

## Leeds Women's Aid research into the accessibility of domestic violence support in Leeds for LGBT+ people

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## About this research

Leeds Women's Aid (LWA) currently provides community based support and emergency refuge accommodation for women and children affected by domestic violence, and women who have been trafficked.

With the recognition that LGBT+ people are proportionately not engaged in our services, LWA is currently examining its practice, and is working towards ensuring its services are accessible, inclusive and appropriate for LGBT+ people in Leeds.

While direct comparison of prevalence rates of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DV & A) between same sex and heterosexual relationships is difficult to establish, the literature does suggest that the rates of DV & A between these populations are similar.<sup>1</sup> Although the research on experiences of DV & A amongst transgender people is limited, the available evidence suggests that for transgender people experience DV & A in relationships at rates higher than the rest of the population<sup>2</sup>

This work builds on research undertaken by LWA in 2014 'An enquiry into LGBT Domestic Violence in Leeds', which comprised a literature review on DV & A amongst LGBT+ people, and conducted questionnaires and focus groups to better understand the domestic violence experiences of this client group, and what helps and hinders them in accessing effective support.

Key findings from the initial research pointed to the need for further consultation with LGBT+ people in Leeds on accessibility of services and on what DV & A support provision LGBT+ people in Leeds want to see in the city.

## Methodology

In 2016 we carried out another survey to find out what kinds of services and support LGBT+ people in Leeds were accessing; what their experience of this has been; what they would like to see available, and what prevents them from accessing support around DV & A experiences. This survey did not aim to collect data from respondents on how their gender or sexuality impacted on their domestic violence experiences, or detailed data on these experiences. It also does not attempt to evidence detailed research on the subject, there is a clear for more detailed research It is small snapshot of the views, perceptions and understandings of LGBT+ people.

The survey was circulated amongst the networks of LGBT+, DV & A, mental health and community organisations in Leeds, promoted through social media channels and paper versions were distributed through outreach by LWA staff at Leeds Pride 2016. Access to the online survey was provided for three months.

Due to the fact that the survey was on-line and people attending Pride received paper copies, we cannot state accurately how many people live in Leeds, or even have been to Leeds.

107 people completed the survey, the majority completing it online. Out of the 107 that completed it, 94 were useable responses. All questions were optional and the

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<sup>1</sup>Richards, Noret, Rivers (2003), 'Violence & Abuse in Same-Sex Relationships: A Review of Literature', York St John College Social Inclusion & Diversity Paper No 5 Research into Practice, Commissioned by Yorkshire MESMAC

<sup>2</sup>Roch, Morton, Ritchie (2010) Out of sight, out of mind: Transgender People's Experiences of Domestic Abuse, Scottish Transgender Alliance

respondents were able to proceed through the survey and skip questions they did not wish to answer.

This research was also informed by conversations with key people who work within LGBT+ communities in Leeds.

## Key findings

### Experiences of DV & A amongst respondents

- Over half of the respondents answered 'Yes' (61%) to experiencing DV & A.
- Emotional and psychological abuse was the most frequently reported types of abuse from respondents. 96% reported that they experienced emotional abuse, and 80% of respondents reported psychological abuse.
- Although the sample is small, people whose gender was not the same as assigned to them at birth, and non-binary people are overrepresented regarding experiences of abuse, and particularly experiences of physical and sexual abuse.

### Seeking support

- Over half (63%) of respondents who identified as DV & A said that they did seek support. The survey did not ask respondents at what point they sought support.
- The most frequently reported sources of support respondents accessed were family and friends. Over half of the respondents said they sought support from family (55%) and friends (63%). Support from counsellors and therapists were the next most frequent sources of support for respondents (44%).
- The proportion of respondents who sought support from DV & A services was very low. Only one respondent sought support from a general domestic violence helpline, and only one respondent sought support from LGBT specialist domestic violence helpline (Broken Rainbow/Gallop).
- Four respondents accessed support through Yorkshire MESMAC, this indicates that established and local LGBT+ organisations are valuable sources of support for the LGBT+ community.

### Barriers to accessing support

- The majority of respondents who did not access support (59%) reported that it was because they did not recognise the abuse. The next most frequently given reason for not accessing support was that they were not ready to access help (43%). Following that, feelings of shame also prevented many from accessing support (40%)
- A significant number of respondents with experience DV & A (18) reported that they did not know which services to access; interestingly 64% of survey respondents who said they have not experienced DV & A also said that they or a friend may not access support because they would not know what services to access.
- Fear of experiencing discrimination from services has contributed to LGBT+ people who answered 'Yes' or 'Unsure' to experiencing DV & A from accessing support. 22% of these respondents thought that services would not have the cultural understanding of their experiences or needs, and 18% of these respondents thought that they would experience homophobia from

these services, and three respondents thought that they would experience transphobia. Amongst respondents who reported no experience of DV & A, 45% said fear of experiencing homophobia from services might prevent them or a friend from seeking support there.

- Respondents who have both experienced DV & A and those who have, not said that they had heard negative things about DV & A support services, 13% and 22% respectively.
- 25% of all respondents (both those who have and have not experienced DV & A) said they were worried that they would not be believed by services. There were a couple of comments that expressed concern that service providers would not take abuse between women seriously. One respondent said that when accessing treatment for a third time from a healthcare provider for injuries sustained from his violent partner he was told to stop wasting their time and to 'sort it out' himself. Another respondent said that despite reporting his violent partner to the police they did not take any action.
- For those who said that they thought their gender would exclude them from accessing these services two were cisgendered men, one was a trans man, one was a trans woman, one was non binary gender, one was a non binary lesbian, one was a queer woman, and two were non binary. This is a significant finding as it indicates that trans and non-binary people believe there is no formal support available to them.

### **Service preference**

- There was strong preference for accessing LGBT counselling services with a domestic violence specialisation, LGBT domestic violence information packs, and an LGBT domestic violence support worker.
- The services that respondents indicated they were less likely to access were Specialist LGBT Domestic Violence Police Officer, and LGBT refuge accommodation.

### **Key areas for action and development**

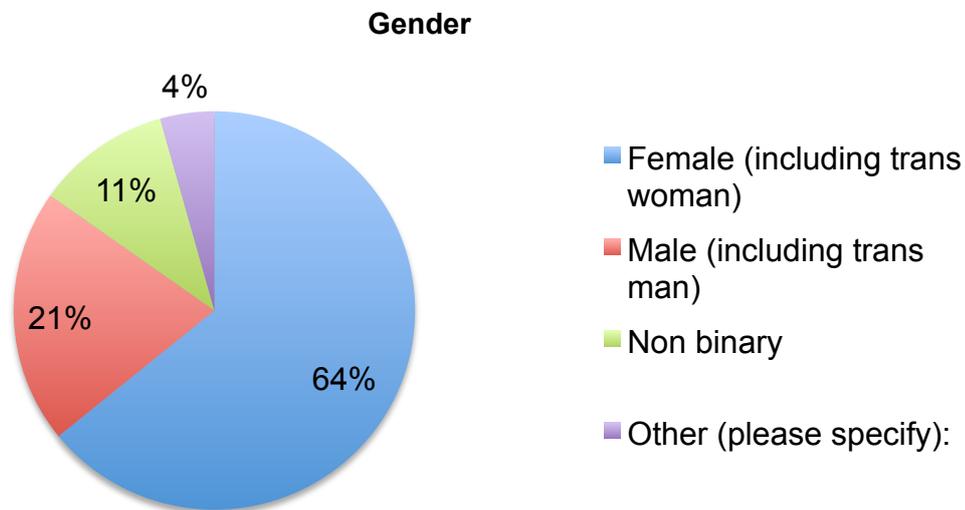
- Provision of specialised LGBT+ support that responds to community needs
- Training across the workforce on how to support LGBT+ clients, challenging discrimination and misinformation within agencies and for agencies to review their practice of working with LGBT+ clients
- Ensuring the inclusion of trans and non-binary people in DV & A support services. The research indicates that trans and non binary people do not feel able to access domestic violence support services because of the fear of experiencing transphobia from these services or because they think their 'gender might exclude them from these services'.
- Providing clearer signposting to DV & A services for LGBT+ people and clearly communicating to LGBT+ communities which services are open to them. The lack of clear signposting for LGBT+ people to available support and services around DV & A is a significant barrier to accessing support. The research found that for over half of survey respondents not knowing which services to go to might prevent/or have prevented them from accessing help for DV & A

- Campaigning to raise awareness of DV & A among LGBT+ people and communities and providing LGBT+ domestic violence information packs and resources. The research showed that feelings of shame, not recognising the abuse, and not feeling ready to access help were significant barriers to LGBT+ people in gaining necessary support. This points to the need for educational community work to be done with LGBT+ communities in Leeds to increase awareness of experiences of domestic violence and to highlight places where people can access support.
- This survey indicates a perception in the LGBT+ community of a lack of joined up working between DV & A agencies in Leeds and LGBT+ organisations and groups who have relationships with the LGBT+ community.

## Demographics

### Gender

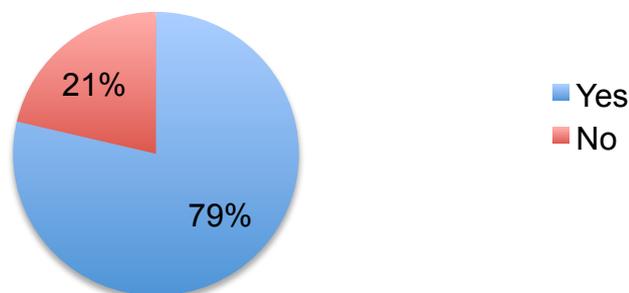
Most respondents to the survey were women. Women accounted for 64% of responses, men accounted for 21% and non-binary 11%. Among the category 'other' respondents reported being 'demiboy', 'non-binary lesbian', 'questioning'.



## Trans status

79% of respondents reported that their gender was the same as the gender they were assigned at birth. 89 people answered this question.

### Is your gender the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?



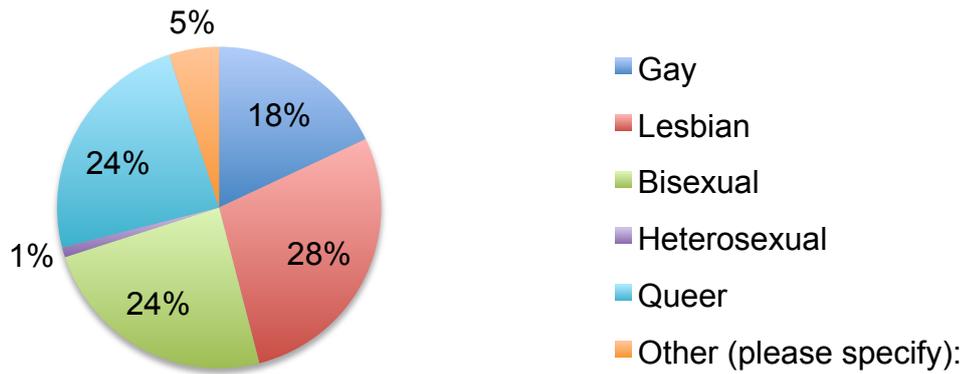
There are complex and multiple understandings of gender amongst survey respondents. While 19 people responded that their gender was not the same as the gender they were assigned at birth, 30 people understood themselves within the following categories shown in table below, with some respondents choosing multiple categories.

| Do you consider yourself to be within any of the following categories? (you can tick more than one if you wish) |                   |                |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choice   | Response Per cent | Response Total |
| 1   FTM / trans man   | 6.7%              | 2              |
| 2   MTF / trans woman   | 13.3%             | 4              |
| 3   Intersex person   | 0.0%              | 0              |
| 4   Androgyne / polygender / genderqueer person   | 43.3%             | 13             |
| 5   Cross-dressing / transvestite person  | 6.7%              | 2              |
| 6   Other type of gender variant person   | 26.7%             | 8              |
| 7   Other (please specify):   | 16.7%             | 5              |

## Sexuality

Distribution in terms of sexuality was spread fairly evenly across LGBTQ identities. More respondents identified as lesbian than any other sexuality (28%), Bisexual and Queer were the next most frequent sexualities reported (24%). It is significant that almost a quarter of respondents identified their sexuality as Queer as Queer is not a regularly monitored sexuality. Of those that responded 'Other' the majority specified 'Pansexual' (4/5) and one 'Asexual'.

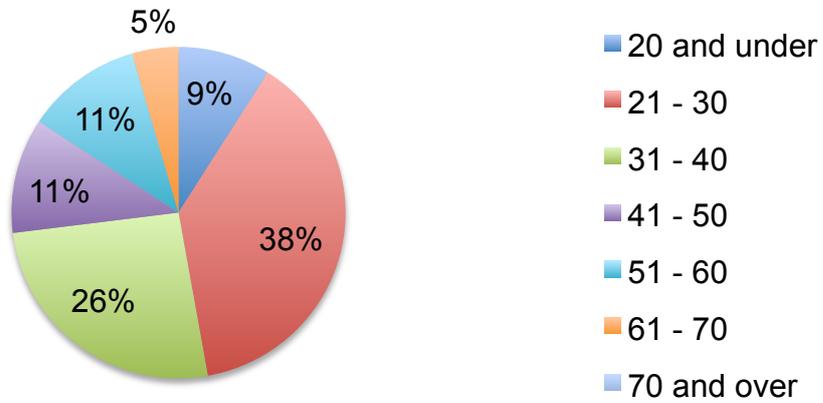
### Sexuality



### Age

Respondents between the ages 21-30 were the most represented group (38%), following that people between 31-40 were the next largest age group (26%).

### Age



## Ethnicity

There was very little diversity in the ethnicity of respondents. The overwhelming majority of respondent were white. Over 90% of respondents were White background.

| Ethnicity     |  |                |
|---------------|--|----------------|
| Answer Choice | Response Percent   | Response Total |
| 1             | White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British                      | 82.2% 74       |
| 2             | White Irish  | 6.7% 6         |
| 3             | White Gypsy or Irish Traveller   | 1.1% 1         |
| 4             | White European   | 4.4% 4         |
| 5             | Any other White background, please describe in comments                  | 1.1% 1         |
| 6             | White and Black Caribbean  | 0.0% 0         |
| 7             | White and Black African  | 1.1% 1         |
| 8             | White and Asian  | 2.2% 2         |
| 9             | Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, please describe in comment   | 1.1% 1         |
| 10            | Asian/British Asian Indian   | 0.0% 0         |
| 11            | Asian/British Asian Pakistani  | 0.0% 0         |
| 12            | Asian/British Asian Bangladeshi  | 0.0% 0         |
| 13            | Asian/British Asian Chinese  | 0.0% 0         |
| 14            | Any other Asian background, please describe in comment                   | 0.0% 0         |
| 15            | African  | 1.1% 1         |
| 16            | Caribbean  | 0.0% 0         |
| 17            | Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please describe in comment | 0.0% 0         |
| 18            | Arab   | 0.0% 0         |
| 19            | Any other ethnic group, please describe in comment                       | 2.2% 2         |
| 20            | Comments:  | 0.0% 0         |
| Comments:     |  | 5              |
|               |  | answered       |
|               |  | 90             |
|               |  | skipped        |
|               |  | 4              |

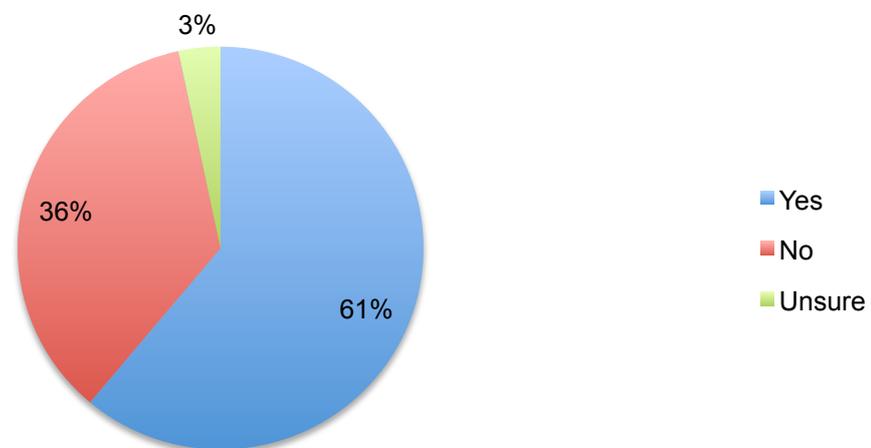
## Experiences of DV & A

The survey asked respondents if they have experienced any of the following: controlling behaviour, verbal abuse, emotional abuse or physical abuse from a partner.

Over half of the respondents answered Yes (61%) to this question.

Respondents who answered either Yes or Unsure were directed to a set of survey question that asked about their experiences of seeking support, or what prevented them from seeking support, and what support services they would like to see provided. Respondents who answered No to this question were directed to a similar set of questions that asked about what support or services they felt they or a friend might access, reasons that might prevent them accessing services, and their preference for support service provision.

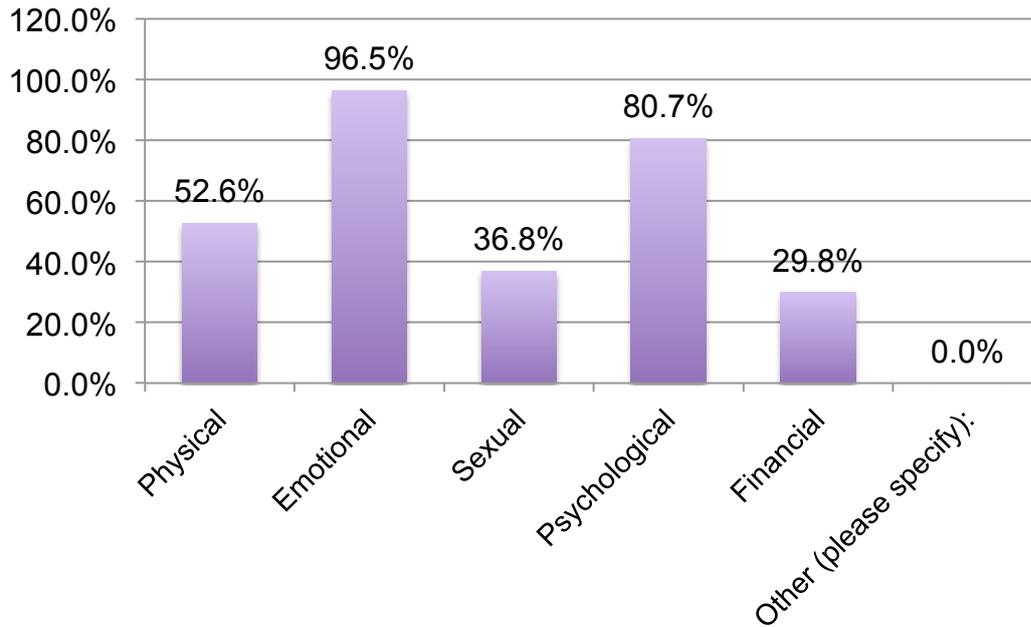
**Have you experienced any of the following from a partner:  
controlling behaviour, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, physical  
abuse?**



Respondents who had answered Yes or Unsure to experiencing abuse were further asked what kind of abuse they experienced – psychological, emotional, financial, sexual and physical.

Emotional and psychological abuse was the most frequently reported types of abuse from respondents. 55 out of 57 (96%) reported that they experienced emotional abuse and 80% of respondents reported psychological abuse.

### What kind of abuse did you experience?



The gender breakdown of respondents who reported one or more of the categories of abuse 35 were women, 16 were men and 6 were non- binary.

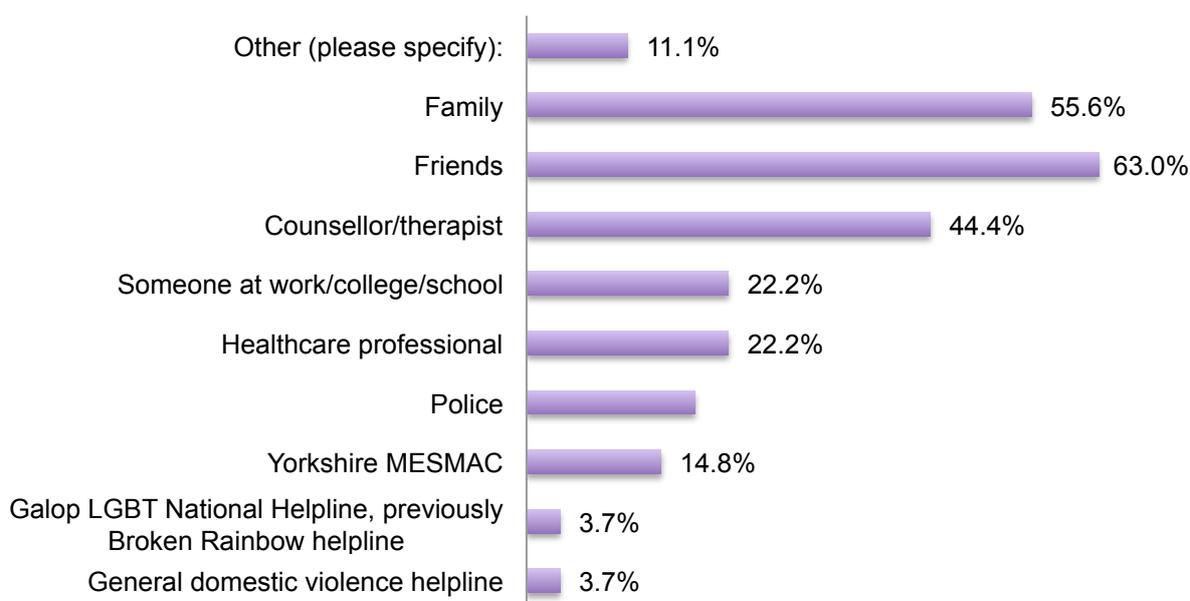
Of those respondents who reported experiencing physical abuse in the survey 20 were women (including 3 women whose gender is not the same as assigned at birth), 7 were men (including 1 man whose gender is not the same as assigned at birth), and 3 non-binary people.

Of those who reported sexual abuse in the survey 12 were women (including 2 women whose gender is not the same as assigned at birth) and 7 were men (including 3 men whose gender is not the same as assigned at birth), and 2 non-binary people.

Although the sample is small, people whose gender was not the same as assigned to them at birth and non-binary people are overrepresented regarding experiences of abuse, and particularly experiences of physical and sexual abuse.

Over half (63%) of respondents who identified as experiencing domestic abuse said that they did seek support. The survey did not ask respondents at what point they sought support.

**If you did access support which service or support did you use? Please choose all that apply**



The most frequently reported sources of support respondents accessed were family and friends. Over half of the respondents said they sought support from family (55%) and friends (63%).

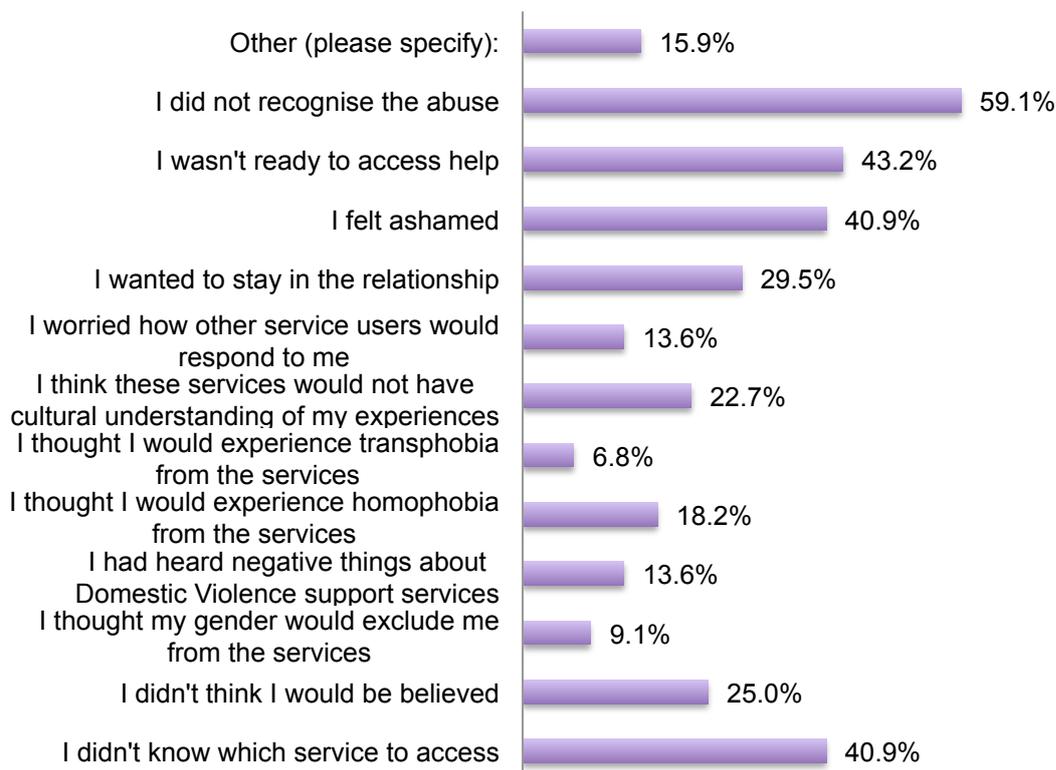
Support from counsellors and therapists were the next most frequent sources of support for respondents (44%). All but one of the comments, given by respondents on their experiences of counselling and therapeutic support, were favourable about the support they received. In particular support from university counselling services and Yorkshire MESMAC were mentioned as valuable sources of support for individuals. Although the survey did not ask respondents at what point in their experiences of abuse they sought support, a number of comments indicated that support from counsellors was accessed some time after the ending of an abusive situation. One respondent commented that while the counselling was useful, it was limited, as they felt that the counsellor they accessed did not have specialised knowledge or experience around DV & A.

The proportion of respondents who sought support from domestic violence services was low. Only one respondent sought support from a general domestic violence helpline, and only one respondent sought support from LGBT specialist domestic violence helpline (Broken Rainbow/Gallop). Four respondents accessed support through Yorkshire MESMAC, and indicates that established and local LGBT organisations are valuable sources of support for the LGBT community. Other sources of support that respondents engaged in were Housing Office, Victim Support and Student Advice Centre at University of Leeds.

## Barriers to LGBT+ people accessing DV & A support

Respondents who did not access services or support were asked why.

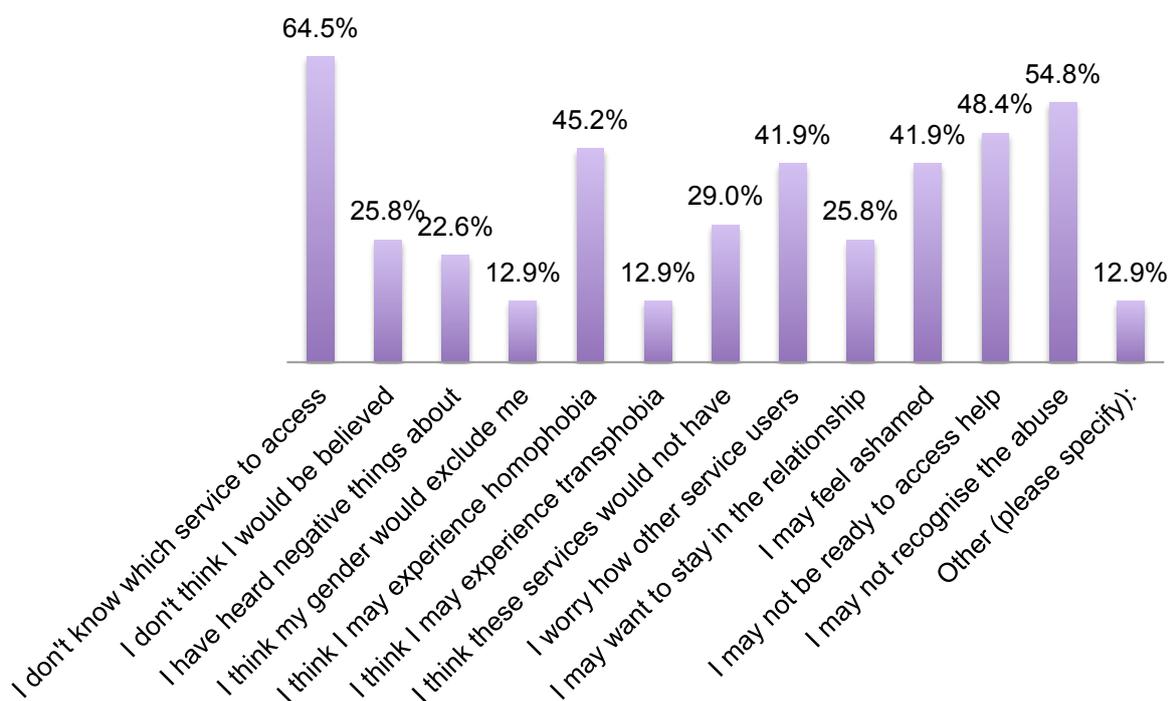
### If you did not access services or support, why not?



The survey also asked respondents who said they had not experienced domestic violence or abuse to give reasons for what they thought might stop themselves or a LGBT+ friend from accessing help if they were experiencing DV & A.

## Not recognising the abuse, not being ready to access help and feelings of shame

### Are there any reasons you think may stop you or a friend from accessing help?



The majority of respondents who did not access support (59%) reported that it was because they did not recognise the abuse. The next most frequently given reason for not accessing support was that they were not ready to access help (43%). Following that, feelings of shame also prevented many from accessing support (40%). Feelings of shame, not being ready to access help or not recognising the abuse were also frequently given reasons that people who had not experienced DV & A felt would stop themselves or a friend from accessing help. All these responses suggest that work needs to be done with LGBT+ communities to raise awareness of domestic violence and abusive relationships, and to de-stigmatise these experiences within relationships.

### Not knowing where to go

A significant number of respondents (18) reported that they did not know which services to access – 64% of survey respondents who said they have not experienced DV & A also said that they or a friend may not access support because they would not know what services to access. This suggests that there is a need for better signposting to DV & A services in these communities, and for DV & A services to communicate that their services are inclusive of LGBT+ people.

### Experiences and fear of receiving discrimination and exclusion from services

Survey responses to this question also indicate a lack of trust or faith in services that provide support around DV & A. 22% of respondents thought that services would not have the cultural understanding of their experiences or needs. 18% of respondents thought that they would experience homophobia from these services, and three respondents thought that they would experience transphobia. It is significant that fear of experiencing discrimination from services has contributed to LGBT+ people not accessing support.

The survey also asked respondents who answered 'No' to experiencing DV & A what reasons they thought they or a friend might have for not accessing services. These survey responses broadly reflected that of those of respondents who answered 'Yes' or 'Unsure' to experiencing DV & A, however a much higher number of respondents said that the chance of experiencing homophobia from services (45%) may prevent them accessing services. 41% said they might worry about how other service users would respond to them. Both respondents who have experienced DV & A and who have not said that they had heard negative things about DV & A support services, 13% and 22% respectively.

It is significant that 25% of all respondents (both those who have and have not experienced DV & A) said they were worried that would not be believed by services. There were a couple of comments that expressed concern that service providers would not take abuse between women seriously. One respondent said that when accessing treatment for a third time from a healthcare provider for injuries sustained from his violent partner he was told to stop wasting their time and to 'sort it out' himself. Another respondent said that despite reporting his violent partner to the police they did not take any action.

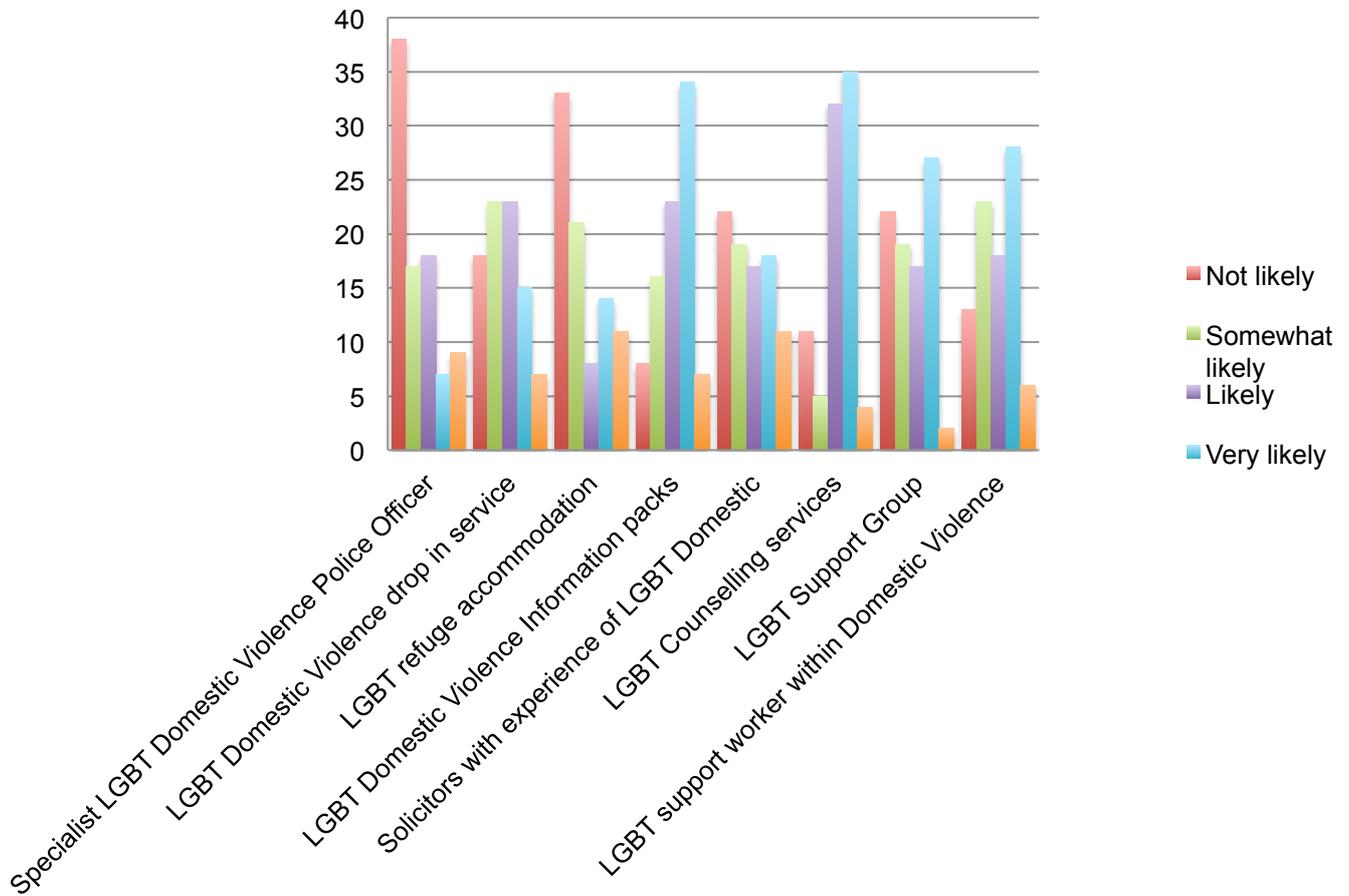
These findings show that there is a perception, borne out of experiences for some, that services are not knowledgeable about LGBT+ people's needs and experiences and services may be seen to be homophobic in their approach. This points to a need to address these concerns through services showing a commitment to equality and diversity by reviewing organisational policy and practice to ensure it is inclusive and anti discriminatory, by engaging in regular training and education around the support needs of LGBT+ people if they have not already done so, and to communicate this work to the LGBT+ community in Leeds.

For those who said that they thought their gender would exclude them from accessing these services two were cisgendered men, one was a trans man, one was a trans woman, one was non binary agender, one was a non binary lesbian, one was a queer woman, and two were non binary. This is a significant finding as it indicates that trans and non-binary people believe there is no formal support available to them. Action is needed in this area to ensure DV & A support is reaching trans and non binary people and that they are not slipping through the cracks of domestic violence provision. The findings from this survey on the severity of domestic abuse (physical and sexual violence) faced by trans and non-binary people shows that urgent action is required by DV & A services and the public sector to ensure support is available.

### Service preferences among LGBT+ respondents

Respondents were asked to consider how likely they would be to seek help from a number of different LGBT specialised support services for DV & A if they were available to them.

**What is the likelihood that you would access the following LGBT Domestic Violence services and support, if you were in need and they were available to you?**



Respondents were also asked to rank in order which LGBT specialised support service they would most like to see provided in the city. With 1 being the service you would most like to see, and 8 the service you would least like to see provided in Leeds

**The average rating from respondents of this survey ranked the services they would most like to see in the following order**

1. LGBT Counselling services
2. LGBT support worker within DV service
3. LGBT Domestic Violence information packs
4. LGBT Domestic Violence drop in
5. LGBT Domestic Violence refuge
6. LGBT peer support group
7. Solicitors with experience of LGBT domestic violence cases
8. Specialist LGBT Domestic Violence Police Officer

There was strong preference for accessing LGBT counselling services with a domestic violence specialisation, LGBT domestic violence information packs, and an LGBT domestic violence support worker. The services that respondents indicated they were less likely to access were Specialist LGBT Domestic Violence Police Officer, and LGBT refuge accommodation.

Support for an LGBT support group differed between respondents who had experienced DVA and those who said they had not; those who had experienced DVA indicated they were less likely to seek support from an LGBT support group. Respondents commented that a barrier to accessing support through a group was that because LGBT+ networks and communities are smaller than that of the cisgendered heterosexual population, with less chance of being able to remain anonymous, there would be increased risk that someone in that support group may know you, or the perpetrator and that information might get back to the perpetrator.

### Key areas for action and development

These key areas for action and development have been identified using the findings from the survey, collating the comments given by respondents, through discussion with key informants in Leeds working with LGBT+ communities, and informed by recent research and guidance on working with LGBT+ communities in a DVA context.

#### **Training across the workforce on how to support LGBT+ clients, challenging discrimination and misinformation within agencies and for agencies to review their practice of working with LGBT+ clients**

This research indicates a lack of trust in support services and other agencies. Where an LGBT+ person may disclose experiences of DV & A and seek help, they may not trust that the service or agency will have adequate understanding or appreciation of LGBT+ people's experiences and consequently perpetuate discriminatory practices. This is a key concern for LGBT+ people in Leeds and our research shows that this lack of trust cuts across DV & A agencies, policing and healthcare. The research indicates that this perception is rooted somewhat in people's experience of trying to access support from some services but being met

with discrimination, lack of care and or their disclosure not being taken seriously. The lack of trust that some LGBT+ people have in receiving support from services is a serious risk for this community as it is a barrier to accessing support. One respondent said they didn't have faith in DV & A services to be 'queer friendly', that workers may misgender and alienate people from their services, and that in the meantime queer people in Leeds are having to find alternative support within their own networks.

Respondents to the survey felt that more training was required for services on the nature of DV & A in LGBT+ communities, and that this training needs to be delivered to all staff within organisations that may work with LGBT+ people experiencing DV & A. Respondents commented that it is not enough to have a specialist worker trained on LGBT+ DV& A issues, but that everyone in organisations and agencies must be knowledgeable about these issues. It was also highlighted through the survey that agencies that support people experiencing DV & A need training to better understand how their behaviours and systems of working might be negatively impacting on LGBT+ people and pose a barrier to accessing support.

### **Ensuring the inclusion of trans and non binary people in DV & A support services**

The research indicates that trans and non binary people do not feel able to access domestic violence support services because of the fear of experiencing transphobia from these services or because they think their 'gender might exclude them from these services'. This follows the research undertaken by Scottish Trans Alliance on experiences of DV & A amongst trans people which found that 'Transgender respondents were often of the view that there were no domestic abuse organisations willing and able to assist them.'<sup>3</sup>

The survey seems to indicate that trans and non-binary people are overrepresented in experiencing physical and sexual violence in relationships. It is crucial therefore that work be done to address trans and non-binary peoples' inclusion in DV & A services and support.

Organisational awareness of the issues facing transgender and non binary people must be built up to ensure that staff are informed and have an understanding of how to deliver appropriate support to trans and non binary people. It is also crucial that organisations that are inclusive of trans and non-binary people communicate this clearly in promotional materials advertising their services.

Guidance documents such as 'Stronger Together; Guidance for women's services on the inclusion of transgender women' provide good practice guidance for women's organisations on the inclusion of trans women as well as the legal aspects of providing services. However there is a dearth of available resources for organisations that offer best practice for working towards the inclusion of non-binary gendered people and trans men in domestic violence service. This survey suggests that work is required to ensure that trans and non-binary people are not excluded from support.

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<sup>3</sup>Roch, Morton, Ritchie (2010) Out of sight, out of mind: Transgender People's Experiences of Domestic Abuse, Scottish Transgender Alliance

## **Providing clearer signposting to DVA services for LGBT+ people and clearly communicating to LGBT+ communities which services are open to them**

The lack of clear signposting for LGBT+ people to available support and services around DV & A is a significant barrier to accessing support. The research found that for over half of survey respondents not knowing which services to go to might prevent/or have prevented them from accessing help for DV & A.

There were a number of comments from survey respondents about the need to indicate clearly, both online and through written promotional materials, where services are open to LGBT+ people. There is no explicit or immediately visible indication across the DV & A agencies in Leeds that they are available to LGBT+ people in Leeds. On the Leeds.gov webpage that signposts services for those who are experiencing DV & A it directs LGBT+ people to the national telephone support line Galop (previously operated by Broken Rainbow) – this sends a signal to LGBT+ people in Leeds that there is no existing local support available for them. The websites of HALT, Leeds Women's Aid, and Behind Closed Doors are not clear that their services are available LGBT+ people, even though they are. This lack of signposting and communication that local provision is accessible to these communities is a significant risk to LGBT+ people in Leeds experiencing DV & A.

Undertaking training on how to support LGBT+ people, and increasing organisational awareness and knowledge of the issues facing LGBT+ people is also necessary, as there is the risk that if agencies promote their services to LGBT+ people without being adequately resourced to support these communities this could lead to a further breakdown of trust.

## **Campaigning to raise awareness of DV & A among LGBT+ people and communities and providing LGBT+ domestic violence information packs and resources**

The research showed that feelings of shame, not recognising the abuse, and not feeling ready to access help were significant barriers to LGBT+ people in gaining necessary support. This points to the need for educational community work to be done with LGBT+ communities in Leeds to increase awareness of experiences of domestic violence and to highlight places where people can access support.

LGBT+ Domestic Violence information packs were ranked third by survey respondents, as provision people would most like to see in Leeds. LGBT+ DV & A information packs were also the second most likely sources of support survey respondents said they would access. It is clear through the research that DV & A agencies lack a presence within LGBT+ communities in Leeds, and as such these communities have failed to benefit from the expertise and resources of these agencies.

Discussion with key people also highlighted that the experience of sexual violence that LGBT+ people face in communities was another key area of concern. It may be beneficial for work to be done which connects the relationship between DV & A in partner relationships and other kinds of sexual violence and abuse LGBT+ people face. Developing community awareness around incidents and prevalence of rape and sexual assault amongst LGBT+ people, violence and abuse perpetrated by family members, as well awareness of what healthy relationships and consent looks like is vital to ensuring communities are resourced to challenge and tackle these issues and to feel able to engage with support services.

## **Provision of specialised LGBT+ support that responds to community needs**

The research highlighted a desire and need for LGBT+ DV & A counselling services, a LGBT+ Support Worker within a DV & A service, LGBT+ DV & A Information Packs, and an LGBT+ DV & A drop in service.

Respondents commented on the need for more trans specific support such as counselling. It was also felt by some survey respondents that refuge services should either provide specific refuge accommodation to trans people or that refuges to make it explicit that they are trans inclusive.

It was also suggested that there be routine enquiry to patients about DV & A at sexual health clinics. A number of comments suggested support online would be useful, such as online peer support for people experiencing or with experience of domestic violence and that these peer support forums be moderated. Another comment suggested the need for support that focussed on recovery for people who have experienced DV & A, and in particular for this to be accessible at the point at which a person is leaving their abusive partner. Comments also suggested that attention needed to be given to deaf LGBT+ people in Leeds.

## **Strategic partnership working between DV & A agencies in Leeds and LGBT+ organisations and groups**

The research indicated a perception of a lack of joined up working between DV & A agencies in Leeds and LGBT+ organisations and groups who have relationships with the LGBT+ community. A strong partnership between DV & A organisations such as LWA, Behind Closed Doors, and HALT and LGBT+ organisations in Leeds such as Yorkshire MESMAC would benefit LGBT+ people in Leeds through these agencies sharing knowledge, expertise and good practice.

## **References**

LGBT Youth Scotland (2015) Stronger Together; Guidance for women's services on the inclusion of transgender women

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