

## Report to Safer Oxfordshire Partnership September 2025

### Domestic Abuse Strategic Board Annual Report 2024-2025

The Domestic Abuse Strategic Board is a statutory system wide partnership group responsible for providing strategic leadership for Domestic Abuse in Oxfordshire to deliver duties as set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

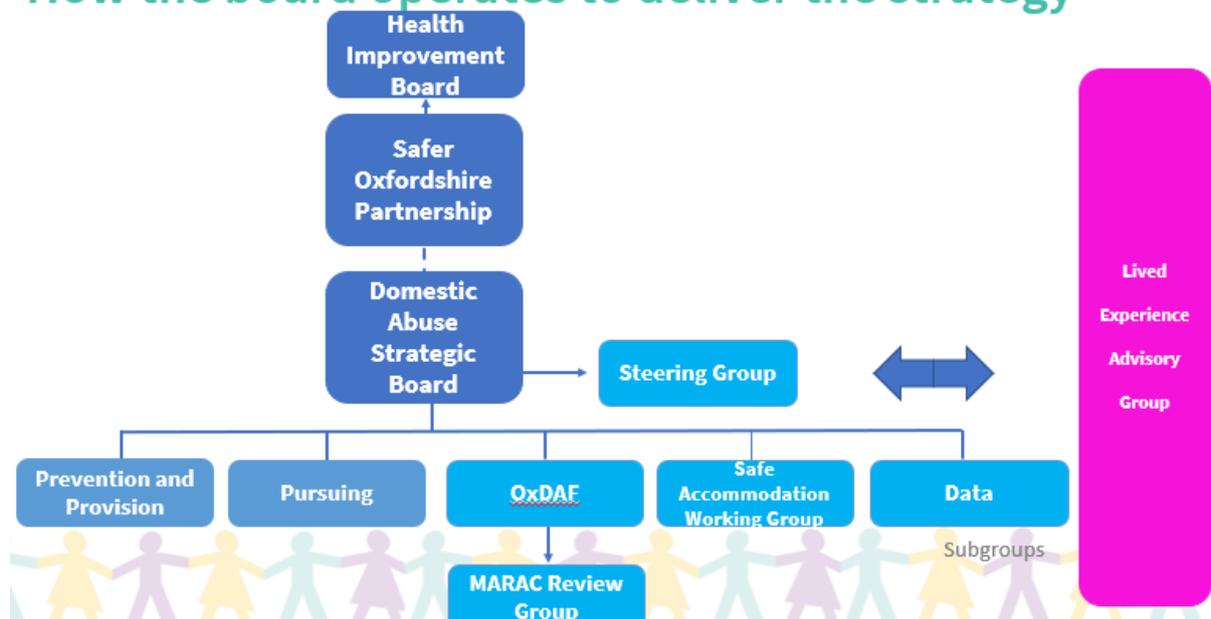
[Oxfordshire's Overarching Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-2025](#) is now reaching conclusion, and a needs assessment is underway to inform the 2026-2031 strategy.

The Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy was refreshed and published in Spring 2025. It outlines Oxfordshire's commitment to fulfilling statutory duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, building on the achievements of the 2021–2025 strategy.

This report presents a comprehensive overview of the Domestic Abuse Strategic Board's activities and progress in Oxfordshire for 2024-2025, highlighting key subgroup achievements and providing updates on timelines for the current needs assessment.

### Board Structure and chairing arrangements

#### How the board operates to deliver the strategy



The board is chaired by Ansaf Azhar Director of Public Health and delivers action plans through various subgroups which are chaired by partners across the system.

## **Key successes in 2024/2025**

- Seldom Heard Voices in Domestic Abuse Conference in January 2025, attended by over 130 delegates. The conference was centred on ensuring the voice of Lived Experience was amplified accessible through various sessions during the day.
- A key outcome of the conference was to commission a Domestic Abuse training needs assessment which is currently underway. Recommendations will be reviewed by the ODASB in December, to inform future commissioning opportunities and enhance the systems training offer.
- The LGBTQIA+ working group developed a report focussing on domestic abuse and the LGBTQIA+ community- a local review of Oxfordshire. Recommendations from the report have been included in the Training Needs Assessment.
- A Children and Young People deepdive was undertaken by the data subgroup of the ODASB. The exercise has resulted in a piece of partnership working with ODASB and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP). There is a joint piece of work ongoing to review pathways for Children and Young People affected by domestic abuse, with a focus on engaging them in the process.
- The prevention and provision subgroup supported the police review of the Operation Encompass programme and encouraged school sign-up to alerts and training provided by the Education Safeguarding team to enhance effectiveness of the initiative.

## **The Lived Experience Advisory Group**

A key success of the board is the valued contribution of the Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG).

The LEAG played a fundamental role in the success of the ODASB through:

- Sharing their lived experience and providing powerful messages to the conference audience, resulting in a training needs assessment
- Supporting the commissioning of the health needs assessment
- Key partners in the redevelopment of the safer accommodation strategy, including co-design of sessions
- Supporting key partners including the ODASB BOB ICB & Family Solutions Plus
- LEAG members present and contributing at all strategic and operational groups
- Contributed to an evaluation of the groups impact and role within the Board and subgroups, identifying best practise and areas for improvement to be taken forward

## **Children and Young People Consultations**

- The LEAG and SAFE! hosted four consultation sessions with Children and Young People to ensure that their voices are heard at a strategic level
- This included consultation with children impacted by Domestic Abuse at home, families experiencing Child and Adolescent on Parent Violence and Abuse, and young people who had experienced IPV/peer on peer abuse.
- A Voice of the child presentation was given at DA strategic board and Children's Services Managers meeting to share findings.

## **Subgroup Updates**

### **Safe Accommodation Working Group Activity – Chair Kerry Tydeman West Oxfordshire District Council**

In spring this year, the ODASB published a refreshed [Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy for 2025 – 2028](#) . It builds on work undertaken by the Safe Accommodation Working Group which has:-

- created a smoother and more efficient housing pathway for victims-survivors moving on from safe accommodation by building effective partnerships within the Oxfordshire system, including people with lived experience.
- identified and addressed areas of need for accommodation through mapping the provision of available accommodation across Oxfordshire.

Key priorities for the next three years include expanding access to diverse safe accommodation options, addressing gaps in provision, and embedding lived experience into decision-making.

### **Prevention and Provision Subgroup Activity – Chair Chloe Purcell SAFE!**

#### **LGBTQIA+**

The LGBTQIA+ working group developed a report focussing on domestic abuse and the LGBTQIA+ community- a local review of Oxfordshire. The report and draft recommendations were presented at the ODASB and the domestic abuse annual conference earlier this year and recommendations were adopted by the working group to address barriers and challenges faced by this community in accessing support. The report along with findings from the baseline services survey to explore service providers' training needs has been included in the ongoing Training Needs Assessment and Health Needs Assessment.

#### **Children and Young People**

Following the CYP deep dive presentation at the strategic board by the data subgroup, there was a recommendation to review the CYP pathways of support. The P&P group presented a draft pathway review proposal to the ODASB. This was the catalyst for partnership working between ODASB, OSCP and Children's Services to create a proposal for governance arrangements to move this piece of work forward

## **Operation Encompass**

The prevention and provision group discussed Op Encompass over several meetings and ensured that we had appropriate representation in the group, including police MASH colleagues, and Education Safeguarding team. Work was supported to feed into the police review of the system and encourage school sign-up to alerts, and to training provided by Education Safeguarding team. This also led to presentations at the Education Safeguarding Team conference.

## **Relationship Health Sex Education – schools survey**

The prevention and provision group contributed new questions to the 2025 school safeguarding survey in relation to domestic abuse and RSE provision in schools. The survey went live on 14<sup>th</sup> July and results will be available by 28<sup>th</sup> November. This will help highlight any gaps in relation to domestic abuse and RSE provision in schools.

## **BAMER project report**

Sundial centre presented findings from the 'BAMER' project review. The project was funded through the home office transformation fund and covered Thames Valley. It aimed to support people from ethnic minority communities in overcoming barriers to accessing services. Some of the outcomes of the project included:

Significant community reach and support in empowering women through advocacy and improved access to services for women from ethnic minority communities during the project.

## **Website**

A survey aimed at professionals and members of the public regarding the content of the Domestic Abuse web pages housed on the Oxfordshire County Council Website was undertaken in spring 2025. The analysis and options appraisal to update the current web offer is underway. Further updates will be brought to a future ODASB.

## **Pursuing Subgroup Activity – Chair Rachel Carter Thames Valley Police**

### **Family Courts**

The pursuing group has identified the lack of support for victim/survivor experiencing in the Family as a gap. The LEAG are undertaking a scoping exercise to benchmark other areas looking at what support is in place in Family Court with a view to understanding what is working well.

### **Clare's Law**

Clare's Law disclosures now sit with to the Harm Reduction Unit. Thames Valley Police have reported improvement of the timeliness of meeting timescales.

Links between the pursuing group and the Harm Reduction Unit in TVP, have been forged, helping the group to understand its remit and share widely with partners.

## **Multi Agency Risk Assessment**

The Medium Risk MARAC pathway has now been successfully embedded as business as usual following a comprehensive pilot and review process. The pathway was originally introduced to address the volume of inappropriate referrals into the main MARAC, and its reinstatement reflects strong engagement from Dedicated MARAC Officers and system partners. The MARAC Steering Group is preparing to sign off formal guidance to support stakeholders in making appropriate referrals and reducing misdirected cases. Approval to adopt the pathway as Business as Usual was sought through the MARAC Annual Report, which was presented to the Strategic Board, with members given the opportunity to comment through discussion. Thames Valley Police facilitated a series of workshops to ensure the pathway was locally responsive and refined accordingly.

## **Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Forum (OxDAF) - Chair Catherine Spring Branch Trust**

The Oxfordshire Domestic Partnership OxDAP has now transitioned into the Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Forum (OxDAF). The forum is an inclusive space for any stakeholder with an interest in domestic abuse to explore emerging themes, challenges, and opportunities for collaboration—with a clear escalation route into the Strategic Board where needed. The group is chaired by external partners, currently Catherine Spring from The Branch, who brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the role. A small splinter working group has also formed to develop a partnership approach to communications, with progress being reported into OxDAF to ensure alignment and shared ownership across the system.

## **Data Subgroup – Chair Clare Dines Oxfordshire County Council**

The work of the ODASB is informed by a quarterly data surveillance intelligence tool produced by the data subgroup and public health intelligence team. The data pack highlight areas of concern that may require deeper analysis and a mechanism to align data with strategic priorities, especially across subgroups like health, police, and social care.

### **The pack includes:**

- District-level breakdowns of DA indicators.
- Police-recorded domestic abuse data.
- Social care and health service interactions.
- National crime survey comparisons.
- Commentary from previous board meetings and data groups

## **Development and Refinement**

The data group keep the data tool under review and have improvements in the pipeline to enhance the usability of the data on offer.

## **ODASB Conference – Seldom Heard Voices in Domestic Abuse**

The Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse conference was held at Unipart House in January 2025, theme Seldom Heard Voices in Domestic Abuse. The conference was attended by almost 130 delegates from agencies, organisations and charities across Oxfordshire.

There were a range of speakers including from Oxfordshire's LEAG and the Domestic Abuse Commissioners office who explored topics related to:

- Children and young people
- Intersection of domestic abuse, rurality and old age
- Lived experiences of victims of domestic abuse and
- Domestic abuse in the LGBTQIA+ community

Further to reviewing themes identified at the conference the ODASB identified that it would be useful to undertake a training needs assessment in the county to analyse the training offer with a view to making recommendations to improve the current offer. This is underway and will be bought to the ODASB winter 2025.

## **Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment**

The needs assessment for domestic abuse is under development ensuring close collaboration with LEAG colleagues and system wide partners.

Various stakeholder workshops have been planned for autumn, including a dedicated professional's workshop and survey, and dedicated engagement with the LEAG to gather qualitative insights, as well as a strong focus on the data.

Once complete in Spring 2026, the end product will be a comprehensive report, accompanied by an easy to read digest that can be a public facing document. The needs assessment will inform a new strategy led by the OCC Public Health team in partnership with the ODSAB, rather than an external commissioner so we can really tailor it to meet our collective needs with tangible actions to take forward.

## **Commissioned training and champions network**

- Between September 2024 and September 2025, a total of 142 individuals became accredited ASC Domestic Abuse Champions, including 18 from the military community at RAF Brize Norton.
- Changes to SocialLed's training module structure have increased attendance and enabled the scheduling of webinars led by professional speakers

## **DRIVE – perpetrator programme**

Since January 2024 there have been 342 cases heard at the Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Panel. This resulted in 165 high-harm perpetrators allocated into the local DRIVE service provision, with 193 associated victim/survivors and 332 associated children. This is despite service referrals being paused from December 2024 – March 2025 whilst confirmation of 25/26 funding was communicated by the Home Office. Oxfordshire County Council continue to fund elements of the programme and wider work being undertaken by the OPCC and TVP, including a dedicated Drive Profile Researcher, a Power Bi Dashboard for MARAC and a Power Bi Dashboard to support effective management of DA perpetrators currently on bail.