



Year End 31 December 2025

National Centre for Domestic Violence

SERVICE IMPACT REPORT



National Centre for Domestic Violence

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Making Domestic Abuse Socially Unacceptable



SERVICE IMPACT REPORT: Year Ending 31 December 2025

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Quick Look

NCDV is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC).

Each year we:

- Help obtain around 30% of all Non-Molestation Orders in England and Wales.
- Handle between 90 – 100,000 referrals each year.
- Make over 300,000 calls and engage with 70,000 people requiring assistance.
- Maintain one of the largest pro bono services in the country. We assisted 4469 people last year who were unable to afford a solicitor.
- Provide free training to approximately 15,000 police and other professionals.
- Contribute to the sector through our data and national voice.

This represents a substantial national contribution to safeguarding at no cost to those using our service or the public purse. Working at this scale brings stability and consistency to a complex and pressured national landscape.

NCDV is an impactful, innovative community resource, and an ally to those working on the frontline.



1. NCDV Leadership Message

As we reflect on the year ending December 2025, we are proud of the continued impact NCDV has made in helping individuals access swift civil protection from domestic abuse. Behind every referral is a person reaching out at one of the most uncertain moments of their life. Seeking protection from domestic abuse is never easy, and it takes courage to take that first step. Our role is to ensure that when someone does reach out, they are met with compassion, clarity, and swift access to safety.

Throughout 2025, demand for civil protection has remained high, reflecting both increased awareness of legal options and the continuing pressures faced by victims and the services that support them. As a self-funding Community Interest Company, we have been able to respond flexibly, providing a free, national service without waiting lists, and working alongside partners to ensure protection can be put in place as quickly as possible.

We are deeply grateful to the police forces, legal professionals, and partner organisations who work with us every day to help make protection accessible. Their collaboration is vital in ensuring that no one seeking safety has to navigate the process alone.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to strengthening partnerships, sharing knowledge, and adapting to emerging legal and policy changes so that we can continue to stand alongside those who need protection most. Because access to protection should never depend on where someone lives, what they earn, or how confident they feel — it should be there when it is needed most.

**NCDV Leadership Team,
March 2026**



2. About NCDV

NCDV established in 2002

Since 2002 NCDV has developed into one of the leading organisations that help people obtain civil legal protection. We have the biggest pro bono service in the country, helping those who cannot afford a solicitor.

NCDV covers England & Wales

We have expanded our reach over the years and now work across the whole of England and Wales. We work in partnership with panel solicitors based in the areas in which we work.

NCDV Vision & Purpose

Our Vision

Making domestic abuse socially unacceptable.

Our Purpose

To provide a service that helps people at risk of domestic abuse obtain protection through the civil courts.

NCDV Legal Status

NCDV is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC). Our model is designed to ensure that access to civil protection from domestic abuse remains free, while allowing us to operate independently of government and local funding streams.

Why NCDV was founded

NCDV was established in 2002 after supporting an individual who could not afford the services of a solicitor. They were assisted to become a Litigant in Person and successfully obtain a non-molestation order free of charge.

That first case revealed a gap in access to justice, and from that moment, NCDV was born.

Although we try to assist everyone who contacts us, ensuring those without the means to secure legal representation are able to obtain protection remains central to our purpose.

Today, our pro bono service supports thousands of individuals each year who fall outside Legal Aid thresholds or have no recourse to public funds. In 2025 alone, 4,469 people were supported to navigate the court process without a solicitor.

Access to protection should never depend on income.

3. Impact as a CIC

NCDV operates as a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC), meaning our work is driven by public benefit rather than profit. Our self-funding model allows us to provide a free, national service without relying on government or local commissioning budgets. This ensures that our work complements, rather than competes with, locally funded domestic abuse services.

Because we are not constrained by contracts or funding cycles, we are able to respond quickly to emerging needs. This flexibility has enabled us to adapt to developments such as the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPO) pilot and changes within the Family Law Act. Independence from commissioning arrangements allows us to operate at scale without waiting lists or capacity restrictions. As demand fluctuates, we can continue to provide consistent access to civil protection and support partners by helping to reduce pressure on local services.

Through this model, NCDV functions as a national community resource — strengthening the wider safeguarding system while ensuring that access to protection is not limited by geography, funding availability, or local capacity.

4. Impact in numbers

2025 Statistics

89,776

Referrals received by NCDV
300,000 calls made and engagement with
70,000 people in need of assistance.

4,469

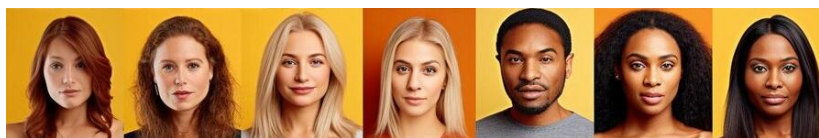
Pro bono cases helped by NCDV

15,581

Police and professionals trained by NCDV

63%

In 2025 NCDV received referrals from every police force in England. We began covering all of Wales last year. Around 60% of referrals come from police forces.



5. Impact in reach & inclusivity

Supporting women, men, all genders

Domestic abuse affects people of all genders. NCDV provides an inclusive service, supporting women and men seeking civil protection.

In 2025, we supported:

- 89% women
- 11% men

Our approach is based on need, ensuring that everyone who contacts us is treated with dignity, respect, and equal access to protection. Whilst we acknowledge that women are disproportionately impacted by domestic abuse, we believe more men may benefit from civil protective orders. One of our public engagement priorities in 2026 is to reach out to men through our training inputs and social media platforms.

Diversity

Our diversity data suggests the people who use our service fall into the following groups. Note: This data represents completed surveys, which is entirely voluntary.

68% of people referred to us identify as White British

12% identify as White non-British

8% identify as pan-Asian

6% identify as Black African Caribbean or other

2% identify as mixed Black, Caribbean or Asian

2% identify as any other ethnic group

2% Did not state

Although these figures are fairly representative of the English and Welsh communities, there are certain groups not being referred in the numbers we would like or not at all. We will scrutinise our data this year to ascertain whether this is a survey completion issue or a lack of diverse referrals. We will then reach out to our stakeholders in an attempt to reach more people.

Age

Nearly half of all referrals involve individuals aged 18–39, demonstrating the significant impact of domestic abuse among younger and working-age adults.



Religion

Nearly half of referrals were from individuals identifying as having no religion, with around one-third identifying as Christian. Smaller proportions identified as Muslim or other faiths, broadly reflecting national demographic patterns.”

Sexuality

Approximately **78%** of referrals identified as heterosexual.

Around **9%** of referrals identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual, pansexual or another minority sexual orientation, while approximately **13%** chose not to disclose their sexual orientation.

The proportion of referrals identifying as LGBTQ+ appears higher than general population estimates, indicating that NCDV’s service is accessed by individuals across diverse sexual orientations. This reinforces the importance of maintaining an inclusive and accessible approach to civil protection.

Disability

Around one in four referrals (**24%**) involved individuals who identified as having a disability.

This underlines the intersection between domestic abuse and disability and reinforces the need for accessible, inclusive and trauma-informed support pathways.

National coverage

NCDV operates across all 43 police force areas in England and Wales, providing consistent access to civil protection regardless of geography. Our national structure enables individuals to seek help without being limited by local capacity or regional variation in services. This ensures that access to legal protection does not depend on where someone lives.

Accessible communication

Where required, interpreter services are arranged to ensure individuals can access support in their preferred language. Clear communication is central to our approach. We recognise that navigating the civil courts can be daunting, and we aim to make information understandable, accessible, and reassuring at every stage.



Inclusive by design

Our service is available regardless of:

- Gender
- Income
- Employment status
- Immigration background
- Local service engagement

We provide free support to help individuals understand their options and access civil protection, ensuring financial barriers do not prevent safety.

Signposting and ongoing support

Every individual who engages with NCDV receives signposting to appropriate local or specialist services. This integrated approach helps strengthen safeguarding and supports longer-term recovery beyond the civil court process.

A wide range of referring partners

Referrals are received from a broad range of stakeholders, including:

- Police forces
- Commissioned domestic abuse services
- Health – including acute trusts, GP surgeries, sexual health, mental health, maternity, and health visiting.
- Housing providers
- Social care teams
- Education – from nurse provision to universities
- Substance misuse services
- DWP
- Community organisations – Food Banks, Home Start, faith organisations, Community Reps.

More recently we have begun to work with other types of organisations that may hear disclosures of domestic abuse, such as veterinary practices and professionals working in hair and beauty.

This diversity reflects confidence in our service and demonstrates our embedded role within national safeguarding systems.



6. Why our impact matters

A significant national contribution

In recent years, approximately **30%** of all Non-Molestation Orders granted in England and Wales have been supported through NCDV. This represents a substantial national contribution to civil protection at scale. Every order obtained is a step towards safety for an individual and their family.

Access to justice, regardless of income

Although we support everyone referred to us, ensuring that those without the means to secure legal representation can still obtain protection remains central to our purpose. In 2025 alone, our pro bono service supported **4,469** individuals who fell outside Legal Aid thresholds or had no recourse to public funds, helping them navigate the court process without a solicitor. Access to protection should never depend on income.

Reducing pressure on local services

Domestic abuse services across England and Wales operate under significant demand. By managing the civil legal protection process, NCDV undertakes this vital first step to safety, enabling locally commissioned services to focus on crisis support, advocacy, and longer-term recovery.

Responding to legal and policy change

The civil protection landscape continues to evolve, including the rollout of Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs) and amendments to the Family Law Act. Operating independently allows NCDV to respond quickly to legislative change, supporting professionals and individuals to navigate new frameworks with clarity and confidence.

Strengthening the safeguarding system

Civil protection forms part of a wider safeguarding response. By providing fast, accessible support at the point of referral, NCDV strengthens the overall system, ensuring individuals can access immediate legal protection while other agencies continue their essential work.



7. Impact through partnership & collaboration

Working with Police Forces

NCDV works alongside police forces across England and Wales to support early referral. Timely referral can be critical in reducing risk and strengthening safeguarding. Through clear guidance and free professional training, we help officers understand how civil legal tools complement criminal justice processes. Our award-winning feedback loop provides speedy updates on referral progress.

Panel Solicitor Firms

We work with a panel of Legal Aid solicitor firms experienced in domestic abuse and civil protective orders. Our model enables individuals to access legal representation efficiently, reducing delay and supporting effective case progression. Strong working relationships help ensure applications are progressed swiftly and professionally.

Commissioned Domestic Abuse Services

NCDV complements locally commissioned services by managing the civil legal protection process. By undertaking court preparation and coordination, we reduce pressure on frontline services, enabling them to focus on advocacy, crisis support, and recovery. This collaborative approach strengthens safeguarding and ensures individuals can access both immediate protection and ongoing support.

National and Corporate Partners

NCDV engages with corporate organisations, universities, and trade unions to support our pro bono service, research collaboration, and awareness initiatives. These partnerships extend our impact beyond direct casework and contribute to broader understanding of domestic abuse and civil protection.

Strength through Partnership

Through collaboration, NCDV plays a connected role within the national safeguarding landscape, helping ensure access to civil protection remains consistent, responsive, and integrated with wider support systems.

8. Impact through training & education

Free Access to Professional Training

As part of our commitment to strengthening safeguarding practice, NCDV provides free training to professionals across England and Wales. Our sessions are designed to improve understanding of civil protective orders, eligibility criteria, referral pathways, and recent legal developments. By offering this training at no cost, we help ensure that knowledge of civil protection is not limited by organisational budgets. In 2025, we trained over 15,000 professionals.

Supporting a wide range of professionals

Our training reaches a broad spectrum of practitioners, including:

- Police officers and safeguarding teams
- Domestic abuse practitioners and IDVAs
- Health professionals and Housing providers
- Social care teams
- HR, workplace leads and Community Union Reps

This cross-sector approach strengthens understanding of civil protection and promotes consistent referral practices nationwide.

Responding to growing demand

Demand for training continues to grow as legal frameworks evolve and awareness of civil protection increases. This is a significant contribution in terms of time and cost, but we are committed to promoting awareness across the sector. We deliver both in-person and remote sessions, enabling whole teams or mixed-agency groups to access up-to-date information. In some force areas, we have delivered multiple sessions across the year to meet operational demand.

Developing new learning resources

In addition to free training sessions, NCDV continues to develop new educational materials, briefings, and guidance to support professionals.

Recent developments include:

- Updated content reflecting changes to the Family Law Act and the introduction of Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs), ensuring practitioners remain informed and confident in navigating the evolving civil protection landscape.
- Downloadable phone-friendly resources on our website for practitioners and survivors.
- Introducing NCDV series of Big Data Reports, using extensive datasets to contribute to sector knowledge.
- Partnering with the National College to rewrite an updated domestic abuse training programme for their national learning platform for schools and colleges.



9. Human Impact

Standing beside those without representation

Our pro bono service exists so that no one is prevented from seeking safety because they cannot afford legal representation. Each year, thousands of individuals are supported to navigate the court process with guidance, clarity and reassurance, rather than facing it alone.

Behind every referral is a person

Every referral received by NCDV represents someone navigating fear, uncertainty, and risk. While our work involves legal documentation and court processes, at its heart it is about people — individuals who have made the difficult decision to seek protection and who may be engaging with the civil courts for the first time. We recognise the courage it takes to reach out.

Human-Led Support

From receiving the referral, our approach is human led. We do not direct individuals to complete complex forms alone or navigate unfamiliar systems without guidance. Instead, we listen, explain options clearly, and prepare documentation with care. For many, reassurance is as important as information. Even when an order can't progress, we signpost, reassure, and encourage people to contact us in the future if their situation changes. Sometimes that's all someone wants from us.

A trauma-informed approach

We understand that individuals seeking protection may be experiencing trauma, coercion, and ongoing risk. Our staff are trained to communicate calmly and respectfully, recognising that memory, confidence, and decision-making can be affected by abuse. We prioritise clarity, choice, and empowerment throughout the process.

Civil protection is a legal remedy, but we believe the journey to obtaining it, handled sensitively, is a service in itself.

Professional reflections

Feedback from professionals and partners highlights the importance of accessible civil protection within the safeguarding system:

“NCDV provides a vital bridge between frontline response and legal protection. Their responsiveness makes a real difference in high-risk situations.”

“The clarity and consistency of the referral process helps officers feel confident that victims will receive swift support.”

“Their training and practical guidance strengthen safeguarding practice across agencies.”

Why This Matters

The legal process can feel intimidating and complex. By providing human-led support and clear guidance, NCDV helps ensure that individuals seeking protection are not left to navigate the civil courts alone. Our impact is measured not only in numbers, but in the confidence, reassurance, and safety that access to protection can bring.

10. Impact through innovation & development

Investing in future talent - The Sharon Bryan Internship Programme

In 2025, NCDV continued to invest in the next generation of domestic abuse professionals through the Sharon Bryan Internship Programme. Honouring the legacy and work of our colleague, Sharon Bryan, who stood with survivors, every step of the way, this initiative provides structured learning opportunities, practical experience, and professional development within a national context. By supporting emerging practitioners, we aim to strengthen future capacity within the domestic abuse sector and honour a legacy of dedication and compassion.

Big Data Reports and sector insight

NCDV continues to analyse anonymised data drawn from our national casework to contribute to sector understanding. Our Big Data Reports examine trends, patterns, and emerging issues within civil protection applications. By sharing evidence-based insights, we aim to inform professional practice, support policy discussions, and contribute to a stronger evidence base across the domestic abuse field. Through this work, operational data becomes sector learning.

Contributing to National Policy and Learning

In 2025, NCDV contributed evidence to the national Covid-19 Inquiry, sharing insight into the impact of the pandemic on access to civil protection and domestic abuse responses. This reflects our role not only as a service provider, but as a contributor to national learning and policy development.

NCDV Pulse

The launch and continued development of the **NCDV Pulse** newsletter has strengthened communication with professionals nationwide. Pulse provides updates on legal changes, training opportunities, sector insights, and organisational developments.

Strengthening our Process Serving service

Our specialist Process Serving team continues to provide a reliable, efficient fixed-fee service for serving court orders for any person or organisation that requires a service. This service supports safe and timely notification of legal protection, complementing our core work and contributing to the sustainability of our self-funding CIC model.

Innovation in practice

Innovation at NCDV is grounded in practice. By combining operational experience, data insight, professional training, and workforce development, we continue to evolve in response to changing legislation, safeguarding demands, and sector needs. Our aim is not simply to maintain services — but to strengthen them.

11. Looking ahead

As demand and legal frameworks continue to evolve, NCDV remains committed to strengthening our service and contributing positively to the wider domestic abuse sector. Our focus areas include:

Strengthening Safeguarding and Internal Processes

We will continue to review and refine our safeguarding practices, internal systems, workforce development and quality assurance processes to ensure that our service remains safe, responsive, and aligned with best practice.

Improving the Litigant in Person (LiP) Experience

For individuals who represent themselves in court, the process can be daunting and complex. We are committed to reviewing and enhancing the experience of Litigants in Person, ensuring clearer guidance, improved communication, and a more supportive journey through the civil process.

Hearing the Survivor Voice

Listening to those who use our service is central to meaningful improvement. We will further develop mechanisms, including structured feedback and surveys, to better understand service user experience and ensure that learning directly informs our practice.

Contributing to Sector Knowledge and Evidence

NCDV will continue to contribute to the national conversation on domestic abuse and civil protection through research, data analysis, and professional training. By sharing insights from our work, we aim to strengthen understanding, inform practice, and support evidence-based approaches across the sector.