



Client Voices Week 2023



Derbyshire Domestic Abuse Services

Introduction

Derbyshire Domestic Abuse Services is a partnership of three providers: NCHA WISH, The Elm Foundation and Crossroads Derbyshire. Together as a partnership we have been providing refuge accommodation, community outreach work and support for children affected by domestic abuse for 11 years, and we have extensive knowledge of the needs of victims of abuse within Derbyshire and beyond.

In 2023 we relaunched our annual Client Voices Week – a countywide survey and consultation exercise designed to identify what we do well, where we could improve, and what our clients would like us to do differently.

The purpose of Client Voices Week is to ensure that inclusivity, diversity and client's views continue to be at the heart of all that we do.

“Derbyshire services were better than I expected”.



Methodology and scope

During the week of 26th–30th June 2023 we conducted one-to-one interviews, group feedback sessions and interviews with current and former clients from across the county, as well as conversations with our own staff and volunteers, and professionals from other agencies.

Clients and professionals were invited to participate by our team of staff and volunteers. Participation was optional and was completely anonymous. We did not put any pressure on anyone to take part in the survey, and we shared it as widely as possible.

Clients who were currently in service or any who had been supported since 1st January 2023 were invited to take part. We excluded any client where we were not confident that it was safe to make contact but we did not select in any other way.

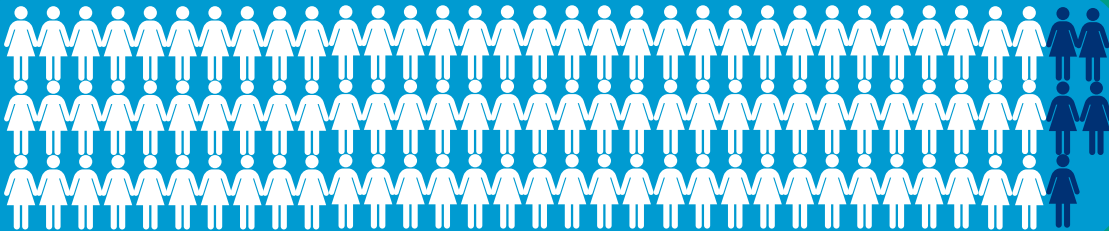
Questions were devised to invite a range of feedback including quantitative and qualitative feedback. We invited responses about where we could improve as well as where we were performing well. We limited the number of questions so as to not put participants off by making the survey too long.

This report summarises the findings of our surveys, focusing on what is going well, what could be improved, and the actions we are taking in response.

This year 101 adults, 41 children & young people and 43 professionals took the time to share their views.

Client Safety

Of the 101 clients asked, "**do you think our support has made you feel safer?**" 96 said yes and 5 said don't know.



- Yes
- Don't know

I was provided with panic alarms, window, door alarms and security cameras
Also having the reassurance of someone to talk too

I believe the support has made me feel safer by providing info on what to look for in the future by surrounding myself with others. I have also been provided with alarms to keep myself safe

This service saved my life. I was days away from suicide when Crossroads got in touch.

It's made me feel more confident to see the red flags of what to look out for in a relationship

Looking back over the last two years since we were connected, I have gone from scared on the floor in a corner of a dark room just rocking to finding ways to get through each day a little bit better some days than others and there's still a lot of fear but I've got someone to call and be there - someone who has a clue how I'm feeling - why I'm feeling the way I do and to reassure me the fear will pass - one day

Community support

The weekly phone calls put my mind at ease as I have someone to talk too and my worker has gone above and beyond to ensure I feel safe and supported

I was completely isolated and alone. Having someone to call is a lifeline. Having someone who knows who to call for particular help, even better. Having someone care, be there, show up, make calls, tell me how to help myself, someone who has more information than I do - there's no way to explain how that feels.

Just having someone to discuss concerns and situations with, has given me the confidence to raise and report concerns.

It stopped my feeling like I was going crazy, it made me feel that someone understood what was happening and was able to give me practical and useful advice.

The support I have received is outstanding & enabled me to leave an abusive 35 year relationship. On really low days I cannot say how much it helped. I owe my support worker so much.

Getting kids in school, help with kids mental health and my own. Sorting paper work out and helping emotional support

I feel like I had the time and space to process and heal. To understand what happened better and forgive and like myself again

It has helped me and my family feel safer and helped me learn to move on and heal.

Accommodation services

Out of 10:

“How would you rate our services?”



95% said that moving to our accommodation made them feel safer.

The safe and calm environment that Crossroads provided meant we were both handed the opportunity to grow with feeling safe. My confidence as a whole completely grew and now I feel a lot happier as a result.

I had a lot of support emotionally and physically with settling in the refuge and coming off social services

Cameras, the area, the surroundings and people. I was at a distance away from my ex. This is a safe place I'm sure half of the country hasn't heard of. It's hidden away and feels safe surrounded by country side.

Having support has allowed me to gain confidence and knowledge I have grown as a person within the time being in Refuge. Having opportunities to do the Freedom program and counseling, support workers helped loads

Tray has done so much to help me, as have the whole team. I have been made to feel welcome and valued and I cannot thank the team enough

Cannot thank my worker enough for the help during my pregnancy and post partum period, always reminded me to keep going and how strong I am. All in the team are true angels.

Children's support

When asked out of 10
"How much has the service helped
your family?"

9.2

I loved going in the playroom. The painting was my favourite. I liked it when we went to the beach.

i hadn't understood the impact of what i was going through on the kids before i worked with Carla, the kids are happy they have someone to talk to that isn't me and understands what they have been through

It was very positive and allowed me to talk and do crafts. I loved making worry dolls.

I found Caroline and Emily extremely helpful in every way :). I was made to feel welcomed from day one and nothing was ever too much trouble. I felt extremely safe :)

Just more for children as I have received support and counselling but there does not seem as much resource for children.

If I did not have this support I honestly did not think I could have come through my separation and divorce as well as I have and my children and would have suffered much more.

Young people

When asked out of 10
“Did our work help you understand
healthy relationships?”

9.4

The support was very helpful and it was nice to know that I have somewhere to go if I need help as a woman in future relationships. I have learned how to use contraception to keep myself safe and the options I have for my sexual health/body.

It means that we could talk about relationship issues/advice, friendships, contraception, self/confidence, periods, boundaries. Kind of like a big sister drop in to talk about all the things girls have problems with.

The domestic abuse topic was very interesting and I learnt a lot about life and it's not all as it seems. It helped me know I'm not alone and helped me to know how to react around women.

We have been able to speak about unhealthy relationships and abuse that nobody really ever talks about and I feel safe and comfortable.

I feel like I can understand and be free from different types of abuse and am now able to identify them. I also feel like I've been able to open up and be myself.

Professionals and stakeholders

When asked out of 10
“How much has the support helped
your client?”



I have been so impressed by the service and they have helped my clients so much. The support is really consistent and varied and my clients have really benefitted from the support.

thank you for all the amazing work you do- you have made a massively positive contribution to the lives of some of my most vulnerable clients. It means so much to know they have the specific support they need.

Your support helped us protect a mother and her children get into emergency housing and away from a violent situation. We also receive good advice from you.

Service is always bespoke to each client I refer, the service my clients receive is always above expectation

You said we did...

We have implemented many of the suggestions clients have made to us and hope to implement many more following Client Voices Week.

Children's Counselling

Five respondents said that they would like to see more counselling for children.

We are setting up a children's counselling service to cover the whole of Derbyshire. This will be in place by April 2024 and will provide direct support to children impacted by domestic abuse.



Peer Support

Some of the young people who have taken part in our Choices programme said they would like to offer support to their peers.

We are piloting a peer support programme in High Schools, and talking to our funders about rolling this out across the county next year.



More follow-on support

Some responses asked for more follow-on support, mindfulness, weekly check ins and longer support.

We already offer the Freedom Programme but we are piloting a new group recovery programme - The Voice Programme, which includes mindfulness, recovery and an opportunity to meet others. More information to follow later this year!



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of the survivors and professionals who contributed to this report. Your views and opinions are so important to us.

If you would like to comment on anything in this report, or if you have any feedback to give us at any time, please contact us.

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