestyle opportunities, affordable housing and good transport links. Median age: the median age in Watford is 37 years. This compares to 40 for England (mid-year 2019 population estimates)

4.2. Disability / Health

Around 85% of the population of Watford state that they have 'good health' and just under 14% record a disability. We do not have details as to what these disabilities are but they will include a wide range of physical and mental health disabilities or impairment (Census 2011). The 2019 NHS Health Profile's summary conclusion is that the health of people in Watford is 'varied' compared with the England average.

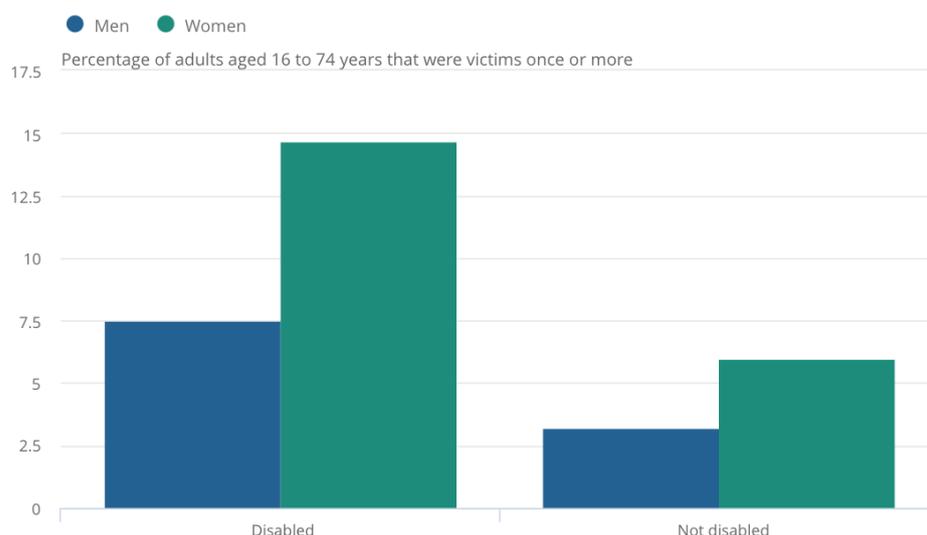
Understanding domestic abuse

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse regardless of sex or gender identity, cultural heritage or ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or disability. However the prevalence is higher in people within some protected characteristics.

4.1. Disability

For the year ending March 2020, the Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that men and women aged 16 to 74 years with a disability¹ were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those without.

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for adults aged 16 to 74 years by disability and sex, England and Wales, year ending March 2020.



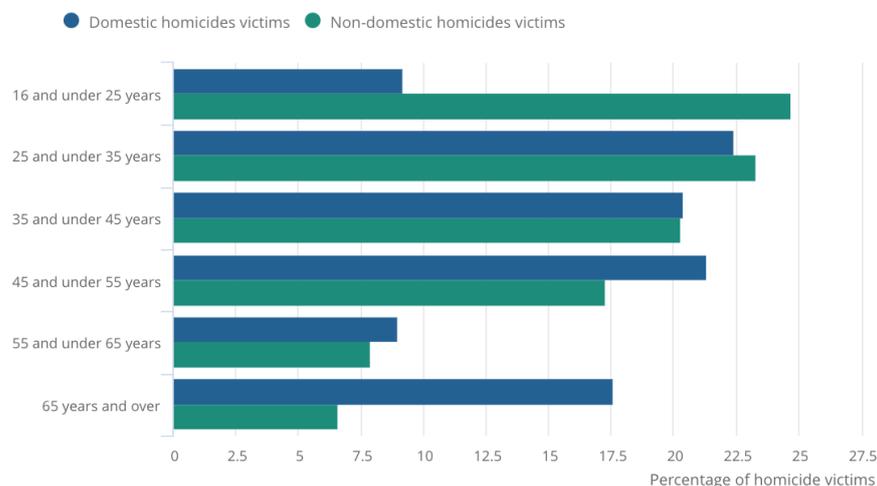
Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime Survey for England and Wales

¹ As the CSEW questions include stalking by a current partner, it is not consistent with the [legal definition of stalking and harassment](#).

4.2. Age

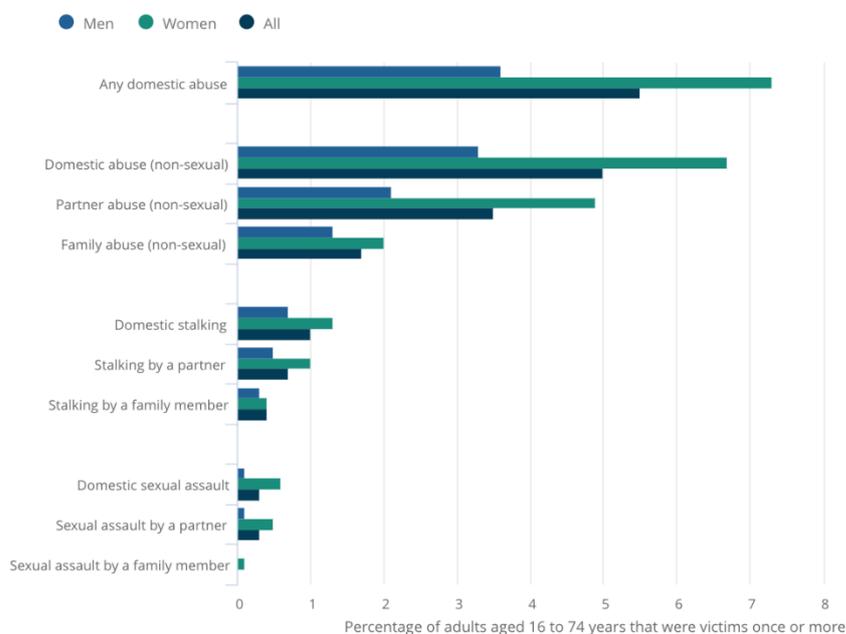
Figure 14: The majority of domestic homicide victims were aged 25 to 34 years

Percentage of homicide victims by homicide-type and age, England and Wales, year ending March 2017 to March 2019



Women are more likely than men to be victims of domestic abuse in the last year.

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for adults aged 16 to 74 years by sex and type of abuse, England and Wales, year ending March 2020.



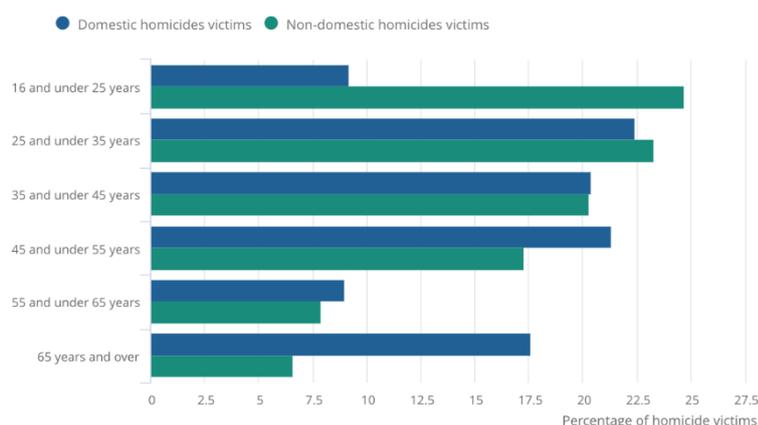
Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime Survey for England and Wales

Data from the Home Office Homicide Index for the year ending March 2017 to the year ending March 2019 show that over three-quarters of victims of domestic homicide were female (77% or 274 victims). This contrasts with non-domestic homicides where the majority of victims over the same time period were male (87% or 786 victims)

The highest proportion of domestic homicide victims fell within the 25- to 34-year age category (22%), whereas the highest proportion of non-domestic homicide victims fell within the 16- to 24-year age category (25%). However, larger proportion of domestic homicide victims were aged 65 years and over (18%) compared with non-domestic homicide victims (7%).

Figure 14: The majority of domestic homicide victims were aged 25 to 34 years

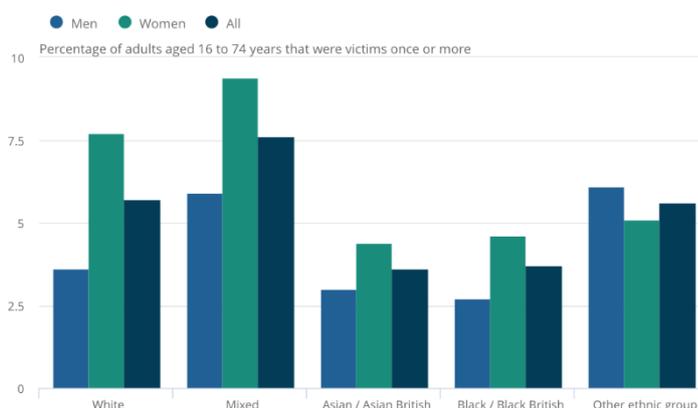
Percentage of homicide victims by homicide-type and age, England and Wales, year ending March 2017 to March 2019



For the year ending March 2020, the Crime Survey of England and Wales showed that those in the Mixed ethnic group were significantly more likely to experience domestic abuse within the last year than those in the Black or Asian ethnic groups.

In the White ethnic group, women were significantly more likely than men to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year (7.7% of women, compared with 3.6% of men)

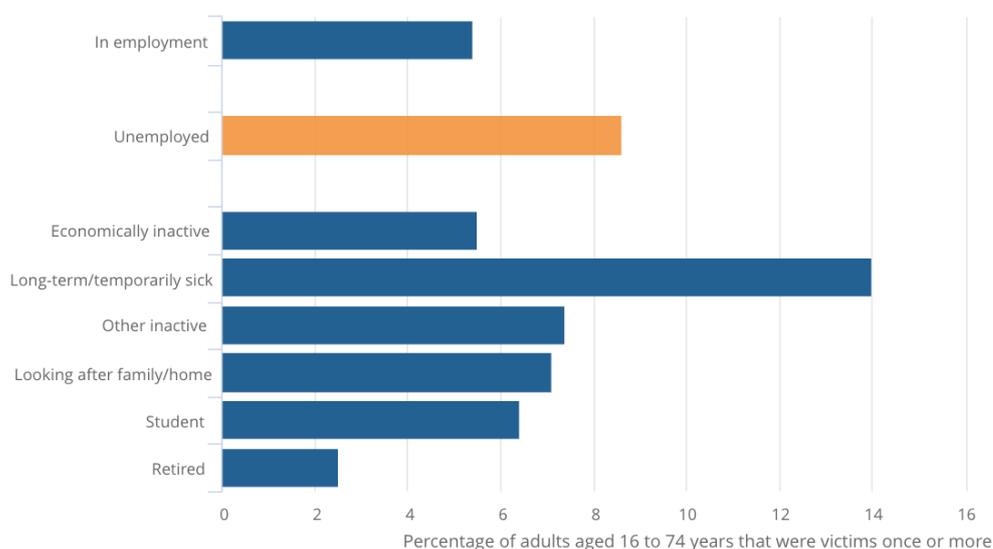
Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for adults aged 16 to 74 years by ethnicity sex and type of abuse, England and Wales, year ending March 2020.



Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime Survey for England and Wales

Unemployed people were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse than those who were employed or economically active.

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for adults aged 16 to 74 years by employment status, England and Wales, year ending March 2020.



Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime Survey for England and Wales

5. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through the Domestic Abuse Policy and Service Delivery

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of the policy:

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

A. Positive impacts

The policy recognises that domestic abuse can happen across any of the protected characteristics and implementation will have a positive impact across these characteristics. National data shows that some characteristics do suffer disproportionately from domestic abuse and it is important to recognise this but without overlooking that it does go beyond these.

It is recommended that data at the local level is collected as far as possible to understand

how the policy is impacting across protected characteristics.

Disability/Carers (including mental health)

The EIA recognises that people with disabilities are disproportionately represented in those who suffer from domestic abuse. To support people with a disability and any associated communication needs, there is a requirement to develop accessible information and advice to ensure people are informed of their entitlements and support. It has also been identified that practitioners working in service areas supporting individuals with disabilities (including learning disabilities) and/or health conditions will benefit from greater awareness of domestic abuse in order to identify issues, support disclosures being made safely and that, where needed, develop local solutions so domestic abuse provision is co-located within these settings (and clear pathways for support are established).

Accessibility of service provision also needs to be addressed in terms of physical access for example; specialist provision would support people with specific physical disabilities.

B. Negative impacts

No negative impacts identified but the service will ensure that the support to victims as both an employer and a direct provider of services is accessible to people in all of the equality characteristics.

6. Overall conclusions

The key potential for cumulative impacts on particular groups have been summarised below;

Summary of potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	V
This policy will have a positive impact on all protected strands.	All protected characteristics	By applying help and s translated included.

Summary of potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	
There are no negative impacts on any of the protected strands		

This EIA has been approved by:

..... **Date**