



# **NFDC domestic abuse strategy 2025-2028 public consultation**

July - August 2025

# Online public consultation hosted by NFDC through the Go Vocal platform for public feedback to the NFDC domestic abuse strategy 2025-2028. 18 responses were collected in total during 14 July 2025 – 10 August 2025

The consultation period was open for a 4-week period from 14 July 2025 to 10 August 2025 for the public to provide their feedback on the proposed NFDC domestic abuse strategy. The online platform 'Go Vocal' was used for the consultation, created by NFDC officers.

The survey was made available through the New Forest District Council website, promoted via social media channels, and shared with residents via email communications.

Any member of the public unable to complete the survey online were sent either an electronic or paper copy and their responses were inputted to analyse the data.

Respondents were able to access three documents prior to completing the survey:

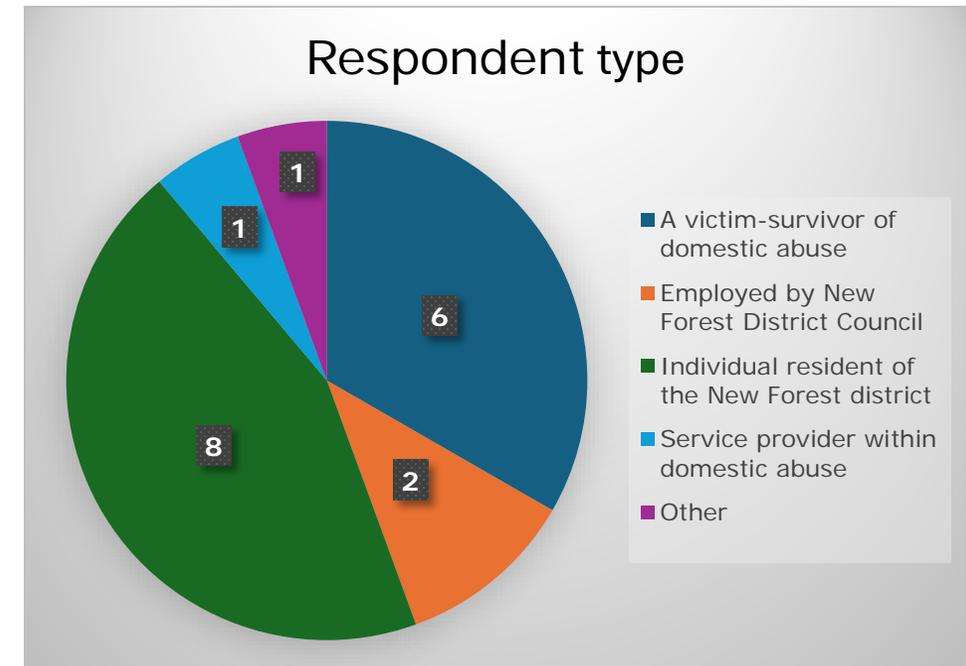
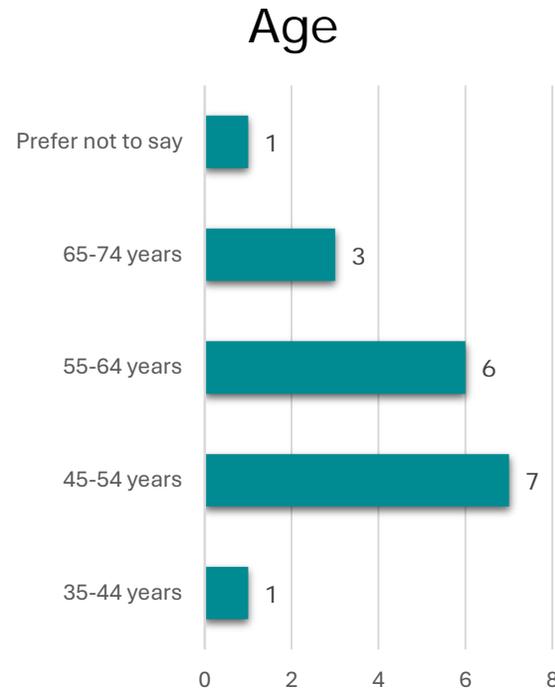
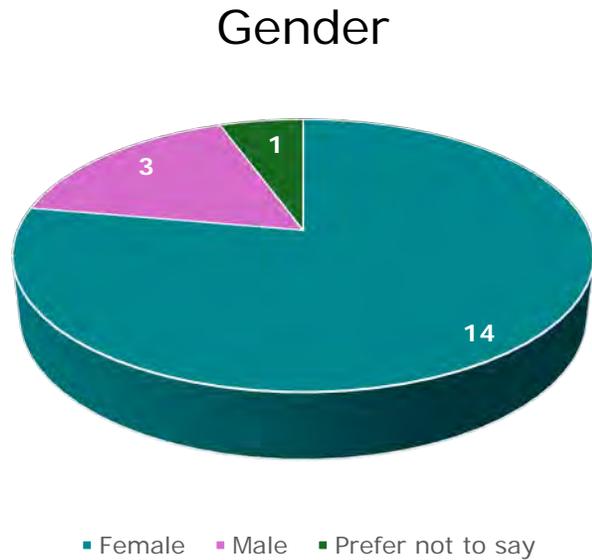
- NFDC domestic abuse strategy 2025-2028

**18 responses** in total were recorded



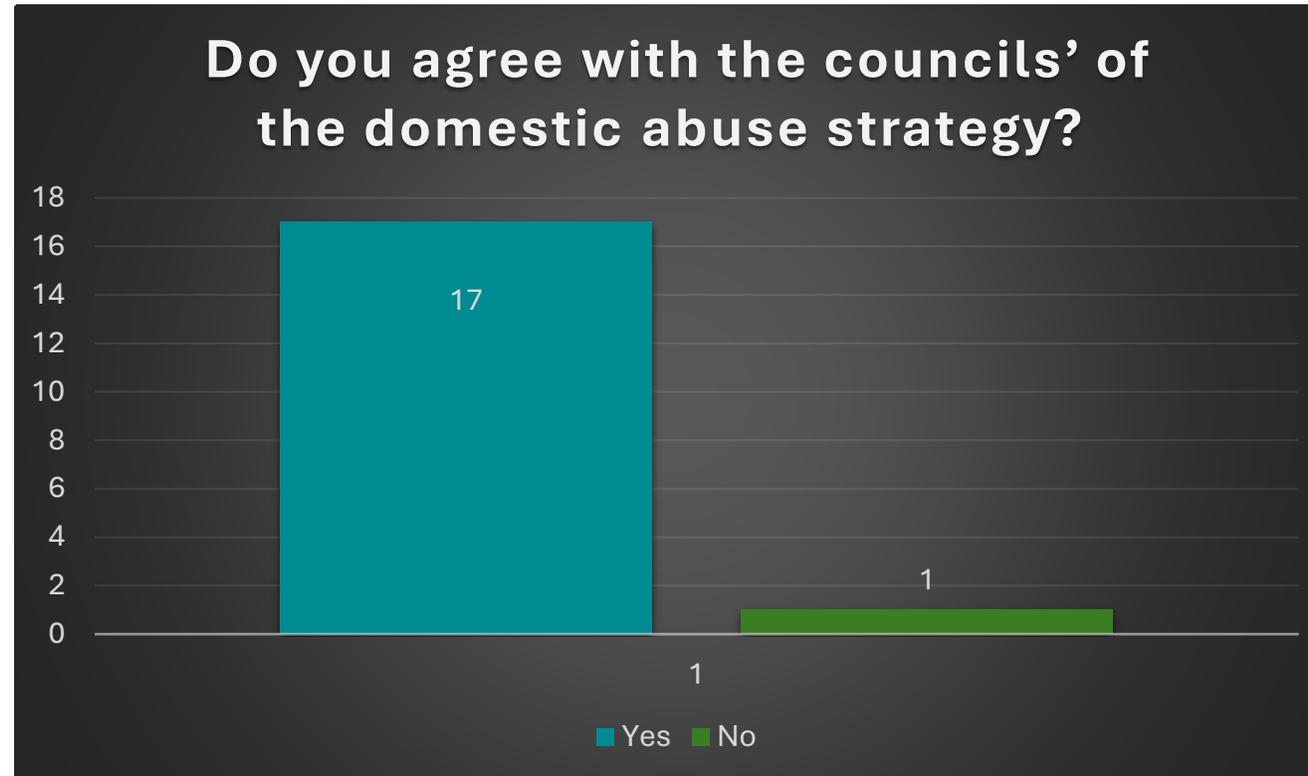
*This document summarises the findings of the survey*

Good spread of age groups over 35 -74 years responding to the survey, albeit no respondents under the age of 35. More females responded to the survey than males whilst 33% of those completing the survey are a victim-survivor of domestic abuse.



Average age:  
56

# In supporting victims-survivors of domestic abuse, do you agree with the councils' priorities as outlined on page 11 and 12 of the domestic abuse strategy?



**94%** of respondents agreed with the priorities outlined within the strategy.

# When considering priority one, awareness and early intervention, do you agree with the commitments outlined within the strategy?

Do you agree with priority one awareness and early intervention and the commitments?



Respondents most frequently emphasised the importance of early intervention and increasing awareness and knowledge about domestic abuse, both among the general public and professionals. Many highlighted that education should start early, particularly with children and young adults, to help them understand what constitutes a healthy relationship and to address domestic abuse as a learned behaviour.

Several responses stressed the need for more experience and expertise in recognising the effects of domestic violence, as well as the importance of identifying gaps in support and ensuring victims are not pre-judged or overlooked by services. There was also a call for greater awareness of less recognised forms of abuse, such as female-to-male abuse and the use of false allegations as a form of control, with a need to address institutional biases.

Some respondents noted that people often do not realise they are in abusive relationships and may interact with multiple agencies before abuse is identified. Others questioned the effectiveness of the commitments if victims are unwilling or unable to speak to council staff.

A few responses pointed out that strategies should not only focus on victims but also address the root causes by considering why perpetrators abuse in the first place. There was also mention of the need to avoid excessive bureaucracy.

Overall, there was broad agreement with the priority one commitments, with most respondents supporting increased awareness, early intervention, education, and improved support for victims, while also highlighting areas for improvement such as perpetrator-focused interventions and recognition of all forms of abuse.

## When considering priority two, workforce development, do you agree with the commitments outlined within the strategy?



All respondents agreed with the priority two commitments, with several explicitly stating their agreement. There was strong support for the idea of domestic abuse (DA) champions, particularly for their potential to support victims at an earlier stage and to act as leaders within council departments. Some suggested that champions who are themselves survivors could be especially effective.

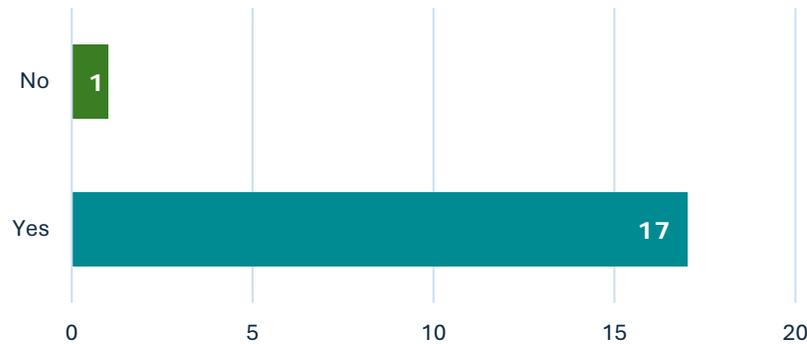
A recurring theme was the need for better and more widespread training for staff, ensuring they are equipped to recognise and respond to all types of domestic abuse, and to break down biases and prejudices. Some respondents emphasised that training should be appropriate to staff roles and that knowledge gained could benefit the wider community. There was also a call for multi-agency working and up-to-date knowledge for champions.

A few respondents expressed uncertainty about the practical impact of the commitments unless all victims interact with trained staff, and one highlighted the importance of a proactive workforce able to prevent and stop abuse. Signposting to appropriate support services was also mentioned as a benefit of better-trained staff.

Overall, the main trends were strong agreement with the commitments, widespread support for DA champions (especially those with lived experience), and a clear emphasis on comprehensive, role-specific training to improve early intervention and support.

# When considering priority three, high quality service provision, do you agree with the commitments outlined within the strategy?

Do you agree with priority three, high quality service provision and the commitments?



Most respondents emphasised the need for better and more accessible safe accommodation for domestic abuse victims, with several highlighting that current provision is insufficient and that victims often return to perpetrators due to lack of furnished, suitable housing. There was a strong call for improved support services, including high-quality, individualised support and better service provision from authorities.

Many respondents stressed the importance of staff training to recognise signs of domestic abuse and provide appropriate support and signposting. The need for local authorities to take a more proactive, leading role rather than relying on charities, especially in coordinating housing, education, finance, and legal support for survivors who are often highly dislocated.

Security in accommodation was noted as crucial, as was the integration of legal and multi-agency approaches. Some respondents mentioned the value of community education and championing abuse-free relationships, with offers to support such initiatives.

Overall, while there was broad agreement with the commitments, respondents consistently called for more resources, better training, and a more joined-up approach to supporting domestic abuse victims.

# When considering priority four, multi-agency working and pathway development, do you agree with the commitments outlined within the strategy?

Many respondents emphasised the importance of consistency and effective multi-agency working, with several highlighting that a strategic board could help ensure a coordinated response for both victims and perpetrators. However, concerns were raised about agencies' willingness to collaborate, with some noting that different organisations often do not work well together.

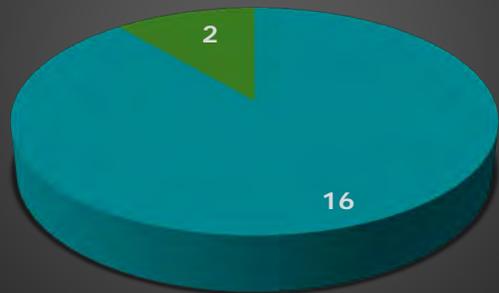
A recurring theme was the need for lived experience to be represented in decision-making. Multiple respondents suggested that survivors of domestic abuse should be included on the strategic board, as their insights are vital for shaping effective support and understanding the long-term impact of abuse.

Several responses stressed the importance of ongoing, holistic support for victims beyond the initial crisis stage. There were calls for mentoring schemes involving former victims, and for better assistance with housing, education, employment, and navigating legal processes. Current support from charities was described as insufficient, and the need for practical help (including expenses for volunteers) was highlighted.

Some respondents simply agreed with the commitments or described them as comprehensive or good, while one expressed uncertainty about the value of creating a new board. There was also mention of the need for non-judgemental support and addressing root causes within families.

Overall, the main trends were calls for better coordination, survivor involvement in governance, and more comprehensive long-term support for victims.

Do you agree with priority four, multi-agency working and pathway development and the commitments?



■ Yes ■ No

Please rank the four proposed priorities in order of importance, 1 being the highest.

