

Domestic abuse partnership perpetrator approach (DAPPA) to manage high risk perpetrators

A multi-agency approach designed to identify and manage highest risk domestic abuse (DA) perpetrators in Norfolk.

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Key details

Stage of practice	Evaluated locally
Purpose	Reoffending
Topic	Violence against women and girls Adults at risk Offender management
Organisation	Norfolk Constabulary
HMICFRS report	PEEL 2023–25 Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy: An inspection of Norfolk Constabulary
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Key details

Partners	Police Community safety partnership Criminal justice (includes prisons, probation services) Education Health services Local authority Voluntary/not for profit organisation
Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	September 2021
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Adults Children and young people Families Offenders Victims Women

Aim

The aim of the domestic abuse partnership perpetrator approach (DAPPA) is to:

- identify and manage the highest-risk domestic abuse (DA) perpetrators
- protect victims
- use a multi-agency approach to develop risk management plans for perpetrators and victims
- establish a monthly multi-agency meeting to discuss the highest-risk DA perpetrators
- ensure the timely completion of risk management actions

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of the DAPPA are to:

- reduce the number of DA incidents by perpetrators managed under DAPPA
- improve engagement with perpetrators through behavioural change interventions
- improve compliance with civil orders such as domestic abuse protection notice and order (DAPN/DAPO) and stalking protection orders (SPOs)
- improve victim safety

Description

In September 2021, Norfolk Constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk launched DAPPA. The initiative follows the standard of the multi-agency tasking and coordination (MATAC) model used by Northumbria Police. The purpose of DAPPA is to provide a localised, multi-agency framework for managing high-risk perpetrators through prevention, diversion, and enforcement. In May 2022, the DAPPA team also became responsible for managing SPOs to ensure consistent oversight of offenders subject to these requirements.

DAPPA team

The DAPPA team sits within the safeguarding and investigations command and consists of:

- one sergeant who chairs the DAPPA meetings and oversees cases
- two police constables or detectives who act as case holders for the management of each perpetrator
- one analyst who carries out risk assessments and monitors data via the recency, frequency, gravity (RFG) matrix

The DAPPA team work with partner agencies such as:

- local authorities
- housing providers
- Probation Service
- mental health services
- substance misuse services
- victim support services
- legal services

DAPPA

The DAPPA initiative identifies perpetrators using the Recency, Frequency, Gravity (RFG) matrix and referrals from police or partner agencies. Identified perpetrators are then discussed at monthly DAPPA meetings. Partner agencies are invited to attend under an information sharing agreement. Each perpetrator is reviewed using the four pillars of risk management:

- supervision
- monitoring and control
- interventions and treatment
- victim safety

Proposed actions are agreed and led by the relevant partner organisation. All actions are recorded in Athena (record management system).

Actions can include divert strategies such as referrals to behavioural intervention programmes.

These programmes include:

- Change Project – provides one-to-one behaviour change interventions for high-risk perpetrators
- Building Better Relationships – a nationally recognised programme designed to challenge abusive behaviours and promote healthy relationships
- substance misuse and mental health support and housing interventions

If a perpetrator does not engage with these services, the team can utilise disrupt strategies. These include:

- enforcing DAPN/DAPO, SPOs and non-molestation orders
- Clare's Law disclosures
- criminal justice interventions for outstanding offences

The team monitors and enforces civil orders. For SPOs, this includes screening stalking offences, advising officers, and escalating cases where appropriate. Disruption visits are carried out to check compliance with conditions, such as device and social media checks and address changes. SPO logs are maintained on Athena, and the team liaises with other forces if the perpetrator moves areas.

Victims are central to the process with independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs), independent sexual violence advisors (ISVAs), social care, and police safeguarding teams involved throughout the criminal justice process. Victim engagement is a key part of the process; with victim contracts developed for those named in SPOs. These contracts are tailored to individual needs, ranging from regular check-ins to providing a point of contact for support. Progress is reviewed monthly, with decisions made on whether perpetrators remain in the DAPPA cohort or are closed from the process. All actions must be completed and logged before closure.

Funding

The implementation of DAPPA required approval and funding from the Home Office and the OPCCN. Funding was initially provided by the Home Office through OPCCN. Since July 2024, staffing costs have been covered by Norfolk Constabulary and behavioural changes interventions have been funded by OPCCN and the Community Safety Partnership. In March 2025, funding for the intervention service delivered by the Change Project ended and is no longer part of the current DAPPA offering.

Evaluation

DAPPA was formally evaluated in 2023 following its first two years of Home Office funding. The evaluation assessed the impact of the intervention by reviewing how key measures were tracked during implementation and comparing outcomes before and after the approach was introduced.

The findings indicated that the intervention had a positive impact.

Overall impact

Following the 2023 evaluation and further analysis conducted in April 2024, the findings show that DAPPA has had a positive impact on reducing risk and improving safeguarding.

During the first 18 months:

- 29 Clare's Law referrals
- IDVAs attended 80% of meetings
- 119 intelligence reports submitted
- 34% of DAPN/DAPOs were issued to perpetrators managed under DAPPA

By April 2024, analysis revealed:

- an average 61% reduction in RFG scores across 98 perpetrators
- DA related offences fell by an average of 0.28 per month post-intervention, and 34.7% of perpetrators had not reoffended.
- the average cost of crime per perpetrator dropped from £4,018 to £1,581 per month
- six of the eight perpetrators who completed the Change Project had not reoffended for at least six months

Learning

- Since September 2021, DAPPA has evolved significantly and is now embedded within Norfolk Constabulary. The evaluation and analysis has revealed a reduction in reoffending and an improvement to safeguarding which has positively impacted victims and perpetrators. Feedback from perpetrators completing the Change Project suggests it has improved their lives and relationships.
- Initially high risks perpetrators were assessed using Cambridge Crime Harm Index; however, this was replaced with the RFG matrix which is more appropriate for DA cases. The matrix now uses six months of data to ensure risk management plans address live risk. The analyst worked closely with other forces to refine the approach and share learning.
- It is important to anticipate challenges around programme delivery and risk assessment tools, secure strong multi-agency buy-in and invest in analytical support. Flexibility and willingness to adapt early decisions based on evidence are essential for success.

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