



HM Government

# A Call to End Violence against Women and Girls

Action Plan 2013

March 2013

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## Ministerial foreword by the Home Secretary



Two and a half years ago, I set out this Government's strategy to tackle violence against women and girls. I am proud of the progress we have made across Government to prevent harm, bring perpetrators to justice and support victims.

Over the last year, we have continued our core funding of nearly £40 million, protected until 2015, to support specialist domestic and sexual violence services. We have continued to innovate to break the cycle of violence and piloted new ways of protecting the victims of domestic violence. We have introduced two new stalking offences and announced plans to criminalise forced marriage. We have invested in changing attitudes and behaviours, by launching successful prevention campaigns to tackle rape and relationship abuse amongst teenagers. And we have continued to ensure victims of sexual violence have the support they need by funding new rape crisis centres in areas where victims could not previously access expert help.

Progress is being made. The latest figures from the 2011/12 Crime Survey for England and Wales show that the levels of domestic abuse experienced in the last year are lower than they were in the 2004/05 survey<sup>1</sup>. Last year saw the highest Crown Prosecution Service conviction rate for rape since recording began, and for those offenders given a custodial sentence for rape, the average length in 2011 was over eight and half years – an increase of nearly 21 months since 2005.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Statistical bulletin: Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2011/12.

2 An overview of sexual offending in England and Wales, 10 January 2013.

However, last year around 1.2 million women were victims of domestic abuse and around 400,000 were victims of sexual assault<sup>3</sup>. Continued low reporting rates for rape and sexual violence show why we need to do more to encourage people to come forward and report these crimes, so that perpetrators can be punished. The events of the last year – the exposure of a number of historic abuse cases, and some of our most vulnerable girls groomed and exploited by predatory, organised groups – make it clear that there is still much to do.

This updated Action Plan sets out not only what we have done, but what more we will do – including how we will tackle new and emerging issues. I am increasingly concerned about mobile phone and digital technology being used by children to view graphic material. And I am worried by reports about young girls feeling pressurised to take indecent images of themselves, which others – their peers and predatory adults – then use to coerce and control them.

I am determined to see continued reductions in domestic and sexual violence. But I am also determined to see a society where abuse is no longer tolerated, where all businesses and organisations offer support to those who may be victims, where those affected by domestic or sexual violence feel confident in coming forward to report their experiences and are fully supported for doing so, where female genital mutilation and forced marriage are no longer practiced, and where the criminal justice system rightly punishes those who would abuse and blight the lives of others.

Violence against women and girls is not a problem that can be solved by Government alone. Indeed, the progress that we have made so far would not have been possible without the tireless passion and commitment of frontline professionals, campaigners and charities throughout England and Wales. We will continue to help bring together frontline professionals and those who commission services at a local level.

Our commitment to tackle this issue also goes well beyond England and Wales. We are determined to support and challenge other countries to ensure they support and protect women from harm. The announcement of the Foreign Secretary's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative and the Department for International Development's Violence Against Women and Girls Research and Innovation Fund shows how seriously we take this responsibility.

We need all parts of the system, criminal justice, education, health, housing and benefits to work together to identify, protect and support victims and bring perpetrators to justice. This plan sets out a renewed focus on coordinating Government activity internationally, nationally and locally.

By working together, we can end violence against women and girls.



Right Honourable Theresa May MP  
Home Secretary

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3 Statistical bulletin: Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2011/12.

## Ministerial foreword by the Minister for Crime Prevention



In my lifetime, the role of women and girls in British society has been transformed. Both legally and culturally, women today have more freedom and control than ever before. However, the scale of violence against women and girls in England and Wales shows that inequalities continue and that many women are still living in fear, or suffering the consequences of violence.

As Minister for Crime Prevention, I am committed to ending this violence and enabling women and girls to live their lives in safety and freedom. I will focus national activity on the areas where we can have the most impact: tackling the underlying attitudes that foster gender-based violence and innovating to address old problems in a new way.

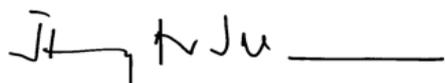
Although the majority of people in England and Wales recognise that violence against women and girls is always wrong, sadly this view is not universal. We know that certain communities consider harmful practices, such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation, to be justifiable traditions, rather than abuse. This is unacceptable in a modern, equal society. I am committed to challenging attitudes and working with communities to address these issues.

I am also determined to engage more with men and boys: to empower them to get involved, and help them see that their mothers, sisters and wives could be victims unless we do more to stop this violence. We cannot tackle a problem of this scale without involving the whole of our society in its solution.

But I also want to be clear – men and boys can also be victims of violence and this Action Plan is aimed at helping them as well.

Finally, critically, this Action Plan recognises that to fully protect victims we must address the behaviour of perpetrators. This renewed focus will help professionals identify abusers and stop the cycle of violence.

By working together, we can end violence against women and girls.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Browne', followed by a horizontal line.

Jeremy Browne MP  
Minister for Crime Prevention

# Executive summary

## Our vision

In November 2010, the Government set out its vision and ambition to tackle the blight of domestic and sexual violence in 'A Call to End Violence against Women and Girls'. In March 2011, we published 88 supporting actions for taking that strategy forward, alongside a full response to Baroness Stern's review into the way rape complaints were handled. Recognising that tackling violence against women and girls requires a sustained, robust and dynamic cross-Government approach, the Action Plan was updated in March 2012 with a commitment to review again by March 2013.

## Progress over the last year

More than 40 of the 100 actions in the March 2012 Action Plan have been closed, and we have made significant progress on the remainder. Our approach has benefitted from:

- Clear strategic objectives focused on prevention, provision of services, partnership working, justice outcomes, and risk reduction;
- Buy-in from across Government, with activity co-ordinated across Government Departments overseen by an Inter-Ministerial Group chaired by the Home Secretary;
- Active engagement with local areas and voluntary sector partners to inform our policies related to violence against women and girls and resolve issues emerging from wider Government reforms; and
- A commitment to almost £40 million of earmarked funding over the spending review period for specialist services from the Home Office and Ministry of Justice.

The Government has maintained its commitment to provide strong national leadership to end violence against women and girls. Key activity we have delivered domestically over the last 12 months includes:

- Announcing that the **Domestic Violence Definition** would be extended to include those aged 16-17, and include coercive control;

- Launching four **domestic violence disclosure scheme** pilots in Gwent, Wiltshire, Nottinghamshire and Greater Manchester Police to enable the police to disclose information about a person's previous violent offending to help protect new partners from future abuse;
- Funding the development and establishment of a further **five new Rape Crisis Centres** in Mid-Wales, Southend, Leeds, Northumbria and Ipswich in 2012-13 and commissioning the development of a further 4 new rape support centres in Lincoln, Reading, Bristol and North Somerset, and Preston to open by April 2014;
- Completing the pilot of **Domestic Violence Protection Orders** which ended on 30 June 2012 and which will be evaluated by summer 2013;
- Launching a £150,000 fund for **Domestic Homicide Reviews** to help local areas prevent future domestic violence tragedies;
- Announcing that we will create **new criminal offences of forcing someone to marry against their will** and breaching of a Forced Marriage Protection Order. A summer campaign about forced marriage was also launched on 12 July 2012, including three short films to raise awareness of different perceptions and views of forced marriage;
- Launching the national **Teenage Rape Prevention Campaign** on 5 March 2012 (with a re-run from November 2012 to January 2013) and re-running the **Teenage Relationship Abuse Campaign** from 14 February 2013, to change and challenge attitudes, and prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of sexual and relationship violence and abuse;
- Following public consultation, committing to wide-ranging improvements to the support provided to victims and witnesses, including **refreshing the Victims' Code and increasing and extending the Victim Surcharge to raise an additional £50 million** from offenders for victims' services, of which a proportion will be committed to fund specialist sexual and domestic violence services;
- Tightening **sex offender management legislation** and closing loopholes that might be exploited by registered sex offenders;
- Creating **two new stalking offences**, "stalking" and "stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm or distress" which came into force on 25 November 2012;
- Launching a short film about **female genital mutilation (FGM)** on the National Health Service's choices website in August 2012 aimed at families, young girls, and professionals who may come into contact with girls/families who are from FGM practising communities;
- Launching the '**Declaration against FGM**', signed by Ministers, in November 2012, and providing an additional **£50,000 funding** to support frontline agencies tackling FGM;

- Working with the Director of Public Prosecutions to support the **Crown Prosecution Service Action Plan on FGM**, launched in November 2012, to address the barriers to investigating cases and strengthening prosecutions;
- **Engaging with partners** to scrutinise wider Government reforms, such as those on welfare and legal aid, to ensure they reflect our ambitions for tackling domestic and sexual violence;
- Launching a 12 month national ‘Ugly Mugs’ pilot scheme run by the UK Network of Sex Work Projects to help **protect people involved in prostitution** from violent and abusive individuals, encouraging them to report incidents of violence and abuse.

Our domestic commitments have been matched by taking an even greater role on the international stage to end violence against women and girls. In the last year we have:

- Signed up to the **Council of Europe’s convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)**;
- Announced the **Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative** on 29 May 2012, recognising that many countries devastated by conflict have seen increasing levels of gender-based violence;
- Invested significantly in scaling up **international work to tackle** violence against women and girls. DFID has announced plans to invest up to £35 million over 5 years to tackle FGM and up to £25 million to build the global evidence base on what works to tackle violence against women and girls. They have 21 country programmes directly tackling violence against women and girls. Through funding to civil society they are helping tackle violence against women and girls in an additional 48 countries.

## Moving forward: The Next 12 Months

In reviewing the Action Plan we have continued to listen to our partners and have welcomed their input into our work. We remain clear that the underlying principles of the strategy – focusing on prevention, provision of services, partnership working, justice outcomes, and risk reduction – remain as valid now as when the strategy was launched in 2010.

This framework provides a solid foundation for the next twelve months. But our activity to end violence against women and girls needs to keep pace with wider Government reforms, and to capture and reflect other developments over the last year. While our activity will continue to be framed against the underlying principles of our strategy, we have identified opportunities to provide renewed attention across five key themes which will benefit from national level activity.

## Integrating violence against women and girls into wider Government reforms

This Government is committed to devolving power, resources and accountability to local areas, recognising they are best-placed to decide their own priorities and how they deliver on these.

Police and Crime Commissioners are now in place and accountable to local communities to cut crime. The new arrangements in the devolved health and care system, including Health and Wellbeing Boards, will be introduced in April 2013. And changes to the way victims' services are commissioned are being established.

We have always been clear that ending violence against women and girls is not possible through central Government action alone. The progress that has been made would not have been possible without the hard work of the police, local authorities, teachers, health workers and the voluntary sector.

The latest Action Plan frames central Government activity against this changing delivery landscape, focusing on the areas where central Government can add value: supporting transition to new commissioning arrangements; horizon scanning to identify learning from wider reforms; and supporting and embedding new initiatives and approaches to end violence against women and girls.

## Continued focus on prevention and early intervention

The Government recognises that local commissioners have to take some tough spending decisions. We are encouraged that local authorities are looking afresh at how they work within their budgets to provide services to victims of violence against women and girls. Some councils are looking upstream at more preventative measures.

The new Action Plan identifies a number of new ways in which the Government can support a more preventative approach, stopping violence at its source by supporting a greater focus on managing perpetrators of domestic violence; intervening earlier to protect victims; and identifying wider opportunities to challenge and change the attitudes and behaviours that underpin violence against women and girls.

## Providing more support for under-represented women and girls

We recognise that young victims and women associated with gangs have specific needs which require a specialist response. The Office of the Children Commissioner's interim report published in November 2012 also identified that young girls could be particularly vulnerable to grooming and child sexual exploitation. The new Action Plan sets out a series of steps to reduce these particular vulnerabilities, and recognises that young victims have specific needs where services designed for adults may not be appropriate.

The plan also recognises that some other groups of women and girls may be more vulnerable, or at greater risk of particular forms of violence. The plan sets out additional work we will undertake at a national level to consider how we can better support these women, such as engaging with communities to help eradicate the practices of FGM, so-called ‘honour’ crimes and forced marriage.

## An end-to-end approach to sexual violence and sexual exploitation

The recent sexual violence bulletin jointly published in January 2013 by the Office of National Statistics, Home Office and Ministry of Justice tracked the pathways of victims of sexual violence through the Criminal Justice System. The bulletin identified improvements in the percentage of successful prosecutions, and that sentence lengths for rapists have increased. However it also showed that the Criminal Justice System still needs to do more to support the victims of these terrible crimes.

Recent investigations into historic child abuse have already identified lessons for safeguarding children. It is vital that these lessons are applied to the victims of sexual offending more widely.

The updated plan sets out a number of actions to identify and tackle the pinch-points in the Criminal Justice System, and build on the one positive to come out of the revelations around historic abuse – that victims can have a greater confidence in being believed when they come forward to report such heinous violence and abuse. We need to ensure that victims are supported through the Criminal Justice System and beyond, to ensure they are able to overcome these awful experiences. Funding for provision of services for victims of rape will remain at a national Government level in recognition of the high impact of these crimes. Separately we need to ensure that services are appropriate for both adult survivors and child victims.

## Measuring outcomes

The latest figures from the 2011/12 Crime Survey for England and Wales, published in February 2013, show that the levels of domestic abuse experienced in the last year are lower than they were in the 2004/05 survey<sup>4</sup>. This is encouraging, but we must not be complacent. Our ambition remains to end all forms of violence against women and girls.

The Crown Prosecution Service has introduced a structure to drive improved outcomes on prosecuting cases involving violence against women and girls with local areas held to account by the Director of Public Prosecutions and supported by dedicated Violence Against Women and Girls coordinators. This assurance system has delivered improved attrition rates of 1.5% for violence against women and girls cases, including a 4% improvement for rape cases.

The updated Action Plan sets out activity to develop a stronger picture of outcomes: of how our actions are making a real difference to the victims of domestic and sexual violence. This will in turn help to inform a targeted approach moving forward.

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4 Statistical bulletin: Focus on: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2011/12.

## Review

By March 2015 we want to see a year on year reduction in violence against women and girls. We also want to see tackling violence against women and girls better integrated into the Criminal Justice System, health services, education and service delivery. We will review the Action Plan in March 2014, and continue to drive progress through inter-Ministerial oversight and close partner engagement.

## Chapter 1: Preventing Violence

**Guiding principle: To prevent violence against women and girls from happening in the first place, by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early to prevent it.**

### The outcomes we want to achieve by 2015:

- A greater proportion of society believes violence against women and girls is unacceptable and is empowered to challenge violent behaviour;
- Fewer victims of sexual and domestic violence each year;
- Frontline professionals (e.g. teachers, doctors, police and prosecutors) are better able to identify and deal with violence against women and girls;
- More employers recognise and support victims of domestic and sexual violence.

### Key activity since 2012 on early intervention and preventing violence:

- Launched the second phase of our national prevention campaign to prevent teenagers from becoming victims and perpetrators of sexual violence and abuse. The Teenage Rape Prevention Campaign was originally launched in March 2012 and ran to April 2012. It was then re-run from November 2012 to January 2013. The Teenage Relationship Abuse campaign was re-launched on 14 February 2013 and will run through to April 2013;
- Published two media literacy resources, aimed at teachers and parents, to help children develop awareness of media representation, diversity and distortion of images of the human body and to make them more literate and critical consumers of media. These resources are available online and have been downloaded over 30,000 times;
- Launched 'A Statement Opposing FGM' – a document which states the law and the potential criminal penalties that can be used against those allowing FGM to take place;
- Re-launched a £50,000 fund to support frontline organisations who work with victims of FGM, or work in preventing and eradicating the practice;
- Co-hosted an FGM roundtable with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) to discuss with frontline practitioners what the barriers are to successfully tackling FGM;
- Launched a forced marriage awareness campaign in summer 2012, which included a Facebook page and three films that have had almost 71,000 views on YouTube;
- Worked with the National Union of Journalists to produce guidance for journalists reporting on issues relating to violence against women and girls;
- Announced robust parental controls, to protect children from inappropriate content on the internet;
- Funded the Suzy Lamplugh Trust to support their work to improve personal safety for women.

Further information on past activity is available at Annex A (p.47)

### Case Study: Young People's Advocates

"Raped, tied up, tortured, other people looking for her cos they are looking for her boyfriend, kidnapped, girls that are in the gang can target her when she doesn't even know that she was in a gang cos of what her boyfriend has been doing. You don't realise but when it happens you realise, believe me." 16 year old girl, Birmingham<sup>5</sup>

Women and girls associated with gangs are at risk of violence, particularly sexual violence. The Home Office funded Young People's Advocates work in areas affected by gangs to provide dedicated support to young people under 18 who have been victims, or are at risk, of sexual and domestic violence and/or sexual exploitation. They also understand the specific risks gang violence poses to young people.

The Young People's Advocates are based in a range of organisations, from local authorities and sexual assault referral centres, to multi-agency gangs units and voluntary sector agencies. They bring together local agencies, raise awareness and develop standards of practice to improve services for gang-associated young women and girls.

Croydon's Young People's Advocate started work in September, under the Safer London Foundation's Empower project. She divides her time between the Croydon youth offending team's gangs unit and the sexual exploitation and missing persons unit, which allows her to identify and act upon information about young women and girls linked to gangs. By embedding herself within both teams, she can promote a consistent and co-ordinated approach across services in the borough and has established clear referral pathways to ensure that vulnerable young women are identified and supported to move forward positively. She recently undertook awareness-raising sessions with accommodation providers for young people, and has completed specialist training (also funded by the Home Office) for practitioners working with victims of sexual exploitation.

Local partners report that the introduction of the Young People's Advocate has made a difference in their ability to identify and support gang-associated young women and girls.

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5 Source: Race on the Agenda, 2010; 2011

## From March 2013 we will:

- Continue to support and promote actions that help people recognise domestic violence, stalking and sexual violence and identify where to go for support;
- Run national campaigns to raise awareness about violence against women and girls so that these messages have the broadest reach;
- Ensure recommendations from Claire Perry's work in her role as the Prime Minister's adviser on preventing the sexualisation and commercialisation of children informs development of violence against women and girls strategy;
- Focus on girls and young women, building on the strong message we sent out last year in announcing an extended definition of domestic violence to include 16 and 17 year olds;
- Intervene early to protect women and girls who are associated with gangs, who have specific needs which require a specialist response;
- Explore how wider crime prevention approaches can be applied to ending violence against women and girls by working with the Government's new 'what works' centres, the College of Policing and looking at different criminological learning and behavioural insights models;
- Engage with communities who practice 'honour' based violence such as FGM and forced marriage to change attitudes and behaviours;
- Identify new ways to educate children and young people about healthy relationships and sexual consent.

### Case Study: Forced Marriage Unit

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) - a joint Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office Unit - is the Government's one-stop shop for dealing with forced marriage policy, outreach and casework. The FMU operates both inside the UK, where support is provided to any individual, and overseas, where consular assistance is provided to British nationals, including dual nationals. In 2011 there were around 1500 instances where the FMU gave advice or support related to a possible forced marriage.

One such case is that of an 18 year old British female whose mother is Somalian, with Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK, and whose father is British. She was taken at the age of 12 to Somaliland under the guise of going on holiday with her mother. The victim was forced into marriage, raped and gave birth to her child at the age of 14, unaided and alone at home. Throughout this ordeal she had been the subject of continued domestic violence from her husband and mother-in-law, however she eventually managed to establish contact with the FMU through the internet.

The FMU advised her that she needed to find a way of coming into the British Embassy in Ethiopia, as they were unable to provide consular assistance where she currently resided. She managed to convince her husband to accompany her to the Embassy, making him believe that she would then apply for a spousal visa for him to rejoin her in the UK when she was settled.

On arrival she was interviewed by Consular staff with guidance from the FMU, following which Emergency Travel Documents were provided, as her passport had expired whilst she had been residing in Somaliland. Funds were also secured to cover the costs of the flights back to the UK from her paternal side of the family and she has subsequently resettled into life back in the UK.

## By 2015 we will:

Ref.	Action	Lead Dept.	2012 ref.	Timing
Raise public awareness and reduce acceptance of violence against women and girls				
1	Continue to deliver a cross-Government violence against women and girls Communications Strategy.	HO	1	Ongoing to April 2015.
2	Promote the teaching of sexual consent and the importance of healthy relationships in schools.	DFE	16	Ongoing to April 2015.
3	Map existing violence against women and girls prevention material, and explore wider crime prevention approaches to inform new violence against women and girls prevention activity.	HO	NEW	December 2013.
4	Hold a roundtable with academics, violence against women and girls experts, and researchers from other disciplines to explore new ways of changing attitudes.	HO	NEW	Summer 2013.
5	Run a pilot to help understand boys' reactions to the Teenage Rape Prevention and Teenage Relationship Abuse campaign messages, and consider lessons for future campaigns.	HO	NEW	December 2013.
6	Identify mechanisms to engage with men and encourage them to take more responsibility for reducing the levels of violence against women.	HO	NEW	December 2013.

7	Explore and address the cultural issues which may impact on group associated child sexual exploitation and challenge views against women and girls where appropriate.	HO / DFE	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
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#### Reduce inappropriate media portrayal of women and children and prevent premature exposure of children to sexualised media and sexual bullying

8	Monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Bailey Review of the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood.	DFE / HO / DCMS	8	DFE will publish a stock-take of progress on meeting Bailey's recommendations early in 2013.
9	Ensure recommendations from Claire Perry's work in her role as the Prime Minister's adviser on preventing the sexualisation and commercialisation of children informs development of violence against women and girls strategy.	HO / DFE / DCMS	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
10	Continue to work closely with media regulators and stakeholders across industry to ensure that suitable media content protections are maintained.	DCMS	9	Ongoing. To be published in the forthcoming Communications White Paper.
11	Consider available measures to challenge social media sites that enable, or allow promotion of, violence against women and girls.	HO	11	March 2015.
12	Ensure media literacy tools are available to help people challenge body images and gender stereotyping in the media.	GEO	12	July 2013. GEO plan to develop resources focusing more closely on gender stereotyping in 2013.
13	Increase use of parental controls by improving skills of parents and children, and provide resources for the schools' and children's workforce.	DFE / HO / DCMS	18	Ongoing to April 2015.

#### Improve intervention where girls are at risk

14	Work to tackle sexual bullying and harassing practices such as 'sexting'.	HO / DFE	10	Ongoing to April 2015.
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15	Promote effective partnership working between police and schools where children are at risk of domestic violence (e.g. Operation Encompass).	ACPO	17	Ongoing to April 2015.
16	Embed, where appropriate violence against women and girls in the child protection / safeguarding landscape.	DFE / HO	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
17	Explore the suitability of existing risk assessment tools for 16 and 17 year olds.	HO	NEW	March 2014.
18	Reform social work education and practice development through the College of Social Work, to ensure that social workers are able to identify and swiftly respond to instances where children are subject to violence or abuse.	DFE	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
<b>Challenge attitudes that create acceptance for 'honour' crimes and empower communities to prevent them</b>				
19	Raise awareness of forced marriage and challenge attitudes which condone this practice through media activities, training events and community engagement.	FMU (HO / FCO)	4	Ongoing to April 2015.
20	Continue to challenge attitudes, prevent FGM and encourage individuals to report cases of FGM, e.g. assessing how best to include FGM as a key focus in Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs.	HO / DFE / DH	13	March 2014.
21	Review 'Declaration Against FGM' document pilot.	HO	NEW	October 2013.
<b>Increase personal safety of women and girls</b>				
22	Consider what more could be done with our partners to increase personal safety for women and girls, including initiatives to improve women and girls' perceptions of personal safety, and their awareness of initiatives to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour on public transport.	DFT / HO	14, 15	July 2013.

## Chapter 2: Provision of Services

### Guiding principle: provide adequate levels of support where violence occurs

#### The outcomes we want to achieve by 2015:

- Violence against women and girls victims receive a good and consistent level of service across England and Wales;
- Statutory, voluntary and community sector get the response right the first time;
- High quality commissioning and service provision at a local level.

#### Key activity since 2012 on provision of services:

- Continued the allocation of £28 million of Home Office funding over four years towards part-funding of Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs), Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) co-ordinator posts;
- Continued to provide £4 million annual funding to 78 local rape support schemes;
- Provided £125,000 to develop further initiatives to support male victims of domestic and sexual violence;
- Continued to allocate £900,000 a year towards the running costs of national help lines to support the victims of domestic violence and stalking;
- Allocated £1.2 million to fund 13 new posts for 'Young People's Advocates for Sexual Violence' who provide direct and dedicated support to young people experiencing, or at risk of, sexual abuse and exploitation;
- Committed a proportion of the additional revenue raised from offenders through the Victim Surcharge and other financial impositions to fund specialist services for victims of domestic and sexual violence;
- Introduced an automatic 13 week deferral period for victims of domestic violence who claim Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Developed an effective and sustainable funding solution to support victims of domestic violence who have entered the UK on a spouse visa while their claim to remain in the country is considered;
- Launched National Occupational Standards and an e-learning package for ISVAs in July 2012. Currently over 80 ISVAs in England and Wales are accessing the materials.

### Case study: Integrate Bristol (FGM)

In 2012 and 2013 the Home Office funded Integrate Bristol to raise awareness of FGM with young people. Integrate Bristol is a charity formed to help with the integration and adaptation of young people and children who have arrived from other countries and cultures. As well as supporting young people with their learning, they run projects that help young people develop their skills so that they can participate in society and feel a part of the community they have joined. Integrate aims to give young people a voice, a platform for expressing their views and ideas.

Integrate Bristol, in conjunction with Zed productions, facilitated a group of teenage film makers to develop and produce 'Silent Scream' a short drama documentary highlighting the myths and misconceptions that appear to justify the practice of FGM. In the film Yasmin, a female living in Bristol, is trying to persuade her mother not to put her sister through FGM. The film was written and made entirely by young people. 'Silent Scream' was declared winner of the Young Voices 2012 award at the First Light Movies ceremony, held at the British Film Institute, Southbank.

In 2012 the group have been developing a script for a play on FGM. Feedback from the project manager revealed that by giving young people a space away from immediate social and family pressures and resistance, the young people found an outlet to explore this painful and sensitive subject and also consider how they can encourage change. Since the completion of the script Integrate have secured further funding to put the play into production. A director working with The Bristol Old Vic Theatre has read and praised the work and has offered to support the young people to produce the play.

### From March 2013 we will:

- Continue to support the provision of services which are most effectively provided nationally – such as national telephone help-lines or the Forced Marriage Unit;
- Continue development and dissemination of best practice advice and national guidance – for example through disseminating the lessons learnt from local Domestic Homicide Reviews;
- Raise standards of professional practice through support for professional training and development of both statutory and voluntary sector staff;
- Continue improving the response of statutory services which are still the responsibility of central Government – for example Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, Crown Prosecution Service, Jobcentre Plus, National Offender Management Service and the UK Border Agency;
- Support new local commissioning arrangements by providing clear information on violence against women and girls to local commissioners to inform service design and delivery;
- Continue to engage with Devolved Administrations in our efforts to tackle violence against women and girls.

## By 2015 we will:

Ref.	Action	Lead Dept.	2012 ref.	Timing
<b>Continue to provide stable funding arrangements to deliver specialist services</b>				
23	Continue the allocation of £28 million of Home Office funding over four years towards part-funding of IDVA, ISVA and MARAC co-ordinator posts, training and support for MARACs and IDVAs, and running costs of national help lines to support the victims of domestic violence and stalking.	HO	19, 22, 29, 30	Until March 2015.
24	Continue to provide £4 million funding to 78 local rape support schemes.	MOJ	20	Until March 2014 (new 2012-13 rape support centres to March 2015).
25	Continue to work with the voluntary sector to develop new rape support provision in areas lacking provision.	MOJ	21	Ongoing to April 2015.
26	Continue to fund 13 'Young People's Advocates for Sexual Violence' who will provide direct and dedicated support to young people experiencing, or at risk of, sexual abuse and exploitation.	HO	24	Until March 2015.
<b>Improve local provision and quality of services for violence against women and girls victims</b>				
27	Work with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to produce public health guidance on preventing domestic violence.	DH	39	2015. From April 2013, NICE will be legally known as the National Institute for Care Excellence as its remit extends to social care.
28	Support the Forensic Science Regulator to work with key stakeholders to establish a quality standards framework for the provision of forensic sexual assault services.	DH / HO	NEW	March 2014.

29	Continue to raise awareness of stalking to improve professionals' response.	HO	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
30	Develop a new awareness campaign in the Armed Forces, using the recently produced DVD on domestic violence, and explore scope for voluntary sector involvement.	MOD	NEW	March 2014.
31	Overhaul our systems to ensure that we have an accurate picture of the extent of sexual offences in the Armed Forces.	MOD	NEW	March 2014.
32	Review interim data from the independent evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme to gauge the prevalence of domestic violence within families currently being worked with and to inform practice in services for troubled families.	DCLG	NEW	December 2013.
33	Based on the recommendations of Dame Fiona Caldicott's review of Information Governance, develop a new statutory code of practice for health and social care bodies to have regard to when making decisions about information sharing. This will include a framework containing more detailed guidance on particular aspects of information sharing.	DH	NEW	December 2013.
<b>Support victims of forced marriage and 'honour' based violence (HBV)</b>				
34	Build capacity amongst Non-Government Organisations to establish local initiatives and services to raise awareness of, and tackle, forced marriage.	FMU (FCO / HO)	35	Ongoing to April 2015.

35	Review use and perceived effectiveness of multi-agency guidelines for dealing with FGM.	HO / FCO / DH / DFE	36	June 2013. Over 100 responses have been received to the Questionnaire reviewing the effectiveness of FGM guidelines. Analysis and actions from these guidelines will be carried out in 2013.
<b>Train frontline professionals</b>				
36	Develop training for health visitors to provide support to families when they suspect violence against women or children may be a factor.	DH	38	2015.
37	Produce a universal academic module (six days duration) for frontline professionals on violence against women and girls. The training module will be produced for frontline practitioners including nurses, teachers and social workers so that they can access a formal standard of training which is directly relevant to their work.	HO	40	Ongoing to April 2015.
38	Support the ISVA network in increasing effectiveness and building capacity to support victims of sexual assault, including: establishing and maintaining a central register of ISVAs; raising the profile of the role amongst statutory agencies; leading quarterly regional focus groups.	HO	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
<b>Develop provision for girls</b>				
39	Develop a guide to signpost local areas to information on domestic and sexual abuse for under 18s.	HO	NEW	March 2013.

40	Ensure that gang-associated girls and young women can access youth and criminal justice services without risk to their safety, through disseminating best practice on 'safe spaces' to Youth Offending Teams and Probation Trusts.	HO / YJB	NEW	March 2014.
41	Deliver training to local areas to highlight issues and best practice on young people, gangs and sexual and domestic abuse.	HO	NEW	March 2014.
42	Work with the Association of Chief Police Officers to develop and disseminate an agreed definition for 'gang-associated female' to better inform identification and service provision for this group.	HO	NEW	March 2014.
43	Ensure that policy areas focussing on child sexual exploitation, girls and gangs, domestic and sexual violence are joined up and explore the use of current definitions to ensure clarity and effective practice in local areas.	HO	NEW	June 2014.

Support victims of violence and abuse to be more independent				
44	Conduct research, to understand how the Destitute Domestic Violence and Job Seekers Allowance Domestic Violence easement are operating, with a commitment to build on the outcomes as we look ahead to Universal Credit implementation (where both the concession and the easement will be continued).	DWP	NEW	April 2013. This is alongside wider work to deliver effective, appropriate and consistent support for domestic violence victims through the welfare system during the next phase of welfare reform. For example, delivering on the DWP Ministerial commitment made in September 2012 to ensure that housing costs for residents in supported exempt accommodation are met outside of the Universal Credit system; and ensuring that there is sufficient regard for the needs of domestic violence victims in Universal Credit design and delivery.
Consider what additional services are required for male victims				
45	Review reports from projects funded by the Male Victims Fund to identify lessons that can be shared more widely.	HO	NEW	December 2013.
Work to ensure that the asylum system is as gender-sensitive as possible				
46	Work with key stakeholders to improve the processes for referring asylum seekers who are victims of sexual violence to the appropriate services and signpost women and girls to available information and advice.	UKBA	NEW (28)	March 2014.

47	Improve guidance and training within the asylum system by enhancing the quality of the country information on violence against women and girls available to asylum decision makers; incorporating a violence against women and girls element into credibility training and foundation training for new case owners; and continuing work with Asylum Aid and other corporate partners to develop a training DVD on managing asylum claims from women.	UKBA	NEW (28)	March 2014.
48	Monitor how asylum interviewers and decision makers handle gender-related issues on a six monthly basis, monitor trends in performance over the longer term and address specific gender-related performance issues.	UKBA	NEW (28)	March 2014.

## Chapter 3: Partnership working

**Guiding principle: Work in partnership to obtain the best outcomes for victims and their families.**

### The outcomes we want to achieve by 2015:

- Better support available for victims and their families with statutory, voluntary and community sectors working together to share information and agree practical action;
- Improved the life chances of victims of violence against women and girls overseas, with this issue an international priority for the UK.

### Key activity since 2012 on partnership working in England and Wales:

- Provided £100,000 to determine gaps in service provision at a local level, help local authorities better understand what services will best assist victims, and assist the voluntary sector in professionalising their dealings with statutory agencies;
- In response to the consultation “Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses”, set out the move to a new model for the provision of support services for victims of crime where the majority of services will be commissioned locally by Police and Crime Commissioners (while rape support services will continue to be funded centrally);
- Funded Against Violence & Abuse (AVA) and the Aya Project (managed by Women’s Aid and Imkaan) to build capacity within the women’s sector and help them better understand Local Authority commissioning processes; and help Local Authority commissioners better understand the needs of violence against women and girls victims and measures to tackle perpetrators in their areas.

Further information on past activity and linked Government Activity is available at Annex A (p47) and Annex B (p58)

### Case study: Young People's Panel

During 2012, the Government consulted on changing the definition of domestic violence and announced in September 2012 that the current definition would be widened to include those aged 16 and 17 years old and wording to reflect coercive control. With the lowering of the age, the Government was keen to ensure that representatives from that age group should have a voice when policy was being developed to assist 16/17 year olds at risk of domestic violence. The NSPCC had made a similar suggestion as part of its contribution to the consultation and, accordingly, the Government and NSPCC agreed to work together to take this forward via a "Young People's Panel".

Eight young people drawn from different parts of the country and who had all experienced domestic violence took part in the inaugural "Young People's Panel" on 10 December 2012. Chaired by the Minister of State for Crime Prevention (Jeremy Browne MP), topics discussed included what an appropriate service for 16/17 year olds at risk of domestic violence looks like, and suitable accommodation for young victims of domestic violence. The Panel will meet quarterly, and its outcomes will be fed through to policy-makers across Government for further consideration.

"The NSPCC is delighted to have the opportunity to work so closely with the Government to ensure we get it right for young people at risk of domestic violence. It's right that the Government put the views, experiences and ideas of young people at the centre of policy making and our young representatives are looking forward to their continued involvement."  
– Alan Wardle, Head of Corporate Affairs, NSPCC

### Key activity since 2011 on partnership working internationally:

- Established a fund of up to £25 million to improve knowledge and evidence of the challenges and mechanisms for tackling violence against women and girls in conflict and emergency contexts;
- Announced plans to invest up to £35 million over 5 years to tackle FGM;
- Signed the Council of Europe Convention for preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence;
- Announced the Foreign Secretary's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative;
- Identified women's rights as one of the priority thematic issues for funding from the FCO Human Rights and Democracy programme fund. FCO are now funding six violence against women projects;
- Raised implementation of international women's rights agreements, through Ministers and Senior Government Officials, with a range of countries including, Afghanistan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Algeria, Uganda and Ethiopia;
- Disseminated three Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department guidance notes on tackling, programming, monitoring and evaluating violence against women and girls;
- Lynne Featherstone MP, the Ministerial Champion for tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Overseas visited Uganda and Ethiopia and raised this issue with Ministers and Government officials during this visit.

Further information on past activity is available at Annex A (p.47)

## From March 2013 we will:

- Continue to work in partnership across Government and with the third sector to ensure that the impact of Government reforms are fully understood and managed;
- Provide clear information on violence against women and girls to commissioners in the changing commissioning landscape;
- Support statutory and voluntary services in sharing information about the women and girls most at risk and agreeing clear referral and needs assessment arrangements;
- Continue to demonstrate leadership internationally to address violence against women and girls, and ensure that the links are made between the women whom the UK is helping overseas and those who arrive in the UK seeking protection.

Ref.	Action	Lead Dept.	2012 ref.	Timing
<b>Improve commissioning of services</b>				
49	Provide information to support health and wellbeing boards to understand violence against women and girls and who they can work with at a local level to take action on it.	DH	42	December 2013. Department of Health, Home Office and Ministry of Justice will be working together and with emerging health and wellbeing boards and relevant parts of the Criminal Justice System to explore how best to support their understanding of how the issues interrelate and who to work with at a local level.
50	Issue fact pack on violence against women and girls for local commissioners, including Police and Crime Commissioners, to improve understanding of violence against women and girls issues, the costs on services and communities, and the benefits of tackling violence against women and girls effectively.	HO	NEW	Summer 2013.

51	Identify which violence against women and girls services are to be commissioned nationally and which would benefit from local commissioning and reflect this in the commissioning framework being developed to support both national and local commissioners of victims' services.	MOJ / HO	NEW	Spring 2013.
52	Review commissioning approach, and coverage of, violence against women and girls help lines.	HO / MOJ	NEW	Summer 2014.
53	Highlight, through national commissioning agreements and documents, voluntary and community sector specialist counselling and support as part of integrated care pathways.	DH	NEW	December 2013.
54	Support commissioning of sexual assault services through a revised public health functions agreement and publication of revising National Health Service Commissioning Board operating model for commissioning sexual assault services as part of the 'Securing Excellence in Commissioning' series.	HO	NEW	Summer 2013.
55	Produce commissioning map for stakeholders and other Government Departments to clearly understand the implications of Government reforms on violence against women and girls.	HO	NEW	Summer 2014.

56	Highlight the need for effective paediatric provision and pathways in national commissioning agreements and documents on sexual assault services.	DH	NEW	December 2013.
<b>Improve cross-agency working</b>				
57	Take forward actions in the Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan.	DFE / DH / CPS / HO	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
<b>Embed tackling violence against women and girls in Government reforms</b>				
58	Work across Government to ensure we understand and manage the potential impact of wider reforms on violence against women and girls.	All depts.	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
59	Ensure Public Health England is an active participant and leads developing action plans to reduce violence against women and girls.	DH	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
<b>Work with employers to improve awareness and outcomes for violence against women and girls victims</b>				
60	Work with businesses to tackle violence against women in the workplace.  To include developing and publishing a pledge with explanatory guidance for all employers to sign as part of the Public Health Responsibility Deal, in order to commit them to develop a comprehensive policy to support all members of staff experiencing domestic abuse.	HO / DH	48	Ongoing to 2015.

61	Raise awareness in the Department of Health to ensure staff have an understanding of violence against women and girls, and where to seek help and support. Engage with other Government Departments to encourage similar activity for staff across the Civil Service.	DH	49	Ongoing to 2015.
<b>Improve the life chances of violence against women and girls victims overseas</b>				
62	Work with Governments overseas to encourage legislative and policy reform to address the structural causes of violence against women and girls, in accordance with international commitments.	FCO	50	Ongoing to April 2015.
63	Continue to strongly support the ratification and lobby for the full implementation of the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol.	FCO	51	Ongoing to April 2015.
64	Continue to promote the domestic implementation of CEDAW.	GEO	52	Ongoing to April 2015.
65	Take action to tackle violence against women and girls in conflict and post conflict countries through the implementation of the UK National Action Plan (NAP) on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security, in partnership with DFID and the MoD.	FCO / MoD / DFID	53	Ongoing to April 2015.

66	Ensure that the UK's humanitarian action, including both assistance and protection, prevents and responds to violence against women and girls.	MoD / DFID	54	Ongoing to April 2015. Programme to protect girls in humanitarian settings is being developed with Girl Hub.
67	Work with UN Women to ensure it focuses on key priorities including violence against women and girls and the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals and delivers real progress for women and girls worldwide.	DFID / FCO	55	Ongoing to April 2015.
68	Continue to support the role of the Council of Europe (CoE) in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls.	HO / MOJ / GEO /	56	Ongoing to April 2015. HO is currently engaging with Devolved Administrations and OGDs to move towards ratification of the convention of preventing and eradicating violence against women and domestic violence.
69	Provide practical guidance to DFID country offices to tackle violence against women and girls in at least 15 of the poorest countries (includes countries in the UK 1325 National Action Plan).	DFID / FCO	57	Ongoing to April 2015.
70	Work with partners to improve and communicate the evidence base on violence against women and girls and understanding of effective interventions.	DFID	58	Ongoing to April 2015.
71	Improve the international, including EU, response to forced marriage by continuing to lobby for commitment to tackling the practice at key events.	FMU (FCO / HO)	59	Ongoing to April 2015.

72	Review results of EU Fundamental Rights Agency's survey on violence against women and girls across EU member states and consider any recommendations.	All Depts.	60	Initial findings due June 2013. Full report end 2013.
73	Through the Foreign Secretary's Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative, address the culture of impunity for sexual violence committed in conflict by: increasing the number of perpetrators brought to justice both internationally and nationally; strengthening international efforts and co-ordination; and supporting states to build their national capacity.	FCO	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
74	Invest up to £35 million over five years to support work to end FGM in at least fifteen countries.	DFID	NEW	Ongoing.

### Case Study: First deployment of UK Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative Team of Experts

Sexual violence in conflict is widespread. Most frequently it is carried out not by invading armies but by one group against another with the deliberate intention of destroying, degrading and humiliating political opponents or entire ethnic and religious groups. It affects not only large numbers of women, but also men and children. In addition to the physical and psychological trauma suffered by survivors, sexual violence adds to ethnic, sectarian and other divisions, further entrenching conflict and instability.

The Government believes that there is more that can – and must – be done to combat this issue and particularly to address the culture of impunity for these crimes that have been allowed to develop. On 29 May 2012 the Foreign Secretary launched the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI).

The UK is using its 2013 presidency of the G8 to rally sustained and co-ordinated international action, and to ensure this issue is a global priority over the coming year. It has also established a specialist team of UK experts to deploy to conflict areas to support the UN and civil society to help build national capacity to investigate allegations of sexual violence and gather evidence.

As the conflict in Syria escalated during 2012, Human Rights Watch and other organisations increasingly reported a growing number of human rights abuses and specifically the use of sexual violence against women, men and children. Experience from other conflicts suggested that without immediate attention to documenting and recording evidence of these atrocities there would be little likelihood of prosecuting the perpetrators in the future. A small deployment of UK Experts, with extensive experience of investigating sexual violence crimes specifically in conflict, was therefore dispatched to the Turkish border with Syria in late 2012 to provide training on the collection, handling, documentation and storage of evidence.

The training was provided through an established programme with Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) - an internationally respected Non-Government Organisation. With additional PSVI support (finances and UK expertise) it became possible to extend PHR's training programme to evidence collection for sexual violence. The training was provided to 21 Syrian doctors who work on both sides of the Turkish–Syrian border in field hospitals, rehabilitation centres and clinics. Daily they treat over 200 patients injured as a result of the Syrian conflict.

We will extend training programmes in 2013 through the deployments of UK experts to cover other Syrian border areas with a view to providing increased capacity to prosecute perpetrators of sexual violence crimes.

### Case Study: DFID Research and Innovation Fund

To mark 25 November 2012 International Day for Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls, the Secretary of State announced that DFID is investing up to £25 million over five years in a new Violence Against Women and Girls Research and Innovation Fund. The Fund will consist of three distinct but inter-related components that address critical international evidence gaps:

- i. Primary prevention of violence against women and girls (in stable and fragile contexts);
- ii. violence against women and girls in conflict and humanitarian emergencies; and
- iii. Economic and social costs of violence against women and girls.

This pioneering Fund will drive innovation, build the global evidence base and support new programmes to tackle violence against women and girls. The funding will support operational research and impact evaluations, including programmes in conflict and humanitarian emergencies; and innovation grants for new programmes that have the potential to be taken to scale. By testing out new approaches and the rigorous evaluation of existing programmes, we can better understand what works in tackling the root causes of violence against women and girls in some of the poorest countries of the world. This will enable improved development of and investment in violence against women and girls policies and programmes around the world (including by UK Government, development partners and national Governments) contributing to a long-term reduction in the prevalence of violence against women and girls and an increase in the number of women and girls receiving quality prevention and response services.

## Chapter 4: Justice Outcomes and risk reduction

**Guiding principle: Take action to reduce the risk to women and girls who are victims of these crimes and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.**

### The outcomes we want to achieve by 2015:

- Increased confidence of women and girls to encourage access to the Criminal Justice System;
- Improved criminal justice outcomes for victims of violence against women and girls, including the rate of convictions;
- Increased rate of rehabilitation among offenders;
- Reduced multiple incidents of violence by using the appropriate risk management tools.

### Key activity since 2012 on Justice Outcomes and Risk Reduction:

- Following public consultation, announced plans to criminalise forced marriage;
- Introduced new stalking offences and delivered training and guidance for police officers and prosecutors about the new legislation;
- Announced a new definition of domestic violence and abuse, which now includes coercive control and 16-17 year olds. The definition comes into effect March 2013;
- Provided £3.78 million to Probation Trusts to fund 31 Women's Community Services in 2012/13;
- Funded a national 'Ugly Mugs' scheme to protect people involved in prostitution from violent individuals;
- Published a Crown Prosecution Service Action Plan on prosecuting FGM including actions on gathering more robust data, identifying the issues that have hindered investigations and prosecutions, and ensuring police and prosecutors work together closely from the start of the investigation;
- Published the Forced Marriage Designated Courts Resource Manual so that it is available to all professionals practising in this area;
- Launched a domestic violence disclosure scheme in Gwent, Wiltshire, Nottinghamshire and Great Manchester;
- Developed an evidence-based programme of intervention for perpetrators of domestic abuse, Building Better Relationships (BBR);

- Published a review of the Crown Prosecution Service's three year violence against women and girls strategy, which found that the strategy delivered more efficient prosecutions and improved support for victims;
- Tightened sex offender management legislation and closed loop holes that might be exploited by registered sex offenders.

Further information on past activity is available at Annex A (p.47)

### From March 2013 we will:

- Continue to ensure that the right legislative measures are in place to protect women and girls from violence and bring perpetrators to justice, and that practitioners use these tools effectively to provide justice outcomes for victims;
- Investigate the barriers to victims reporting violent crimes and make recommendations to overcome them;
- Work with the Crown Prosecution Service and the Association of Chief Police Officers on one over-arching and agreed approach on the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences;
- Continue to work with the police, Crown Prosecution Service, judiciary and voluntary agencies to ensure that vulnerable and intimidated victims and witnesses are fully supported throughout the criminal justice process;
- Seek to ensure myths and stereotypes around rape are challenged so that juries are not inappropriately swayed by misinformation;
- Further our understanding of violence against women and girls through developing an improved evidence base;
- Improve our response to perpetrators of these crimes to ensure that adequate responses are available to treat and rehabilitate individuals, both through the Criminal Justice System and other referral routes;
- Identify lessons emerging from reviews into historic child abuse and ensure learning is applied to sexual violence more widely;
- Ensure that female offenders who are also victims of abuse receive support on these issues, whether they serve sentences in custody or the community.

### Case Study: National Ugly Mugs Pilot Scheme

The National Ugly Mugs (NUM) Pilot Scheme, funded by the Home Office and managed by the UK Network of Sex Work Projects (UKNSWP), is a third party reporting mechanism for crimes against people involved in prostitution. Such individuals are frequently targeted by dangerous criminals and these crimes often go unreported to the police.

When an incident is reported to NUM a warning is produced and circulated to its members (individuals involved in prostitution and organisations working with them) to alert them to dangerous individuals. The Scheme has over 500 individual members, 120 organisations and 33 escort sites or establishments. If the victim consents, information will also be fed anonymously into police intelligence systems, including the Serious Crimes Analysis Section, to help bring perpetrators to justice.

Since NUM launched in July 2012, more than 188 incidents have been reported to Scheme, of which more than 66 involved violence and around 50 were rapes or attempted rapes. Crucially, in only 28% of the incidents reported to NUM were victims willing to formally report to or share their personal details with the police. Yet, in the vast majority of cases (99%) the victims consented to feed information anonymously into police intelligence systems. This demonstrates how NUM is enhancing the levels of police intelligence on perpetrators of crimes against people involved in prostitution in the UK.

In Soho, London, NUM is reportedly making a difference. The Health Promotion Specialist at Central London Action for Street Health (CLASH), said: "Soho has been an area that has not routinely reported incidents in recent years, however, since NUM has been in place we have seen an increase in reporting."

NUM also provides a national centre of expertise regarding issues of violence and safety matters for people involved in prostitution. The NUM 6 Pillars of Good Practice initiative recognises the improvements in Ugly Mugs reporting practice since the launch of the Scheme.

## By 2015 we will:

Ref.	Action	Lead Dept.	2012 ref.	Timing
Improve the Criminal Justice System response to violence against women and girls victims				
75	Work on the development of guidance and learning programmes for the Police on sexual and domestic violence, including FGM, forced marriage, 'honour' based violence (HBV) and stalking.	HO / MOJ / ACPO	61	December 2013. The College of Policing are developing three levels of training for public protection. Level 1 (all staff) will be made available to forces as an e-learning package from March 2013.
76	Seek to re-establish effective voluntary arrangements with local authorities to ensure that the protocol on exchange of information is adopted and used to best effect. The protocol was developed by the Crown Prosecution Service, the Association of Chief Police Officers, LGA and Association of Directors of Social Services.	CPS / HO / CLG / DFE	64	March 2014.  A roundtable was held on 4 December 2012 which had good representation from a number of agencies who are taking forward actions as a result. A further meeting took place in February where next steps were discussed.
77	Develop new Standard Operating Procedures for violence against women and girls and measures to support local prosecution action plans. This includes considering the feasibility of extending Rape and Sexual Offence Units to improve prosecutions.	CPS	66	Ongoing to April 2015.
78	Implement actions on special measures to improve support for vulnerable victims – including those of domestic and sexual abuse – in court.	CPS	NEW	March 2014.
79	Improve understanding and awareness of additional services for violence against women and girls victims through consultation on the Victims' Code.	MOJ	NEW	Spring 2013.

Develop guidance and share good practice				
80	Issue our response to the review of the effectiveness of the statutory guidance on Domestic Homicide Reviews.	HO	74	Summer 2013.
81	Review policies, guidance and training across violence against women and girls issues.	CPS	62	March 2014. Refresher training on HBV, forced marriage, and teenage relationship abuse is planned for 2013-14.
82	Develop an overarching and agreed approach to the investigation and prosecution of sexual offences, supported by the College of Policing; including public consultation on new guidance.	CPS / ACPO	NEW	March 2014.
83	Support prosecutions involving harmful traditional practices, including FGM and female foeticide.	CPS	NEW	March 2014.
84	Identify lessons emerging from reviews into historic child abuse and ensure learning is applied to sexual violence more widely.	HO	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
Protect and support victims of domestic violence through the Criminal Justice System				
85	Pilot a domestic violence disclosure scheme in four police force areas.	HO	95	Pilots launched in Gwent and Wiltshire in July 2012, with Nottinghamshire and Great Manchester launched in September 2012. Pilot runs until September 2013.

86	Consider the case for implementing section 60 of the Family Law Act 1996. This provision would provide for a 'prescribed person' such as the police or Local Authority to make an application for a domestic violence injunction on someone else's behalf. A similar provision is already available in forced marriage cases.	MOJ	80	December 2013.
87	Support Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVCs) to ensure effective operation, including monitoring progress of court closures and mergers.	HO / MOJ / CPS	81	Ongoing to April 2015.
88	Consider feasibility of applying Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) model in youth cases.	HO / MOJ / CPS / YJB	82	December 2013.
89	Address ways to improve the support to victims in the prosecution of domestic violence cases.	CPS	NEW	Summer 2013.
90	Develop guidance on the vulnerability and credibility of victims of violence against women and girls.	CPS	NEW	March 2014.
<b>Change the law to better protect VAWG victims and monitor new legislation</b>				
91	Introduce and implement legislation to make breach of a Forced Marriage Protection Order a criminal offence.	MOJ / HO / CPS	87	June 2014.
92	Introduce and implement legislation to make forcing someone to marry a criminal offence in England and Wales.	HO / FCO / CPS	NEW	June 2014.
93	Monitor implementation of the new stalking offences.	HO	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.

Better understand the issues and reduce risk through research and evidence gathering				
94	Improve understanding of the incidence, reporting and prosecution of false allegations or perverting the course of justice, in rape or domestic violence cases.	HO / MOJ / CPS	89	Ongoing to April 2015.
95	Carry out further research on the health aspects of violence against women and children.	DH	91	2015. Five projects have been commissioned to complete between 2013 – 2016.
96	Clarify the issues around Female Genital Cosmetic Surgery through the inquiry that Sir Bruce Keogh is conducting into cosmetic surgery and other cosmetic interventions.	DH	93	June 2013.
97	Commission the National Health Service Information Centre to advise on the feasibility of coding FGM in National Health Service clinical data sets, to improve information sharing and care for those affected by FGM, and support prevention amongst at-risk communities.	DH	NEW	December 2013.
98	Further our understanding of the extent, distribution, and trends of violence against women and girls through developing an improved evidence base.	HO / all	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
99	Explore with College of Policing the potential for evaluating the effectiveness of police responses to violence against women and girls.	HO	NEW	March 2014.

Risk management and reduction				
100	Consider whether MARACs could be used to identify and support high-risk victims of rape and sexual assault.	HO	94	March 2014. Assessment of SV MARAC in Avon & Somerset due April 2013, and we are aware of other areas looking at this model.
Management and rehabilitation of perpetrators				
101	Create a new specialist risk assessment tool to enhance the validity of the risk-targeting criteria for the offending behaviour programme 'Building Better Relationships' in line with the What Works risk principle.	NOMS	97	September 2013.
102	Revise the National Offender Management Service domestic abuse strategy and the Best Practice Guidance for Offender Managers working with perpetrators of domestic abuse in line with the new domestic abuse programme.	NOMS	98	April 2014. National Offender Management Service will review the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2010 by April 2014, in line with changes resulting from the Probation Review.
103	Consider how to support GPs to give effective response when they are engaging with violence against women and girls perpetrators.	DH	NEW	March 2014.
104	Support evaluation of local perpetrator referral pilots.	HO	NEW	March 2014.
105	Consider ways to engage with health commissioning bodies and professionals to better identify and treat stalking behaviour.	HO / DH	NEW	December 2013.
106	Publicise the YJB domestic abuse webpage and effective practice library for practitioners working with young perpetrators and consider gaps in service provision.	YJB	NEW	December 2013.

107	Continue to ensure that convicted sex offenders in the UK are managed in as robust and effective way possible manner.	HO / ACPO / NOMS	NEW	Ongoing to April 2015.
Support women offenders who have been victims of violence				
108	Commission women's community services through Probation Trusts, allocating a protected investment of £3.78 million	NOMS	99	Ongoing to October 2013.
109	Deliver the Women Awareness Staff Programme to voluntary and community sector partners working with women offenders and women at risk of offending in the community.	NOMS	100	To meet the demand of the Women Awareness Staff Programme to voluntary and community sector partners, training for trainers event was held in October 12. 11 Probation Trusts were represented and 18 participants attended. This is in addition to 3 Probation Trusts who were already in a position to deliver their own training.
110	Review the feasibility of replicating recommendations set out the Corston Review, (which assessed women with particular vulnerabilities in the Criminal Justice System) in the youth justice system.	HO / YJB / NOMS	NEW	March 2014.

## Annex A – Closed Actions

(Work completed or overtaken by new activity)

No.	Action	Summary
2	Launch the second phase of our prevention campaign to tackle teenage relationship violence – with a focus on sexual violence and consent.	<p>The Teenage Rape Prevention Campaign ran from March 2012 - April 2012, with a re-run from November to January 2013.</p> <p>Additionally, the Teenage Relationship Abuse campaign was re-run from 14 February 2013 to April 2013.</p>
3	Develop education and awareness-raising campaigns on rape and sexual assault.	We have created a section on the Home Office website signposting to all the various local campaigns to share good practice (following the closure of DirectGov in November 2012).
5	Produce two short informative films for the National Health Service Choices website on child sexual exploitation and FGM.	The FGM film and web resource was launched in autumn 2012. The Child Sexual Exploitation film and web resource will be launched later this year.
6	Ensure that all Government press releases on violence against women and girls issues contain the national domestic violence and national stalking helpline phone numbers and contact details.	Practice now embedded across Departments.
7	Work with the National Union of Journalists to produce guidance for journalists reporting on issues relating to violence against women and girls.	The National Union of Journalists approved the guidance in January 2013, which will be published shortly.

23	Subject to consultation (“Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses” published 30 January 2012), commit a proportion of up to £50 million a year of additional income raised from offenders through the Victim Surcharge and other financial impositions to services for victims of domestic and sexual violence.	<p>The Government response to the consultation “Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses” committed a proportion of the additional revenue raised from offenders through the Victim Surcharge and other financial impositions to fund specialist services for victims of domestic and sexual violence.</p> <p>Victim Surcharge reforms implemented 1 October 2012 and anticipated that revenue should start to be realised by July 2013.</p> <p>Ministry of Justice and Home Office to work to identify how best to fulfil this commitment as part of the national/ local funding strategy across victims’ services.</p>
25	Provide £125,000 to develop further initiatives to support male victims of domestic violence.	Funding was allocated for two years.
26	<p>Introduce an automatic 13 week deferral period for victims of domestic violence who claim Jobseeker’s Allowance. This provides additional support for Jobseeker’s Allowance benefit claimants who are victims of domestic violence so that they are not financially dependent on abusers who are partners or family members.</p> <p>Introduced the Destitute Domestic Violence Concession - migrant spouse victims of domestic violence who have been granted leave to remain outside the immigration rules under the ‘destitute domestic violence concession’ are able to access eligible income-related benefits.</p>	<p>Introduced on 23 April 2012.</p> <p>Introduced 1 April 2012</p>
27	Develop an effective and sustainable funding solution to support victims of domestic violence who have entered the UK on a spouse visa while their claim to remain in the country is considered.	Funding agreed for 2012-13 and 2013-14.

31	Improve the training available to ISVAs to ensure a minimum quality standard for ISVA support and provide a framework for qualification of ISVAs.	The National Occupational Standards and e-learning package was launched in July 2012 and are available for use. At present, over 80 ISVAs in England and Wales are accessing the materials.
32	Review and update guidance on the operation of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPAs).	Updated MAPPA Guidance was published on 23 May 2012 and includes an update on the links between MAPPA and MARACs. It is available on the Ministry of Justice website.
33	Consider how violence against women and girls victims in rural areas could be better supported.	<p>The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has provided guidance to Government Departments on how to consider the impact of their policies on women and girls in rural communities.</p> <p>DEFRA intends to publish, early this spring, an updated version of the existing Rural Proofing toolkit which will refresh the advice and guidance material for national Government policy-makers. Guidance to local authorities is also available.</p>
34	Develop a training package for chairpersons of Domestic Homicide Reviews.	Training Package completed and rolled out from end of January 2013.
37	Review the findings from the 'honour' based violence local mapping exercise and identify models of effective practice to share with local areas, particularly those where awareness and activity to tackle forms of 'honour' based violence is low.	Questionnaire circulated to update information collected in 2010 on 'honour' based violence, which closed on 28 Sept 2012. Analysis of over 30 responses completed and analysed to inform future policy making.
41	Develop a training package for the voluntary and statutory sectors on supporting young people experiencing domestic violence, sexual violence and gang involvement.	Complete. We are looking at how the Young People's Advocate training will be rolled out to ISVAs, IDVAs and more widely.

43	Develop a support package to help NGOs better understand the Local Authority violence against women and girls commissioning process and help Local Authority commissioners better understand the needs of violence against women and girls victims and measures to tackle perpetrators in their areas.	<p>The Local Government Association produced a briefing for police and crime commissioner candidates and an article in its councillor magazine on the case to invest in violence against women and girls services. The Home Office funded Against Violence &amp; Abuse (AVA) to hold a national conference with Local Authority commissioners and the voluntary sector in March 2013, followed by a series of local events and other related activities.</p> <p>The Home Office have also provided funding to Women's Aid to support the "Aya Capacity Building Project" which offers direct support to local services and addresses broader capacity building in the independent women's services sector.</p> <p>The Crown Prosecution Service also produced a briefing pack to help Police and Crime Commissioners better understand prosecutions for violence against women and girls.</p>
44	Provide £100,000 to determine gaps in service provision at a local level, help Local Authorities better understand what services will best assist victims and assist the voluntary sector in professionalising their dealings with statutory agencies.	Complete. 30 partnership visits completed by March 2013.
45	Host a national conference to bring together Local Authorities and the voluntary and community sector to discuss violence against women and girls issues.	Conference held March 2012 (See action 43)

46	<p>Subject to outcome of consultation "Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses" published 30 January 2012, ensure that new arrangements for commissioning of services for victims – proposed to take effect from 2014 - take account of the needs of victims of violence against women and girls.</p>	<p>The Government response to the consultation "Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses" set out the move to a new model for the provision of support services for victims of crime where the intention is for the majority of services to be commissioned locally by Police and Crime Commissioners.</p> <p>At a national level the Ministry of Justice plan to continue to commission rape support centres, support for victims of trafficking, some telephone help lines and some other specialist services for victims of sexual and domestic violence which the Ministry of Justice are working with the Home Office to identify.</p> <p>A commissioning framework is being developed to support both national and local commissioners of victims' services and we will ensure that it reflects violence against women and girls interests.</p>
47	<p>Following the consultation "Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses" published 30 January 2012, central Government plan to continue to commission services which are best provided at a national level (for example, national domestic violence and stalking help lines; national training and accreditation programmes; nationally co-ordinated services for victims with specialised or complex needs (such as victims of trafficking).</p>	<p>Consultation complete. Further commissioning activity reflected in new actions.</p>
63	<p>Publish research on special measures to protect vulnerable victims – including of domestic and sexual abuse - and take appropriate actions following findings.</p>	<p>Complete. The research was published on Crown Prosecution Service website on 22 August 2012. Implementation of recommendations due in 2013-14.</p>

65	Develop local Action Plans building on the qualitative assessment of violence against women and girls prosecutions.	Violence against women and girls assurance process completed and violence against women and girls annual report published in October 2012. A Roundtable meeting of Area Violence Against Women and Girls Coordinators took place in January 2013 to identify local issues and plan 2013-14 actions. April 2013 will be next assurance report and plans to include the links between the assurance and Local Scrutiny and Involvement Panels.
67	Fund a national 'Ugly Mugs' scheme to protect people involved in prostitution from violent individuals.	The Home Office funded a 12 month national 'Ugly Mugs' pilot scheme run by the UK Network of Sex Work Projects. This pilot brings together existing locally run schemes which aim at helping protect people involved in prostitution from violent and abusive individuals, encouraging them to report incidents of violence and abuse. The pilot was successfully launched on 6 July 2012.
68	Learn from how police forces in other countries respond to violence against women and girls and work with our police partners to consider how effective approaches might be applied in England and Wales.	Contributed to the European Union handbook of Good Police Practices in overcoming attrition in domestic violence through policing which also showcases best practice from other countries.
69	Work with the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime and other partners on an effective response to exploitation of prostitution and human trafficking in preparation for the Olympic Games.	Complete.
70	Address the issue of cyber stalking by ensuring that the links are made between the different agencies that are working on stalking, e-crime and communications data.	Links have been made between hate crime, communications data, cyber crime and stalking policy.  Stalking stakeholders engaged in seminar in September 2012 regarding the Communications Bill and how this could impact on victims.
72	Publication of the Forced Marriage Designated Courts Resource Manual so that it is available to all professionals practising in this area.	The Manual has been revised. Published 11 June 2012  <a href="http://www.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-vulnerable/forced-marriage">http://www.justice.gov.uk/protecting-the-vulnerable/forced-marriage</a> .

73	Identify the most appropriate method of support and communication with violence against women and girls victims.	<p>Completed. There is now a signed off model for Witness Care Units which identifies those victims and witnesses in greatest need and gives them an enhanced service.</p> <p>The model is currently operating in West Midlands, London and Wales (except Gwent) and will be rolled out nationally by March 2013.</p>
75	Undertake an audit of Sexual Assault Referral Centre services to ensure they all meet the minimum elements.	We do not propose to conduct a Home Office audit of the Sexual Assault Referral Centres. The changes to National Health Service commissioning by the Department of Health has implications for Sexual Assault Referral Centres and as part of the work, service specification and minimum elements are being developed. There is "evaluation" of Sexual Assault Referral Centres being done as part of this process (in particular through the early adopter programme), by identifying baseline service, including how much everything costs (Forensic Medical Examiner and wrap around services).
76	Undertake research to gain an understanding of international best practice in relation to tactics to reduce harm and abuse of women involved in prostitution.	Responses to a questionnaire regarding international approaches to reducing harm to prostitutes were received from UK Embassies and High Commissions (via the FCO) in late Summer 2012.
77	Consider the responses to the consultation on widening the current cross-Government definition of domestic violence (for example to include victims under 18) and agree next steps.	New definition announced 19 September 2012 and will be implemented from March 2013.
78	Consider the responses to the stalking consultation (closed on 5 February 2012) on how we can protect victims of stalking more effectively.	Consultation response published 24 September 2012.
83	The Crown Prosecution Service and the Association of Chief Police Officers to publish a joint enhanced evidence gathering and charging checklist for use in domestic violence cases.	Joint-checklist was published and disseminated on 25 November 2012.

85	To introduce two new offences of stalking.	New offences came into force 25 November 2012.
86	Consider the responses to the consultation on whether a specific criminal offence would help us to combat forced marriage and agree next steps.	Announcement on 8 June 2012 that we will criminalise forced marriage. Legislation will be introduced when parliamentary time allows.
88	Consider ways to improve the criminal justice response to the abuse of trust involved in cases of domestic violence.	The sentencing guideline relating to domestic violence makes it clear that offences committed in a domestic context should be regarded as no less serious than offences committed in a non-domestic context. Where an offence has been committed in a domestic context, there are likely to be aggravating factors present that make it more serious which should be taken into account when sentencing.
90	Explore the prevalence and effects of violence against women and girls on vulnerable groups, including black, minority, ethnic and refugee communities, and work to raise awareness of violence against women and girls both within these groups and with frontline practitioners and local decision makers.	Research completed to inform future policy making.  Home Office has set up quarterly meetings with stakeholders to progress this work, which began in November 2012.
92	Review and assess how third parties monitor Forced Marriage Protection Orders (FMPOs) and deal with breaches of these orders.	This action was overtaken by the decision to criminalise the breach of a FMPO and will be re-assessed when the legislative work to create the new offence has concluded.

96	Continue to support the National Offender Management Service domestic abuse strategy by developing and making available for delivery an evidence-based programme of intervention for perpetrators of domestic abuse. This would replace programmes currently used by probation and some prisons.	The programme - Building Better Relationships (BBR) - was submitted to the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel on 23rd April when it was provisionally accredited with permission to roll out across the National Offender Management Service. National Offender Management Service Interventions Unit has commenced national roll out of the BBR training to Probation Trusts using a network of BBR trainers that have been developed following a successful training for trainers event. Events are planned in fortnightly across 2013.
97	Research into safety of victims including: actions following victim withdrawals from prosecutions and into the impact of IDVA support on Criminal Justice System outcomes.	Director of Public Prosecutions-led National Scrutiny Panel held in July to discuss cases related to teenage relationship abuse. A number of actions have been proposed and shared externally for views. Research into actions following victim withdrawals from prosecutions to follow in spring 2013.
66	Ensure rape myths are consistently recognised and challenged during the prosecution of rape cases.	Training sessions for rape specialist prosecutors held in February and March 2013. This action has been replaced by action 77 in the 2013 Action Plan.

62	Develop and deliver refresher training for prosecutors on violence against women and girls issues.	<p>Update on work in 2012/13:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Child Sexual Exploitation conference for senior prosecutors was held in October 2012.</li><li>• In November 2012 launched training on stalking and cyber stalking.</li><li>• By March 2013, revised e-learning on domestic violence will be published and sessions will be held to train more rape specialists.</li><li>• E-learning materials will be published on human trafficking by March 2013.</li></ul> <p>This action has been replaced by action 81 in the 2013 Action Plan.</p>
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71	Identify and share good practice in prosecutions for child sexual exploitation.	<p>In addition to a child sexual exploitation conference for senior prosecutors in October 2012, all Crown Prosecution Service Areas now have leads in as part of a dedicated network - ties in with recommendation 2.3 in the Association of Chief Police Officers Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan published in November 2012.</p> <p>A closed forum for prosecutors was set up on the Crown Prosecution Service intranet and a webinar will be held. A face to face seminar is planned for April 2013.</p> <p>Central collation of cases since December 2012 and regular links with the Deputy Children's Commissioner on a weekly basis.</p> <p>The Office of the Children's Commissioner list of vulnerabilities and warning signs were circulated to Chief Crown Prosecutors in December 2012. This action has been replaced by action 82 in the 2013 Action Plan.</p>
79	Complete a 12-month pilot of Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs).	Pilot complete. Evaluation ongoing and due to report by autumn 2013.

## Annex B – Wider Government Initiatives

There are a number of cross Government initiatives that will assist in tackling violence against women and girls and that have influenced this refreshed Action Plan:

### Child protection

The Government is committed to the on-going reform of the child protection system in England, building on the Munro Review and taking into account more recent recommendations made in the Education Select Committee report, *Children First: The Child Protection System in England* and Lord Carlile's report into the Edlington Case. We are committed to a programme of change to bring about sustainable, long term reform which enables and inspires professionals to do their best for vulnerable children and their families.

Our reforms include: investing in the recruitment and training of social workers; testing new ways of working which enable social workers to respond better to the needs of vulnerable children; revising statutory guidance to make clearer the legislative requirements of organisations working to safeguard children; changing inspection processes to focus more on children's experiences of the services they receive; strengthening Local Safeguarding Children Boards to hold local agencies to account for safeguarding children; and continuing to drive improvements in the quality of Serious Case Reviews so the system learns from past mistakes.

The emphasis of the revised guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', which will be issued shortly, is on professionals making effective judgements in the best interests of the individual child. The revised guidance will make clear what must be done by individuals and organisations working together to keep children safe. It will be clear about the responsibilities on local leaders, managers and other professionals to manage services for vulnerable children and families.

## Child Sexual Exploitation

The Government published the national Action Plan for tackling child sexual exploitation on 23 November 2011. The Action Plan looks at sexual exploitation from the perspective of the child. It highlights areas where more needs to be done, and sets out specific action that the Government, local agencies, and voluntary and community sector partners need to take, to address this abuse. The actions are set out under four strands:

- raising awareness and prevention – so that practitioners, parents and young people themselves are aware of the signs of exploitation;
- responding effectively to this abuse when it happens – so that all the agencies involved are better able to help victims get out and to deal with perpetrators;
- getting justice for victims and their families – with the needs of vulnerable and intimidated witnesses being identified and responded to in the criminal justice process; and
- helping victims and their families get over what has happened to them – including through the provision of specialised, appropriate support.

The Government issued a report on progress, along with a new step-by-step guide on what frontline practitioners should do if they suspect a child is being sexually exploited on 3 July 2012. The progress report highlighted the significant progress that was being made but made clear that there was still much more to be done.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) published an interim report from its two-year inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups in November 2012. The final report with recommendations for policy and practice is expected to be published in the Autumn 2013.

## Social work education

The Government is funding a range of reforms to initial and post qualifying social work education and practice development which are being implemented by the College of Social work, to ensure that social workers are able to identify and swiftly respond to instances where children are subject to violence or abuse.

The Professional Capabilities Framework is a new set of professional standards that underpins all education, training, assessment and performance management in social work. Child protection specific capabilities have been written into the PCF, as recommended by Professor Munro. Curriculum guides in specialist areas have been produced for institutions training new social workers in a range of areas, including relationships, relationship stress and/or breakdown and neglect, violence and abuse of children and adults.

Training is being funded for social work managers and supervisors in reflective supervision, which is critical for ensuring that social workers stay focused on ensuring the best outcomes for children. Working Together emphasises the importance of effective supervision and challenge to support professionals to reflect on the impact their decisions have on the child and his or her family. Any professional working with vulnerable children should have access to a manager to talk through their concerns and judgments affecting the welfare of the child. New Employer Standards and Supervision Framework both make clear the expectations for social work employers to provide a proper level and quality of support and supervision to enable social workers to do their jobs.

Social workers must maintain and develop their knowledge and skills through continuing professional development (CPD) in order to maintain their registration with the Health and Care Professions Council. High quality CPD is fundamental both to the development of skilled and confident practitioners and to the provision of quality services to children and their families. The Professional capabilities framework underpins CPD at all social work career levels.

## Troubled families

The Troubled Families programme is committed to turning around the lives of 120,000 families by the end of this Parliament. The Prime Minister has set out a clear vision about what needs to change in these households: getting children into school, cutting crime and anti-social behaviour, putting adults on the path to work and making savings to the public purse. Significant local discretion has been built into the design of the programme enabling local areas to consider domestic violence as one of the contributing factors that determine the identification of families for inclusion in the programme.

At present the programme is making good progress with 152 upper-tier councils in England having committed to start work with almost 42,000 families across England by the end of this financial year (2012/3), over a third of the 120,000 troubled families target.

In July 2012, Louise Casey CB (Head of the Troubled Families Programme) published the 'Listening to Troubled Families' report which gave a glimpse into the lives of and problems experienced by 16 troubled families. The report showed that within those 16 families she interviewed there were a range of problems that these families both had and caused; problems that were often passed from generation to generation, such as sexual abuse, teenage pregnancies, poor parenting, a need for social care interventions, police call outs and educational failure. In particular, domestic violence appeared to be a common theme in the majority of families that were interviewed.

There will be an independent evaluation of the Troubled Families programme conducted, which will help to give a clearer understanding about the progress and outcomes being achieved with troubled families across a broader set of issues, including domestic violence.

## Victims Strategy

In July 2012 the Government published its response to the consultation "Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses". This set out a package of reforms to radically change the way the Government commissions support services for victims and witnesses. Currently Central Government spends in the region of £66 million each year in grant funding to a wide range of organisations that provide support services. We are now working to introduce a mixed model of national and local commissioning, with the majority of victim support services being commissioned locally by Police and Crime Commissioners.

The Government is committed to devolving responsibility for commissioning most services to Police and Crime Commissioners but recognises that some services are best commissioned nationally. Central Government (the Ministry of Justice and Home Office) will nationally commission: support for those bereaved by homicide; support for victims of human trafficking; support for victims of rape through rape support centres, plus some other support for victims of sexual and domestic violence; the witness service and some national help lines.

All support services, whether nationally or locally commissioned, should aim to achieve two outcomes for victims of crime – firstly to help victims to cope and then, and as far as is possible, to recover from, the impacts of crime upon them. Support should be particularly targeted at those who have suffered the greatest impact from crime: victims of serious crime, the most persistently targeted and the most vulnerable.

We are also revising the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (the “Victims’ Code”) to give victims clearer entitlements from criminal justice agencies and to better tailor services to individual need. As part of this we are reviewing the Victim Personal Statement to give victims a louder voice in criminal proceedings. A consultation will be held on the draft Code in spring 2013.

## Probation reform consultation

The Ministry of Justice launched the Transforming Rehabilitation consultation on 9 January 2013. It described the Government’s intended approach to driving down the rate of reoffending and delivering better value for the taxpayer. Integral to the proposals is a criminal justice system which punishes offenders properly, and protects the public and supports victims. The system also needs to reform offenders so that they do not go on to commit further crimes. The reform proposals focus on the rehabilitation of all adult offenders managed in the community and subject to community orders or suspended sentences. The consultation document also contained, for the first time, proposals to develop services for those offenders serving under twelve months in custody.

The Government recognises that many female offenders have experienced domestic and sexual violence, and that a history of abuse is associated with higher rates of reconviction. We will ensure that we commission services for female offenders that take account of this experience and address their needs as victims of violence to reduce their re-offending. Although not all perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence against women are men, many are. We are therefore committed to addressing this criminal behaviour by commissioning offender management services that work with male offenders where there is evidence of involvement in domestic and/or sexual violence whether against women or men.

## EU Directive on the rights of victims of crime

The EU Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime is intended to ensure minimum standards for all victims of crime committed within the EU and their family members in fatal cases. The Directive covers: information and support; participation in criminal proceedings; protection of victims and recognition of vulnerable victims (referred to in the Directive as victims with specific protection needs) and general provisions such as the training and co-ordination of services.

The Government opted-in to the EU Victims’ Directive in October 2012 to promote improved standards on the entitlements, support and protection available to victims of crime across the EU, to the benefit of UK citizens.

The majority of the Directive reflects existing practice. We do not anticipate many policy changes but may enshrine practice in national law or statutory codes. We expect to fully implement the Directive by 16 November 2015.

## Ending Gang and Youth Violence

On 27 November the Home Office published the 'Ending Gang and Youth Violence' report: One year on. The report sets out the Government's achievements to date and its commitments to build on this success over the next year and beyond. It covers a range of key issues, including the role of health in preventing violence; the criminal justice response; partnership working and information sharing; and sharing evidence of what works to improve local service delivery. The report has a section on women, girls and gangs. This includes a commitment to ensure key actions pertaining to gang-associated young women and girls are included in the updated Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan, as well as:

- Work with the Association of Chief Police Officers to identify gang-associated women and girls;
- Update safeguarding guidance on young people at risk of gang activity;
- Ensure that gang-associated girls and young women can access youth and criminal justice services without risk to their safety;
- Work with local partners to address boys' and young men's harmful attitudes towards women and girls; and
- Continue to work with the Crown Prosecution Service to develop initiatives to prevent and reduce the impact of gang violence on girls and young women.

