

UNITED KINGDOM

In the UK there are 3 different prison services, depending on the geographical and political areas (England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland). The situation in each area is explained below:

1. England and Wales

Women's programmes

There are 14 women's prisons in England. There are none in Wales. Female young adult offenders are held in dedicated young adult units, and there are currently 4 purpose built female juvenile units. There are 7 mother and baby units.

The last ten years or so have seen a dramatic rise in the numbers of women in prison from an average of 1560 in 1993 to around 4463 in June 2006. An all time high of 4672 was reached in May 2004. Despite this rise in numbers, women in prison represent a very small proportion of the total prison population at about 5.7% of a total of 77982 in England and Wales as at June 2006¹.

Life in prison for women follows similar procedures to those for male prisoners. There are, however, a number of important differences in women's offending behaviour and their needs whilst in prison. One of these differences is the fact that half of women who are in prison have experienced some form of abuse – physical, sexual or emotional. Studies have shown that half of women in prison report histories of physical abuse or domestic violence, and one third of sexual abuse.

Handling abuse issues in prison need particular care. Prison itself is not an ideal environment to address these issues, and for many women, the short length of time they spend in prison (70% receive sentences of less than 12 months) limits the opportunity to offer long-term support or counselling.

In supporting women who have been abused, a balance has to be struck between doing too little (by failing to offer support when abuse is disclosed), or by attempting to do too much (by offering interventions that encourage women to open up abuse issues without providing the safety and continuity to resolve them).

A range of approaches are currently used in women's prisons. These include: listening and being supportive; providing information about abuse; providing information and contact details about community agencies that help survivors of abuse; referral on to community agencies; and, where appropriate, individual or group counselling. Many prisons work closely with local Rape Crisis or abuse agencies to provide counselling support

¹ Data from <http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk/>

The National Offender Management Service has developed a set of gender specific standards for the women's prisons, drawing from existing best practice. The standards were published on 28 April 2008 in a new [Prison Service Order \(4800\) on Women Prisoners](#) and are due to be implemented in April 2009. They cover all areas of regime provision and should enhance the significant improvements that have already been achieved in the care and management of women prisoners and planning for their resettlement. The document is divided in different 'pathways to resettlement' and there is one specifically dedicated on 'Supporting women who have been abused, raped or who have experienced domestic violence'. The document gives gender specific guidance on action that should be developed inside prison:

- Annually there should be a needs analysis conducted of the population to provide an estimation of the number of women affected by abuse and domestic violence and their needs.
- Individually, needs such as support, advocacy and a safe place to go on release should be established at an early stage. A range of supportive interventions should be available to women who disclose abuse or domestic violence. These should include: information, support that can be offered by external organizations, self-help books and websites. Where women are likely to stay in the prison long enough interventions should be offered – either on a 1:1 basis or as part of an accredited group work programme. Assistance to build women's confidence and coping skills should be offered by regime activities, as this can be the first step in enabling her to move out of violent relationships. Counselling and other support need to be carefully managed, particularly, the ending of services or handover to other agencies. Information sharing protocols between agencies must be established.
- Links should be established between establishments and agencies and organizations that can offer support to women, including Women's centres and domestic violence area co-ordinators.
- Staff must be aware of potential risks to the safety of the woman and her children and know how to make referrals. Most domestic violence cases do not qualify for MAPPA. Where appropriate referrals should be made to MARACs (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences), which are domestic violence specific and exist in most local authority areas.
- Staff should be trained in how to cope with having abuse disclosed to them and how to respond. Staff must also be debriefed and supported – this is often a traumatic and difficult experience for all.

The organisation Women in Prison (www.womeinprison.org.hk) started a the 'Women Offender Campaign Network'². In the answer they submitted they stated that the pathway 8 of the Prison Service Order (4800) on Women Prisoners on Supporting women who have been abuses, raped or who have experience domestic violence has not yet been effectively understood and incorporated into regional reducing reoffending action plans and not translated into adequate change in practice.

The Prison Service is undertaking an internal review of the Freedom Programme, the only specialist, group-based intervention currently being offered to women in prison. However, there are currently no resource committed to develop alternative to this programme or any commitment to develop an strategy that will improve support to women.

The Freedom Programme is a group work project that takes place in 8 sessions (2 sessions per week during 4 weeks) plus support between sessions. Modelled on the 'Duluth' model, it is based on a cognitive behavioural approach, and focuses on how many of the survivors of gender violence internalise myths that the perpetrators gave during the relationship. The programme aims at unblock this internalisation, develop self-esteem and acceptable behaviour. It includes an element of support in the community from the Women's Aid. At the end of the programme, women receive a certificate and a report is produced and shared with relevant agencies that may support women on release.

Following the Women in Prison's communication, they stated that there is an appalling lack of consistent, specialist provision for women in prison and the group-based Freedom Programme, where it exists, is delivered without consistent standards, adequate risk assessments, advocacy support or evaluation.

Men's programmes

In England and Wales there is one specific programme targeting male inmates who have been perpetrators of domestic violence. This is the *Healthy Relationships Programme*.

Furthermore, there are two other accredited domestic violence programmes in use in the community with male offenders who are convicted for domestic violence but who have not been sent to prison: the *Community Domestic Violence Programme* and the *Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme*.

In addition, there is a number of accredited offending behaviour programmes addressing thinking skills, anger management, domestic and other types of violent crime as well as sexual offending, which at some point may also tackle domestic violence issues, not specifically but within a broader programme. Other activities across prison and probation measures such as training, education, work, non accredited courses, specialist support and resettlement also have a significant part to play in this area.

² In Resposne to 'Together we can end violence against women' consultation on a National Strategy on Violence Against Women. (May 2009)

All these programmes are challenging and require offenders to discuss in detail their offending behaviour and the consequences of their actions.

Healthy Relationships Programme (HRP)

The Healthy Relationship Programme in use in prison aims to increase domestically violent offenders' awareness and skills. In particular, HRP intends to tackle:

- Awareness of the consequences of his abusive behaviour
- Ability to respond non abusively
- Ability to change abusive beliefs
- Ability to empathise with his victim(s)
- Ability to identify high-risk situations and to effectively manage these in the future

HRP intends to change those beliefs and attitudes that support domestic abuse, and emotional mismanagement (jealousy, anger, fear and dependency). It puts a special emphasis on teaching how to manage relationships without controlling others.

There are two types of HRP, the moderate and the high intensity programmes. The moderate intensity programme runs over a two month period and is designed for those men assessed as having a moderate risk/moderate need, who have been violent in their intimate relationships. The course has 28 group sessions and at least 3 individual sessions.

The high intensity programme runs over a five month period and is designed for high risk/high need offenders, who have been violent in their intimate relationships. The programme is 68 sessions long and has at least 10 individual sessions.

Community Domestic Violence Programme (CDVP)

The CDVP is a cognitive behavioural programme delivered in the community targeting convicted male perpetrators of domestic violence of medium to high risk of harm. It includes interagency risk assessment/information exchange management; victim contact; proactive offender management and core group work. It consists of 28 group work sessions of two hours.

CDVP intends to change those beliefs and attitudes that support domestic abuse, and emotional mismanagement (jealousy, anger, fear and dependency). It puts a special emphasis on teaching how to manage and maintain relationships without controlling others.

Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP)

IDAP is a cognitive behavioural programme delivered in the community targeting male offenders, who are in, or were in, heterosexual relationships, who are of medium to high risk of causing harm. IDAP challenges attitudes and beliefs of the offenders.

It is a rolling programme of 9 modules consisting of 3 sessions in each. Offenders can start the Programme at the beginning of any module except the Sexual Respect Module. It teaches non controlling behaviour strategies, and enhanced victim empathy. It includes interagency risk assessment/information exchange management, victim contact; proactive case management and core group work. The programme consists of 27 two hour sessions delivered weekly.

IDAP intends to change those beliefs and attitudes that support domestic abuse, and emotional mismanagement (jealousy, anger, fear and dependency). It puts a special emphasis on teaching how to manage and maintain relationships without controlling others.

These two community programmes and the one in prison are completed with the work of the Woman Safety Worker (WSW), which collaborates with the National Probation Service Domestic Abuse in the delivering of this kind of programmes. The WSW is an organisation working with the victims and partners of men completing the accredited community DV programmes (CDVP and IDAP).

The WSW role is an integral feature of the delivery of domestic violence interventions within the National Probation Service Domestic Abuse strategy as part of the coordinated community response to domestic violence. It maintains a focus on the safety of victims whilst intervening with the perpetrator. All 42 Probation Areas of England and Wales either deliver CDVP or IDAP and there are WSW staff assigned within all probation areas.

WSW professionals contact female victims and new partners who may be at risk of men attending these and the prison domestic abuse programme.

2. Scotland

Women's programmes

In Scottish prisons, there are no specific in-prison programmes dealing with gender/domestic violence targeting women at present.

Men's programmes

At this moment, in Scotland there are no specific in-prison programmes targeting male perpetrators of gender violence. However, the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) stresses that there is the will and the need to deal with this issue in prison so they are "in process" of starting plans to implement programmes maybe for next year, although the approach to tackle it is still under discussion.

The plan is to start these programmes with male prisoners are in "open estate", which is when prisoners are due to leave, in the last part of their sentence.

In principle these programmes will be delivered by prison staff, so there is the intention to provide training to them on these issues.

At the moment in some Scottish prisons they have a suite of accredited and approved interventions, addressing offending behaviours and life skills. These ones may address in an indirect way issues surrounding violence between partners such as anger management, violence prevention, sexual offending, cognitive skills etc. The most relevant ones targeting male offenders are gathered below:

Alternatives to Violence (16 Hours) – Developed at HMP Kilmarnock.

Violence Prevention Programme (200 hours in length)

- Designed specifically for those offenders at highest risk of future violent re-offending. A history of violent convictions and a lifetime pattern of violence are pre-requisites for participating in this programme.
- Targeted to the adult, male population.
- 10 modules which, together, explore offender's use of violence. The programme challenges their motivation and reasons for violence and teaches skills to assist these individuals to replace violence with more pro-social behaviours.
- Developed by the Correctional Service of Canada and introduced to SPS in November 2003. It is currently available in Shotts.

3. Northern Ireland

Women's programmes

In the prisons of Northern Ireland there are no specific programmes for women who have suffered gender violence within intimate partnerships and are in prison. However work is being done in partnership with Barnardos to deliver the "Making the most of yourself" programme which can indirectly address this matter if it is raised by participants. In addition, NIPS also offer one-to-one psychotherapeutic interventions which frequently address issues relating to domestic violence.

Men's programmes

In the prisons of Northern Ireland there are no specific programmes for men who have committed gender violence within intimate partnerships and are in prison. There are however a number of current programmes which indirectly address this matter (in that they attempt to reduce violent offending generally), e.g. the Motivational Enhancement Group (MEG); the Enhanced Thinking skills Programme (ETS); the Cognitive Self-Change Programme (CSCP); the CORE Sex-Offender Treatment Programme (CORE SOTP); the ROLLING Sex-Offender Treatment Programme (ROLLING SOTP); 'Safer Lives' (a juvenile sex-offender treatment programme); the Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage It programme (CALM) etc.