

Thurrock Housing Service

Housing Safeguarding Performance Comparison Report

1st April 2015 - 31st March 2016

1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017

1st April 2017- 31st March 2018

'Domestic Abuse: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.'

1.0 Introduction

The Housing Safeguarding (HS) Team work with reports of domestic abuse (DA), sexual abuse (SA), honour based crimes and forced marriage. The team began in 1st July 2015 with the Sanctuary Scheme being brought in-house from the provider Thurrock Women's Aid. As a result of referrals for DA casework, the team began to record the details of these cases in April 2015. As the team have been in existence for over three years, this report has been produced to highlight the evolution in the way the team now functions within the housing service.

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was introduced to Children's Social Care in 2014 and the HS Team became a core member. The team is also a core member of the Thurrock Multi Agency Risk Assessment Group (MARAC).

The team also work with internal partners within the Housing Options Team to carry out risk assessments for those who approach the service as homeless applicants who are survivors. The Sanctuary Scheme is a method of homelessness prevention, offering additional security measures to allow survivors to remain at home should they wish.

The team have oversight of the refuge contract which is currently provided by Changing Pathways. The contract will be renewed once it expires in January 2019. At this time the Floating Support service which is a part of the contract, will be brought into the Thurrock Housing Safeguarding Team. The plans for the team going forward are to prevent homelessness alongside the current role of integrating refuge leavers back into general needs accommodation.

The HS team are core members of the South Essex Domestic Abuse Hub with partners from Basildon, Brentwood, Tendring, Castle Point and Rochford.

This report draws on the definitions and categories recognised by the professionals and practitioners who form the Thurrock Violence Against Women and Girls Group (VAWG).

There are 10, 038 council owned properties in Thurrock and of these 904 are leasehold properties sold through the Right-To-Buy process.

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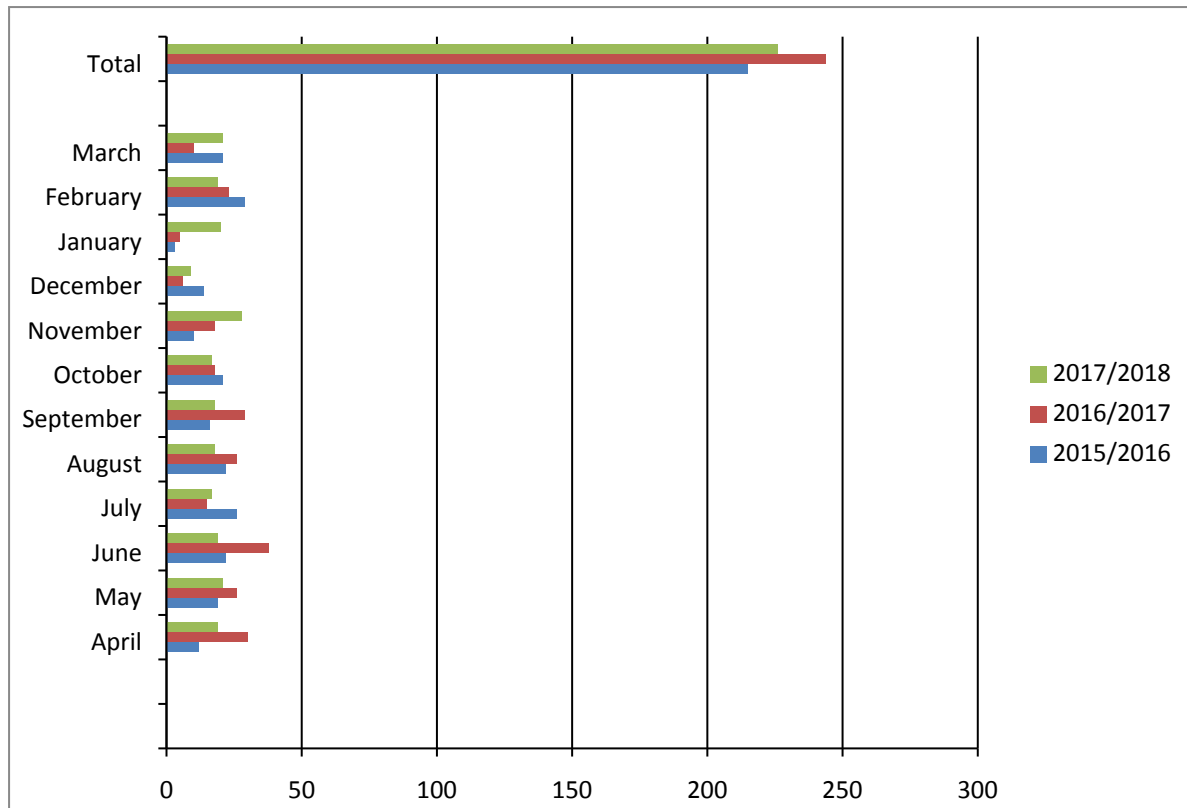
2.0 Case Numbers

During the three years from April 2015 to March 2018 the team have assisted 685 survivors:

2.1 The following table shows the case numbers over the period of this report (see below cases shown by month and year):

Case Numbers	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
April	12	30	19
May	19	26	21
June	22	38	19
July	26	15	17
August	22	26	18
September	16	29	18
October	21	18	17
November	10	18	28
December	14	6	9
January	3	5	20
February	29	23	19
March	21	10	21
Total	215	244	226

2.2 The spike in June 2016 coincided with the Euro 16 football tournament and England lost their final game on 27th June. The spike in the month of February 2017 is a peak which takes place every year and follows Christmas holidays and the month of January, when family finances are under pressure. The average number of cases the team receive on a monthly basis is 19.

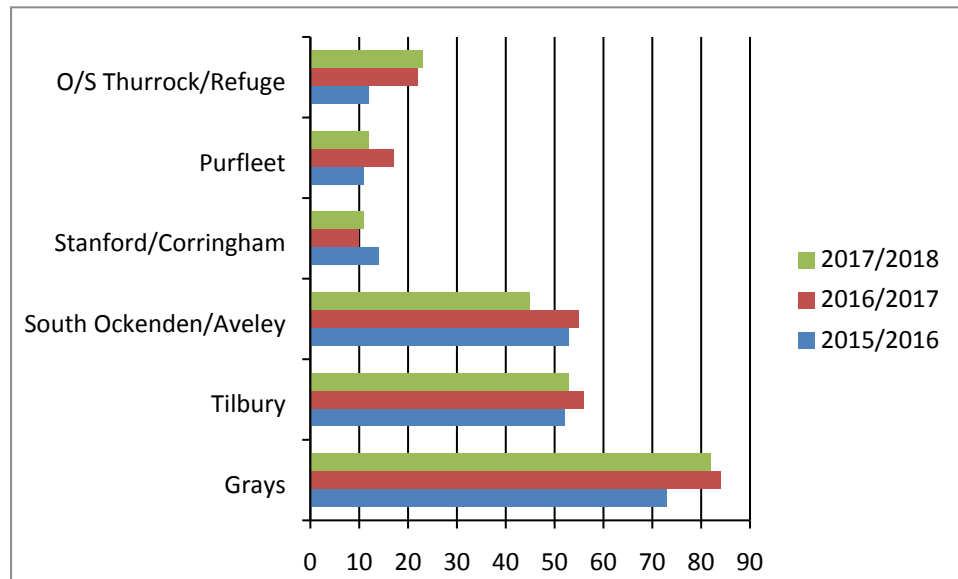


2.3 Three areas in Thurrock have consistently been identified as having the most number of disclosures of abuse: Grays 34%, Tilbury 23%, and South Ockenden /Aveley 22 %. The survivors who fled from outside the Thurrock borders have continued to increase over the three year period. The number has doubled and represents 8% of disclosures. The areas of Purfleet, Stanford Le Hope, Corringham and Chafford are mostly privately owned or rented and these areas have a comparatively low number of survivors accessing the service.

The following diagrams show cases broken down by location over the period 1 April 2015 to 31st March 2018:

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Area	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Grays	73	84	82
Tilbury	52	56	53
South Ockenden/Aveley	53	55	45
Stanford/Corringham	14	10	11
Purfleet	11	17	12
O/S Thurrock/Refuge	12	22	23
Total	215	244	226



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2.4 Cases by sexual orientation

The Housing Safeguarding Team has seen a marked increase in reports of domestic abuse from male survivors. During the year 2017/2018 a male graduate trainee was working within the team and this coincided with a steep rise in the number of disclosures from male survivors. The team have also received a disclosure from the LGBT+ community.

Case No. by sexual orientation	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Female	210	240	210
Male	5	4	15
LGBT+	0	0	1
Total	215	244	226

2.5 Cases by category

The following diagram show reports to Housing Safeguarding broken down by category of case. The highest category is referrals from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the team only record the enquiries with which the team are involved. Although, they do respond to all MASH enquiries, they only record the cases open to the team. This is also replicated in the MARAC casework.

Category	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
MARAC	60	69	64
MASH	70	60	77
Casework	25	43	35
Sanctuary Scheme	60	72	50
Total	215	244	226

3.0 Outcomes and actions

The Housing Safeguarding Team completed risk assessments in 100% of the cases referred to them. The team received a total of 7 sexual abuse cases in 2017/2018, which represents 3% of all cases. The team do not utilise Domestic Abuse Stalking and Honour-Based (DASH) risk assessments for measuring levels of risk in sexual abuse cases, we use the South Essex Rape Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC) referral form which is more specific to the level of risk to this particular client group.

The target hardening through the Sanctuary Scheme has fluctuated and there are fewer cases in the last financial year than the previous two years. It is possible that this is because there were more residents who wished to move rather than remain at the family home.

In the two previous years of 2015 to 2017 the team were carrying out risk assessments on behalf of the homeless team, however due to a lack of resources this function could not be offered from 2017/2018. It is anticipated that this function will be carried out by the Floating Support Service (FFS) when it comes back 'in house' from 31st January 2019. A further function provided by the FFS will be homeless prevention delivered by working with DA survivors threatened with homelessness. The key component of the role will continue to be resettling survivors into accommodation after they leave refuge.