

What's the Current Situation?

In recent months, domestic violence has risen dramatically. With lockdown in place, victims have been forced to remain at home with their abusers - unable to escape or raise the alarm.

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is intentional and persistent behaviour used to cause pain or injury.

It includes controlling, threatening and coercive behaviour, which causes physical, emotional, psychological or sexual harm.

Who is at risk?

Domestic abuse can happen to **anyone** - irrespective of background, gender, class, race, religion or position in society.

How does it start?

Domestic abuse often starts slowly, with the perpetrator grooming the victim over a period of time. They may start by targeting the individual psychologically and emotionally before becoming physically violent. Victims are made to feel that they deserve the abuse they receive.

Who is impacted?

In addition to the main victims of abuse, many others are impacted. Children, in particular, are often present in the home when abuse is taking place.

The trauma they experience can have a long term negative impact on their lives and the relationships they form as they grow up.

Impact of Lockdown on Domestic Abuse

- Refuge report that the National Domestic Abuse helpline has seen a 25% increase in calls and online requests for help.
- The first three weeks of lockdown saw the highest number of killings of women in any 21-day period in the past decade.
- Constant close confinement with an abuser makes it much harder for victims of domestic violence to reach out for support.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO LISTEN TO OUR FULL WEBINAR VISIT
WWW.CINNAMONNETWORK.CO.UK/DOMESTIC-HOPE

What prevents victims getting help?

1. **Fear** - Victims fear further retribution from their perpetrators.
2. **Credibility** - Many don't think they will be believed. Perpetrators are good at manipulating everyone around them and victims fear they just won't be believed.
3. **Lack of services** - People don't know where to go for help. Domestic abuse isn't a topic that society talks about and services aren't always well advertised.
4. **Misconceptions about support** - Many people fear that places, like women's refuges, won't be safe for them and their children.
5. **Fear of judgement** - Victims also fear that if they speak out, they will be blamed or judged.



What can churches do?

A simple but effective way for churches to respond is by becoming a Safe Place. The Safe Place initiative was developed by the charity Onus to empower churches to recognise and respond to domestic violence and abuse both within the church and wider community context.



Become a 'Safe Place'

Any organisation or church can become a Safe Place. To become a Safe Place you need to:

1. Attend a **training session** online, where you'll learn how to raise awareness, and direct victims for support
2. Display a **Safe Place sticker** in the window of your church, so people know they can come to you for help
3. Have **information cards and posters** available to signpost people for help
4. **Raise awareness** of domestic abuse within your congregation

For more information visit onustraining.co.uk/safe-church-training/ or complete the form at the end of these notes.

Churches wishing to understand the issue of domestic abuse in greater depth can take part in additional **Safe Place Pathways** training also provided by Onus.

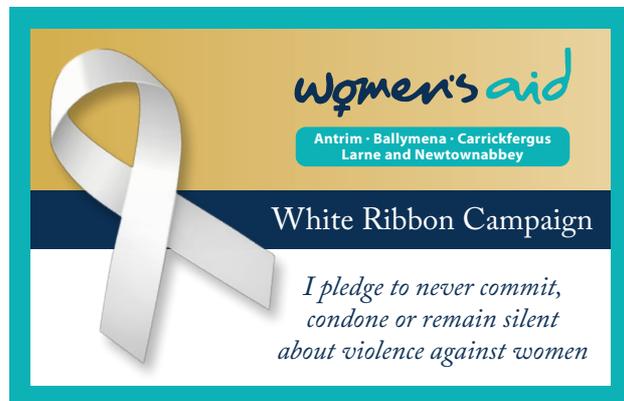
30% of women and 16% of men will be subjected
to abuse by a partner.

Commitments every church can make

1. Raise awareness

Many churches presume that domestic abuse isn't a subject that they need to worry about. However, it's a hidden issue that is prevalent in every community.

- Leaders can make sure they speak out about the issue from the front.
- Conversations should be encouraged to create an environment where victims feel confident in speaking out.
- Churches can get involved in White Ribbon Day on 25 November, which is a national campaign to draw attention to domestic abuse.



2. Signpost services

Simply knowing where to direct victims for support is crucially important. As a church you don't have to provide support, counselling or services yourself, but you can tell people where to go.

Support for women

Women's Aid - womensaid.org.uk

Refuge - refuge.org.uk

National Domestic Abuse Helpline - nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Domestic Violence Assist - dvassist.org.uk

Support for children

NSPCC - nspcc.org.uk

Action for Children - actionforchildren.org.uk

Women's Aid - womensaid.org.uk

Support for older people

Hourglass - wearehourglass.org

Support for men

ManKind - mankind.org.uk

Respect Men's Advice Line - mensadvice.org.uk

Survivor's UK - survivorsuk.org

Support for the LGBTQ community

Galop - galop.org.uk/

Bi-survivor's network - consortium.lgbt

Survivors' Network - survivorsnetwork.org.uk

Broken Rainbow - brokenrainbow.org.uk

3. Make contact with local services

Every town or city will have their own provision for victims of domestic abuse. As a church you can make contact with services, such as your local women's refuge and social services, to find out what support they may need and where to sign post people in need of help.

Further reading

The issue of domestic abuse is complex. Women's Aid and Onus both provide additional information to help you get to grips with the issue.

You may also want to read "**Out of Control: Couples, Conflict and the Capacity for Change.**" by Natalie Collins.

Natalie has experienced domestic abuse first hand and weaves her personal story into the book which provides theological insight into some big questions that domestic violence poses. .

Natalie has also written an **informative and eye-opening blog** about lockdown and abuse.



Onus Safe Church

empowers churches to recognise and respond to domestic violence or abuse. They provide a variety of training opportunities for churches, business and other organisations

onustraining.co.uk

info@onustraining.co.uk



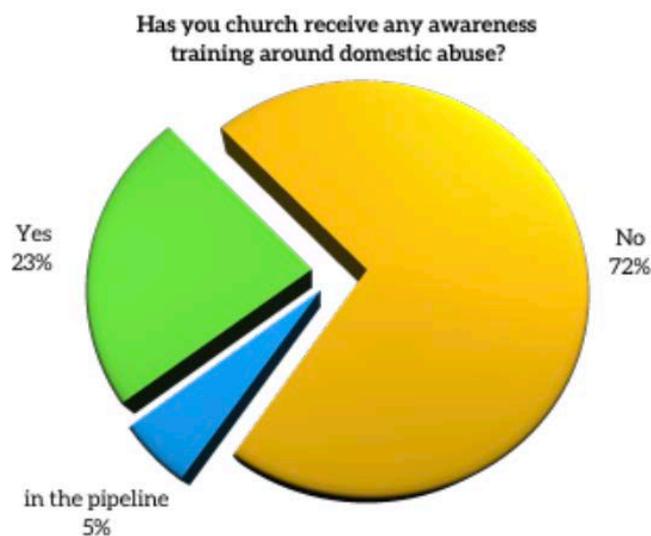
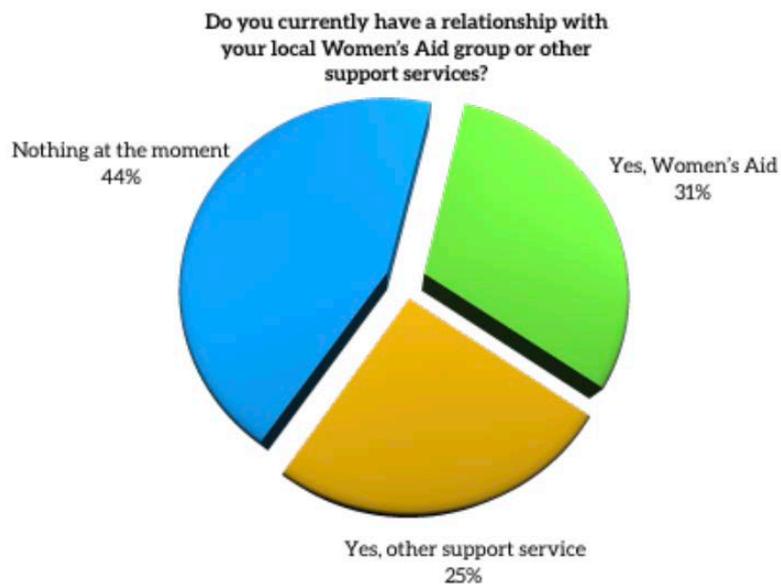
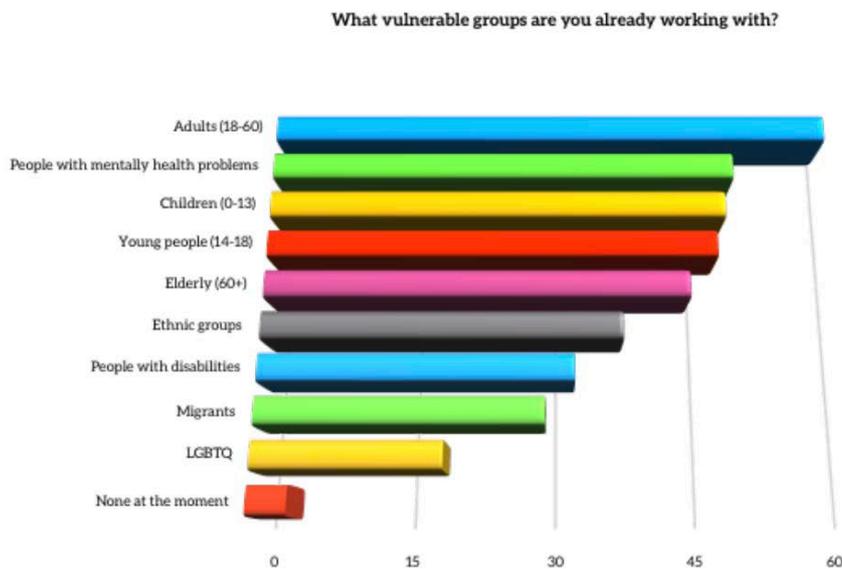
Women's Aid

provides confidential support, information and accommodation for women and children who are affected by domestic abuse.

womens-aid.org.uk

Poll results

As part of our webinar we asked our guests to answer a number of questions. Here's a summary of the results.





Pathways for Participation



SAFE PLACE
REGISTRATION FORM:

Yes, I would like to offer the Safe Place scheme in my organisation:

Name: Position:

Organisation:

Sector: Public Private V/NFP No of employees:

Address:

Postcode:

Landline: Mobile:

Email:

Date:

Would you be interested in finding out more about the Workplace Charter on domestic violence? Yes/No

Please return the form to: Onus, Ballymena Business Centre, 51 Church Street, Ballymena, BT43 6DF. Or email details to info@onustraining.co.uk

Information provided will be processed in line with GDPR regulations. Onus will retain information for the duration where an organisation wishes to remain as a registered Safe Place, any organisation wishing to withdraw from the Safe Place Initiative may do so at any time by informing Onus. Further details of our privacy policy can be found on our website at www.onustraining.co.uk

Office Use Only

To demonstrate attainment of Safe Place Charter Status, please evidence the following criteria:

Table with 3 columns: Action, Mandatory/Recommended, Date Completed. Rows include: Safe Place Registration form completed, Attended Safe Place Awareness Raising session (1/1.5hrs), Received Safe Place resources: Business Cards, Window Stickers, Posters.

Safe Place registration form processed by: Date:

Information provided on this form will be kept for the purposes of Onus only and will not be shared with any third parties.

THANK YOU

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