Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is rarely a one-off incident, but a pattern of power and control over you. It is any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been in a relationship, or between family members.

Domestic abuse can include, but is not limited to:

- coercive control (a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation and control with the use or threat of physical or sexual violence)
- psychological and/or emotional abuse
- physical or sexual abuse
- financial abuse
- harassment and stalking
- online or digital abuse

Coercive or controlling behaviour does not relate to a single incident, it is a purposeful pattern of incidents that occur over time in order for one individual to exert power, control or coercion over another. Coercive control is effectively controlling behaviour; Acts by an abuser which takes away another person's freedom and ability to have a positive sense of self and worth which results in the victim feeling more dependent on the abuser and then creates an on-going cycle of controlling abuse.

Coercive and controlling behaviour can be particularly difficult to identity when in an abusive relationship and is a relative newly recognised crime, only coming into law with the Serious Crime Act of 2015.

Coercion and control is a broad umbrella term however here are some common examples of what it may look like:

- Purposefully isolating a person, or preventing them from socialising with family and friends
- Stopping them from attending work or their place of study, e.g. by limiting their access to transport
- Demeaning and belittling a person, such as telling them they are worthless
- Controlling how much money they have and how they spend it
- Monitoring their activities and movements

- Taking control over aspects of your everyday life, such as where you can go, who you can see, what you can wear and when you can sleep
- Depriving you access to support services, medical advice, attending appointments etc.
- Putting you in fear of doing what you would like to do

Help and support

- If you are in immediate danger, always call; 999.
- To make a safeguarding referral visit: Report abuse/neglect of a vulnerable adult or contact the Community Adult Front Door on 01942 828777.

Wigan Borough Domestic Abuse Helpline provide support, advice and counselling for those affected by domestic abuse and anyone concerned about the wellbeing of others.

- Call 01942 311365 Monday to Friday 8am-6pm

Visit for more information:

- DIAS Domestic Abuse Centre (external link)
- Domestic Abuse - Wigan Council
- Older Adults and Domestic Abuse Leaflet.

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What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic Abuse as an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence.

Key Characteristics:

- Coercion and Control
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Psychological
- Harassment/stalking
- Online

Signs to look out for:

- Low self-esteem
- Feeling that the abuse is their fault when it is not
- Brusing, cuts, broken bones
- Verbal abuse and humiliation in front of other
- Damage to property/home
- Isolation – not seeing friends and family

Legal Framework

- Care Act 2014
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021