

# Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Strategic Plan 26-28 - Draft for Consultation



**This is a draft document published for consultation purposes only. It has not yet been formally approved and may be amended following feedback received during the consultation process.**

**Please note: This document is a Strategic Overview rather than a standalone strategy. It sets out the borough's high level approach and priorities for tackling violence against women and girls.**



# What is Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)?

**Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) refers to violence and abuse that is directed at women and girls because of their gender, or which disproportionately affects them.**

This includes:

- Sexual violence, harassment and unwanted sexual behaviour
- Stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour
- Exploitation, including sexual and criminal exploitation
- Abuse and harassment in public spaces and the night time economy

VAWG can take place in public, private and online settings and can have serious physical, emotional and psychological impacts. It is often under reported and can affect how women and girls feel and move through public spaces. In Newham, VAWG remains a key concern, impacting how women and girls experience public spaces, particularly after dark.



# Introduction



**Violence Against Women and Girls remains a significant and persistent challenge in Newham, requiring a coordinated and sustained partnership response. VAWG sits at the centre of the Newham Safety Partnership Strategic Plan 2025 - 2028.**

Our approach focuses on:

- Preventing harm
- Improving safety in public spaces
- Strengthening the response to perpetrators
- Ensuring women and girls feel safer across the borough

VAWG is addressed through a coordinated partnership approach across Community Safety, Public Health, policing, licensing and the voluntary sector. This includes strengthened delivery of activities across public spaces, the night time economy and partnership enforcement.



## Purpose of this Overview

**This overview sets out how VAWG is addressed in Newham and how different strategies and services align.**

It is intended to:

- Provide a clear and accessible overview of the borough's approach
- Explain how key strategies and services work together
- Support transparency for residents and partners
- Act as a gateway to detailed strategies, delivery plans and partnership activity



## Strategic Context

**VAWG is embedded across a number of existing strategies and partnership priorities, reflecting the cross cutting nature of the issue.**

Key frameworks include:

- Newham Safety Partnership Strategic Plan 2025–2028
- Domestic Abuse Strategy 2026–2031
- Sex Work Strategy (10 year borough wide commitment)
- Delivery of Women's Safety Action Plan by multi-agencies

These frameworks provide the overall strategic direction for VAWG activity and ensure prevention, enforcement and support are aligned across the borough. Together, these frameworks ensure a consistent and coordinated approach across prevention, enforcement and support.

\* The Domestic Abuse Strategy 2026–2031 and borough wide Sex Work Strategy are in the process of being made publicly available.



# VAWG Data and Trends

Non domestic VAWG offences increased between June 2025 and May 2026. While this highlights ongoing challenges, it may also reflect improved reporting, with more women feeling empowered and confident to report offences that may previously have gone unreported. The data helps identify trends, target resources and inform prevention and enforcement activity across the borough.



2,348 offences  
recorded between  
Jun 2025 - May 2026



68.8% increase  
compared to  
previous 12 months



2 in 3 women feel  
unsafe walking alone  
after dark in  
Newham



**424** Public Order  
Offences

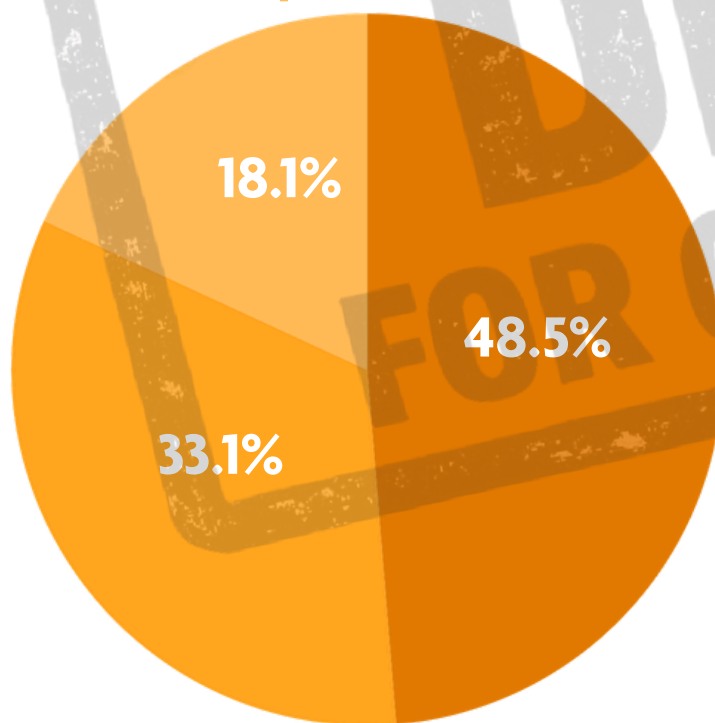


**1,319** Violence Against  
The Person



**776** Sexual Offences

Note. Excludes 9 offences in other categories



## Key Insight

- Approximately one in six VAWG offences involved stalking or harassment (16%).
- Sexual offences (excluding rape) accounted for 21.5% of all VAWG offences, the largest offence category.
- Stratford Olympic Park, Stratford and Plaistow South recorded the highest levels of VAWG offences, with increases of over 40% compared with the previous year.

## This data is used to:

- Target hotspot locations
- Shape partnership activity
- Prioritise prevention and enforcement work

## You Said

Feedback from residents and consultation activity highlights consistent concerns around safety, visibility and behaviour in public spaces

Women feel unsafe in public spaces, particularly after dark

Harassment, intimidation and inappropriate behaviour are a key concern

There is not enough visible police and enforcement presence

Anti social behaviour, drug use and loitering make areas feel unsafe

Certain high streets and locations feel unsafe, particularly where groups gather or there is low footfall

Poor lighting, lack of CCTV and environmental issues contribute to feeling unsafe

More needs to be done to educate and challenge behaviour

More awareness and support is needed for women



## We Listened

Our response has focused on targeted enforcement, environmental improvements and prevention activity across the borough

Targeted enforcement activity in key locations including Stratford, East Ham and High Street North

Delivery of a Public Space Protection Order to address street harassment and unsafe behaviour

Intelligence led partnership activity through the Newham Integrated Community Enforcement (NICE) model and local action plans

Targeted work to address anti social behaviour, drug related harm and street based issues

School based programmes, bystander training and awareness activity to challenge harmful behaviour

Borough wide campaigns, Walk and Talk activity and community engagement to improve awareness and confidence

Environmental improvements through CCTV expansion, Environmental Visual Audits and night audits to improve visibility and safety

# Our Approach

The borough's response to VAWG is structured around five connected areas of work:

## Prevention and Early Intervention

Addressing root causes through education and behaviour change

## Community Engagement, Listening and Understanding

Improving confidence and strengthening reporting pathways

## Partnership Delivery and Coordination

Ensuring a consistent and joined up response across agencies

## Public Space and Night Time Economy Safety

Creating safer environments through targeted interventions

## Perpetrator Focus and Enforcement

Disrupting offending and addressing repeat behaviour

These areas work together to deliver a coordinated system response to reduce harm and improve safety.





# Prevention and Early Intervention

**Prevention activity focuses on addressing the root causes of VAWG through education, early engagement and behaviour change.**

- Delivery of school based programmes on consent, boundaries and healthy relationships
- Theatre based performances in secondary schools focused on misogyny and VAWG
- Promotion of bystander awareness to support residents in recognising and safely responding to harassment
- Community Safety Enforcement and ASB Officers trained in bystander intervention to support safer responses to incidents in public spaces
- Free VAWG training opportunities for residents promoted through the Newham Women's Safety webpage to increase awareness and confidence
- Development of training for staff and partners on healthy masculinity and challenging harmful behaviour (delivery options under review)
- Organisational Learning Team delivering training to first responders on achieving best evidence with victims and suspects.
- Reviews of incidents (including Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews) to identify lessons learned.
- MPS Phase 2 "New Met for London" (NMfL) training rolled out across all ranks, focused on values, standards and accountability.

This work supports increased awareness, challenges harmful attitudes and contributes to long term behavioural change.



# Community Engagement, Listening and Understanding

**Community engagement and listening activity improves awareness, confidence and access to support, ensuring activity is shaped by resident experience.**

Borough wide campaigns raise awareness of VAWG, increase visibility of support and engage residents across the borough.

- International Women's Day activity, including the Shero campaign with 44 nominations and a multi agency event in Stratford
- 16 Days of Activism and White Ribbon campaign with 37 events delivered, over 250 residents engaged and 77 pledges recorded
- Police-led initiative offering women walks with officers to discuss local safety concerns and identify areas where they feel unsafe.
- Engagement with sex workers via third sector organisations to understand concerns and provide support.
- Engagement with faith and community groups through a dedicated officer to address concerns and provide support.

This work improves awareness, challenges harmful behaviour and increases confidence in reporting.





# Partnership Delivery and Coordination

VAWG activity in Newham is delivered through a coordinated partnership system, guided by shared principles and commitments.

## Our Principles:

- **Public Health Approach** – Focus on early intervention, prevention and the wider drivers of crime and safety
- **Contextual Safeguarding** – Taking a whole system, trauma informed approach to safeguarding across all environments
- **Resident Involvement** – Working with communities to understand local priorities and shape responses
- **Collaboration** – Sharing data, intelligence and working jointly across agencies to deliver outcomes
- **Supporting Victims** – Strengthening support, reducing repeat victimisation and recognising complex needs

## How the system works:

- Strategic direction is set through the Newham Safety Partnership
- Delivery is coordinated through the Women's Safety Action Plan
- Data and community insight inform priorities and activity
- Partners across Community Safety, Public Health, police and the voluntary sector deliver a coordinated response
- Regular Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to identify victims early, coordinate safeguarding and pursue offenders.
- Newham Integrated Community Enforcement (NICE) intelligence meetings used to identify and task resourcing in high-risk locations



# Public Space and Night Time Economy

Improving safety in public spaces and the night time economy remains a key priority.

- Licensing visits to promote women's safety measures, including compliance checks across licensed premises
- Ask for Angela promoted across licensed premises, with most venues demonstrating good awareness and guidance provided where improvements were required
- Anti spiking awareness activity delivered across the night time economy and secondary investigations of spiking allegations in licensed venues.
- Joint Council and Police deployments in the night time economy, including use of a mobile police station in Stratford to support women to get home safely
- Targeted patrols delivered through town centre action plans in Stratford, East Ham and Green Street
- Activity coordinated through Safer Stratford, Safer East Ham and Safer Beckton partnerships
- Engagement with businesses and partners to improve staff awareness and response to harassment and vulnerability
- Dedicated VAWG assets deployed at large events (concerts, festivals, sporting fixtures, conventions) for fast-time response and prevention.
- Op Vigilant / Op Verona: plain-clothes and uniform deployments in night-time economy hotspots, using behavioural detection to challenge predatory behaviour early.
- Night-time economy venues and large events introducing their own Safe Spaces with trained welfare officers.
- 24/7 CCTV coverage with trained operators identifying offenders and potential victims for fast-time prevention and response.







There are currently no Sexual Entertainment Venues operating in the borough.

#### Public Space Protection Order (PSPO):

- Approved by Cabinet in March 2026
- Introduces enforcement powers to address street harassment and unsafe behaviour in public spaces
- In the process of preparing signage for borough wide installation
- Supported by a borough wide communications campaign to raise awareness and deter offending

#### Impact:

- Compliance activity shows the majority of licensed premises demonstrate good awareness of women's safety measures
- Mobile police station deployments in Stratford have supported women in the night time economy, providing visible reassurance and practical support
- Joint patrols across key locations have increased visibility and enabled faster response to issues



# Perpetrator Focus and Enforcement

Alongside enforcement, work continues to address perpetrator behaviour and reduce reoffending. This work supports the Newham Safety Partnership priority to reduce reoffending and strengthen the management of high risk offenders.

- Two Respect accredited programmes (CIFA and Drive) operating in the borough
- Work with partners to strengthen use of enforcement tools and disruption activity
- Community Safety Audit pilot in development, working with community partners.
- Work is underway to strengthen partnership oversight of high risk offenders, including improved tasking, intelligence sharing and use of disruption and civil orders
- Use of protective tools such as Domestic Violence Protection Notices, Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Clare's Law disclosures is being strengthened to improve safeguarding and manage risk
- The Metropolitan Police manage a cohort of the highest risk VAWG offenders across the BCU, with individuals subject to enhanced monitoring, enforcement and disruption activity to reduce reoffending
- V100 offenders: identification of the top 100 VAWG offenders in the borough, with control measures applied to stop behaviours and bring them to justice
- Use of Live Facial Recognition (LFR) and other technology such as risk terrain modelling
- Digital investigators trained in the investigation of online offences
- Use of Sarah's Law disclosures

This strengthens the borough's ability to manage risk, disrupt offending and reduce reoffending.





# Outcomes and Impact

**This work is driving measurable improvements in safety, confidence and partnership effectiveness.**

- 130 school sessions delivered, reaching 4,606 pupils across primary and secondary schools
- 18 theatre performances delivered, engaging 2,970 students on misogyny and VAWG
- 12 community engagement stalls delivered, with over 700 residents directly engaged
- Over 2,000 information materials distributed to improve awareness and access to support
- 37 campaign events delivered during 16 Days of Activism, with over 250 residents engaged
- Borough wide safety survey launched with around 200 responses in the first quarter

**Police Outcomes (May 2025 to June 2026)**

- Approximately 209 positive outcomes achieved for non domestic abuse VAWG offences.

Positive outcomes represent cases where police have taken formal action against an offender, such as a charge, caution, community resolution or other criminal justice outcome.

**Positive outcomes included:**

- 124 for assault with injury offences
- 78 for stalking offences
- 31 for assault offences

## Impact

- Increased reporting and intelligence is enabling more targeted, intelligence led enforcement in hotspot locations including Stratford and East Ham
- Improved visibility of enforcement and partnership activity is strengthening public confidence and reassurance
- Prevention and education activity is increasing awareness of VAWG and supporting sustained behavioural change
- Strengthened partnership working is improving the identification of risk, coordinated response and disruption of offending

Performance monitoring is being strengthened to track outcomes over time, including reporting, enforcement activity, engagement and perceptions of safety.

# Next Steps

The borough will continue to strengthen its response through the following priority actions:

- Continued engagement with women and girls through focus groups, surveys, StreetSafe and Walk and Talk activity to inform priorities
- Delivery of Environmental Visual Audits and night audits to identify further improvements in hotspot locations
- Targeted delivery of the Open Spaces Action Plan to improve safety and tackle offending behaviour
- Strengthening partnership working with organisations supporting vulnerable women and girls, improving access and signposting to specialist services
- Increased engagement with faith groups, voluntary sector partners and marginalised communities to improve awareness and reach
- Strengthening early intervention and prevention activity to address the root causes of VAWG
- Enhancing support for victims and survivors, including those with complex support needs and protected characteristics
- Continued work with businesses and partners to improve safety in the night time economy
- Increasing awareness of transport safety and advice to support safer journeys
- Delivery of Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews (DARDRs) in line with statutory guidance, ensuring learning and recommendations are implemented across agencies
- Develop and deliver a borough wide awareness campaign to promote the Street Harassment PSPO as well as a new criminal offence which came into force on 1st April 2026 which tackles Street Harassment
- Continue targeted high visibility patrols in identified hotspot locations





## Summary

VAWG in Newham is addressed through a coordinated partnership approach, bringing together prevention, enforcement, engagement and support to respond to the needs of women and girls across the borough.

This approach is enabling more targeted activity in public spaces, strengthening the management of perpetrators and increasing awareness and confidence through engagement and campaigns.

Through continued partnership working, data and intelligence led activity, and a focus on prevention and enforcement, this work aims to reduce harm, improve safety and strengthen confidence for women and girls across Newham.



**DRAFT**  
**FOR CONSULTATION**