

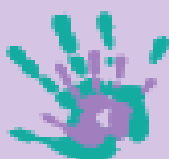


South Ayrshire  
Multi-Agency Partnership  
Violence Against Women & Children

Strategy 2006 – 2008

# There is No Excuse

end violence against  
women & children  
south ayrshire multi agency partnership



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## **BACKGROUND**

South Ayrshire Multi-Agency Partnership for Violence Against Women and Children is committed to the promotion of human rights within society and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and harassment. There are many forms of violence within society and all forms of violence are unacceptable. Whilst it is acknowledged that men without doubt experience violence, the focus of this strategy is violence against women and children as gender-based violence. Various studies from around the world show that violence against women and children is widespread and cuts across class, age, religion and ethnic group. Common attempts to justify or excuse away gender-based violence include unemployment, personality disorders and the use of drugs and/or alcohol. However, it has long been established that there can be no justification for any form of violence against women and children and that whilst certain circumstances may exacerbate abuse and violence they are not causal factors. Gender-based violence exists because of the way society is structured and engineered. Whilst the majority of men do not enter into any form of violence against women and children the minority have the capacity to harm many. Non-abusive men have a crucial role to play in challenging gender-based violence. South Ayrshire Multi-Agency Partnership recognises that violence against women is associated with gender inequality, and should be understood in its historical context, whereby societies have given greater status, wealth, influence, control and power to men. Violence against women is a range of behaviours that constitute male abuse of this power.

There has been national recognition of the role and responsibility of public services to tackle violence against women and at local level this has resulted in a multi-agency partnership approach.

South Ayrshire Multi-Agency Partnership is committed to addressing gender-based violence and to offering appropriate, high quality services to women and children, underpinned by a clear and unequivocal commitment to promote gender equality and inclusion across South Ayrshire. The partnership is made up of representatives from agencies working with women and children in South Ayrshire including:

- South Ayrshire Council
- South Ayrshire Community Safety Partnership
- Strathclyde Police
- South Ayrshire Women's Aid
- NHS Ayrshire & Arran
- Procurator Fiscal's Office
- South Ayrshire Victim Support
- Barnardo's South Ayrshire Families Service
- Job Centre Plus
- Red Cross
- Victim Information & Advice

The partnership was originally established to take forward the National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland (2000). In 2005 it was decided to widen that remit to embrace the Scottish Executive's broadening agenda to incorporate all aspects of violence against women and children.

The partnership is co-ordinated by the Community Safety Officer for Violence Against Women and Children, with each member being managed by their own agency. The partnership meets every 8 weeks to monitor progress, activity and/or spend.

The Multi-Agency Partnership reports to the South Ayrshire Community Safety Partnership, which links to South Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership. The MAP comes under Priority 1 of the Community Safety Partnership: Tackling Violence and responds to the corresponding outcome targets:

- less violence in communities
- increased confidence in partner agencies' responses to reported incidents of violence,
- people feel safer in their communities

## **DEFINITION**

The United Nations General Assembly defined gender-based violence as follows:

**“The term violence against women means any act of violence by men that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life. Violence against women should be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including where such violence is inflicted upon children and young people in the household, culturally related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women and violence related to exploitation. It also includes physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution.”**

*Please also refer to Appendix 1 for further information on the 'Scottish Executive's Strategic Framework on Violence Against Women'.*

## **OBJECTIVES**

The partnership aims to achieve positive outcomes for women & children experiencing gender-based violence by adopting the key themes underpinning the National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland, namely:

**Prevention:** raising awareness in the community of issues around violence against women and challenging those attitudes that allow it to be tolerated

**Protection:** encouraging and supporting agencies to develop appropriate responses to women experiencing gender-based violence

**Provision:** developing multi-agency support services for women experiencing gender-based violence

The specific objectives are:

- **To provide consistent and appropriate responses to women and children experiencing gender-based violence in South Ayrshire**
- **To raise public awareness of issues around violence against women and children**
- **To promote and support good practice within and between agencies**

## **RESOURCES**

All partners are committed to the implementation of this strategy and in kind contributions are made through different departments/agencies. Specific funding to enable the implementation of the strategy to be taken forward includes:

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Allocation 2006/08</b>
Scottish Executive - Violence Against Women Fund	£62,500
Scottish Executive - National Training Strategy	£27,832
South Ayrshire Community Safety Partnership	£10,000
South Ayrshire Council	£13,000
Strathclyde Joint Police Board Fund	£5,000
South Ayrshire Women's Aid	£2,500

## ACTION PLAN

**Objective:** *To provide consistent, co-ordinated approach to women and children experiencing gender-based violence in South Ayrshire*

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Improved service to women and children who experience gender-based violence	Provide assistance to women and children experiencing domestic abuse through the Additional Security Project	Number of referrals to ASP from partner agencies Number of women and children who feel safer and more able to remain in their own homes	Ongoing	Antisocial Behaviour Officer (Victim/Witness Support)
	Produce leaflets containing relevant information and service provider details to raise awareness of existing services	Number of violence against women and children leaflets produced and distributed	March 2008	Community Safety Officer (VAW) with assistance from MAP reps
	Create a violence against women website detailing information and support provision	Number of 'hits' on the website	March 2008	Community Safety Officer (VAW)
	Deliver multi-agency training & learning sessions to partner agencies	Number of places on learning sessions available	Ongoing	South Ayrshire Women's Aid Training & Prevention Worker
Violence against women agenda integrated into the Community Planning Process	Use Community Safety Partnership effectively	Number of briefing notes issued through Community Safety Partnership	Ongoing	Community Safety Officer (VAW)
Improved awareness of the work of the partnership across agencies	Range of agencies and departments attending partnership meetings	Number of partnership meetings held Number of attendees at meetings	Ongoing	Community Safety Officer (VAW)

**Objective: To raise public awareness of issues around violence against women**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Raised public awareness of domestic abuse	Implement domestic abuse marketing campaign	Number of campaigns implemented Number of calls to advertised services	March 2008	Community Safety Officer (VAW)
Changed public perception of sexual violence	Financial and marketing support for 'this is not an invitation to rape me' campaign	Feedback from independent evaluation	March 2008	Rape Crisis

**Objective: To promote and support good practice within and between agencies**

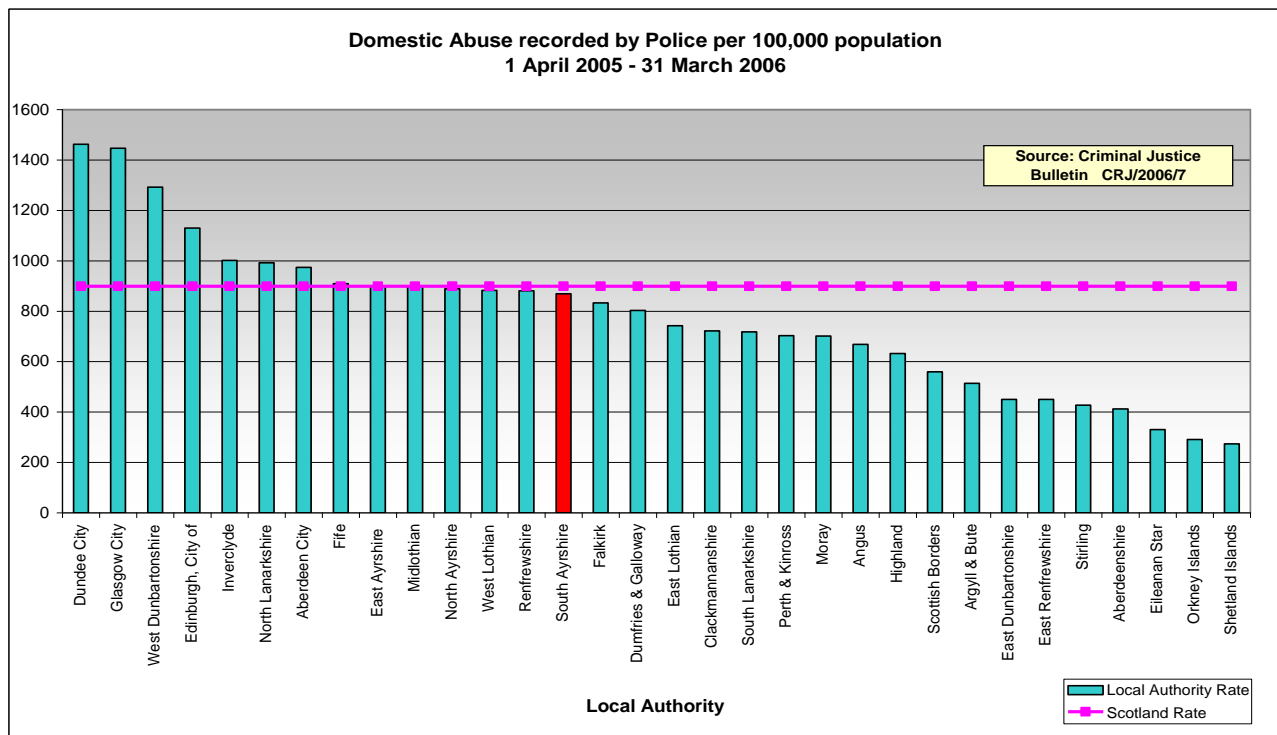
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Lead</b>
Improved awareness of the work of each partner agency	Produce a violence against women and children 'directory of services'	Number of directories produced and distributed	March 2008	Community Safety Officer (VAW) with assistance from MAP reps
Accessible information on provision and good practice available to partner agencies	Develop service provider section of violence against women website	Number of agencies providing information on the website	March 2008	Community Safety Officer (VAW) with assistance from MAP reps
Improved awareness of availability of domestic abuse learning sessions amongst partner agencies	Promote multi-agency learning session to partner agencies	Number of leaflets advertising training dates produced Number of sites advertising training dates	Ongoing	Community Safety Project Assistant

## MONITORING & EVALUATION

South Ayrshire Multi-Agency Partnership acknowledges that an essential component of delivering co-ordinated services to women experiencing gender-based violence is monitoring. This is important in quantifying the number of clients presenting to a service, tracking outcomes, reviewing and evaluating progress made, and actions taken. It is also a key factor in quantifying the costs involved.

### Domestic Abuse

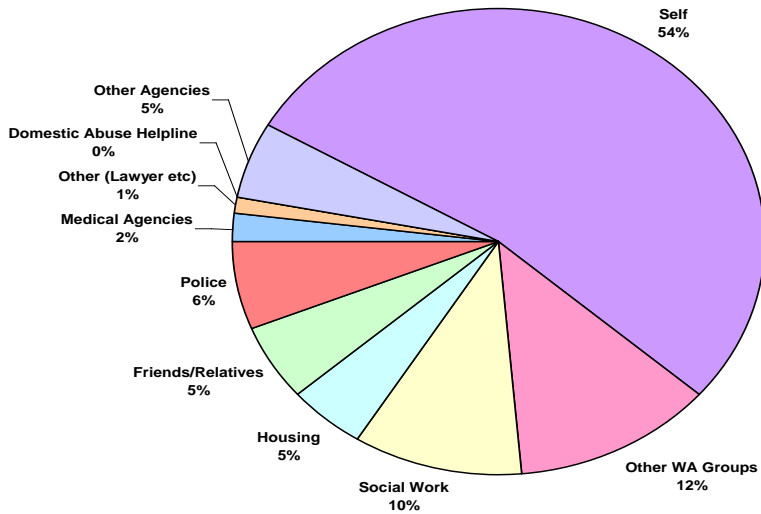
Official figures recorded by Strathclyde Police show that South Ayrshire is slightly below the Scottish average rate of domestic abuse.



However, it is only a minority of cases of domestic abuse that are reported to the police. Therefore, the referrals made to South Ayrshire Women’s Aid are also taken into account to reflect the true scale of domestic abuse in South Ayrshire.

Over half of all referrals to South Ayrshire Women’s Aid were self-referred, with only six percent made from Strathclyde Police.

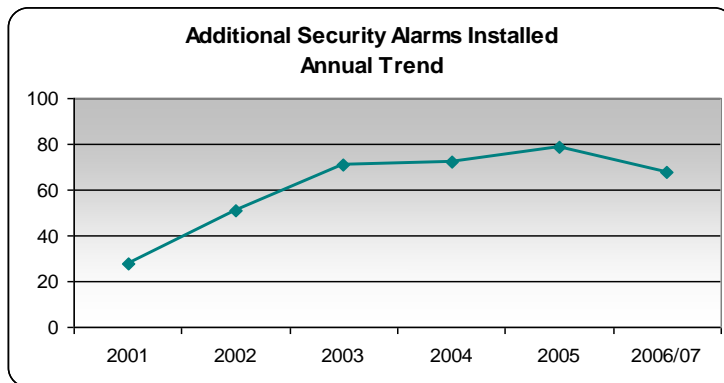
Women's Aid Statistics – South Ayrshire Office  
 Source of Referral: 1 April 2005 until 31 March 2007



Source: Women's Aid South Ayrshire Office

**Additional Security Project**

The additional security project can provide women and children experiencing domestic abuse with a range of security measures in their own home or in temporary accommodation to help them feel safer. This includes a panic alarm that provides a 999 Police response.



Year	No. of alarms
2001	28
2002	51
2003	71
2004	72
2005	79
2006/07	68

Source: ASP Database

Please note:

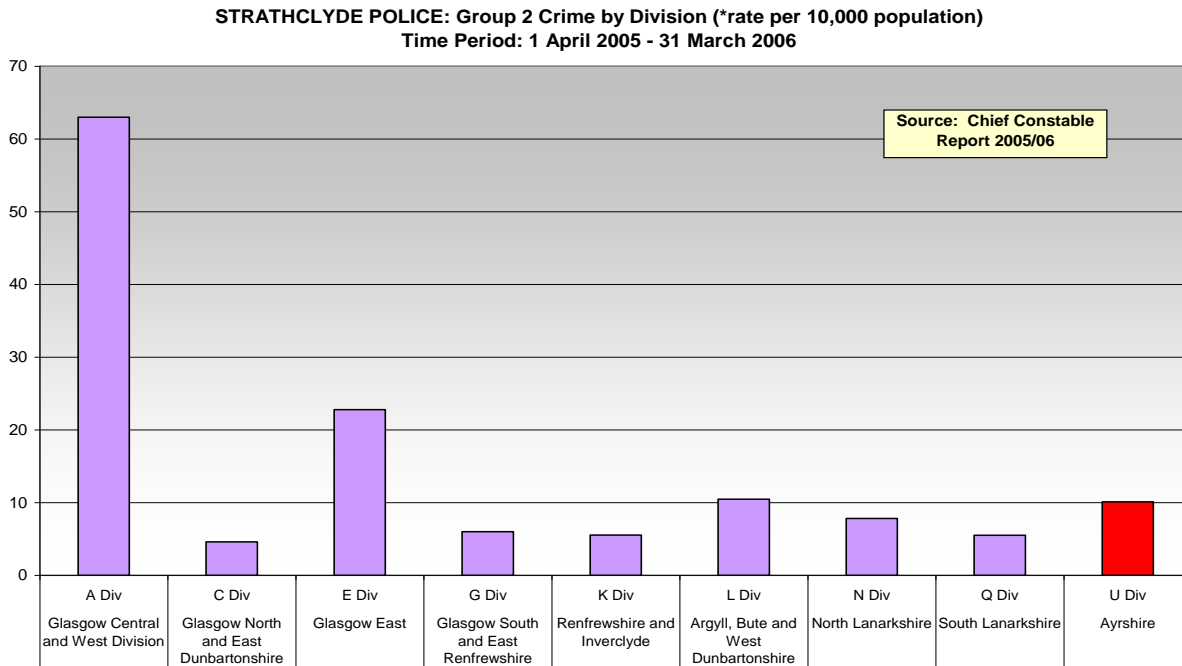
- Previous years figures are for January to December, the figures for 2006-07 are for April to March, therefore all represent one calendar year
- In 2006 there was a complete review of the project. Procedures are now in place for all requests to be assessed & for regular review of equipment.

Initial findings from the evaluation suggest that women referred to the project feel safer and more able to remain in their home as a result of the security measures accessed.

## Sexual Violence

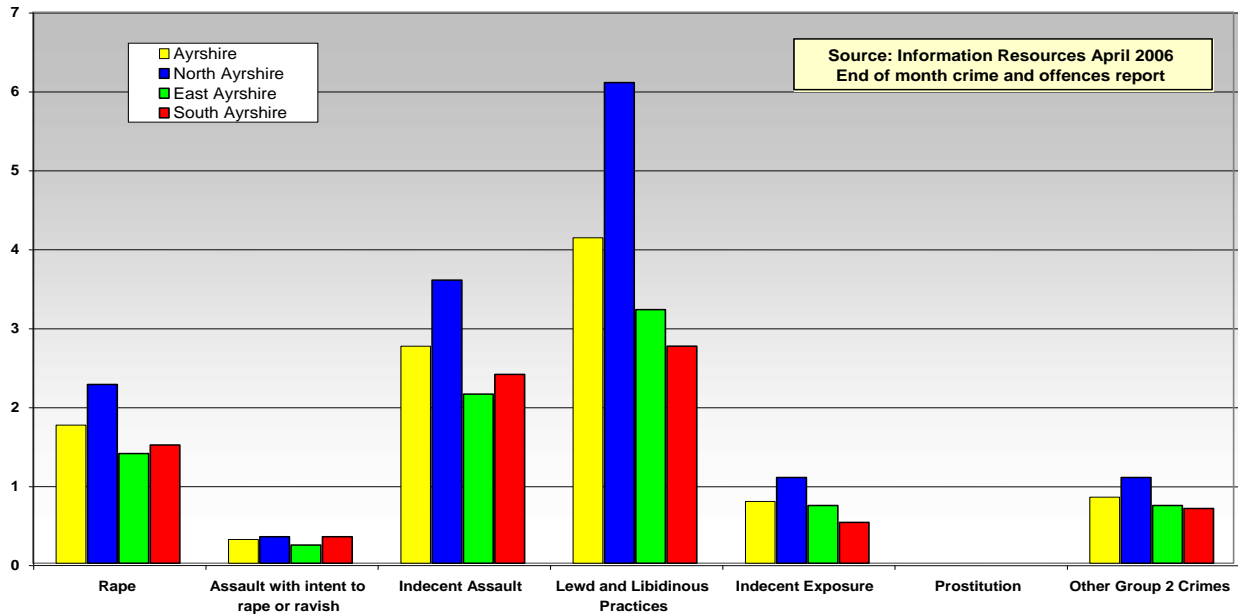
Please note

- Group 2 Crime incorporates crimes of indecency – i.e. rape, assault with intent to ravish, indecent assault, lewd and libidinous practices, indecent exposure and prostitution.
- A division and E division with the highest report rates are the only police divisions with reported crimes of prostitution

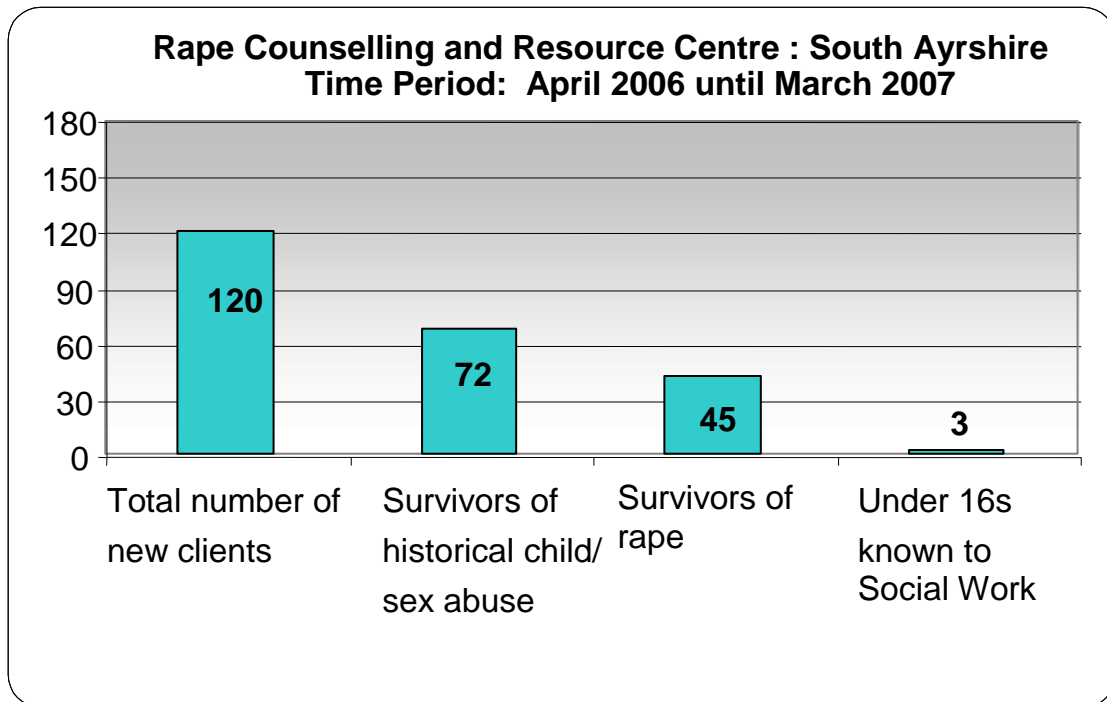


Figures relating to the whole of Ayrshire reflect a particularly high incidence rate of group 2 crime compared to other regions. However, South Ayrshire is below the average for Ayrshire for each classification within group 2 crime.

Group 2 Crimes of Indecency by Type and Council Area - rate per 1,000  
1 April 2005 until 31 March 2006



The Rape Counselling & Resource Centre in East Ayrshire has been providing an outreach service to South Ayrshire for the past year. Due to uncertain funding commitments the service stopped accepting new clients after January 2007. Therefore, the numbers are lower than they would otherwise have been.



## **DIVERSE NEEDS**

South Ayrshire Multi-Agency Partnership is committed to ensuring that all women receive an equitable service regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, age, trade union activity, political or religious belief.

Women from black and ethnic minority communities are a diverse group and not homogenous. Service providers should understand the impact of different cultural values on women experiencing gender-based violence, in order to make distinctions between legitimate cultural traditions and abuse of girls and women. The proportion of the population of South Ayrshire who identified themselves as BME (Black & Minority Ethnic) or "other" was 0.68%, using information from the 2001 Census.

Around 20% of the population of South Ayrshire are disabled, from the 2001 Census and the Scottish Health Survey 2003. People with disabilities face a range of discriminatory and oppressive factors in their lives, it is therefore wrong to assume that women with disabilities are affected by gender-based violence in exactly the same way as other women. Women with disabilities can feel more vulnerable to male violence and it can be difficult for them to challenge such attitudes. It is important to assist women to overcome barriers in accessing information, services and support, particularly for women with disabilities who are being abused by their carers.

The gender-based analysis of domestic abuse applies to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people's experience of domestic abuse; although people may have difficulty believing it can happen in LGBT relationships or acknowledging their own experience as domestic abuse. LGBT people may be discouraged from disclosing if service providers use language that reflect heterosexual assumptions; asking someone if they are experiencing domestic abuse without using gendered language is more inclusive, for example, using 'your partner' instead of 'he/she' or 'boyfriend/girlfriend'. No statistics are included because of the hidden nature of the LGBT community.

South Ayrshire covers an area of 422 square miles with a population of 112,160 (2001), which is 92 persons per square km. It includes an extensive rural area containing many small, often remote villages. Women living in rural areas who experience gender-based violence face additional barriers in accessing services; from geographical location being used as a method of confinement serving to enhance the common feeling of isolation, to fears of maintaining confidentiality and additional pressure to remain from a small, close-knit community. These issues may be further magnified for women living in travelling communities. 0.2% of the population of South Ayrshire live in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure, according to the 2001 Census. Women who choose to leave an abusive partner would also have to leave their chosen lifestyle.

## **CONSULTATION**

Development of a multi-agency response to violence against women must be informed by the needs of women who have experienced such violence, which means that consultation with them must be an integral part of developing and implementing the strategy.

The partnership consists of agencies offering direct services to women experiencing gender-based violence. These agencies are able to feedback womens' views and reactions to the partnership. Individual projects, such as the Additional Security Project have evaluation procedures in place to continue to develop and improve services offered to women and children.

## **TRAINING**

Training employees, who will be in contact with women who have experienced gender-based violence, raises awareness of the issues around violence against women, underlines the political commitment to tackling violence against women and children, and contributes to a more effective service delivery by ensuring that women who approach services for assistance will receive a more consistent response.

South Ayrshire Multi-Agency Partnership promotes participation in Dismantling Domestic Abuse and Trouble With Trouble study days, delivered by South Ayrshire Women's Aid, with completion of Day 1 being an absolute requirement for membership of the MAP. The partnership follows the aims of the Scottish Executive National Training Strategy: "That all agencies, individually and working together, can make the changes required to ensure that the best possible service is provided to anyone affected by domestic abuse anywhere in Scotland".

The study sessions explore men's use of violence, abuse and control against women and children. Each session works using a gender analysis of domestic abuse and clearly identifies domestic abuse as a gender-based issue. Sessions cover a range of topics, including:

The impact of domestic abuse on the lives of women and children

The scale of the problem

Women, children and young people's experiences and needs

Service provision – the roles we play

Creating opportunity – Promoting disclosure

Improved interagency working

Training dates are advertised and can be booked on the South Ayrshire Council website; the link to the training information is promoted via the 'Protection of Children' Training Calendar.

## APPENDIX I

### SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

#### What do we mean by "violence against women?"

The National Group to Address Violence Against Women has adopted defining principles setting out what "violence against women" encompasses for the purposes of tackling gender based violence against women and its impacts on children and young people.

Gender based violence is a function of gender inequality, and an abuse of male power and privilege. It takes the form of actions that result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affront to their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. It is men who predominantly or exclusively carry out such violence, and women who are predominantly the victims of such violence. By referring to violence as "gender-based", this definition highlights the need to understand violence within the context of women's and girl's subordinate status in society. Such violence cannot be understood, therefore, in isolation from the norms and social structure and gender roles within the community, which greatly influence women's vulnerability to violence.

Accordingly, violence against women encompasses but is not limited to the following:

- physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, within the general community, or in institutions, including: domestic abuse; rape; incest and child sexual abuse;
- Sexual harassment and intimidation at work and in the public sphere; commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography and trafficking;
- dowry related violence;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced and child marriages;

Activities such as pornography, prostitution, stripping, lap dancing, pole dancing, and table dancing are forms of commercial sexual exploitation. These activities have been shown to be harmful for the individual women involved, and have a negative impact on the position of all women through the objectification of women's bodies. This happens irrespective of whether individual women claim success or empowerment from the activity. It is essential to separate sexual activity from exploitative sexual activity. A sexual activity becomes sexual exploitation if it breaches a person's human right to dignity, equality, respect, and physical and mental wellbeing. It becomes commercial sexual exploitation when another person, or group of people, achieves financial gain or advancement through the activity.

Adoption of this definition does not deny or minimise, the fact that the woman may use violence, such as violence against a male partner, or violence in lesbian relationships. Although less common violence committed by women is no less serious and requires to be addressed. The fact that women may sometimes be involved in carrying out harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation, or pimping and brothel keeping, does not take away from the fact that these are acts of gender-based violence, which harms and/or disempowers women as a group, and benefits men as a group.

In relation to incest and child sexual abuse, it is acknowledged that both girls and boys are abused. However, violence against women requires a response which takes account of the gender specific

elements and the broader gender inequalities which women and girls face. It is important that any response to violence against women takes into account the large numbers of adult women who have experienced child sexual abuse.

Violence against women can and does have a significant impact on children and young people. This includes children and young people who are directly or indirectly harmed through domestic abuse of their mother, and there is evidence of links between domestic abuse and, emotional, physical and sexual abuse of children. It is important that children's services and child protection is informed by work on violence against women, and that responsibility for harm to children lies with the offender. In relation to domestic abuse, the safety of children is closely linked to the safety of the adult victim.

**APPENDIX II**

**DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Don't Ignore It...  
...They Can't

When you see or hear someone being abused call 999  
(no one needs to know who called)  
You could change their life  
[www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/domesticabuse](http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/domesticabuse)

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**DOMESTIC ABUSE: Physical, Emotional, Sexual - NO EXCUSE**

**Loves me... Abuses me... Blames me...**

For information or Support contact:

<b>South Ayrshire Women's Aid</b>	. . . . .	<b>01292 266482</b>
<b>Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline</b>	. . . . .	<b>0800 027 1234</b>
<b>Strathclyde Police Domestic Abuse Unit</b>	. . . . .	<b>01292 664159</b>