



domestic  
abuse  
commissioner

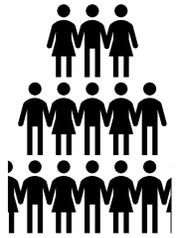
# Domestic Abuse Commissioner

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NICOLE JACOBS



# In numbers

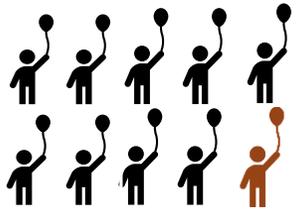


**2.3 million**

adults affected by domestic abuse in year ending March 2020 (5.5% of adult population)

**8.8 million**

adults have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 (20.8% of adult population)



**1 in 10**

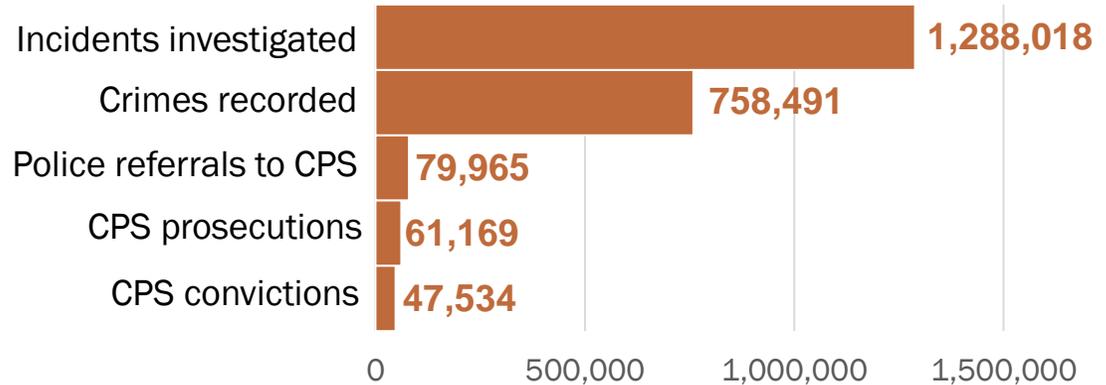
adults lived with domestic abuse as children



**£66 billion**

The estimated annual cost of domestic abuse to society (year ending March 2017)

## DA flagged police recorded incidents, crimes and prosecutions - year ending March 2020



# Purpose

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## The Problem

- The prevalence of domestic abuse remains too high, and the national and local response (while in some areas improving) is inadequate to the scale and complexity of the problem.
- The response represents a “postcode lottery” with significant variation across England and Wales.
- Not only does the specialist domestic abuse support available vary in both quantity and quality, but the wider community response from health, housing, education or social care varies considerably.

## The Domestic Abuse Commissioner

- Nicole Jacobs was appointed Designate Domestic Abuse Commissioner in September 2019. The passage of the Domestic Abuse Act saw her official appointment as the Commissioner.
- The Commissioner will play a key role in holding local and national Government to account in order to improve the response to domestic abuse and shining a light on both good and poor practice and policy.
- All statutory agencies and Government Departments will have a legal duty through the Domestic Abuse Bill to cooperate with the Commissioner and respond publicly to any of her recommendations within 56 days.

# Key policy priorities for the year ahead

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- Support for migrant victims and survivors of domestic abuse – working to inform the outcomes of the Supporting Migrant Victims Pilot
- Improving the experiences of survivors and their children in the family courts
- Creating an oversight mechanism on domestic homicide and suicides to better learn lessons needed to prevent future deaths
- Secure longer-term sustainable funding for both accommodation-based and community-based services
- Secure implementation of the recommendation that a firewall be created between the Border Force and the police in the HMICFRS Report on super-complaint

# The Domestic Abuse Act

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This landmark piece of legislation, first introduced July 2019 and re-introduced in March 2020, received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021.

Key elements of the Act are to:

- Establish the Domestic Abuse Commissioner as a statutory office holder
- Create a statutory definition of Domestic Abuse to ensure its properly understood, considered unacceptable and challenged across agencies and in public attitudes
- Provide for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order
- Place a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation

# The Domestic Abuse Act (continued)

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- Prohibit domestic abusers from cross-examining their victims in person in the family courts in England and Wales
- Ensure that anyone made homeless as a result of domestic abuse is automatic in priority need for housing
- Create a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal courts (for example, to enable them to give evidence via a video link)
- Place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing

# The Domestic Abuse Act (continued)

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- The Government have extended the remit of Part 4 to ensure LAs assess the impact on community-based services. The government have also committed to consulting on the provision of community-based services ahead of the upcoming Victim's Bill
- A new standalone offence of non-fatal strangulation – 29% of domestic homicides include strangulation
- The coercive control offence will be extended to include post-separation abuse
- Threats to share intimate images will be a criminal offence
- All DHRs will be shared with the Commissioner to help us build a stronger oversight mechanism on domestic homicide