

Appendix 6

SUPPORTING PEOPLE TEAM GROWTH BID TEMPLATE

SUMMARY OF SERVICE

Domestic violence accounts for the highest percentage of violent crime in the UK (Cabinet Office, 2005). Its effects are well documented and varied. For many women and children, domestic violence results in homelessness, repeat victimisation, and for two women each week, death. Refuge's independent domestic violence advocacy service (IDVAS) offers intensive short to medium term support to women and children who are at high-risk of violence. The aim is to support high-risk women from crisis intervention, to risk assessment, and through court proceedings. We do this by providing individual support and safety planning: reducing repeat victimisation, improving confidence in the Criminal Justice System and, multi-agency working.

Domestic violence is proven to increase in frequency and severity over time, so it is essential that all women and children have access to immediate and sustained support through the legal system. Ensuring that cases are heard, and perpetrators are convicted, increases the safety of women and children. It also reduces homelessness caused by domestic violence, and saves lives.

We want to develop the capacity of Refuge's Kent IDVAS. Refuge has well-developed domestic violence services in the county and has built strong local support. We provide refuge accommodation and floating support services to women and their children as well as independent domestic violence advocacy services. The IDVA team is made up of three members of staff who are managed by our national domestic violence advocacy manager, Lynn Crockford. Current funding for all posts comes to an end in March 2009.

This application is seeking a total of £497,177 over three years to employ two independent domestic violence advocates and one IDVA coordinator and includes a proportion of the management costs of the national domestic violence advocacy manager.

EVIDENCE OF NEED

The legal system is often complex, intimidating and isolating for victims of domestic violence. They often lack adequate support networks and informed advice to pursue their case successfully. As victims are only treated as witnesses in criminal cases, no agency within the criminal justice system is obliged to keep them informed of the progress of the case. During this period women need increased protection, as the period of separation from the perpetrator is when the overwhelming majority of homicides take place. Many victims are pressurised by the perpetrator to withdraw their statement. Consequently, many criminal cases do not proceed. Cases also collapse because information that would help the prosecution remains undisclosed to the Crown Prosecution Service and court (such as the nature and extent of the violence, abuse towards children etc.).

A Home Office study in 2005 found that up to 35% of murders in the last five years were caused by domestic violence. It accounts for around a quarter of all recorded violent crime, and claims the lives of two women every week. It has the highest repeat victimisation of any crime – that is to say that it is rarely a one off event. The study concluded that effective advocacy services would increase the number of cases reaching court and would

decrease the rates of repeat victimisation. The report recommended advocacy involving intensive legal and other practical and emotional support to enable victims to support the prosecution. Advocates were cited as the key component in:

- Increasing a victim's sense of safety and confidence through both the criminal and civil legal system
- Reducing repeat homelessness
- Increasing prosecutions
- Reducing repeat victimisation
- Encouraging help-seeking and safety planning
- Increasing safety and assisting in emotional recovery
- Making savings to the public purse
- Reducing the number of children 'at risk'
- Increasing multi-agency working
- Helping national and local authorities to meet targets

Domestic violence in Kent

A Homeless Statistics Report for West and North Kent in 2002 illustrated how potentially life saving our work is for East Kent:

- West Kent Police -
 - 1,367 incidents reported between family members, including partners (1,058 of which were solely between partners)
 - 502 repeat abused women (457 of which involved the partner)
 - 294 perpetrators arrested (241 of which were the victims partner)
 - 138 perpetrators charged
- North Kent Police -
 - 1,766 incidents reported between family member, including partners (1,458 of which were solely between partners)
 - 652 repeat victims (611 of which involved the partner)
 - 403 perpetrators arrested (325 of which were the victims partner)
 - 189 perpetrators were charged

The statistics above highlight that Refuge IDVAS have an important role to play in the provision of specialist crisis intervention and support for women who have come into contact with the criminal justice system as victims of domestic violence. Independent advocacy, particularly when combined with a Multi-Agency Domestic Violence Conference (MARAC), is effective in reducing the level of both repeat victimisation and risk to victims.

Domestic violence and homelessness

The Cabinet Office records the number of households accepted as being homeless and having a priority need (usually children in the family, pregnancy or some form of vulnerability at local authority level). These figures often underestimate the real numbers of women who lose their homes due to domestic violence because many women who turn to family or friends as an immediate respite from violence often make an application as homeless (Shelter, 2000). In these cases, the recorded reason for the loss of home is *they could no longer stay*

with family or friends. Studies of homeless families over the years show how significant a problem domestic violence is.

Shelter's 2002 Homeless to Home study found domestic violence to be one of the biggest factors in homelessness. 38% of families using their Homeless to Home projects had lost their home through domestic violence. The study concluded that most women would remain in their homes if their security could be assured (Shelter, 2002). IDVA services can assist women to access home target hardening schemes and floating support services once the level of risk has been lowered.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Domestic violence remains a key concern to Kent County Council. Refuge's strategic and long-term challenges cut across the priorities of Kent Supporting People, Kent's Local Area Agreement, and The Vision for Kent (2006 – 2026). The Kent IDVA service will help the county meet the following local strategic objectives:

- The key aim of Kent Supporting People is 'to support vulnerable people to have a better quality of life by providing housing-related support services. The goal is to support people to live independently in Kent.
- Kent's Local Area Agreement and Local Public Service Agreement phase 2 (LPSA 2), 2008 – 11 stresses the importance of multi-agency partnerships to improve outcomes for the county including:
 - Making communities safer and stronger by ensuring people are safe in their homes from violence
 - Reducing crime and building confidence in the criminal justice system
 - Supporting people lead healthier lives and enjoy high quality services that meet their needs for health, care and wellbeing
 - Adopting a partnership approach in which communities work together with public services
 - Enjoying effective community leadership and a network of support systems
 - Adhering to the principles set out in the Kent Compact to create a framework for positive change and a proactive relationship between partners and the voluntary and community sectors
 - Supporting and developing a strong, inclusive and diverse voluntary and community sector in Kent, and widening the range of people active with voluntary and community organisations (VCOs)
 - Helping vulnerable people to help themselves and become active citizens in a community based on stable and independent families
 - Creating a wider awareness of the scope of the voluntary and community sector activities and their benefits to communities and individuals

Influencing policy

Refuge will continue to influence advocacy development on the national and local policy agenda. Our National Advocacy Manager and Policy Manager have already worked on numerous policy consultations, including recently the Ministry of Justice Probation and Integrated Domestic Abuse Programmes, Her Majesty's Court Service's *Domestic Violence Guide* and The Association of Chief Police Officers' (ACPO) *Guidance on Investigating Domestic Violence*. Through an expanded service, Refuge would be able to ensure that more women's voices are represented in government policy and legislation.

Refuge also works to raise awareness around domestic violence and the services available for victims. Our proactive communications team secure media coverage to achieve these aims. In 2007 we secured coverage to raise awareness of independent advocates and MARACs. Also, last year our advocacy services received coverage on BBC Dispatches and BBC News 24. With more staff Refuge would be able to increase this activity and enable more women to learn about the availability and effectiveness of advocacy services.

SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION

Our independent advocates intervene at the point of crisis for a woman i.e. just after a police call or upon attendance at A&E. Statistically, a woman is at highest risk of serious injury or death at this point, because the abuser feels like he has lost power and control over her. Should a woman make a decision to leave her perpetrator this doesn't mean the violence is over, most women and children continue to be harassed, intimidated or threatened by their abuser especially if they attempt to pursue legal remedies. The advocate works closely with the woman, advising her on complex issues such as criminal charges, non-molestation and occupation orders, immigration law and child contact orders. They also ensure that all the agencies involved in supporting a woman work together to present a robust case to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). In doing so, this has helped prevent the courts from underestimating the danger a woman is in. A common misunderstanding has been that the courts all too easily regard domestic violence incident as a 'one-off', and releasing the perpetrator on bail where he may go on to repeat the abuse, and in some cases kill.

The Kent independent advocacy team is located in its own office in Hythe. The service employs two independent advocates and a co-ordinator who operate the service across the county. The service currently supports 54 women on a rolling basis across East Kent. This equates to approximately 150 families per year. The majority of referrals come from the police. The service adopts best practice as promoted by the Home Office, and the independently accredited standards developed by Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA).

We expect the number of referrals to grow significantly as the Refuge team operates between six courts (Folkestone Magistrates Court, Ashford Magistrates Court, Dover Magistrates Court, Maidstone Crown Court, Canterbury Crown Court and Canterbury County Court) and our links with key partners become established.

The Advocates will:

- be fully CAADA trained
- carry out risk assessments on all women and children referred to the service or those victims that have directly approached the service
- carry out joint risk assessments with other specialist agencies, i.e. drug and alcohol agencies, BAME community organisations
- work alongside the woman to understand her needs and devise a support plan
- advocate on behalf of the victim within the following agencies; Crown Prosecution Service, courts, police, probation, housing, voluntary agencies such as refuges, counselling and outreach services and solicitors
- arrange referrals to refuge or emergency housing, where appropriate through UK Refuges Online
- provide support within the criminal and civil justice systems, including:
 - explain the working practices of the criminal and civil justice systems e.g. legal terminology and procedures, explanation on the role of judge, jury, prosecution and defence
 - attend court hearings or other appointments as appropriate

- keep track of what is happening in the victim's case and liaise with the Crown Prosecution Service and the court to report any breaches of bail, further evidence, court dates and police appointments
- advise on the type of civil remedies that are available, including basic information on non-molestation orders, occupation orders, child related orders and protection from harassment act orders

Referrals are made to the following local partners:

- Floating support - CASA & Refuge
- Other refuge and community domestic violence service providers
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Kent Police
- Surestart
- Homestart
- Alcohol services
- Social Services
- NCH – the children's charity
- Local hospitals

Partnership Work

The success of the service will rest on the multi-agency collaboration of relevant organisations to ensure the victim's safety. Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) have proven that a holistic multi-agency approach to domestic violence can reduce repeat victimisation, even among populations most at risk. The advocacy service will encourage the establishment of a MARAC system, using this proven inter-agency collaboration model to ensure the victim's safety and to effectively pursue cases through the legal system and to proactively manage risk. Refuge already works in collaboration with numerous voluntary agencies and statutory services across Kent. In addition, the proposal has received financial support from all five CDRP/CSUs and has secured office space in the Poultons Family Centre, Dover.

Within the advocacy service the advocates will be responsible for strengthening relationships, including those with:

- Police
- The Crown Prosecution Service
- Probation Service
- Health services
- Community law centres
- Community Safety Units
- Social Services departments
- Victim Support
- Witness Services
- Local family, community and women's centres
- Culturally specific services for BME women
- Floating support services and Homeless Services Unit
- Housing departments and local RSLs

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Our new outcomes framework is currently being developed. It mirrors the Supporting People framework, and will be finalised in autumn 2008. A copy will be sent to the Kent Supporting People Team. In the meantime, our outcomes are as follows:

- To gain commitment from key partner agencies to develop a co-ordinated and seamless response to high risk victims of domestic violence
- To increase the safety of women and children at high risk of serious injury from domestic violence, through intensive casework support, structured risk assessment and close multi-agency working
- To reduce repeat victimisation through a fully co-ordinated community response to women and children providing increased safety for the victim
- To reduce the number of domestic violence cases discontinued within the criminal justice system
- to ensure that the service is fully accessible and effective for all women

Monitoring and evaluation

The National Advocacy Manager has worked to establish a monitoring and evaluation system to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, from which to measure the impact of the service. Refuge uses the Modus Software for monitoring casework. This has been endorsed by CAADA and the University of Cardiff. This software captures key outcomes in crime reduction and enables collaborative outcome analysis with other national independent advocacy projects through the University of Cardiff.

We currently measure and report on:

- victim satisfaction and safety
- repeat victimisation
- decrease in the number of withdrawals of witness statements
- increased reporting of children at risk of harm from domestic violence
- attrition rates within the criminal justice system
- referral practices
- policies and service delivery of mainstream agencies
- equality of access

Refuge has strong culture of ensuring all its services are shaped by feedback from the service users. This project will operate within Refuge's policy on User Feedback and feedback will be regularly reported and analysed by the Advocacy Manager, supported by Refuge's Performance and Quality Manager.

TIMESCALES

Refuge Kent IDVAS key milestones and timescales for completion are as follows:

	Key Milestone	Target date	How will it be achieved?
1	Create effective working agreements with key partners to ensure fast response from the Refuge IDVA team for women experiencing high risk domestic violence	End of September 2008	Ensure that the Refuge Kent IDVAS has agreements in place with: Police Social Services Health – A&E – Royal Victoria Hospital in Folkestone and the Walk in Centre
2	Ensure that the Refuge Kent IDVAS are working at a maximum case load	Ongoing with results to be reported at the end of the financial year.	Line management/supervision to be undertaken by the National Advocacy Manager to ensure staff are fully trained and supported and therefore working effectively. The Refuge IDVA team to work to ensure that they are linking in with key referral agencies (as describes in Milestone 1).
3	Number of convictions – 75% of cases supported by our IDVAS will result in a conviction	Ongoing with results to be reported at the end of the financial year.	Refuge will aim to ensure that 75% of cases supported result in conviction. Refuge's IDVAS will work to achieve this by ensuring that IDVAS provide support to women from the moment they access our service through to a time where they no longer need the IDVA service. Also, by ensuring our IDVAs are linking up effectively with all key referral partners and attend all relevant multi-agency meetings and functions.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The table below shows the breakdown of where and how the funds from Supporting People will be used from 2009 to 2012. A three year budget is provided. We hope for a steady state longer term contract with Kent Supporting People.

Advocacy 3 year budget - outside of London based advocates	2 IDVAs	Co-ordinator	Total Y1 2009/10	Total Y2 2010/11	Total Y3 2011/12	Total for 3 years
Salaries	48,064	30,964	79,028	83,770	88,796	251,594
NI	5,768	3,716	9,483	10,052	10,656	30,191
Pension	2,403	1,548	3,951	4,188	4,440	12,580
Support Cost	12,316	6,158	18,473	19,582	20,757	58,812
Staff Costs	68,550	42,386	110,936	117,592	124,648	353,176
Other costs including training, stationary and printing, telephones and travel expenses*	16,575	8,287	24,862	26,354	27,935	79,152
Total Direct Cost	85,125	50,673	135,798	143,946	152,583	432,328
Management Cost	12,769	7,601	20,370	21,592	22,887	64,849
Total Costs per post	97,894	58,274	156,168	165,538	175,471	497,177

* full breakdown available upon request.

Kent & Medway
domestic violence
Strategy Group

**P.P.U., Area Operations Directorate, Kent Police Headquarters, Sutton Road,
Maidstone, Kent. ME15 9BZ
Tel: 01622-640455 Fax:01622-654749**

Kevin Prior
Supporting People Team
Kent County Council
Sessions House
Maidstone

18th August 2008

Dear Kevin

Re: Refuge Advocacy Service

I would like to register my support for the bid submitted by the Refuge Advocacy Service regarding their service in Kent.

This service provides valuable support to victims of domestic abuse, helping them to remain safe in their homes and the organisation is highly regarded and depended on by partner agencies.

Yours sincerely

Alison Gilmour
Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Co-ordinator

BP/
01303 853732
bob.porter@shepway.gov.uk
19 October 2007

Kevin Prior
Kent Supporting People Team
Room 4.02 Sessions House
County Hall, County Road
Maidstone
Kent, ME14 1XQ

Dear Kevin

Re: Refuge Advocacy Service

I am writing in support of the bid from Refuge for resources to establish an advocacy project in Shepway for women who have experienced domestic violence.

This is a service that would make a valuable contribution to our homelessness prevention work in Shepway, and support women to explore alternatives to the stress and trauma homelessness.

Shepway also has a significant numbers of homeless young people, some of whom have fled violent relationships or family backgrounds, and would benefit from access to advocacy services. The district's top priority for new supporting people funding remains supported housing for young people.

If you require any further assistance please let me know.

Yours Sincerely

Bob Porter
Housing Services Manager
Shepway District Council