

## **Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Report**

### **October to December 2018**

Croydon’s Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) services are delivered through a hub and spoke model, with the FJC as the central hub, offering a drop-in service. Over the last two years there has been an increase in providing community based support with IDVAs at Croydon University Hospital and within the police station, as well as the community IDVAs working across the borough.

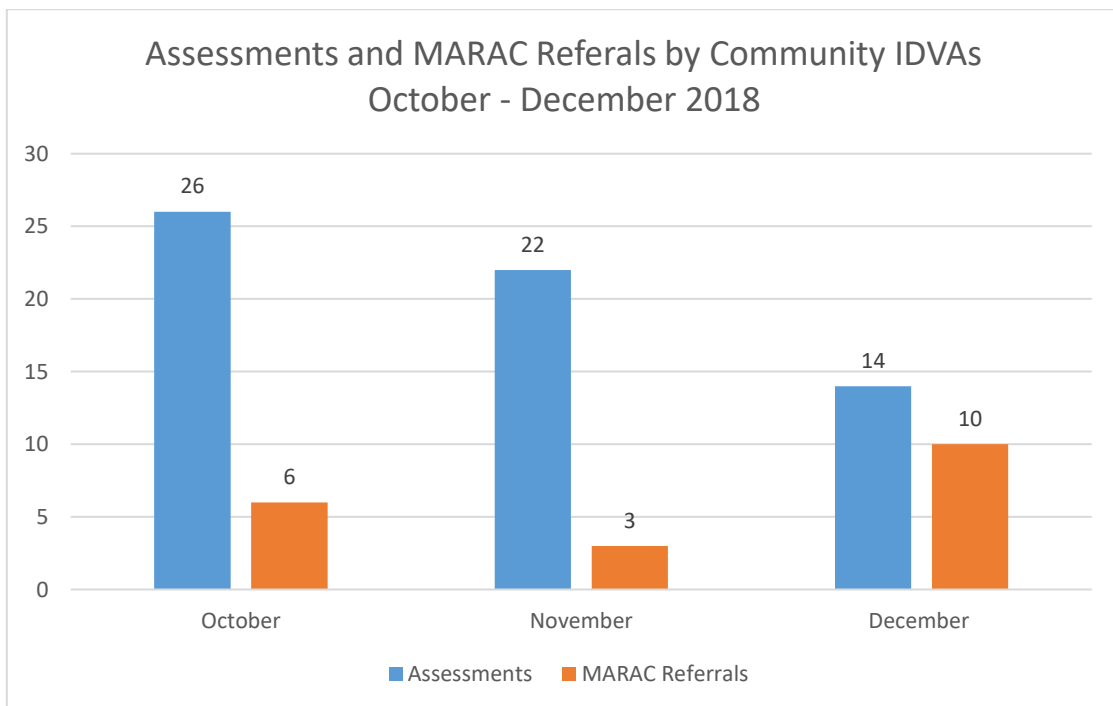
The FJC central hub has now moved to a new purpose built site and it now provides 6 consultation rooms, improved training facilities and greater security for both clients and the staff. To further safeguard clients, the address of the new site will not be published. The new site is in Central Croydon and is a short walk from Croydon Police station and the main council building Bernard Weatherhill House.

This report reveals the trends found from FJC data for October to December 2018-2019. It is important to note that it is difficult to accurately measure trends in domestic violence, as abuse often occurs behind closed doors and is severely unreported due a range of factors.

#### **Community IDVAs**

The community IDVAs work across the community, assessing clients and providing support to those with low to medium risk. Between October and December, the community IDVAs made 19 referrals to MARAC, this is an increase from the previous quarter and may be due to the continuous DASV training delivered by the community IDVAs in the borough.

*Figure 1 (Source: Early Help Module and MARAC Inbox)*



As part of their role, each of the community IDVAs also complete case consultations; supporting professionals within the community to create a holistic approach to supporting individuals and

families. The community IDVAs also deliver training, for example to schools ranging from nurseries to colleges to help raise awareness across the borough.

## **Hospital IDVA**

The FJC now has a well-established Hospital IDVA who is based within Croydon University Hospital. The IDVA's role is to provide support to staff and patients who are experiencing domestic abuse, as well as training and liaising with hospital staff to support patients who are victims of DASV.

**I remember seeing the hospital IDVA for the first time when she approached me on the hospital ward. Her warm smile, caring and supportive attitude immediately made me feel like someone cared for me after the incident. I felt alone in the hospital and did not understand how I had ended up in this situation. She spoke to me at great lengths to help me understand that the abuse I suffered was not my fault. She reassured me that she was there to help and supported me to access services and find a place of safety.**

**With guidance, support and empowerment from her, I decided to take the step to go into a women's refuge for the extra support I was in need of.**

**The hospital IDVA went through every step with me and also was there on the end of the line when I moved into the refuge, to ensure I was settled.**

**I did not see things clearly but with her there for me to talk to, during this stressful transitional period of my life, I don't know what I would've done. Yes I made the step to flee but, without her and your services I would not have been able to take the step needed.**

**Words cannot express how much I appreciate the work FJC do with women in DV cases and I can assure you that anyone that encounters the hospital IDVA as I have, will be very lucky because she is a star.**

**I would just like to say thank you to all your team for providing the support you do to suffering domestic violence. Be proud of yourselves, I am now a survivor.**

**(Client feedback, November 2018)**

## **NRPF IDVA**

The FJC now have a NRPF IDVA who provides specialist support services to vulnerable individuals and families who are experiencing domestic abuse with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and EEA nationals in refuge and in the community.

Between October and December, the FJC received 23 referrals for clients with no recourse to public funds.

**AB<sup>1</sup> experienced domestic abuse perpetrated by her husband since she joined him in the UK on a spousal visa. AB experienced all forms of abuse.**

**At this point, AB approached the FJC. Through the support of the FJC she began to feel comfortable to open up and disclosed she was concerned about the safety of her and her child, she felt unable to continue the relationship due to the abuse, could no longer cope with the impact it was having on her emotional well-being and no longer wanted to live in fear.**

**AB was supported by an IDVA to obtain an immigration appointment the following day to submit the Destitute Domestic Violence Concession (DDVC). Within a week, AB had been granted the DDVC therefore access to public funds. The IDVA referred AB to housing who provided her with emergency accommodation. AB fled the perpetrator's accommodation and applied for benefits - she began her new life free from violence and fear.**

**With the continued support of the FJC and the immigration solicitor, AB submitted an application for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) under the SET DV Rule as a survivor of domestic abuse. Within a few months, AB had been granted ILR in the UK. On the day it was granted, she took her daughter for a special treat to mark the moment – a typical British afternoon tea!**

**AB went on to have emotional and practical support from a volunteer as part of our volunteer project. This has given AB the space to continue a journey of empowerment, self-love and healing.**

**AB is now rebuilding her life free from violence and fear!**

**(NRPF IDVA Case study, December 2018)**

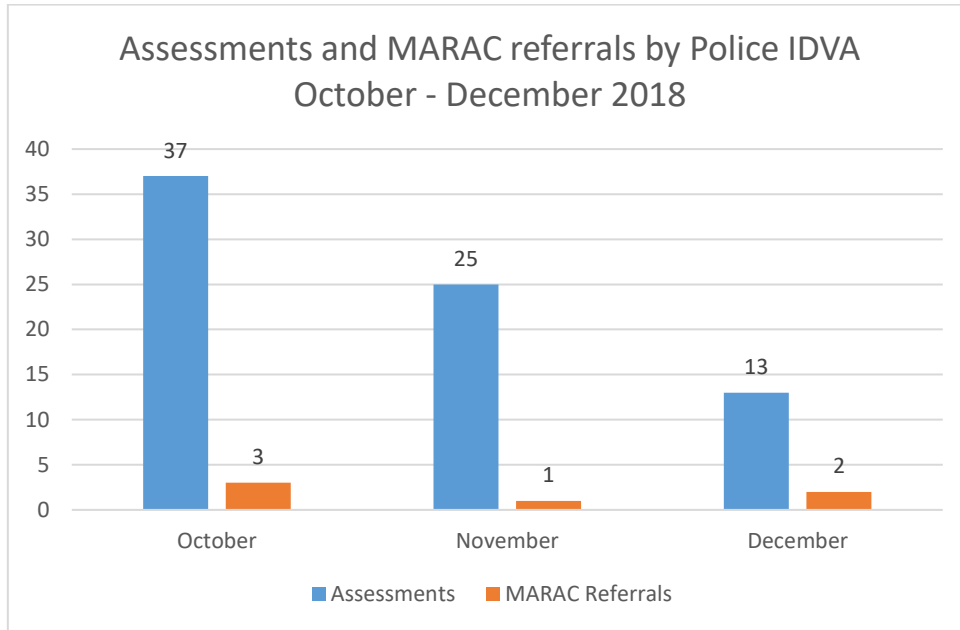
<sup>1</sup> Initials of client have been changed for confidentiality purposes.

## **Police IDVA**

The Police IDVA works closely with the Community Safety Unit (CSU) within Croydon's policing team, assessing and supporting clients who have reported domestic abuse. The Police IDVA also supports CSU when carrying out welfare checks.

During November, the Metropolitan Police and Police IDVA held a Community Safety Event at the Whitgift Centre in Croydon in regards to Operation Athena to help raise awareness of DASV in the borough and the FJC. There was a fair turnout and individuals were able to approach and enquire about the support and services available.

Figure 2 (Source: Early Help Module and MARAC Inbox)



## MASH IDVA

An IDVA is based in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) full time, to provide a consultative role to agencies regarding risks and families experiencing DASV. The IDVA contributes to the assessment of risk and vulnerability, whilst informing intelligence to form a broader professional perspective and help increase efficiency and response where risk is assessed as high.

On average, for October to December, the FJC received 20 referrals a week from MASH, with the IDVA involved in the triaging of 23 cases, 57 case discussions and provided intel for 55 cases.

## Merlin Data

In total, 545 Merlins were received for MASH for Domestic Abuse and Non-Crime Domestic Abuse within Croydon, during October to December; this is consistent with the previous quarter. As shown in Table 1, 374 Merlins were received for Domestic Abuse. This debunks the myth that domestic violence increases over the holiday season<sup>1</sup> and supports the view that victims of domestic abuse are less likely to reach out for help during the holidays.<sup>2</sup>

Table 1 (Source: Police team within MASH)

| Month    | Non-Crime Domestic Abuse | Domestic Abuse |
|----------|--------------------------|----------------|
| October  | 60                       | 120            |
| November | 56                       | 105            |
| December | 55                       | 149            |

<sup>1</sup> National Resource Centre on Domestic Violence, 2010

<sup>2</sup> Source: National Domestic Violence Hotline

The total number of police call outs for domestic abuse during the year would be higher. A Merlin is only generated when a child is present during the reported incident. The figures above do not include domestic incidents where a child was not present.

In addition to the Merlins listed above, Adults Social Care are notified when the police are called to a domestic incident and a vulnerable adult is present.

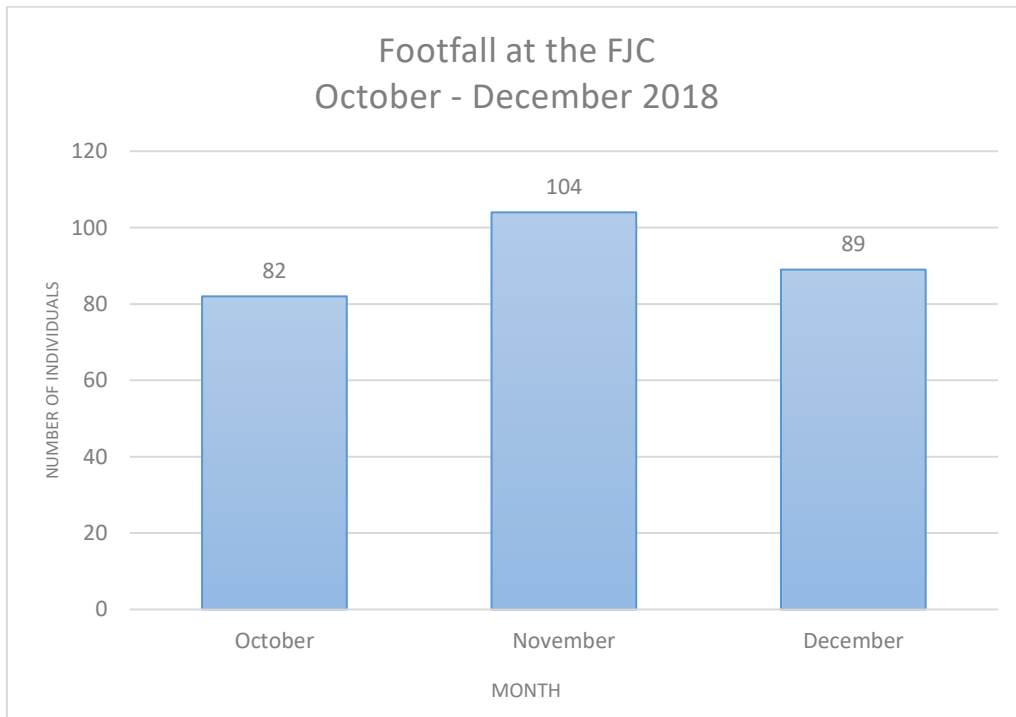
During this quarter, Operation Encompass across the MET was due to be implemented, however this pilot was unable to launch due to absence of an ISA by MET Police. Moving forward, there will be a greater emphasis on Merlin data and a focus on all schools being notified the following morning if a domestic incident occurred the night before in the family home and they were present. This will further allow appropriate pastoral support to be offered to the child or young person.

## FJC Data

Between October to December there were 275 visitors to the FJC. This is 56% lower than the previous quarter due to the FJC moving locations as the FJC offered a reduced service during this transitional period with an interim in-between. Furthermore, partners of the service were unable to meet their services users who had experienced domestic abuse at our site. December footfall also reflects a decrease due to the school Christmas holidays and two bank holidays. As expected, this resulted in the FJC being quieter than usual. Visitors to the FJC include clients who have been booked for an assessment with an IDVA, to seek legal advice from a solicitor, to seek housing advice, to access counselling and to also meet FJC volunteers for additional support.

Despite the number of visitors to the FJC every day, it is important to note that there are still many people in Croydon who are being affected by domestic abuse and are not receiving support. In the UK, 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, which based on Croydon’s female population 16 years<sup>3</sup> and older is approximately 38,500 women.

Figure 3 (Source: Footfall Tracker)



Between October to December, the FJC received 382 referrals. This is consistent with the previous quarter.

Table 2 (Source: Early Help Module)

| Month    | Number of Referrals |
|----------|---------------------|
| October  | 139                 |
| November | 149                 |
| December | 94                  |

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics (2016)

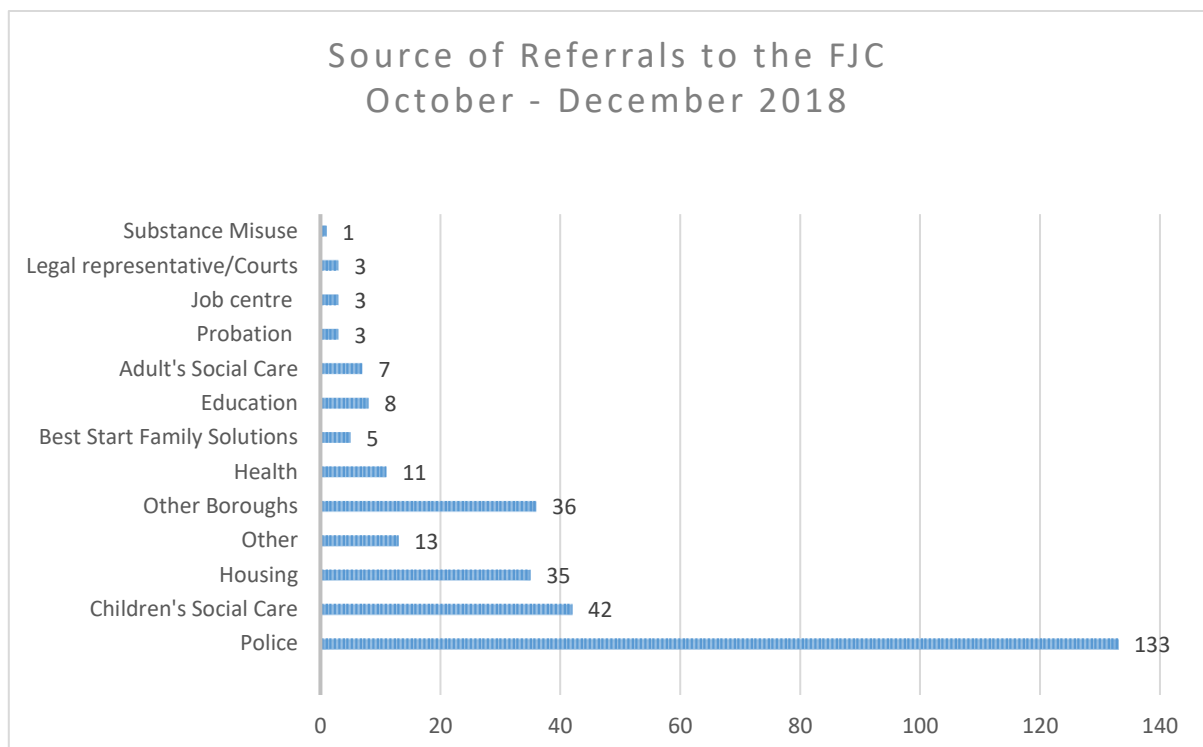
Table 3: (Source: Early Help Module)

| Type of Referral | Total |
|------------------|-------|
| Direct Referral  | 167   |
| Sign-posting     | 148   |
| Self-referral    | 67    |

82% of individuals referred to the FJC were from agencies directly referring or signposting clients. The remaining 18% are self-referred, meaning they found the service online or through advertising and contacted the FJC. The number of self-referrals has been consistent with the previous quarter. This is something the team will continue to monitor.

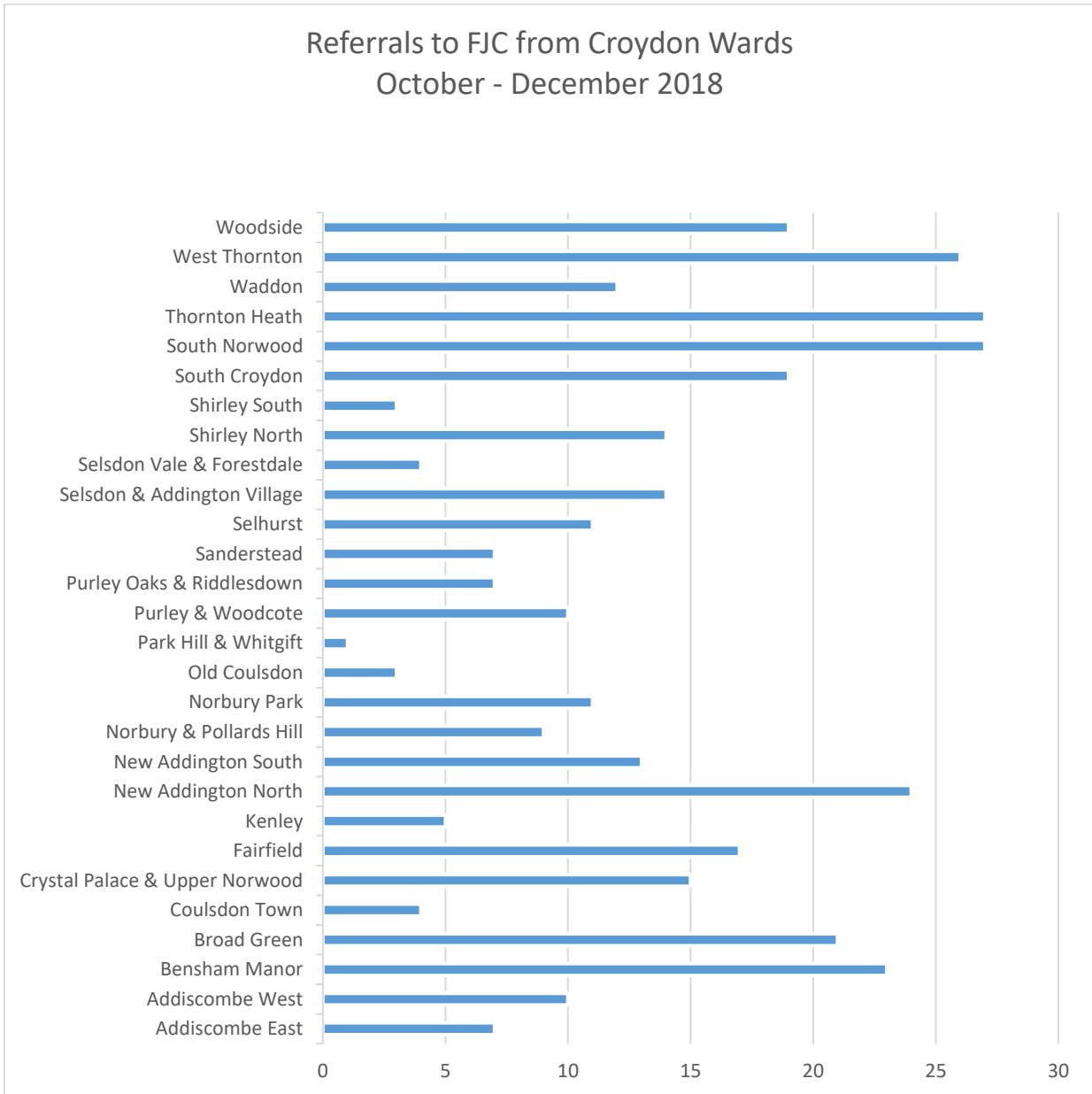
Those directly referred or signposted to the FJC have been broken down by agency in Figure 4, with the police referring the most between October to December. The previous quarter found only 29 cases referred from Children’s Social Care to the FJC and this was an area which the DASV Programme Board focused on exploring further. Through identifying this and delivering DASV training to Children’s Social Care professionals we have seen an increase by 45% in the referrals made to the FJC by Children’s Social Care, when compared to the previous quarter. This is a positive outcome and will continue to be regularly monitored to help identify risks more efficiently.

Figure 4 (Source: Early Help Module)



As shown in Figure 5, the FJC receives referrals from across the borough. The FJC receive a higher amount of referrals from the north of the borough, this reflects previous trends.

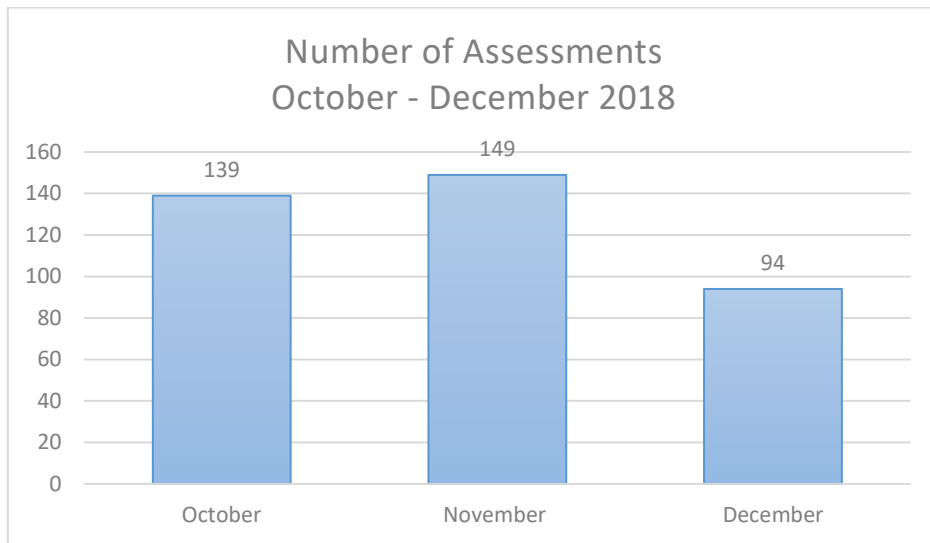
Figure 5 (Source: Early Help Module)



Of the 382 referrals, 381 assessments were completed by IDVAs between October to December. Not every referral results in an assessment for a range of reasons, including clients disengaging or the case not being appropriate for the IDVA service.



Figure 6 (Source: Early Help Module)



As seen in Figure 7, 97% of those assessed between October to December were female, this reflects a national trend and that domestic abuse is a gendered crime.

Figure 7 (Source: Early Help Module)

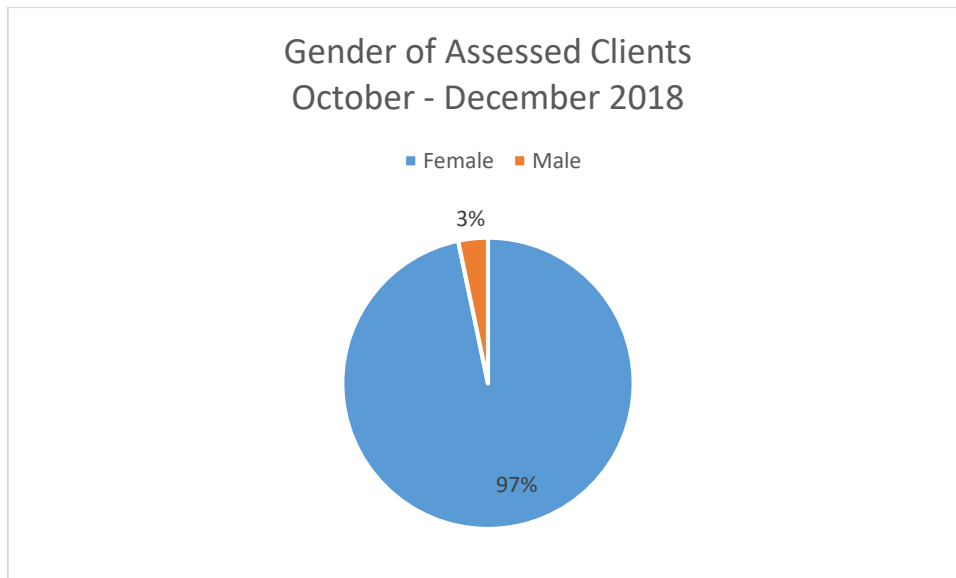
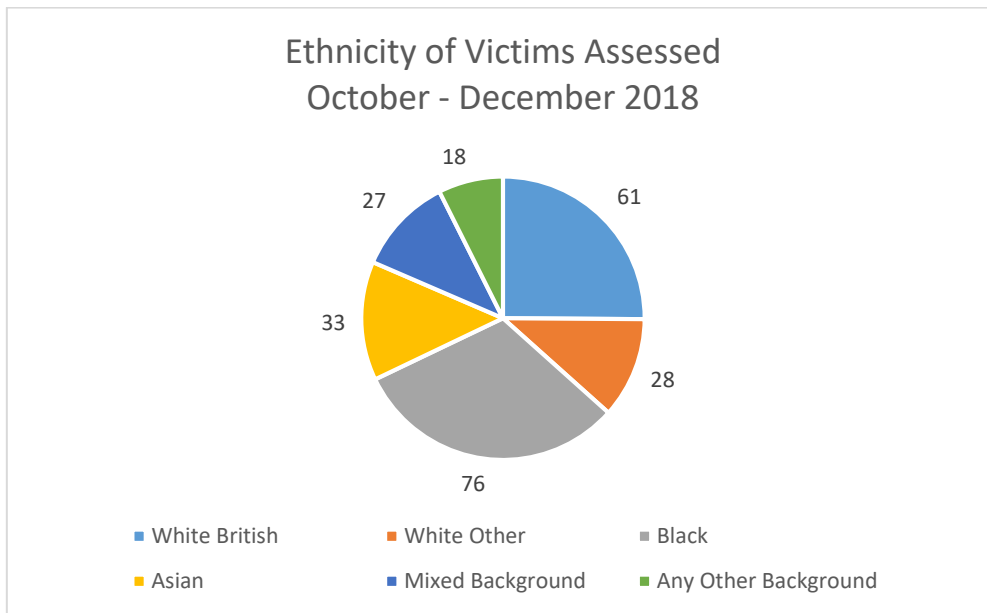


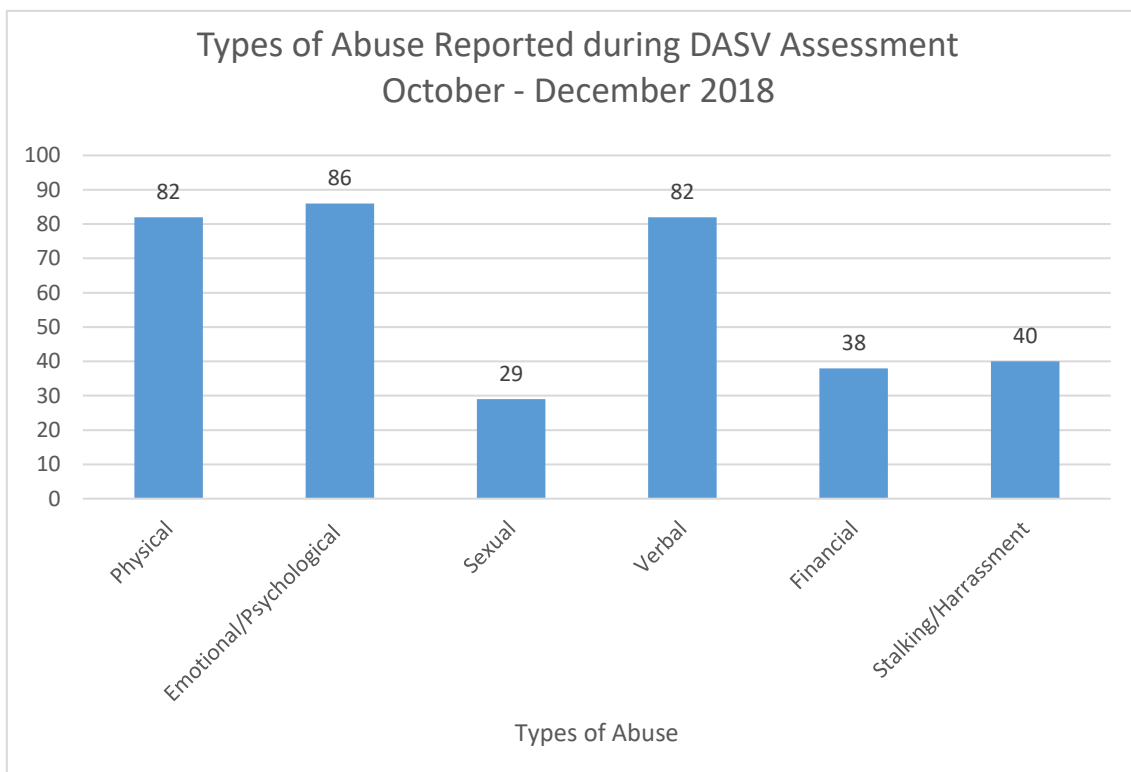
Figure 8 breaks down the ethnicity of those who were assessed by an IDVA between October to December. This figure does not include individuals who refused to provide their ethnic background.

Figure 8 (Source: Early Help Module)



The following graph (Figure 9) demonstrates the different types of abuse that have been reported by clients, as part of the assessments completed between October to December. Following previous trends, emotional/psychological and verbal abuse were the most commonly reported, with the addition of physical abuse in this quarter. On average, each victim has experienced at least three different types of abuse. This is common for domestic abuse cases as abusers behave in ways that include more than one type of abuse, as well as the boundaries between some of these behaviours often being blurred. The statistics will be lower than the real abuse levels due to such data being based on self-reporting and accurate identification of abuse.

Figure 9 (Source: Early Help Module)



As a result of the 381 assessments, the following also took place between October and December:

- 127 safety plans were developed with clients
- 61 clients were supported to move to a safer location
- 76 referrals were made on behalf of clients to counselling services
- 53 clients were referred to the Freedom Together programme
- 17 referrals were made to Early Help
- 14 clients were referred to Social Care for further support
- 14 clients received Immigration Advice
- 62 clients received legal advice and as a result:
  - 7 Non-Molestation Orders were obtained
  - 8 Restraining Orders were put in place
  - 7 Prohibited Steps Order were granted

## Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

Upon completion of the Safer Lives DASH Risk Identification Checklist (RIC), cases are deemed high risk if scoring 14 or above, or if due to professional judgement risk factors presented are considerable regardless of the score, this includes a number of police call outs. These cases are referred to Croydon’s Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which is held fortnightly. MARAC acknowledges that tackling domestic abuse requires an effectively co-ordinated multi-agency response. All MARAC cases are allocated to an IDVA to work with the victim to eliminate the risk of abuse.

Between October to December, 150 referrals to Croydon’s MARAC were received. This is a 26% increase from the same period last year. 35% of the referrals received were repeat referrals, where the case has been heard before at MARAC. This falls in line with the national average, with SafeLives estimating 28-40% of MARAC referrals being for repeat clients. Figure 10 displays the number of MARAC referrals received, including repeat referrals.

Figure 10 (Source: Croydon MARAC Safe Lives Tracker)

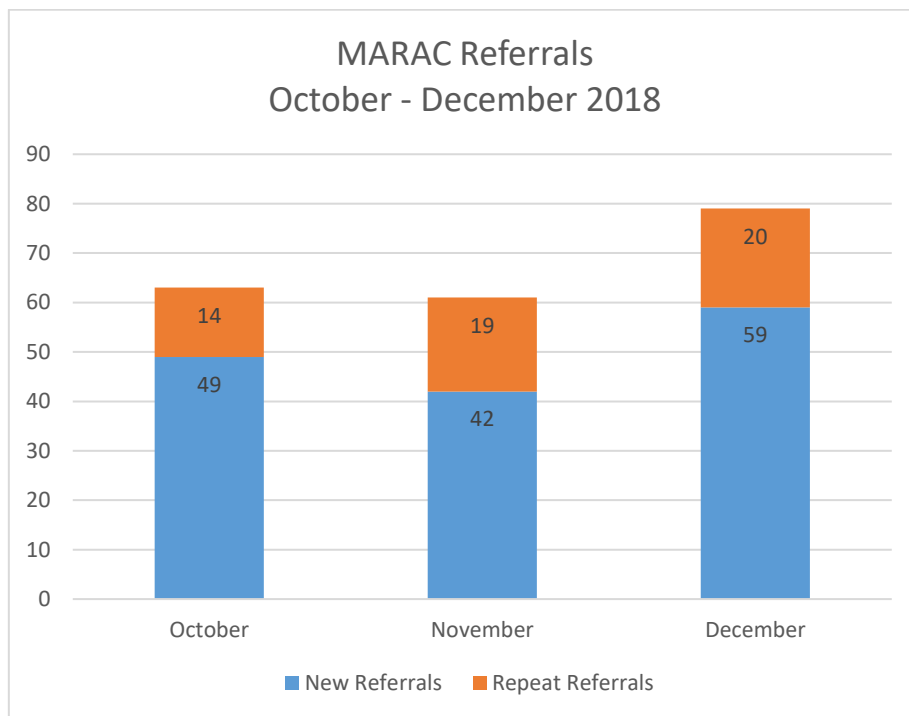


Table 4 (Source: Croydon MARAC Safe Lives Tracker)

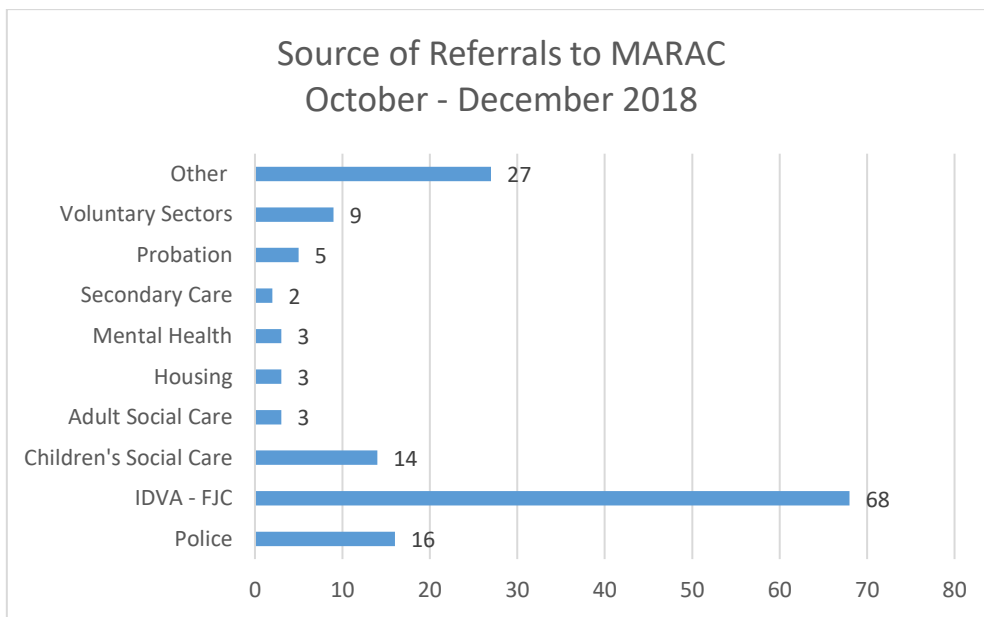
| Month    | Total Referrals |
|----------|-----------------|
| October  | 49              |
| November | 42              |
| December | 59              |

45% of referrals to MARAC during October to December were made by the FJC itself. These referrals from the FJC all follow an assessment completed by an IDVA, and are then referred to MARAC. This is a decrease since the previous quarter. However, it also means that other agencies have been

identifying individuals at high risk and making referrals to Croydon MARAC accordingly. This may also be due to the MARAC training delivered to agencies by the FJC between this quarter.

The FJC remains the highest referrer to MARAC and it is typical for victims to access a DV service before being referred to MARAC to help reduce the high risk posed to them. MARAC referrals from Children’s Social Care has increased since the last quarter of 2017, but will be continue to be monitored by the service. The previous quarter saw only 4% of MARAC referrals from Children’s Social Care and this has increased to 9% between October to December 2018. A possible explanation for this could be due to having a full time IDVA based at MASH or due to training that was delivered to Children’s Social Care teams.

Figure 11 (Source: Croydon MARAC Safe Lives Tracker)



77% of MARAC cases heard between October to December included children in the family. This is consistent with the previous quarter.

Table 5 (Source: DASV Dashboard)

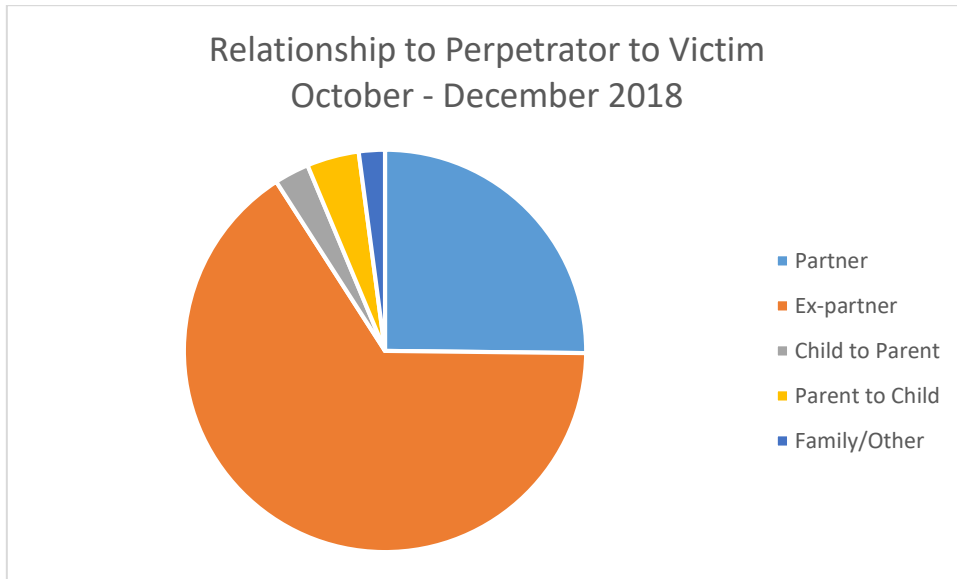
| Month    | Percentage of MARAC referrals with Children in the Family |
|----------|---|
| October  | 82%   |
| November | 76%   |
| December | 73%   |

9 women were pregnant at the time of their referral being made to MARAC. This is important to note as 30% of domestic abuse begins or increases in severity during pregnancy.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.domesticviolencelondon.nhs.uk/1-what-is-domestic-violence-/23-domestic-abuse-during-pregnancy.html>

86% of MARAC referrals between October and December 2018 were due to partner or ex-partner abuse. Figure 12 reflects the national trend, an increase in child to parent violence.

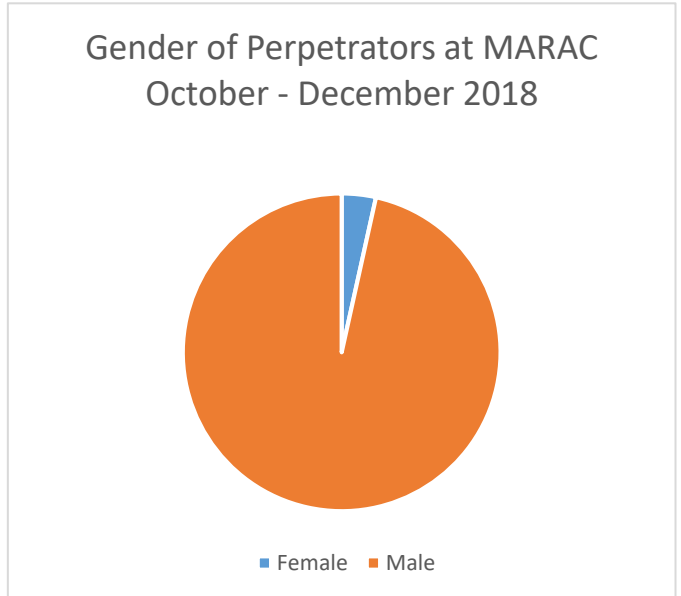
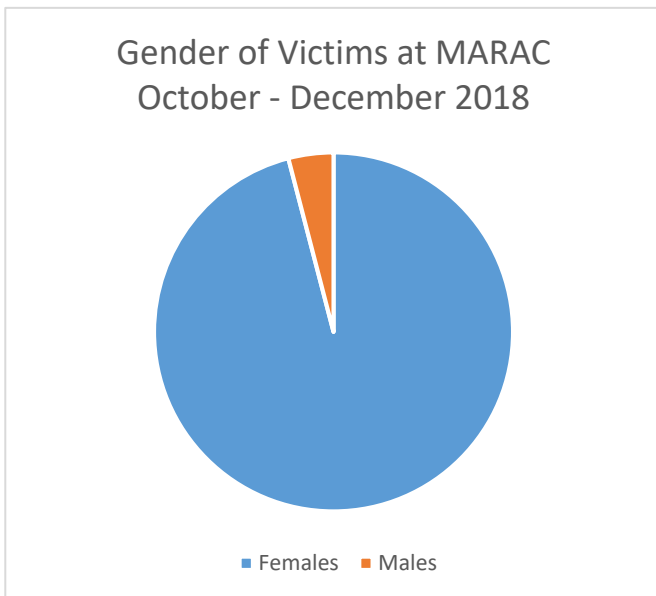
Figure 12 (Source: MARAC Tracker)



From Figures 13 & 14, the gendered nature of domestic abuse is clear. Only 6 victims referred to MARAC between October to December were male. This is an increase from the previous quarter. 93% of the alleged perpetrators heard at MARAC were male, this is a slight decrease from the previous quarter.

Figure 13 (Source: MARAC Tracker)

Figure 14 (Source: MARAC Tracker)



The following two figures (Figures 15 & 16) demonstrate the ethnicities of the victims and alleged perpetrators referred to MARAC between October to December.

Figure 15 (Source: MARAC Tracker)

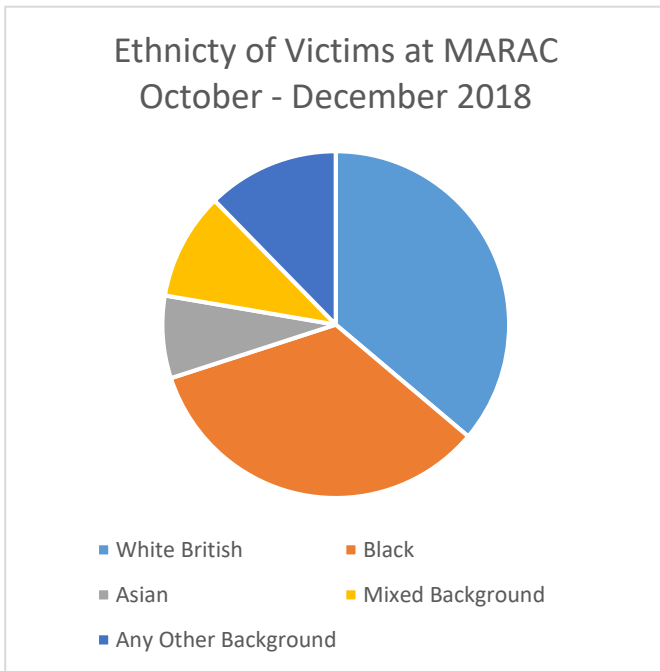
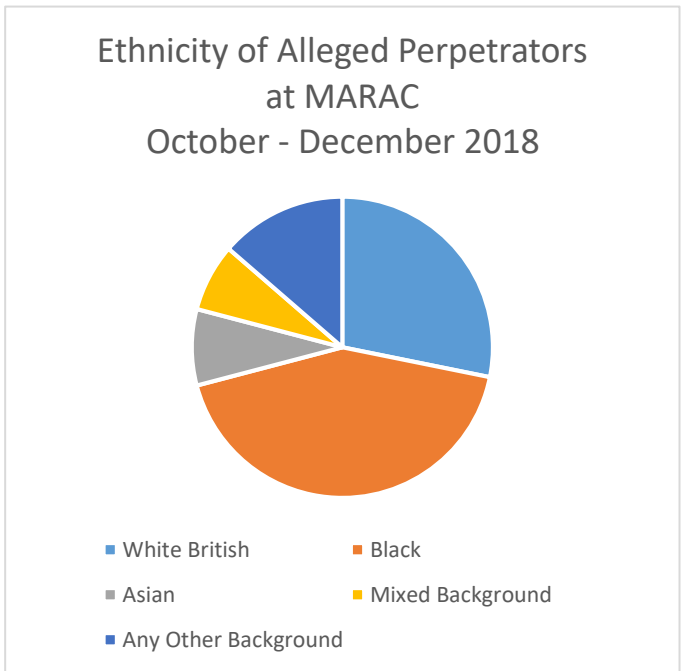


Figure 16 (Source: MARAC Tracker)



The following two figures, 17 & 18, demonstrate the age of both victims and alleged perpetrators referred to MARAC between October and December 2018. Following previous trends, the largest age group for both victims and alleged perpetrators is 31-40 years. This is consistent with previous quarters.

Figure 17 (Source: MARAC Tracker)

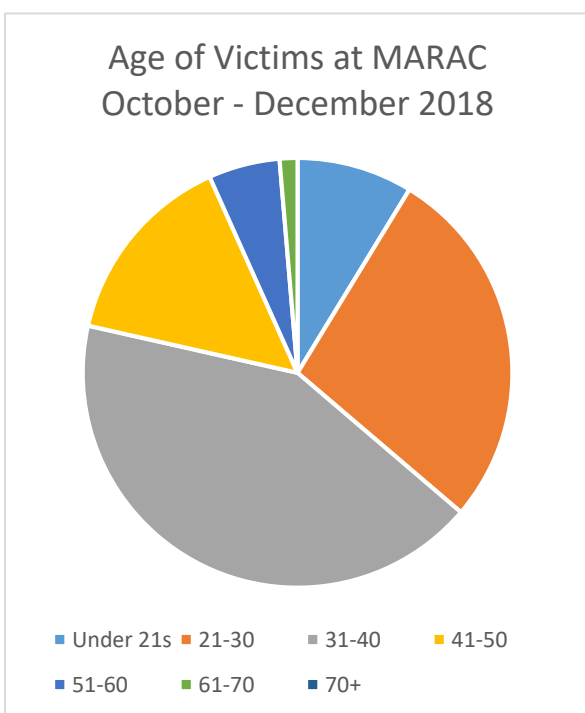
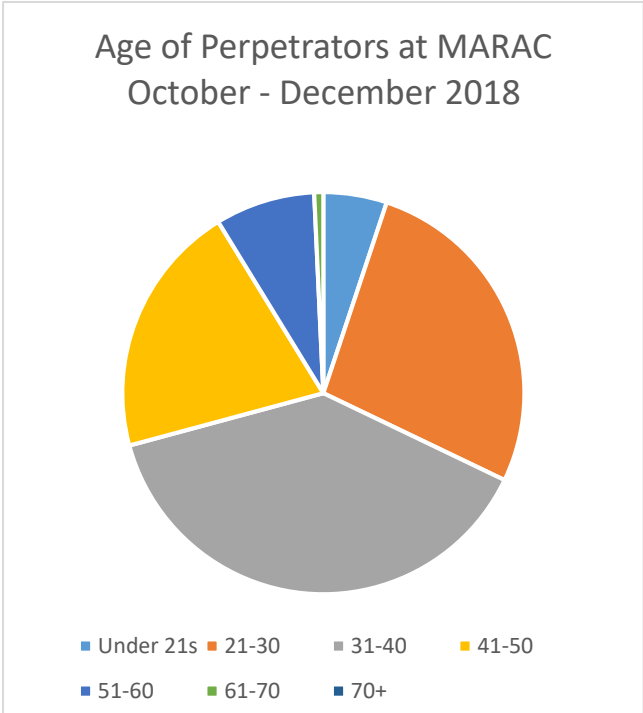


Figure 18 (Source: MARAC Tracker)

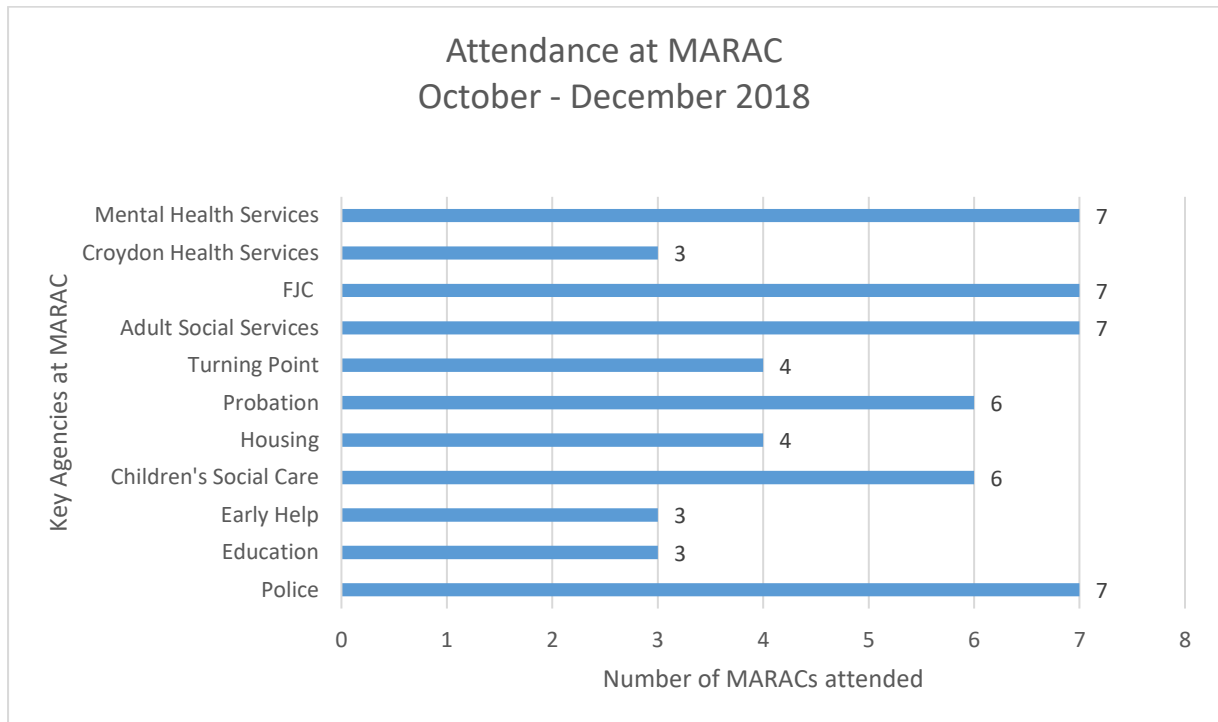


Only 1 of the MARAC victims identified as homosexual, the remaining either identified as heterosexual or preferred not to say. This means that the LGBT+ community were under-represented between October to December. The FJC has now a designated LGBT+ IDVA who has been working in partnership with GALOP since October 2018 and has been informing them of practice with the hope that more victims from this community come forth to seek support.

It was reported that 41% of alleged perpetrators at MARAC misused drugs and/or alcohol. It is important to note that this information is self-reported and victims may be reluctant to share with the Local Authority any alcohol or drug misuse. 38% of MARAC victims reported either mental health issues or a physical disability, compared to 14% of the alleged perpetrators heard at MARAC. Both figures are slightly higher than the previous quarter. Further caution should be taken, as this information is shared by the victim to the referring organisation and not by the alleged perpetrator themselves.

7 MARACs were held during October to December and were all well attended and chaired by the police. Figure 19 below demonstrates the range of agencies that regularly attend MARAC.

Figure 19 (Source: MARAC Tracker)





## DRIVE Data

On 2<sup>nd</sup> July Drive was launched in Croydon, with RISE commissioned to deliver the intervention work. Drive aims to reduce the number of victims of domestic abuse and increase the safety of victims and their families by holding perpetrators to account and challenging them to change. It focuses on reducing victim blaming and shifting the view of ‘why does she not leave’, and start asking ‘why does he not stop’.

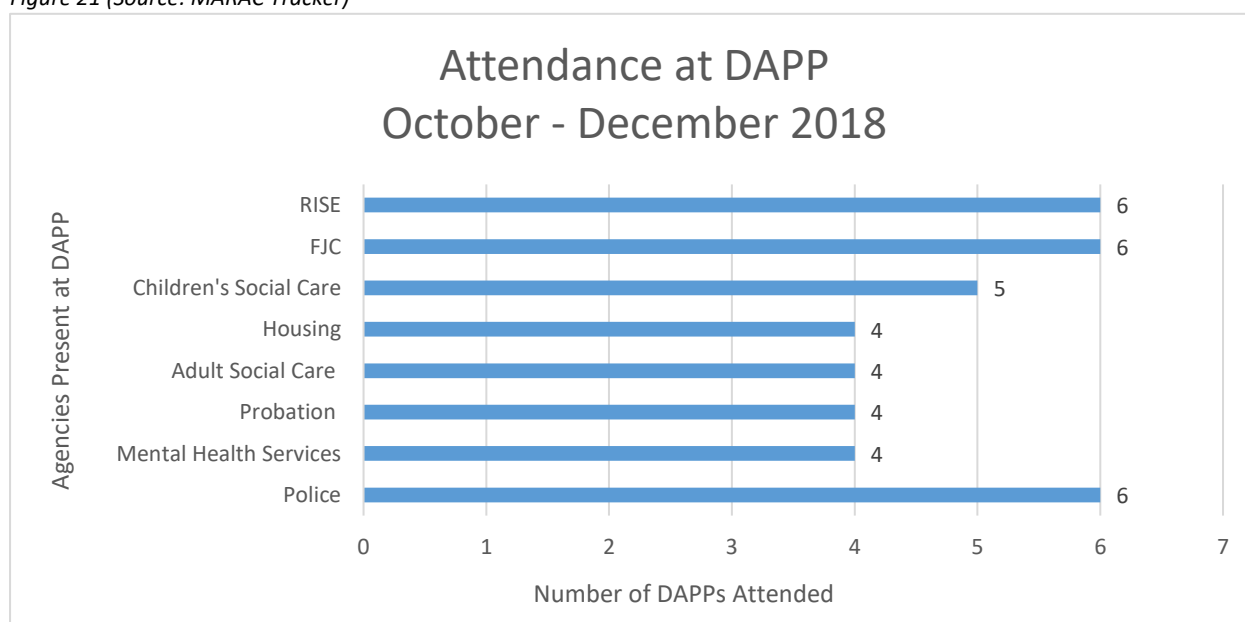
High risk perpetrators of domestic abuse are identified through MARAC and then discussed at a newly established multi-agency panel: Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Panel (DAPP). DAPP is responsible for overseeing referrals to Drive, as well as, enabling a co-ordinated multi-agency response. The aim is to disrupt abuse and reduce re-offending, while keeping victims/survivors and children’s safety at the core.

Figure 20 (Source: DAPP Dashboard)

| Indicator  | October | November | December |
|--|---------|----------|----------|
| Number of perpetrators discussed at DAPP (incl. case reviews)                | 33      | 19       | 11       |
| Number of serial perpetrators discussed (more than one victim/repeat victim) | 18      | 15       | 3        |
| Number referred for Intensive Case Management/Behavioural Change             | 18      | 6        | 2        |
| Number of referrals for disruption work                                      | 4       | 4        | 4        |

From October to December 6 DAPP meetings were held which were well attended and chaired by the police. Figure 21 demonstrates the range of agencies that attended the DAPPs.

Figure 21 (Source: MARAC Tracker)



## **Supporting the Partnership**

### **Training**

From October to December 10 training courses were delivered by the team, including 5 training sessions to council staff. 3 MARAC and Claire's Law Training were also delivered across the council by the FJC and the Community Safety Unit in Croydon to 46 professionals. Across the 10 training sessions there was a total of 199+ attendees. In October, the majority of training was delivered to schools including Nurseries, Junior and Primary Schools. Training was also delivered to Croydon College in November, which 100+ individuals attended to help raise awareness of DV and introduction to services FJC.

Two additional training sessions were organised and delivered through Croydon's Safeguarding Children's Board from November to December. Across the two sessions, there were 36 attendees. Training was also delivered to Gateway and Business Support Teams in the council.

### **DASV Forum**

During Quarter 3 of this financial year the DASV Forum was held on Thursday 15th November, at Croydon Voluntary Action. The forum was attended by 70 professionals working across Croydon. The forum included speakers from Women's Resource Centre, Women and Girls' Network and the Sky Alexandra Centre. The forum is open to anyone working with residents and families within the borough.

Feedback:

- 'Some great speakers/organisations, thank you'
- 'Excellent – keep it up!'

The next forum will take place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February and will again be hosted by Croydon Voluntary Action.

### **DASV Bulletin**

The DASV bulletin is circulated to over 300 professionals and organisations in Croydon every other month. During quarter 3, one bulletin was circulated in November. The next bulletin will be in January.

November's bulletin focused on Domestic Abuse Awareness Month (October), and the awareness of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on the 25<sup>th</sup> November. It also featured the #HerStoryOurStory campaign run by the EU, and also the White Ribbon campaign and Blooming Strong event to acknowledge the strength of women. Additionally, FJC's site move was also advertised on the bulletin along with volunteering at the FJC.

### **DASV Leads in Schools & GP practices**

The DASV Leads form a professional network of officers that as a service we can impart specialist knowledge to, including training offers and to form a cohesive pathway to share information about clients we know that are impacted by abuse.

87% of schools have a designated and trained DASV lead, whilst 83% of GP practices have identified a DASV lead. Training was delivered to the staff teams of 4 schools. Additionally, to further raise the profile of DASV with GPs, an article has been included every month in the GP bulletin.

Further training to DASV Leads in Schools and GP practices was due to continue in this quarter, however this was not possible due to the FJC move.

## **Pharmacy Training**

Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence training was offered to pharmacies for the first time in October. All pharmacies were contacted by letter and by the Public Health team via email. Two training sessions were held and attended by 7 pharmacies. All pharmacies gave the training very positive feedback. The training is being offered again to pharmacies in January.

The training was developed following market research with nine pharmacies across the borough. It was highlighted during the market research that more material was needed in different languages and so the marketing team developed the following poster, using the top five most spoken languages in Croydon:



## **Volunteer Programme**

The FJC Volunteer programme opened for referrals in March and there are currently 28 active Volunteers, with a further 10 potential volunteers on a waiting list to attending training in the next quarter. Between October to December, a total of 149 hours of support was provided to clients by volunteers. This is a decrease from the previous quarter; this may be due to the FJC move and holiday period. 26 hours of supervision was provided to volunteers, as well as a further 50 hours of training.

Feedback from clients on the Volunteer programme:

- “The support I received from my IDVA and Volunteer has left me as stronger young woman. The Volunteer was very in tuned with my experience and she really help me to see life lighter in most of my darkest moments. We connected as mothers. We laughed a few times when we met up and that was all I really needed to go on sometimes. Overall this service is fantastic and I don't think I would be where I am today without these support. I hope to give back some day.”

## **Workplace Ambassadors**

There is a total of 40 trained Workplace Ambassadors across the council. Domestic Abuse Ambassadors provide support and signpost any colleagues who are experiencing domestic abuse.

Active Learning Sessions are held for the Ambassadors and Volunteers to further their knowledge. The October to December period saw Tender continue delivering a workshop around the Whole Schools Approach and discussed some of the gendered issues affecting young people today. The Whole Schools Approach is a programme commissioned by MOPAC to be delivered in four schools across the borough, focusing on issues of gendered crime and serious youth violence.

## **Marketing**

In December the DASV team had a two week slot on the Decaux boards around the borough which the marketing team developed and supported with a press release. The press release led to Councillor Hamida Ali being interviewed by the London Live television channel, discussing the impact of domestic abuse in Croydon, particularly during the festive period and how to access support.



The FJC, and other local organisations were also promoted as part of the StoptheTraffik campaign in December. StoptheTraffik launched a campaign online to tackle labour and sexual exploitation which went live on social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The campaign was targeted at Romanian, Polish, Albanian, Vietnamese speaking communities in Croydon, as well as English. The campaign was a success and the FJC saw an increase in referrals being made from these ethnic minority backgrounds; thus ultimately reaching out to communities who may not have been aware of the services available in the borough.

The Safer Croydon Partnership Communications Officer has been crucial in ensuring that the FJC's site move has been effectively and discreetly communicated, internally and externally. The FJC moved to new permanent site in November. The new site has been designed with clients in mind and is DDA compliant.

In addition, the marketing team continue to support the promotion of the DASV Workplace Ambassadors through various internal channels.