Understanding Domestic Violence in Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire County Council and Northamptonshire Police

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Executive summary

Summary of findings from the police data overview analysis

1. Across the whole of Northamptonshire a total of 4,045 recorded reports of domestic violence (DV) from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015 were recorded by the Police. This shows an increase of 42.7% compared to position in previous 12 months.
2. 997 crimes of all recorded DV in Northamptonshire over the stated 12 month period occurred when there was at least one child present, this equates to 24.6% of all DV.
3. 1,526 crimes of all recorded DV in Northamptonshire occur at the weekend. Weekend, for the purpose of this report, covers Saturday and Sunday. This can be explained by the strong correlation with alcohol intake and long periods spent indoors over the weekend.
4. Alcohol is the largest contributory factor to DV in 39.4% of crimes. The other major factors are child normally resident (37%), relationship break up (26.3%) and child present (24.7%). Multiple contributory factors can be selected for a single crime therefore the count will not equate 100%.
5. Corby, (8.10/1000 population), Northampton (7.37/1000 population) and Kettering (6.69/1000 population) have the largest proportion of domestic violence reported over the stated 12 month period relation to both the volume of DV and the rate per 1000 population.
6. 53.5% of all DV in Northamptonshire resulted in evidential difficulties – no victim support outcome i.e. victim wanted Police to diffuse immediate tension between victim and perpetrator, but did not wish to press formal charges.
7. 77.8% of all victims of DV in Northamptonshire fall with the age bracket 18 to 45 (figures exclude victims under the age of 16).
8. 86% of all victims of DV in Northamptonshire described their ethnicity as White (i.e. White British or White). This figure reflects the distribution of ethnicity across the whole of the Northamptonshire population (91% of total population- according to 2011 Census). 338/3,849 or 8.8% of all victims of DV describe their ethnicity as being Black Ethnic Minority (BME). This figure is in line with the distribution of total population for the whole of Northamptonshire (8.5%-2011 census).
9. 38.5% of DV within Northamptonshire occur in households grouped by Experian as Family Basic\textsuperscript{1} and Transient Renters\textsuperscript{2}.
10. Risk levels for victims of DV in Northamptonshire are classified as high for 10% of victims and medium for 52% of crimes using the DASH form as a means to identify risk. Information from a previous police review suggests that Police officer intervention does little to reduce level of risk to victims. In fact, more victims are likely to have higher risk levels after Police visit due to the questions answered.
11. 12% of victims in Northamptonshire contacted the police twice or more with the stated 12 months reporting being a victim of a domestic violent crime.
12. 80.6% of all DV crimes in Northamptonshire occur between current partner and ex-partners.

\textsuperscript{1} Family basics traits are those on low income wages living in housing association accommodation or council tenure. With a large proportion having multiple children with low resources mainly aged between 25 and 45.

\textsuperscript{2} Transient renters are classified as young couples/singles that have young children and that live by their means, possibly home sharers.
Summary of findings from Northamptonshire County Council - all ‘Domestic Violence’ Initial Contacts (IC) during 2014/15 data overview analysis:

1. During 2014/15 Northamptonshire County Council had 3,993 ICs to Children’s Services with the presenting issue recorded as ‘Domestic Violence’.
2. 63.5% of these ICs were received from the Police, with Health services providing the second highest number (11.1%).
3. 56.7% of these ICs had an outcome of ‘Further Assessment Required’ but 28.1% had an outcome of ‘NFA’.
4. Age distribution of the children shows that younger children are more likely to be effected by Domestic Violence.

Summary of findings from the Police data overview analysis of ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort:

1. 37.2% of crimes from all evidential difficulties cohort had an indicator that alcohol was a contributing factor in the domestic violence crime.
2. 38.7% of domestic crime within the evidential difficulties occurred at the weekend, this is almost identical to the level at all DV.
3. 82% of the cohort victims are female; this level mirrors the levels seen in DV where a child is present however is a higher rate (7% increases) than all domestic violence crimes.
4. Risk levels for victims within the cohort show a higher level of high and medium risk victims than the all domestic violence rate. This could suggest better identification of risk by officers when there is a child present.
5. 91.4% of the cohorts crime occur between partners or ex partners
6. As with overall domestic violence Corby, Kettering and Northampton are the three highest sectors for domestic violence where a child is present and for the evidential difficulties.

Summary of findings from Northamptonshire County Council ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort data overview analysis:

1. From the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort, 415 children were identified as known to NCC during the financial year of 2014/15.
2. This cohort had a total of 794 ICs between them. Most of the ICs regarding the identified children came from the Police (67.7%).
3. The most frequently recorded presenting issues for the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort was for ‘Domestic Violence’ (68.1%) followed by ‘Family Breakdown’ (6.8%).
4. The age distribution of the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort shows higher numbers of younger children affected by domestic violence at the identified addresses.
5. 59.5% of ICs in the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort had an outcome of ‘Further assessment required’, 38.6% (207) where considered to require ‘no further action’.
6. Risk levels are assigned by the police, the majority of ICs designated as high risk had an outcome of ‘Further assessment required’. However, 23 referrals that the police designated as high risk where considered by NCC to require ‘No Further Action’. 
Recommendations

Strategy/action plan should address or make links with other strategies regarding the following key findings:

- Reduce risk of harm to children, given that children were present in 27% of crimes recorded by Police
- Promote healthy alcohol intake and work to reduce link between recorded DV and alcohol intake by Police at weekends
- Domestic Violence happens or is contributed to by many factors (e.g. alcohol, child normally resident, relationship break ups and arguments about the children). Helping families to deal with these contributions factors to reduce levels of DV
- Prioritise tackling of DV by district according to rates i.e. Kettering, Corby, and Northampton
- Targeted support for DV victims by type of household – prioritise family basics, transient renters and rural realities
- Consider targeting service that are located close to most prevalent areas of DV across the county as shown by the mapping.

Further work required across partner agencies to collect, analyse and share data to fill current gaps in our knowledge of DV, especially in relation to the following:

1. A defined pathway of partnership data sharing for future analysis
2. Distribution of DV Crime/ NCC referral information in relation to all nine Equality Act protected characteristics. I.e. age, sex, religion, ethnicity, housing, health etc.
3. Mapping the classification of Police DV risk levels – (High, Medium and Standard) to NCC children’s risk scores/categorisations
4. Collection of intelligence where there is no reported violence or domestic incident e.g. A/E attendances, GP consultation, Occupational Health consultations etc. Other gap areas include where victim/perpetuator is under age of 16, information on how long a victim has been risk-rated high and how changes to risk category occur. Under-reporting of repeat victims of DV is another gap area
5. Thematic review of a representative sample of Police, NCC free text fields (include NHS/health records too) for each record to have a better understanding of risk factors for DV, service uptake etc in Northamptonshire
6. More detailed work to understand yearly trends for Police/NCC data in respect of DV. We should do same re NHS/health data-if available.
Brief

The main aim of this report was to correlate datasets between Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Police and other partnership organisations to better understand what domestic violence looks like within Northamptonshire. Using this collated data, to produce a needs analysis on what service those victims, perpetrators and families require or currently access. This report was commissioned as part of a domestic violence task and finish group. This group has produced a draft strategy that sets out the aims over the next five years alongside an action plan of how and by whom this will be achieved. This analysis sets out to utilise the intelligence held by the partnership and to provide insight into supporting the strategy.

Methodology

The purpose of the work was to collect data held by the partnership organisations and to cross reference the data sets to create a more detailed understanding of the whole family in relation to Domestic Violence.

The data presented here is an overview of data from Northamptonshire County Council’s Children’s Services and Northamptonshire Police Services. An amalgamation of the data has been mapped across the county to show areas of prevalence as seen by NCC and Northamptonshire Police.

NCC data shows the number of Initial Referrals that are received by the Children’s Services teams over a 12 month period where the primary identified issue is of Domestic Violence. For a number of these cases the details of other risk factors have also been examined to show additional issues that affect the families and that the services who support them must take into consideration.

Police data shows the number of domestic violence crimes that have been reported over the 12 month period between 1st April 2014 and the 31st March 2015. This data details aspects around those crimes including the details of the victim, suspect, the household and whether a child was present at the time of the crime. The data does not include domestic abuse crimes that are not violence related, nor does it include domestic incidents.

Data has been requested from a number of other agencies to match across what services these victims, suspects or children have accessed. Data has also been requested from Public Health and the NHS to show the number of people who attend hospital in relation to injuries sustained through domestic violence, though these data sets will not be part of this presentation.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations to the data that need to be remembered. The following list is not exhaustive but covers the main limitations:

- The data and analysis presented here only show those individuals that are known to either the Police or NCC.
- Data quality can sometimes be poor and there are also variations in the way front line staff record the data across the organisations, this will affect the level of detail and our ability to match the information across organisations.
- The data presented here only covers one year and it is unknown how representative this year is of others or take into account for any trend variations.
Where free text boxes are used for recording details of crimes or referrals the information in these boxes can not be retrieved without performing an audit style analysis, something which has not been done. In addition to this, Police referrals for children are uploaded as electronic PDF’s which would also need a thematic review as the system cannot retrieve the data.

Data recording relies on individuals to interpret situations and information as accurately as possible and record these interpretations, where information is lacking this could be as a result of it being unknown or unrecorded.

Another important limitation to remember centres around how comprehensive this sample is of the wider population and needs of those affected by domestic violence. In order to complete this analysis cuts to the data were made for a number of reasons, including inability to match records or a request for a more focused understanding of a particular cohort. The explanation that follows illustrates where cuts have been made.

There were 9,635 domestic incidents and 5,313 domestic crimes recorded between 1st April 2014 and the 31 March 2015 by Northamptonshire Police, of those there were 4,035 that had been recorded as domestic violence - that figure being split 59.2% (2,387) for violence without injury and 40.8% (1648) for violence with injury crimes.

Out of these 4,035 domestic violence crimes there was 997 (24.7%) that were recorded as having a child present at the time of the offence. This figure when looked at in terms of number of addresses across the County equated to 896 unique addresses where a domestic violence crime had occurred and the child was present in the time period used. This rate is converted to 3 out of every 1,000 households in Northamptonshire.

From those 997 crimes identified there was 933 victims suggesting that 64 of those victims had been a victim twice or more times within the 12 month period and 908 suspects again suggesting that 79 suspects had been named twice or more within the same period.

From the 896 households identified by the Police data that contained children at the time of the domestic offence, we have been successful in matching 402 of those addresses with data of Initial Contacts for Children with a presenting issue of Domestic Abuse held by Northamptonshire County Council. For those 494 addresses that did not match across services, this could be due to a number of reasons: a) the primary presenting issue for NCC is not domestic violence but another issue, b) a CPT referral was not conducted by the Police (this was the case for approx. 180 cases) c) that the location of the crime was different to the home address of the child therefore not being able to match on addresses and d) data recording issues when recording addresses on both services behalf.

Due to time restraints on the report it was requested that we focussed our efforts on those where the Police had a crime outcome of evidential difficulties, no victims support or evidential difficulties with victim support. These outcomes suggest that while the victims of those crimes may have been supported as much as possible by the Police service there was either no support from the victim to bring a sanction to the suspect or the Police didn’t have enough evidence to do so. From this request, 231 crimes were identified and it is the addresses of these crimes that our analysis is based on.

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1 Minimum due to officers recording standards, there is a suggestion that it could be a higher figure, but officers when data inputting forget to complete the tick box.

2 290000 households in Northamptonshire ( Rounded), Census 2011 ONS release
Wider and Supporting Research

This report should not be read in isolation but in reference to wider and supporting research from a number of sources. The below additional source suggestions is not an exhaustive list.

For Police context please consider:

- Domestic Abuse Quality Assurance Review – Dave Warnes
- Domestic Abuse Problem Profile – Laura Curtis
- Domestic Abuse Performance Framework – Billy Saunders

For children’s information relating directly to numbers of children affected by Domestic Violence and Abuse in Northamptonshire this report should be read in conjunction with The Children’s JSNA 2015 (including all Children’s JSNA Locality Profiles) and the annual report of LAC children in NCC’s care.

This report did not include information on health for those cases which are known to Northamptonshire Police or Northamptonshire County Council for data confidentiality and timescale reasons. However, the ‘Northamptonshire A&E Assault Analysis Annual Report 2014-2015’ (awaiting publication) may be able to provide some information on recorded levels of hospital treatment for injuries of domestic violence’s assault.

This report must also be taking in the context of wider national research, for example:

Office for National Statistics – Understanding DV across England and Wales 2013/14

Each year the ONS carries out a Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) covering crimes committed against the population of England and Wales resident in households, and crime against households. Though it has a narrower range of offences than Police recorded violence, it is able to capture offences experienced by respondents that have not been reported.

In 2013/14 the CSEW reports that:

- 8.5% of women and 4.5% of males have experienced some form of domestic abuse in the last year. This is an estimated 1.4 million female and 700,000 male victims of abuse.
- 6.8% of women and 3% of men reported experiencing some type of partner abuse in the last year.
- 28.3% of women and 14.7% of men (or an estimated 4.6 million women and 2.4 million males) reported having experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16.
- The decline in domestic abuse for all victims between the 2004/05 and 2008/09 CSEW surveys was statistically significant. However, the current figure (6.5% for both men and women combined) continues a fairly stable trend seen since 2008/09.
- Women were more likely than men to have experienced intimate violence across all headline types of abuse asked about, for example, 2.2% of women and 0.7% of men having experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts) in the last year.

Police Crime Information

The information presented below from Northamptonshire Police covers a 12 month period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015. A Domestic Crime is any occurrence of controlling, coercive, threatening behavior, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

There were 5,313 domestic crimes that where recorded during the defined timeframe by Northamptonshire Police, 76% (4,035) of these being defined as domestic violence. Only domestic violence crimes have been used for this analysis.

![Figure 1: Domestic Violence Contribution to all Violence](image)

Domestic violence accounts for 36% of all violence recorded by the Police within the stated time period and this has seen an increase by 42.7% compared with the same time period 12 months earlier. This equates to around 1,200 more domestic violence crime. This is due to an increase in confidence and first time reporting victims; using the current trends is it predicted that this is likely to continue in the near future (Figure 1).

25% of all recorded domestic violence occurs when there is at least one child present, those crimes equate to just over 9% of all violence recorded within the stated time period.

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8 The number of domestic violence crimes can be split 59.2% (2387) for violence without injury and 40.8% (1648) for violence with injury crimes.
41% of all domestic violence within Northamptonshire is classed as violence with injury; this level of violence carries a minimum sentence of 6 months in prison. On average, using recorded Police data, it is reasonable to suggest that around 400 crimes where children are present are classified as violence with injury (Figure 2).

37.9% of all domestic violence occurs at the weekend, with more stable levels being seen throughout the working week. This is to be expected and correlates with the trends seen nationally. Weekends also show a strong correlation with alcohol consumption and could also be due to the longer hours spent with relations. 50.2% of all DV crimes at the weekend have a factor of alcohol, compared with a lower rate of 32.4% during the week (Figure 3).
Figure 4 shows that 52% of all domestic violence in the stated time period occurred between the hours of 20:00 and 04:00 which again correlates strongly with alcohol intake. 32% also correlated with the times that the licensed premises close and could suggest that violence may occur when one party returns home after significant alcohol intake.

Figure 5 shows the trends in domestic violence over the past five years. In 2010, the force was averaging 275 recorded domestic violence crimes a month, in the 12 months period between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015 that rate was 350 a month, 75 crimes a month more, equating to around 900 more compared with the rates for 2010/2011. If child present crimes are 25% of all domestics, at the current rate that can be logically inferred that 200 more crimes a year have a child present than 5 years ago. (Figure 5)
Contributory Factors for Domestic Violence

Figure 6: Indicator Reason for DV Crime
(Please Note that multiple indicators can be used on a single crime therefore the volumes do not total the number of crimes)

Figure 6 shows that 39.4% of all domestic violence recorded over the last 12 months had a contributory factor of alcohol. This figure is thought to be higher as an internal audit suggested anywhere up to a further 20% of all crime is missing the alcohol flag when it should have been applied. This is also represented by the national ONS report of violence that states around 50% of violence have a contributor of alcohol.

The second and fourth highest indicators relate to children being present at the time of the DV crime or that they are normally resident in this household. With this data it is reasonable to infer that almost 40% of all addresses where a domestic crime has taken place house at least one child.

In almost a quarter of all domestics violent crimes there was a child present.

Domestic Crimes by Police Sectors

Northampton has the highest percentage of domestic violence crimes of any policing sectors in the county. This is to be expected due to the volume of population that live within the town (Table 1).

Table 1: Percentage of total Crimes by Police Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of total crimes by sector</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daventry</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Northamptonshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
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<td>Northampton</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Northamptonshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
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When domestic violence sector comparisons are measured by how many crimes per 100k population, Corby presents the highest proportion of domestic violence for their volume of population (Figure 7).

**Outcomes of Domestic Violence**

54% of all DV resulted in an outcome of evidential difficulties - no victim support. Reading through a random selection of these crimes, it was noticed that some victims wanted the suspect dealt with for their actions but did not wish for any sanction to be pressed against the suspect. There is a thought that the length of time between contacting the Police for assistance and the arrival of Police may have an effect, the heat of the moment effect (Figure 8).

A second responder scheme called ‘What Works’ from the college of policing suggests a trial in America shows that where a victim is kept informed either by the Police or a commissioned service this improves
victim confidence in the service, therefore increases cooperation with regards to crimes and possibly the willingness of victims to remove themselves from these situations.

**Victim Profile**

![Victims Age](image)

Figure 9: Victims Age

The highest proportion of victims of domestic violence are within the ages of 18 to 45 (77.6%) and mainly the ages of 26-35 (28.8%). These age groups are the most likely to have younger children. However, the Police do not record a crime as a domestic if one party is under the age of 16, in compliance with the crime recording standards (Figure 9).

![Ethnicity of the Victims of DV Crime](image)

Figure 10: Ethnicity of the Victim of Domestic Violence Crime

86.3% of all Northamptonshire ethnicity is White - British, so the percentage this ethnicity contributes to domestic violence victims in the county is to be expected. However, there are still very low representations of domestic violence coming from ethnic minorities (Figure 10).
Figure 11 shows that 76% of all domestic violence victims are female.

Figure 12: MOSAIC Household Groups for Location of Crime

36.5% of all domestic violence occurs in households grouped by Experian as ‘Family Basics’ and ‘Transient Renters’ (Figure 12).

‘Family Basics’ traits are those on low income living in housing association accommodation or council tenure, with a large proportion having multiple children with low resources, mainly aged between 25-45.

‘Transient Renters’ are classified as young couples/singles that have no children and who live by their means; possibly home sharers.
42.5% of all domestic violence occurs in households that are composed of single males or females, with the third highest composition being those with families. There have been a number of crimes where ex partners have turned up to collect their children from the other party and a domestic assault has ensued (Figure 13).

Current risk levels for those victims of domestic crimes show that 52% are currently classified as medium risk with 10% being high. Those victims that present as high risk are as such due partly to the completion of a risk review done by the DASH forms. A hypothesis test completed in recent months indicates that officer intervention does little to reduce the risk to the victims, with more victims having their risk heightened after the Police visit (Figure 14).
13% of domestic violence victims have reported 2 or more violent crimes in the 12 month period. As this data is only looking at a certain 12 month period it does not mean that the other 83% are first time reporters or that they have not been a victim of another crime type.

That said, the 13% of all victims who have contacted the Police at least twice in 12 months equates to 929 crimes (Figure 15).

Figure 16 visualises a very high level of domestic violence crimes between partners and ex partners at 80% of all domestic violence, mothers and fathers being the third highest group at 7.5%. Mothers alone represent 6% of the total.
Male on male domestic violence accounts for 7% of all domestic violence, with the majority falling under the relationship of brothers (Figure 17).

Female domestic violence accounts for 5% of all domestic violence, mainly with mother being the victims, followed by daughters (Figure 18).
Suspect Profile

The number of suspects that are arrested for the domestic violence crimes is very even with 51% of all suspects being arrested (Figure 19). However, there are two separate views around domestic arrests, one that making arrests could safeguard the victim better, the other being that splitting the family is actually the wrong decision. The action to arrest is one that needs to be carefully investigated at the time of the offence by the attending officer using their professional judgement.

Figure 20 shows that contrary to victims profiles, there is a clear sway towards Male suspects with nearly 80% for the stated time period. A note of caution is that when a domestic violence occurs and both parties are injured this is recorded as both parties being a victim and both parties being a suspect.

As with the victim age, the highest proportion of domestic violence suspects are also within the ages of 18 to 45 (79.2%) and mainly the ages of 26-35 (35%). These age groups are the most likely to have younger children (Figure 21). However, the difference between suspect age range and victim age range is the volumes that fall within 18-25 and 36-45. It is noticeable that there are many more victims in the 18-25
category than there are suspects, suggesting that those victims that are younger adults are being violently assaulted by suspects that are older than themselves. See figure below for a combined chart (Figure 22).

Figure 22: Suspect Age to Victim Age

**Correlation between alcohol and suspects**

![Figure 23: 5 Years of Domestic Violence levels correlated with Alcohol indicator](image-url)
Domestic violence has a very strong correlation with suspects who have been drinking alcohol prior or during the violent crime.

Figure 23 shows that where spikes in domestic violence crimes are recorded (blue line) there are also spikes where the offenders are intoxicated (grey line). There are very few occasions on the graph that show otherwise.

Figure 24: Suspects named in other Crimes

From the 4,035 crimes that were recorded as domestic violence within the given time period, Figure 24 shows the named suspects of those crimes and groups them in how many times they have been a named suspect in any other crime type over the past 5 years.

Only 41% of those named suspects have 1 crime recorded against their unique person reference (that being the domestic violence crime), the other 59% of suspects are named in at least 2 or more crimes. 32% of
those suspects have been involved in at least 4 crimes, with 11% of the suspects being named in 10 crimes or more in 5 years. These crimes are not solely focused on domestic but all recordable crime types.

As a quarter of all domestic violence crime have a child present it is reasonable to infer that 15% of those children may have witnessed multiple domestic violence over the past 5 years.

![Figure 25: Suspects named in Domestic Crimes](image)

Figure 25 is the same chart replicated as above but where the suspects have been named in domestic crimes.
Northamptonshire County Council’s recorded Initial Contacts related to Domestic Violence

The information presented below covers the 12 months between 1st of April 2014 and the 31st of March 2015. It looks at Initial Contacts (ICs) that have been recorded with a presenting need of ‘domestic violence and abuse’ by Children’s Services. During the stated timeframe, there were 3,993 ICs with domestic violence and abuse as the presenting issue out of a grand total 27,474 ICs.

Initial Contact with a presenting issue of Domestic Violence

Each of the 3,993 referrals relates to one specific child. This means that referrers can make contact with NCC once to refer a sibling group and each child in the group will be counted as a separate IC incident.

Also referrals can be made by multiple organisations regarding the same incident/day, this results in a level of double counting.

Figure 26 shows the 3,993 ICs with a presenting issue of domestic violence and abuse broken down by the organisation or individual who made the referral.

The Police account for 63.5% (2,534) of all ICs made to NCC during 2014/15.

With 11.1% of the total ICs, the next largest group is ‘Health Services’ which is made up GPs, Health Visitors, A&E, Primary and Secondary Health Services.
Figure 27: Outcome of Initial Contact for Domestic Violence

All ICs are referred to the MASH for consideration of further action. Figure 27 shows the distributions of outcomes for ICs of domestic violence during 2014/15; of the 3,993 ICs, the majority (2,260 or 56.7%) were referred for further assessment. The smallest group, with only 37 ICs (0.9%) for DV, were referred to Early Help services, but the 1,119 IC’s where ‘No Further Action’ was taken account for 28.1% of all referrals.

Demographic of children with a presenting issue of Domestic Violence

From the 3,993 ICs shown in Figure 26, there are a total of 3,042 individual child IDs; these children are shown in Figure 28 distributed by their age. As expected, there is a higher proportion of young children affected by Domestic Violence with numbers generally slowly declining towards the higher age groups before dropping sharply for those aged 18 and 19.
Summary of NCC IC with a presenting issue of Domestic Violence

During 2014/15 Northamptonshire County Council had 3,993 ICs to Children’s Services with the presenting issue recorded as ‘Domestic Violence’. The majority of these ICs where received from the Police (63.5%), with Health services provided the second highest number (11.1%). Of these ICs 56.7% had an outcome of ‘Further Assessment Required’ but 28.1% had an outcome of ‘NFA’. Age distribution of the children shows that younger children are more likely to be effected by Domestic Violence.

Maps of Domestic Violence across the county

For all recorded crimes a postcode and street name is recorded for the location where the incident took place, postcodes and street names are also recorded as part of ICs. These postcodes have been combined to highlight where information is held by both Northamptonshire Police and NCC.

There are 997 domestic violence crimes identified for police where a child was present and 1157 addresses recorded by NCC where domestic abuse is the presenting issue. During the mapping process it became evident that there was a large disparity (500 addresses) between the number of addresses with domestic violent crimes with children present that could be matched to children referred to NCC during the same time period for domestic violence and abuse. A number of reasons have been identified for this disparity, these include,

- Around 250 of the identified addresses not been matched are though to be recorded by NCC with an alternative presenting issues. Further work would be needed to confirm this and to examine what alternative issues had been recorded.
- Around 180 of the unmatched addresses had no CPT referral made by police despite a child being present.
- This leaves approx. 80 addresses where victims address may be different to the crime location, or there may be recording quality issue.

Those addresses identified across both police data and the NCC’s data that where successfully mapped for a visual representation of where in the county domestic violence is known. Information on local service provision has also been included on the maps. These maps can be found in Annex 1 Corby, Annex 2 Daventry, Annex 3 East Northants, Annex 4 Kettering, Annex 5 Northampton, Annex 6 South Northants and Annex 7 Wellingborough.
Focused analysis of ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort

Further analysis was requested to look closely at those addresses where domestic violent crimes had been committed but there was either ‘Evidential Difficulties – WITH Victim Support’ and ‘Evidential Difficulties – NO Victim Support’ during the financial year 2014/15. These outcomes can be defined as those where the victims of those crimes may have been supported as much as possible by the Police or there was either no desire from the victim to bring a sanction to the suspect or the Police didn’t have enough evidence to do so.

From within these two groups of ‘Evidential Difficulties’ 231 individual addresses were identified and 228 of them successfully matched with children known to NCC at the same address during the same time period. By examining this cohort the aim was to see if those families that the Police are unable to support are being supported by other organisations. These addresses have been mapped to provide a visual representation of the this data across the county; these maps can be found in Annex 8 ‘Evidential Difficulties’.

Police Data around ‘Evidential Difficulties Cohort’

When comparing those crimes that occur when a child is present against all domestic violence crime, there is a slightly higher percentage of violence with injury offences when a child is present, around 2% more likely. This suggests that more serious crimes are being committed in front of these children, bringing with it a heighten risk for the safety of that child (Figure 29). This is around the same percentage split for the evidential difficulties cohort (Figure 30).
Alcohol is still the number one contributory factor for domestic violence when children are present and for the evidential difficulties cohort (Figure 31), this factor is used in 37% of the cohort’s crimes. The other contributory factors seen within the cohort that show high levels are relationship breakups which continues to be the second highest used indicator at 30.4%. The indicators of children and family issues both show a much more prominent rate in child present domestics as well as the evidential difficulties cohort when compared against all domestic violence crimes. The use of the children or family indicator is selected when it is a reason for why the offence occurred. For example, one party comes to collect child from the other parties’ house and a violence offences occurs due to an argument around how one party treats the child etc. This suggests that a proportion of the domestic violence between those where a child is present is due to arguments about those children.

Figure 32 shows that 38.7% of all domestic violence crime in the 230 addresses with ‘Evidential Difficulties’ occurred at the weekend, this is almost identical to all domestic violence crimes levels (Figure 3).
There are strong similarities across all domestic violence, child present domestic violence and the evidential difficulties cohort (Figure 33). However, what is more notable when there is a child involved is the age range of victims. With all violence those victims between the ages of 18-45 equate to 77% of crime, when there is a child involved this rate increases to 90.2%.

Gender is split 82-83% female to 17-18% male for child present offences and for the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort (Figure 34) respectively. This rate shows a higher percentage of females as the victims than the all crime rate where it is around the 75% mark for female victims.
Victims risk levels show that there is a higher level of high and medium risk victims for those that have children when the offence occurs than all domestic violence crimes. This suggests that when officers complete the DASH form they are better identifying the risk for these victims, taking into account the children at the property at the time. Only 31% of victims are recorded as standard risk compared with the 38% on all domestic violence crimes, this could also indicate that the victims with children present are showing a much greater need for safeguarding (Figure 35).

Figure 36 shows the relationship to the victim with regards to the evidential difficulties cohort. Where a child is present, 85-91% of the crimes occurs between partners or ex partners. This again is a much higher rate than when comparing against all domestic violence which is only 56%.
Very similar rates for the child present domestic violence and the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort can be seen in Figure 37. However, when comparing those with all domestic crime suspect arrest levels (Figure 19) there is up to 5% more likely that an arrest would take place if a child was present. This could indicate that officers feel that the suspect is a higher risk when children are involved.

Out of the 230 crimes that fall within the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort, there were 138 indicators used across the crimes, 86 being alcohol related, 29 as drugs and 23 mental health. This shows that 37.3% of the cohort had drink related domestic violence, 12.6% had drugs and 10% had mental health issues (Figure 38).
Both the volume (Figure 39) and the number of crimes per 1000 population (Figure 40) charts show that Corby, Kettering and Northampton town are the three highest areas for domestic violence where a child is present in the county. This is also echoed by the all domestic violence chart and would suggest that a reduction or prevention in these sectors would have the most significant impact.

In terms of volume, Northampton has the highest number of domestic violence crimes however when these volumes take into account the population of each sector, it indicates that Corby is the most prevalent district for domestic violence with children. These rates continue the same trend when taking into account the evidential difficulties cohort.
Northamptonshire County Council Initial Contact

The 231 addresses where Police recorded Domestic Violent crimes that resulted in an outcome of either ‘Evidential Difficulties – WITH Victim Support’ or ‘Evidential Difficulties – NO Victim Support’ during the financial year of 2014-15 were matched to known children with Initial Contacts through the Children’s Service by Northamptonshire County Council; 228 addresses were successfully matched to known children. Details of the children affected at the 228 address have been analysed and are presented below. This cohort cannot be considered representative of all children that are effect by Domestic Violence in Northamptonshire or in previous years, but are can be used as an indication.

Initial Contacts for the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort

Each of the 794 referrals relates to one child. This means that referrers can make contact with NCC once to refer a sibling group and each child in the group will be counted as a separate Initial Contact. Also referrals can be made by multiple organisations for the same incident/day. All of this means that there will be more children than addresses but that there may be more than one referral per child.

A total of 794 Initial Contacts where received by Northamptonshire County Council Children’s Services for the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort. These ICs are not restricted to Domestic Violence as the presenting issue, but instead show all ICs for all issues (further analysis of the range of issues will follow).

Figure 41 shows the range of organisations or individuals who made the referrals to NCC for children known at the 228 matched addresses with ‘Evidential Difficulties’. The pattern of referrers is similar to that of ICs with a presenting issue of domestic violence (Figure 26).

Figure 41 shows that Police referrals account for 538 (67.7%) of all ICs for the cohort of children known at the 228 matched addresses during 2014/15.

With 11.7% (93) of the total ICs the next largest group is ‘Health Services’ which is made up of GPs, Health Visitors, A&E, Primary and Secondary Health Services.
Figure 42: Presenting Issue from Initial Contacts of ‘Evidential Difficulties‘ Cohort

Figure 42 shows the range and distributions of presenting issues for the 794 ICs for the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort. Domestic Abuse/Violence is recorded as the presenting issue in 68.1% (541) of all the referrals. This is followed by ‘Family Breakdown’ (6.3%) and ‘Parental Substance Misuse’ (4.8%). Overall, the range of presenting issues shows that many of the families have more than one issue that would need to be addressed by services that work with them.

Child Demographics

The ‘Evidential Difficulties’ children cohort is made up of a total of 415 individual children which have been identified as living at the addresses where domestic crimes were recorded. The total number of children includes 96 sibling groups of between 2 and 12 children.

Figure 43 shows the distribution of the children from the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort recorded by their age. This shows that those most likely to be effected are younger children with an overall decrease as children get older though there is some fluctuation.
Figure 44 shows that 319 (59.5%) of the referrals made by the Police for the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort were taken on to further assessment, 10 (1.9%) were referred to Early Help but 207 (38.6%) were ‘No Further Action’ for NCC.

Figure 44 also shows the Police designated risk level by the outcome of the IC the Police had referred to NCC during 2014/15 for the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort. Risk levels are identified by the officers recording DASH at the time of the crime, each answer for the set of questions on the DASH equates to a score of 1, those victims scoring more than a score of 14 is classed as a high risk victim.

Standard and Medium Risk levels can be seen in all outcome groups and account for 22.2% and 67.4% of all Police referrals respectively. 10.4% of all Police referrals were classed by the police to have a High Risk level. High risk levels can be seen distributed between three of the outcome groups 5 referrals ‘Information Given – NFA’ accounting for 6.9% of that groups total referrals, 18 referrals where high risk with an outcome of ‘Notification only – NFA’ this amounted to 13.3% of that groups total referrals. A further 33 high risk referrals were also received these had an outcome of ‘Further Assessment Required’, these referrals accounted for 10.3% of all the referrals for that outcome.
Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs) are a process by which information can be gathered and recorded in a standard format about a child for whom practitioners have concerns. It is a shared assessment and planning framework for all services that helps to identify needs and how these can be met in the early stages while promoting coordinated working between partnership organisations.

The CAF’s purpose was to be a key part of the delivery by frontline services that are integrated and focused around the needs of the children and young people. Its aim is to support early intervention and improve joint working and communication between practitioners. 7

Of the 415 children in the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ only 4.6% are reported to have had a CAF (total of those ‘Closed Recently’, ‘In Place’ and ‘CAF Continues’). The majority (93.7%) of children were recorded as having no CAF (Figure 45).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAFs for children in 'Evidential Difficulties' Cohort</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of CAF in Place</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>0%</td>
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<td>60%</td>
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Figure 45: CAFs for children in ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort

Summary NCC ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort analysis

From ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort 415 children were identified as known to NCC during the financial year of 2014/15 with a total of 794 ICs. Most of the ICs regarding the identified children came from the Police (67.7%). A large variety of presenting issues where recorded from the 794 ICs, the most frequently recorded issue was for ‘Domestic Violence’ (68.1%) followed by ‘Family Breakdown’ (6.8%). The overall range of presenting issues shows that many of the families have more than one issue, these need to be taken into consideration by commissioners and service providers when working with these families.

The age distribution of the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ Cohort shows higher numbers of younger children affected by domestic violence at the identified addresses.

The majority (59.5%) of ICs in the ‘Evidential Difficulties’ cohort had an outcome of ‘Further assessment required’, 38.6% (207) where considered to require ‘no further action’.

Risk levels are assigned by police, the majority of ICs the police designated as high risk had an outcome of ‘Further assessment required’. However, 23 referrals that the police designated as high risk where considered by NCC to require ‘No Further Action’.

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7 The CAF was considered a lengthy document that could be difficult for practitioners and families to work through and was known to be off putting for some families. Because of this the CAF was replaced by the Early Help Assessment (EHA) in June 2015 across Northamptonshire.
Summary of Understanding Domestic Violence in Northamptonshire

This paper has aimed to further the understanding of domestic violence across the county by matching and cross referencing data collected by a number of organisations and presenting it in one concise document. Further work needs to be done to develop that understanding and bring in information from a wider range of sources and services that work with those affected by domestic violence. This can be achieved by continuation of work that aims to strengthen partnership working and data sharing practises.

The information around victims, perpetrators and children provided in this report should not be taken as all that is or needs to be known about domestic violence in Northamptonshire but as a starting place from which to develop.