

Domestic Abuse Briefing

Briefing No 1

Spring 2014

Scottish
Women's Aid

Introduction

Domestic abuse exists in all sections of our communities. It can exist in all types of relationships between partners and ex-partners. Abusers and victims of domestic abuse can be male or female, any race or religion and from all different types of background.

The nationally agreed definition of domestic abuse, adopted by the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service is:

“Any form of physical, sexual or mental and emotional abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship.

The relationship will be between partners (married, co-habiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse can be committed in the home or elsewhere.”

Domestic abuse is characterised by a pattern of coercive control escalating in frequency and severity over time.

Prevalence figures suggest between one in three and one in five women experiences some form of domestic abuse in the course of their lifetime. The frequency and prolonged nature of domestic abuse, the psychological aspects of this control, and the setting in which domestic abuse takes place, all help to explain the higher level of fear and trauma experienced by victims.

*highest
number of
incidents reported in
victim's home*

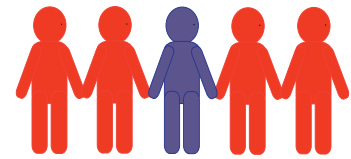
suggest that *one*

in five women

will experience

domestic abuse at

some stage in her life. Supporting people affected by domestic abuse and survivors of domestic abuse will mean that: *more people who have experienced domestic abuse are in a home of their choice and are emotionally supported; survivors of domestic abuse have a greater sense of self-worth and emotional well-being.*



National Picture

- Domestic Abuse Incidents

There were 60,080 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in 2012/13, compared to 59,847 incidents recorded in 2011/12. This equates to an increase of less than half of 1% however follows the increasing trend experienced over the last ten years. Half of all incidents recorded in 2012/13 led to the recording of a crime or an offence (30,259) and of these, 78% were reported to the Procurator Fiscal (23,606).

The percentage of incidents where a male victim was recorded has largely remained unchanged over the last 5 years at between 16 and 17% of all incidents.

The highest number of incidents was reported in the victim's home (44%) rather than the “joint home” (29%) inferring that many incidents have occurred when partners were no longer living together.

The weekend (Saturday/Sunday) remains the highest risk period for incidences of domestic abuse accounting for between 37% and 39% of all incidents reported. Interestingly, Sunday is reported as the peak day; however, it is more likely that this is a result of incidents being reported in the early

hours of Sunday morning that are probably linked to the previous Saturday evening.

Nationally, the most common crime or offence in 2012/13 was common assault, at 42% (12,778) of all incidents where a crime or offence was recorded. Threatening or abusive behaviour was the second most common crime or offence, accounting for 19% (5,685) of incidents where a crime or offence was recorded.

Local Picture

- **Domestic Abuse Incidents**

Across the Forth Valley area there were 3,500 incidents recorded and in Fife, 4,800 incidents recorded during 2012/13. Across the three local authority areas in the Forth Valley area, there were 713 incidents reported in the Clackmannanshire area, a slight fall on the previous year where 792 incidents were reported; 1997 incidents in the Falkirk area, a slight fall on the previous year where 2080 incidents were reported; and 790 incidents in the Stirling area, again a slight fall on the previous year where 833 incidents were reported.

No. of domestic abuse incidents in Fife area increased in 2012/13.

The number of incidents reported in the Fife area in 2012/13 (4800) increased on the

previous year where 4519 incidents were reported. The increase reported in Fife is likely a result of changes in the reporting of domestic incidents in the area implemented by Police Scotland and not necessarily an actual increase in the incidence of domestic abuse in the area.

(Forth Valley was reporting their incidents using the framework adopted by Police Scotland nationally whereas prior to Police Scotland, Fife were not).

Clackmannanshire Local Authority area has the **fourth highest** number of incidents of domestic abuse per 100K population at 1390, much higher than the Scottish average of 1131 (Glasgow City, Dundee City & West Dunbartonshire are the

three local authority areas that were higher than Clackmannanshire). Falkirk's was 1274 incidents, Stirling 868 incidents and Fife, 1311 incidents per 100K population.

In the Forth Valley area, 44% resulted in the recording of a crime and in the Fife area, it was slightly less at 41.5%; both areas were lower than the Scottish average (50%). In the Forth Valley area, 71.5% of these crimes were reported to the procurator fiscal (lower than the Scottish average) and in Fife; 79% were reported (higher than the Scottish average).

- **Domestic Abuse Court Cases**

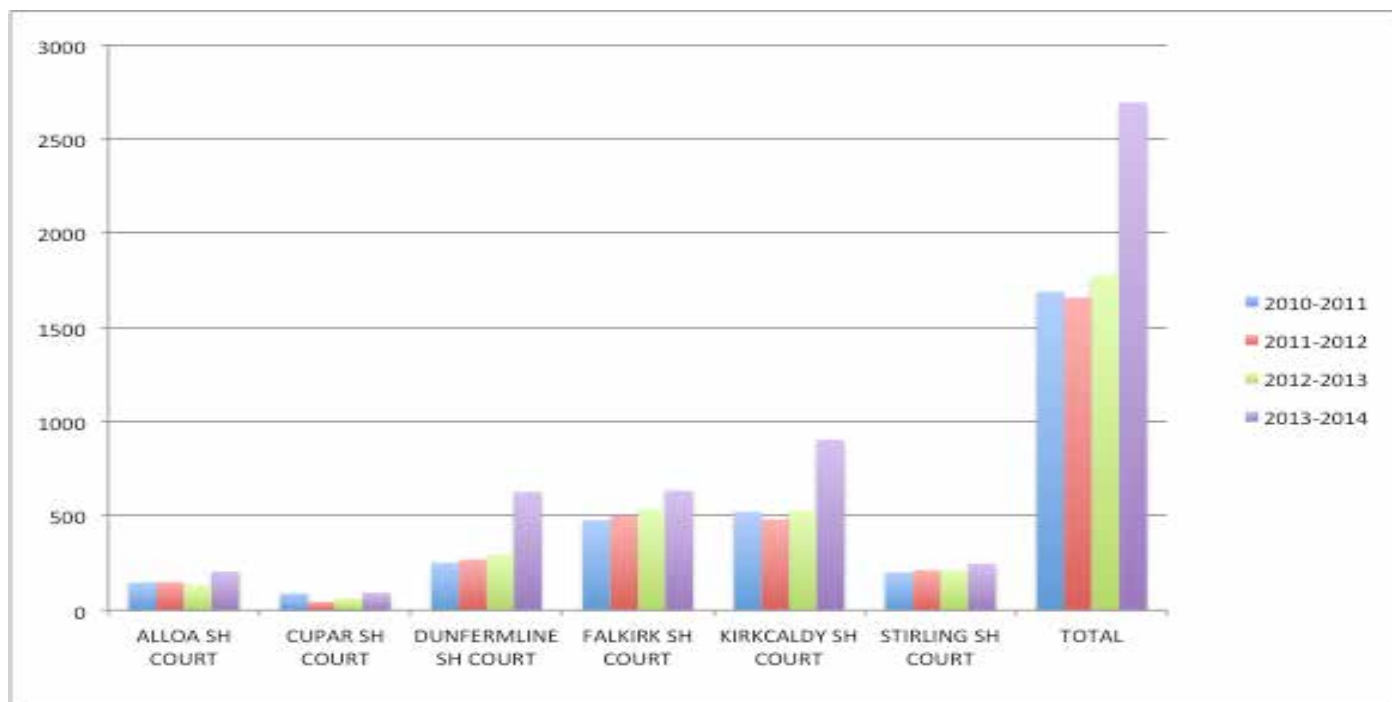
The number of cases called to court with a **DOMESTIC** aggravator across the Fife and Forth Valley area in 2013/14 was 2694, an increase of 52% (918 cases) on the previous year (2012/13 – 1776 cases)¹. This increase follows an increasing trend experienced over the last three years and is illustrated in Chart 1.



As expected, given the increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents reported in the Fife area, the courts in this area have all experienced an increase in the number of domestic abuse cases called to court.

Cupar Sheriff Court (which has now closed) reported an increase of 45% (29 cases) in 2013/14 compared to 2012/13; Dunfermline Sheriff Court reported the highest increase of all the Fife courts with an increase of 331 cases (111.5%) in 2013/14 and Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court reported an increase of 71% (375 cases). This increase, as previously stated, may be linked to changes in the reporting of domestic abuse incidents in the Fife area.

Chart 1: No of Domestic Abuse Cases called to Court



Across the courts in the Forth Valley area, all reported an increase in the number of domestic abuse cases called to court in 2013/14 compared to 2012/13. *It will be interesting to see if the number of domestic abuse incidents in the Forth Valley area for 2013/14 has increased as in the previous years, they had reported a decrease.* (The number of domestic abuse incidents from Police Scotland was not provided therefore this comparison couldn't be made until the official statistics are released from Scottish Government around October 2014).

The highest increase was reported at Alloa Sheriff Court where 205 domestic abuse cases were called to court in 2013/14, an increase of 51% (69 cases) compared to 2012/13. Falkirk Sheriff Court reported an increase of 18.5% (99 domestic abuse cases) and Stirling Sheriff Court reported an increase of 15% (33 cases).

Falkirk Sheriff Court has a Domestic Abuse Cluster Court, which is held one day per week; Alloa and Stirling Sheriff Courts do not. There is no explanation at present to explain why Alloa Sheriff Court has experienced such an increase in 2013/14 although Scottish Government stats for 2012/13 did highlight that Clackmannanshire Local Authority area had the fourth highest rate of domestic abuse incidents across Scotland.

Domestic Abuse Cluster Courts in operation across the Falkirk area

Since the 2nd August 2011 there have been a total of 730 domestic abuse trials through Falkirk Domestic Abuse Cluster Court¹¹.

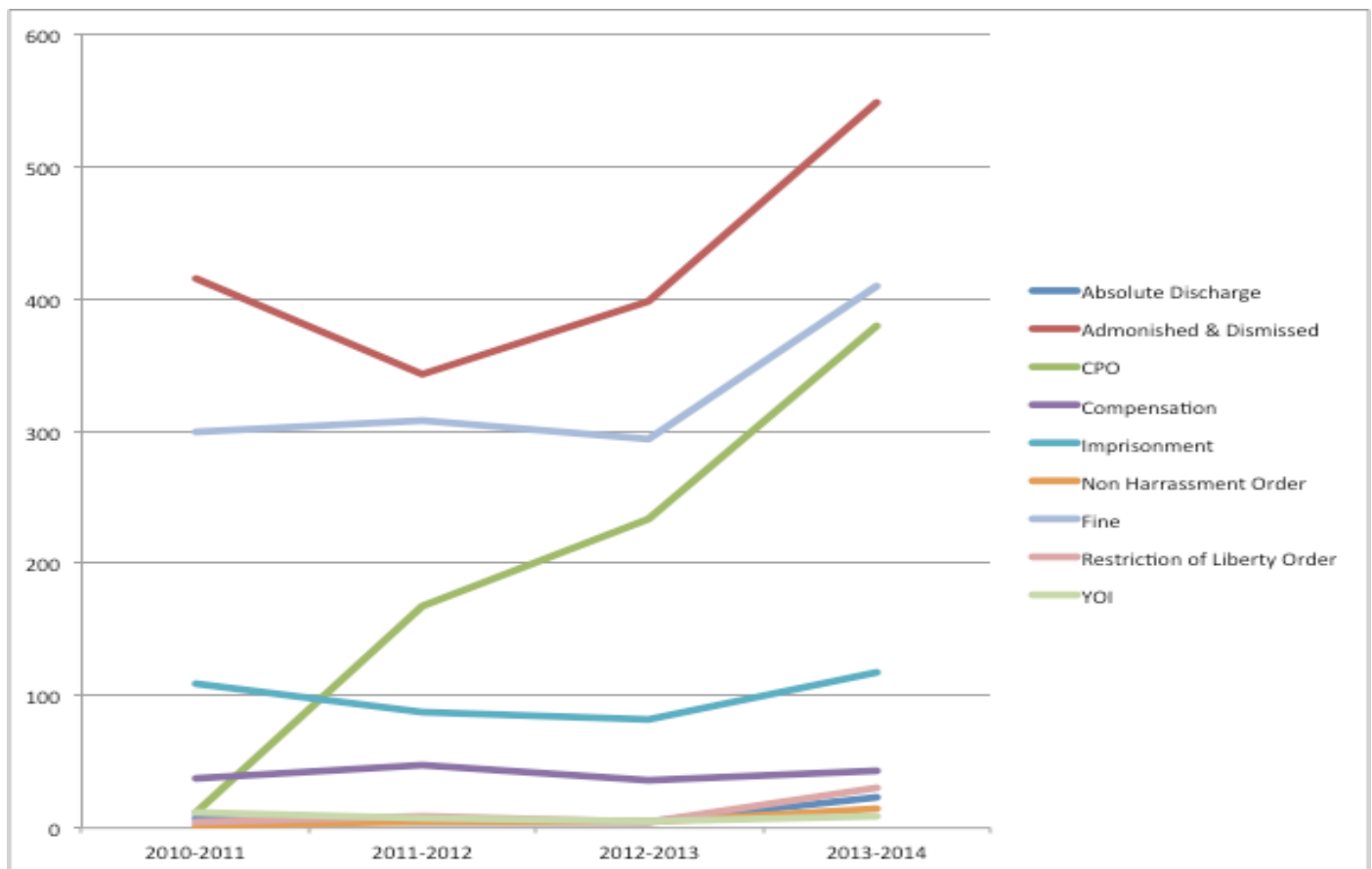
Court Disposals

The highest proportion of court disposals across the courts in the Fife and Forth Valley area² for the last three years (2011 to 2014) has been ‘*admonishments and dismissals*’ ranging from between 34% and 37% of all disposals; little change. As expected with the introduction of Community Payback Orders (CPO) as alternatives to custody and to replace community sentences, the proportion of disposals that has resulted in a CPO has increased over the last three years from 17% in 2011/12 to 24% in 2013/14. This is illustrated in Chart 2 below.

In 2013/14 there were more disposals, which resulted in imprisonment, but proportionally against the total number of disposals, it was about the same as in the previous year (between 7% and 8%). Therefore, despite there being a higher number of persons being sent to prison for domestic abuse cases, this reflects the general increase in the total number of domestic abuse cases being dealt with through the courts. In relation to young offenders, there were 9 cases resulting in the accused being sent to a Young Offenders Institution (YOI) in 2013/14, an increase of 4 on the previous year (2012/13: 5).

Interestingly, the number of “*absolute discharge*” cases in 2013/14 was much higher than in the previous two years, increasing from 4 in 2012/13 to 23 in 2013/14. It can be inferred that this increase may be a consequence of the “zero tolerance” approach by Police Scotland³.

Chart 2: Type of Court Disposals



More domestic abuse cases resulting in an “absolute discharge” - Why?

- **Domestic Abuse Task Forces**

Originally introduced in legacy Strathclyde Police Force area, *Domestic Abuse Task Forces* are now in all local police divisions. These task force teams tackle domestic abuse using a radical approach specifically aimed at serious and serial domestic abusers by investigating all aspects of their criminal lifestyle to prevent them from further offending.



These task forces are supported by local Domestic Abuse Investigation Units.

The inference has been drawn across local authorities and partner agencies that this increased focus by Police Scotland has led to an increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents being reported.

Domestic Abuse Liaison Groups – Fife & Forth Valley

Domestic abuse has been an area of concern for both the Fife and Central Criminal Justice Boards for at least the past three years. Alongside the prevalence of domestic abuse, there was a worry at the level of support provided to victims who very often, were reluctant to engage with the Criminal Justice System.

In an effort to address the issue of support for victims, Fife and Forth Valley Community Justice Authority agreed to establish two working groups, entitled the Fife and the Forth Valley Domestic Abuse Liaison Groups (DALGs). Since both groups have been established there has been an increased focus on domestic abuse.

Increased focus on domestic abuse

Locally Delivered Domestic Abuse Programmes

- **The Caledonian Programme – Forth Valley**

The Caledonian Programme is an integrated approach to address men's domestic abuse and to improve the lives of women, children and men. It does this by working with men convicted of domestic abuse related offences on a programme to reduce their re-offending while offering integrated services to support and address the safety of women and children.

The Caledonian Men's Programme uses a person centred approach coupled with cognitive behavioural techniques in order to encourage men to recognise their abuse and take responsibility for themselves and their relationship with their ex/partners and children. The programme is aimed at adult males convicted of domestic abuse who are placed under supervision or subject to statutory aftercare.

The Caledonian System in Forth Valley is delivered in partnership with the Forth Valley Accredited Programmes Team, Sacro Groupwork Services, and Criminal Justice Social Work Services in Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling.

As of the 31st March 2014⁴, the total number of men referred to the Caledonian Men's Programme from the Forth Valley area has been **187** with 117 assessed as suitable: 40 not suitable and 30 still awaiting assessment⁵.

The total number of men in all stages of the programme is 77 with 13 having recently completed (93%)⁶; all from the Falkirk area. The number of men across the three local authority areas currently on a programme is: Falkirk: 41 men; Stirling: 15 men and Clackmannanshire: 21 men.

The Caledonian Women’s Service aims to maintain contact with the women throughout the man’s Order hence the total number of women known to the service at the end of March 2014 was **152** (a number of men have involvement with multiple women). Five of these women were assessed as “critical” risk⁷ at the end of March with 21 at a “heightened” risk⁸.

The Caledonian Children’s Service aims to maintain contact with the child throughout the man’s Order to offer ‘Safety Planning’ and support in relation to the impact of domestic abuse; hence, the number of children still receiving a service at the end of March 2014 was **169**.

- **Fife Domestic Abuse Programmes**

Fife does not run an accredited domestic abuse programme; however, they do run a Domestic Abuse Groupwork (DAG) Programme.

Between 1st October 2013 and 30th April 2014 there were a total of 74 reports requested for domestic offences. Twenty-seven (**27**) individuals started the DAG in January 2014. In March 2014, 5 individuals completed their programmes.

Despite the number of persons currently on a DAG programme there were still 75 people on the pending list waiting on a programme at the end of April 2014. This would suggest that the demand is not meeting the supply.

As with the Caledonian Programme in Forth Valley, the Fife DAG Programme also supports women. As of the 30th April 2014, 27 women were engaging/ being supported by the service.



ASSIST

ASSIST⁹ is the specialist domestic abuse advocacy service, supported by Police Scotland that provides advocacy and support to victims of domestic abuse¹⁰. The aims of ASSIST are to ensure that all victims of domestic abuse are safe, informed and supported throughout the court process and beyond. ASSIST is mainly linked to the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court at Glasgow Sheriff Court and for male victims, at Edinburgh Domestic Abuse Cluster Court.

It was anticipated with the introduction of Police Scotland that all local police divisions would have an “ASSIST” service for domestic abuse cases; however, this has not been the case.

Instead, Fife has introduced a **Court Advocacy Service** and Falkirk have introduced a **Court Support Officer**, who will assist and support victims of domestic abuse through the judicial process. This dedicated Court Support Officer will be supported by the Domestic Abuse Liaison Officers (DALOs), employed by Police Scotland and based in Forth Valley Division (Local Police Domestic Abuse Unit, Larbert). This service officially started on **12th May 2014**.

Court Support Process

Fife and Forth Valley Domestic Abuse Liaison Groups (DALGs) have been successful in introducing additional support for victims. In Falkirk, as mentioned above, funded from Falkirk Women’s Aid and Falkirk Community Safety Partnership, there is a Domestic Abuse Court Support Service (DACSS).

This is a new service offering support to clients attending the Domestic Abuse Court in Falkirk to give evidence about their experience. A Court Support Officer is available to explain the court process and if necessary arrange special support for clients before attending court. This support is to ensure victims can understand the process and are therefore more likely to appear at court and give evidence. The Court Support Officer liaises closely

with Police, Witness Services, Social Work and all agencies involved in the court process to make sure clients (victims) are kept safe and further risks are reduced. It is a totally inclusive service and offers support to all individuals regardless of age, beliefs, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexual orientation and race who have experienced domestic abuse.

The Falkirk Court Support Officer has been in contact with 74 victims (between November 2013 and April 2014) and in Fife; the Court Support Officer dealt with 112 cases in a period of 7 months (1st April 2013 to 31st October 2013).

**Future
funding for these
posts is an issue currently
being addressed through both
Fife and Forth Valley
DALGs.**

- Fife Domestic Abuse Court Support & Advocacy Service¹²*

The Court Support and Advocacy Service in Fife fills the gap between clients' reporting domestic abuse to the police and the outcome of any court case. Prior to this service¹³, face-to-face visits, support getting clients' to court and support after any trial/ hearings were not possible. It has been proven through listening to victim's experiences that it is *'pre-trial'* when victims feel most vulnerable; hence not having adequate support available at this time was affecting non-attendance at court.

The support worker identified difficulties in the length of time cases are taking to get to trial which can be difficult to manage for some clients. In Dunfermline Sheriff Court, which holds the 'domestic abuse' court every second Tuesday, trials are being heard within 12 weeks of the custody hearing; in Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court it can be up to 20 weeks and in Cupar Sheriff Court it ranges from 9 to 22 weeks to get to trial. (These figures do not take account of the numerous adjournments that take place).

It should be noted that domestic abuse cases normally held in Cupar Sheriff Court move to Dundee Sheriff Court upon its closure. ***It will be interesting to note if there is a fall in the number of women attending court given the change in court they have to attend.***

Between 1st April 2013 and 31st December 2013, 150 cases were referred to the Court Support and Advocacy Worker; 25 declined the service (11 stated they felt ok about going to court); and 40 were unable to be contacted (21 cases had no contact details). Fifty-eight (58) of the cases were referred to MARAC.

In measuring the 'soft outcomes' of this service, most women generally felt supported by the Court Support and Advocacy Worker before, during and after they attended court. Women commented on being informed about the court procedures and being supported mentally to attend and give evidence even if some had gone back to their partners. Nearly all said that having the support aided them to feel more confident about giving evidence and ***just under half said that they would not have attended court if the support was not there.***



VICTIM CASE STUDY

Sandra is a 55 year old woman from Fife who had been married for 34 years. For most of her married life she had experienced domestic abuse. The last incident had resulted in Sandra's husband being arrested and charged with assault to cause injury and threatening and abusive behaviour.

There was a custody hearing next day where the accused pled not guilty to all charges. Dates for intermediate diet and trial diet were set and special bail conditions were imposed.

Special bail conditions meant that Sandra's husband was prohibited from approaching or contacting her or attempting to approach or contact her. It was at this point I (Court Support Worker) received the referral from VIA (Victim Information and Advice).

I contacted Sandra to explain the service to her. She was keen to speak to me and after completing the relevant forms we agreed a home visit.

At the visit we spent some time exploring what had brought Sandra to this point. Sandra told me about numerous incidents of domestic abuse but she was always too frightened to call the police. On this last occasion Sandra's granddaughter was in the house when the assault took place and she knew she would have to do something.

Sandra was petrified of going to court and felt it would be impossible for her to stand in front of her husband and give evidence against him. I explained to Sandra that I could organise a court familiarisation visit and we could look at getting special measures in place so she would not have to face her husband. She was pleased these procedures were available to her but she was still very scared.

Although Sandra took time everyday to look her best, always doing her hair and makeup, she lacked in confidence and self esteem. I was aware that the 'Freedom Programme' had a course starting in Sandra's area; I offered to send Sandra information on the programme and to support her to attend if she wanted to go ahead. Sandra felt that she needed all the support she could get at this point and was happy to enroll in the programme.

Sandra received a letter from VIA asking her if she needed support with 'special measures' in court. I supported her to make the phone call to VIA and give reasons why she required special measures. VIA put the application for special measures to the Procurator Fiscal in Dunfermline. (Special measures were later granted.)

At the intermediate diet there was no change of plea and the case was continued to trial. At this point we contacted the Witness Service in Dunfermline Sheriff Court to arrange a court familiarisation visit. Sandra found the visit particularly useful to put her mind at ease. She had never been in a court before and had some preconceived ideas.

Sandra had been attending the 'Freedom Programme'; this had helped with her understanding of what she had experienced; it also helped her to focus on what she had to do in court, although she was still very anxious.

I picked Sandra up to take her to court, we went through the evidence giving process again and she seemed resigned to doing her best. We arrived at court at 9.25am and were met by witness services at the side door of the court. Due to lack of time the case was adjourned for a further two months. Sandra was extremely distressed at this outcome and felt it had taken everything she had to appear on this occasion.

By the time the case was heard, Sandra had finished the 'Freedom Programme' sessions and had also begun counselling with Fife Women's Aid. She had moved into a new tenancy and had spent time with family in Spain. She was in a better place.

In court Sandra made an excellent witness. She felt prepared for the questions asked by the Procurator Fiscal and the defence and answered them clearly and with confidence.

The accused was found guilty of all charges. Sandra felt very emotional after the trial and very proud of herself. She told me that she may not have been able to go through with the process if not for the support she received from the court support service.

For years Sandra had kept the abuse to herself. She had felt to blame for some of the abuse because she was not being a 'good wife'. This case was exacerbated by Sandra suffering from epilepsy.

Through positive reinforcement Sandra came to realise her ability to change her way of looking at the abuse. We had built up a trust based on honesty, empathy and integrity. Sandra felt liberated in her ability to talk freely without fear of being judged.

She felt empowered thus able to enact change for herself.

MARAC

MARAC (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference) is a model of multi-agency risk management that is specifically designed to address domestic abuse. It is a multi-agency meeting, which has the safety of high-risk victims of domestic abuse as its focus.

The purpose of MARAC is to;

- share information to increase the safety, health and well being of victims (and their children, if they have any)
- determine whether the perpetrator poses a significant risk to any particular individual (other than the victim currently subject of the MARAC) or to the general community
- jointly construct and implement a safety plan that provides professional- support to all those at risk and which reduces harm
- reduce repeat victimisation
- improve agency co-ordination and accountability
- improve support for staff involved in high risk domestic abuse cases

MARAC is a pro-active conferencing and coordination mechanism based on the key principles of confidentiality, multi-agency pro-active information sharing (with consent wherever possible) and accountability.

It is delivered through multi-agency collaboration involving statutory and non-statutory partners: Police, Health, Education and Children's Services, Housing and Community Care and other relevant voluntary and statutory sector services. The views of the victim are represented by an independent advocacy worker.

MARAC is a process for adult victims (men and women), over the age of 16 years, unless they are aged 17 or 18 and are subject to a supervision requirement.

For every £1 spent on MARAC'S at least £6 of public money can be saved annually on direct costs to agencies such as police and health services. MARAC's are saving money now and will go on to save more in the future if properly resourced.¹⁴

• MARAC Forth Valley

The Forth Valley MARAC was established following partnership discussions involving police and a number of third party agencies across Forth Valley. It meets monthly in Larbert Police Station and has been operating since August 2013.

Agencies prioritise cases for MARAC based on risk and only the highest risk people are referred. Across the Forth Valley area the criteria is CAADA Dash Risk Score of 14 or higher and/or professional judgment. As of February 2014, 7 meetings of the Forth Valley MARAC have taken place with over 40 women and one man discussed.

• MARAC Fife

MARAC performance across Fife has three main outcomes:

- Reduction in repeat victimization
- Victims feel safer
- Reduced risk to victims and others, including children.

There were 60 cases discussed in the MARAC in Fife between October and December 2013 (most recent stats available); 49 were first time referrals and 11 were repeat cases. All victims discussed were female. Risk factors include stalking, pregnancy, and substance misuse. There were 59 male perpetrators and one female perpetrator. Almost a third (32%) used weapons including knives, hammer, and furniture. More than one hundred (124) children were discussed resulting in 104 child-related tasks.

MARAC Case Study

Alana is a 30 year old woman, referred to MARAC after an attempted murder by her new partner. The perpetrator was remanded.

We visited Alana to explain the MARAC process and to gather her views and concerns to share at the meeting.

Alana had only been in a relationship with the perpetrator for four weeks but had known him for a long time as he was a friend of the family. Alana knew he had a criminal history for violence but Alana was feeling vulnerable and thought that David would be able to protect her.

Alana has a tenancy with the council. The tenancy is in her own name and she has rent arrears. She would like to move house before David is released from prison.

Alana spoke of the abuse she had suffered at David's hands and the things he had told her that he had done to previous partners.

Alana is suffering panic attacks and is on anti depressants. She had a suicide attempt last year. However, she is being supported by her GP and feels that she is stable at present.

Alana sustained a fractured eye socket in the assault and has had surgery to rectify the damage.

We discussed supports. Alana has good support from her brother and her cousin but would like assistance with sorting her benefits and looking to move house. She needs someone to talk to who understands how she feels and would like support through court.

Alana's children were present during the assault and are struggling to come to terms with what they have seen. Alana would like support for them too.

We made a referral to Woman's Aid for support for Alana and a referral to CYP for support for the children.

We also referred Alana for court advocacy.

We spoke to Victim Support who will represent Alana through an application for criminal injuries compensation.

Through the MARAC process, Housing were informed of Alana's needs and arranged a Housing Options Interview for her.

The children were already open to Social Work Children's and Families and they linked in with the Health Visitor to provide consistent support for the family.

Education would inform the children's school to ensure their safety and well being. Police would continue to update Alana regarding the perpetrator and any release date.

MATAC

MATAC is an abbreviation for "Multi Agency Tasking & Coordination Group". This group was introduced by Police Scotland on the 1st of April 2013. It brings together partners to discuss and assess the risk of prolific Domestic Abuse Perpetrators.

More information on MATAC will be provided in future editions of the newsletter.

Becoming A Survivor

In March 2014, four organisations across the Fife and Forth Valley area were awarded funding from the Big Lottery Fund as part of its "Becoming a Survivor" programme. This programme supports people affected by domestic abuse in Scotland.

Falkirk Women's Aid was awarded £321,065 for a project, which will support 328 women, and their families who have experienced domestic abuse. These women have been identified as being at high risk and this project will allow them to access safe and secure accommodation. The project will also provide access to emotional and psychological support to enable women and children to re-build their lives.

Fife Council were awarded £691,253 for a project that will benefit 500 women in Fife affected by domestic abuse by enhancing housing choices and providing emotional and practical support through a joined up approach. The initiative will enable the group to work in partnership with relevant local organisations and employ staff to deliver a holistic package of support.

Saje Scotland Limited, based in Fife, were awarded £551,914 to support a project which will encourage and enable survivors of domestic violence to live independently without fear or abuse by providing a one stop shop that meets both their emotional and practical needs. The project will assist women and men residing in the Fife area, to access emotional support and improve their confidence/self-esteem to obtain and sustain a home of their choice.

Stirling Citizen's Advice Bureau was awarded £460,669 for a project, which aims to address the need for a comprehensive support package to enable women experiencing domestic abuse to better access housing, legal and financial support. It will deliver a support programme which includes legal, welfare advice, housing options, one to one support and advocacy to improve the outcomes for women and their children.

National Influences

- **Clare's Law**

It was announced by the Scottish Government on 8th May 2014 that Scotland is to pilot a disclosure scheme - commonly known as Clare's Law - in an attempt to tackle domestic abuse. The scheme allows people to find out from police whether their partner has a history of domestic violence. It is named after Clare Wood, who was killed by her ex-boyfriend in Salford, Greater Manchester, in 2009. A similar disclosure scheme was rolled out across England and Wales in March 2014.

Police Scotland have proposed setting up a multi-agency group and develop a pilot on a Clare's Law disclosure scheme in Scotland.

- **Scottish Strategy on Violence against Women**

The Scottish Government and COSLA are producing "Equally Safe", Scotland's strategy to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) with partners from the voluntary and public sectors. An outline of the strategy to address VAWG was published on 17th January 2014.

The strategy will cover all forms of VAWG. This includes, but is not limited to: commercial sexual exploitation; female genital mutilation; forced marriage; rape and sexual assault, as well as domestic abuse. Work is continuing to amend the strategy in the light of *consultation*¹⁵ responses and feedback from focus groups with service users, and the Scottish Government is on track to publish the strategy in June 2014.

References

Scottish Government Website

Scottish Government (2010) Tackling Violence Against Women: a review of key evidence and national priorities.

Scottish Government (2009) Safer Lives: Changed Lives; A Shared Approach to Tackling Violence Against Women in Scotland

Scottish Government (2005) Violence Against Women: a literature review.

NHS Scotland gender-based violence and health:
www.bgv.scot.nhs.uk

National training materials on violence against women: www.womenssupportproject.co.uk/vawtraining

The Big Lottery Website

Endnotes

- 1 Data provided by FOI request to Scottish Courts Service, 14/04/2014
- 2 Sheriff Courts: Alloa, Cupar, Dunfermline, Falkirk, Kirkcaldy & Stirling
- 3 Data provided by FOI request to Scottish Courts Service, 14/04/2014
- 4 Between the 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2014
- 5 Data taken from Caledonian System: Statistical Report: Partners Edition, March 2014
- 6 The court generally imposes two year Orders with a programme requirement. One male breached due to alcohol issues therefore his Order was not completed.
- 7 Critical Risk: high risk; recent child protection; recent adult protection; recent injuries; uncoordinated resources and services; significant service generated risks, pregnancy/post partum, separation.
- 8 Significant increase in risk, vulnerabilities and service generated risks, ongoing risk assessment; woman is in chaotic circumstances; need for increased support from women's service; recent separation, more coordination of multi-agency support, recent police call-out.
- 9 ASSIST stands for Advocacy, Support, Safety, Information & Services Together
- 10 [http://www.saferglasgow.com/what-we-do/support-services-for-victims/assist-\(advocacy,-support,-safety,-information-services-together\).aspx](http://www.saferglasgow.com/what-we-do/support-services-for-victims/assist-(advocacy,-support,-safety,-information-services-together).aspx)
- 11 data from Clerk of Court, time period 0/2/08/11 to 22/04/2014
- 12 Domestic Abuse Court Support & Advocacy Report 2013/14 by Bobbie Rae Greve
- 13 Current services: witness services and VIA would telephone and/or send letters to client's regarding queries about court dates, special measures which may be required in court and court familiarisation visits, etc.
- 14 Report by Chris Murphy, Falkirk & District Women's Aid, February 2014
- 15 There was no formal consultation on this strategy.