

MAKING A DASH FOR THE FUTURE

The Dash Charity
Strategic Plan 2024 - 2026



domestic abuse stops here

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Welcome from our CEO

I'm proud to present our two-year strategic plan for 2024-26: Making a Dash for the Future.

The next two years will elevate us to where local survivors of domestic abuse need us, taking our strength and reputation for being locally well-known and well-loved, and preparing us for ground-breaking services and impact for survivors. Much of this time will therefore be spent looking inwards to ensure we have the systems and processes in place to strengthen our people, communities and spaces.

Despite the name, it's important to me that this isn't seen as an 'interim' plan, because it's not merely bridging a gap to get us to the next level. Dash already lives and breathes its core values: we go above and beyond; we work together, we understand; we strengthen; and we are local.

The time and preparation we take now will reinforce our next strategic plan when published in 2026, enabling us to make meaningful collaborations, take innovative leaps, breakdown barriers for survivors and continue to amplify the message that domestic abuse stops here.



Nicola Miller, CEO
nicola@thedashcharity.org.uk



Message from our Vice-Chair

I am pleased to share with you The Dash Charity strategy and measurable business plan for 2024–2026. This business plan and strategy provides details of the actions we will take over the next two years to achieve our ambitions.

This strategy sets out our priorities for ending domestic abuse and providing support to individuals and families that need us most. This includes our refuges, outreach programmes and healthy relationship training. As the contracted provider of domestic abuse services to The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, we aim to provide experienced, timely and responsive services wherever they are needed. Our strategy includes awareness raising throughout the communities we work in to ensure that victims of abuse know we are here.

New services will be developed and delivered including peer mentoring for young adults; strengthen demand led children's services and extend healthy relationship programmes.

Dash will also use its position and platform to campaign for change where its local communities can benefit most, rather than on wider, less relevant issues with limited measurable impact.

We successfully moved to new premises in 2023, which has provided the right environment for the staff and senior executives to work effectively as a team.

The past year has been challenging with the cost of living crisis, fundraising and recruitment but we are planning ahead with renewed optimism and are grateful for all the support we have received.

Ginette Gower

Ginette Gower,
Vice-Chair/ Interim Chair of Trustees



The Dash Difference: Our core values



MAKING A DASH FOR THE FUTURE

Summary Strategic Plan 2024-26



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Strengthening local communities to feel safer and break the cycle of domestic abuse



CONSOLIDATE

- 1. Supporting our people
- 2. Focusing our systems and processes
- 3. Engaging internal communities
- 4. Embedding lived experience
- 5. Volunteering culture



COLLABORATE

- 1. Strengthening survivor voices
- 2. Getting out there
- 3. Responsive services
- 4. Re-establishing a volunteering resource
- 5. Evaluating our reach



INNOVATE

- 1. Building proactive support
- 2. Breathing new life into services
- 3. Developing fundable programmes
- 4. Future-proofing our services
- 5. Service co-production to meet needs of diverse communities



EDUCATE

- 1. Evolving our business case
- 2. Raising awareness
- 3. Promoting healthier relationships
- 4. Empowering through education
- 5. Tailored support



ADVOCATE

- 1. Campaigning for impact
- 2. Creating lasting change
- 3. Being there for survivors
- 4. Harnessing volunteer voices
- 5. Using our platform for good

OUR COMMITMENTS

OUR COMMITMENTS

STRONGER PEOPLE

STRONGER SPACES

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

STRONGER STARTS

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our approach to success

Consolidate

We will work to bring our teams together with cohesive practices and structures in place that strengthen the effectiveness and wellbeing of our people and services.

Advocate

We will use our experience and understanding to advocate for change on behalf of the victims, survivors and communities we serve, where it matters most and where we can make a difference.

Educate

We will strengthen and empower our communities through education, preventative strategies and informed responses to challenge attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.

Our education and awareness-raising will help more people access new and existing routes into our services to find the support they need.



Collaborate

We will work to ensure meaningful partnerships are achievable and realised through a culture of collaborative working practices, enabling Dash to deliver quality and impactful support services.

Innovate

We will continuously improve upon existing practices and find new ways to meet the diverse and evolving needs of people who are experiencing domestic abuse.

We will intervene as early as possible to prevent domestic abuse from continuing, reoccurring or escalating.



01. Supporting our people

We will support, develop and invest in our teams to stay focused and motivated while working towards our shared mission and goals.

02. Focusing our systems & processes

We will ensure we are connected by fit-for-purpose systems that reinforce the quality of our work and best practice.

03. Engaging internal communities

Getting the ways our teams communicate with each other to work better so our external communities we will support can benefit more.

04. Embedding lived experience

We will develop and embed greater service user engagement practices across Dash, embedding feedback from a range of stakeholders that will use and benefit from our services.

05. Volunteer culture

Create a culture of volunteering to support services, fundraising and governance.



01. Strengthening survivor voices



We will build a more collaborative approach to service design and delivery through greater service user involvement and lived experience voices, centring these within our programmes and activities.

02. Getting out there



We will identify and nurture the relationships that will make us well-placed to spot and seize the most relevant and valuable opportunities when they come, alongside developing a proactive and formalised organisational approach to solving problems through partnership working

03. Responsive services



Victims and survivors receive responsive services with co-ordinated pathways, which support sustained recovery and a reduction of risk of further harm for themselves and their children

04. Re-establishing volunteer resource



Create and support a culture of volunteering to support services, fundraising and governance.

05. Evaluating our reach



To make more strategic decisions by understanding where we can add most value and deliver locally known and loved, high quality services.



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INNOVATE



01. Building proactive support

We will review the frameworks we use to evaluate our outputs, outcomes and impact in order to learn from and develop informed, updated responses to cases of medium and high-risk domestic abuse.



02. Breathing new life into services

We will not be afraid to challenge existing practice and will explore and research ideas that address the diverse support needs of our local beneficiaries that are not being met by established systems, such as housing, therapeutic interventions and move-on programmes.



03. Developing fundable programmes

We will develop sustainable income streams for fundable programmes and services, with funding agreements that everyone at Dash has ownership of and insight into. We will continue to put robust financial planning systems in place



04. Future-proofing our services

Diversify income sources to decrease reliance on statutory funding and increase sustainability. Focus budgets on dual delivery of current core services and responding to emerging need



05. Service co-production

Services will continue to be developed in new directions to reflect national and Dash data, trends and feedback. We will centre our survivor communities within the organisation and services to improve support, including a Young Adult Advisory Panel, Older People's Forum and collaborating with like-minded organisations who champion survivors voices.



EDUCATE



01. Evolving our business case

We will assess the demand and make the case for our prevention education work so that it can have lasting, measurable impact across our local communities. We will build a fundable training and education programme that is aligned with our mission and values.



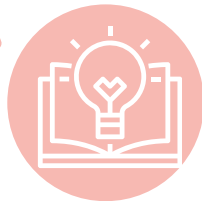
02. Raising awareness

We will target the local population with relevant and topical messages relating to domestic abuse, and encourage greater understanding and awareness that leads to confidence and trust in Dash that supports referrals into its services



03. Promoting healthier relationships

We will champion naming and intolerance of unhealthy behaviours within personal relationships, targeting children, young people and adults in a variety of educational and community settings with key messages that challenge the normalisation of toxic relationships that can foster domestic abuse.



04. Empowering through education

To develop and provide B2B training for professionals and support for employers to identify and support domestic abuse disclosures in the workplace



05. Tailored support

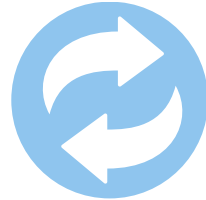
To further co-produce appropriate programme of prevention and education support offered for children and young people

ADVOCATE



01. Campaigning for impact

We will campaign selectively on issues related to domestic abuse locally and beyond that have the most impact and relevance to our communities. Social norms, values and beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in the community and amongst professionals will be challenged and shift to zero tolerance.



02. Creating lasting change

We will ensure that support given by Dash reduces risk and increases safety for domestic abuse victims and survivors, due to its high quality and commitment to improving outcomes for people



03. Being there for survivors

We will back victims and survivors navigating the challenges that come with leaving domestic abuse behind, and be by their side the whole way. Victims and survivors will have increased access to justice by being supported through the criminal justice system.



04. Harnessing volunteer voices

We will reignite our volunteering strategy and see our service delivery, promotion and fundraising reinforced by a team of valued volunteers advocating for Dash.



05. Using our platform for good

We will use our voice to amplify victims' and survivors' voices, speaking out on topics where we have opinions or expertise to contribute that will get domestic abuse victims and survivors heard.

PROGRAMME SUMMARIES: STRONGER PEOPLE

1

Breaking the Cycle

We'll continue to provide therapeutic group support, both online and face-to-face, for those clients who are not in crisis but are in the process of rebuilding their lives.

Our peer-driven coffee meetings are an opportunity for clients to gain support and strength from one another – 50 women per year will attend and report feeling less isolated with stronger social networks.

2

Holistic Helpdesk

Review and expand Helpdesk service to develop a collaborative, Berkshire-wide access point for victims and offer an approach that meets local needs.

Develop our digital presence with simple, discreet access.

Co-produce with people who have lived experience of domestic abuse.

Recruit and manage a specialist pool of Volunteers to help deliver community-based support and awareness.

3

Reducing Risk

We will encourage re-referrals back into our service where it supports risk reduction through early intervention and support to break the cycle of domestic abuse.

Dash will offer extended support within a community based, peer led mentoring programme of survivors and building safety support with clients.

Expected outcomes will include increased safety and confidence around domestic abuse for mentees and opportunity to share learnings within the sector.

PROGRAMME SUMMARIES: STRONGER SPACES

1

Home from Home

Our refuge spaces offer safe sanctuary for women and their children who are fleeing an abusive living arrangement.

We will establish improved ways to offer a sustainable maintenance programme for the refuge houses

We will introduce further trauma-informed wellbeing activities, following consultation with victims and survivors, so that they have access to overcoming barriers to physical and mental wellbeing.

2

Safer at Home

We will ensure our IDVA and support worker services empower people who stay in their homes (rather than move to a refuge), so they can feel safer.

Offer access to lifestyle support and emerging technology to help survivors feel safer in their homes.

All front-line staff will receive IDVA and/or ISVA training as standard by 2026.

3

Dash HQ

We will consolidate our spaces for staff so that they are supported by a fit-for-purpose office and working environment.

PROGRAMME SUMMARIES: STRONGER COMMUNITIES

1

Pop-up Dash

We will proactively engage new families & individuals who require support, whether at crisis point or simply looking to explore their options for the very first time.

Increase our service access points: A series of 'Pop-Up Dash' drop-ins will be held at various community locations across the Dash footprint to help more people access our support in a central, accessible, yet discreet manner. We would expect 25% increase in self-referrals to our services each year.

2

Spreading the word

Our team will develop local knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse – we'll deliver talks each year to community groups.

We'll give victims a lifeline with a tailored 'Ask for Ani' style initiative for local businesses, giving a safe outlet for seeking support.

Create confident and well-informed agency professionals through workshops to new and existing agency partners.

3

Campaigning for change

Dash will use its position and platform to campaign for change where it's most relevant and beneficial to its local communities, using our own trends and data to identify where we can campaign to make a difference.

We will amplify voices of survivors so that they are heard, and speak up where we feel we have something to contribute to national or local debate and survivors need to be heard and recognised.

PROGRAMME SUMMARIES: STRONGER STARTS

1

Demand-led children's services

Dash will create and fund a separate Children's Services team and strengthen our offer for children directly impacted by domestic abuse.

Build upon BREATHE: A programme supporting children and young people in RBWM who are or have been affected by unhealthy, conflicting and abusive behaviours in parent or carer relationships.

2

Preventing unhealthy relationships

We will have thorough and established plans in place to expand beyond our local audience to the wider Thames Valley region, where there is an unmet need.

We will design updated teaching toolkits to underpin the healthy relationships workshops we deliver.

We will develop an online delivery format to make this accessible to a busy audience of young adults working and managing other commitments.

3

Supporting young adults

We will develop a focused peer mentoring support programme for young people under 30 who are either stepping down from our medium-to-high risk support programme, or referred to us from other local agencies.

We will recruit 5 young people as volunteers, train and support them as mentors, and pilot then evaluate this community-based initiative.