



## **A N N U A L R E P O R T 2 0 0 2**

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*It gives me great pleasure to see the first annual report of the Standing Together Trust. Hammersmith and Fulham have been amongst the leaders on domestic violence issues for many years with a variety of projects. The creation of the Trust has meant that, over the last year, a financial and administrative basis has been provided for many of these projects. This is just a beginning. I hope the Trust will mean that we can gain funds to strengthen existing projects and develop new ones. All the projects supported by the Trust are multi-agency. Our thanks go to all the agencies involved in our work. With additional funding we can continue, together, to provide services that support the safety of women and their children as well as holding perpetrators to account. For all the work accomplished over the last year I would like, in particular, to thank the staff directly employed by the Trust. Nothing would have been possible without them.*

*Ms Rohan Collier, Chair of Trustees, Standing Together Trust* ——— ”

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*Knowing you exist has taken a load off my mind and I feel safer.*

*Survivor* ——— ”

**“ Hammersmith and Fulham Council are proud to support the work of Standing Together against Domestic Violence. The launch of the Specialist Domestic Violence Court in 2002 marks another significant step forward in the partnership’s work, which is making a real difference to the safety of the women and children in the Borough whose lives are blighted by domestic violence.**

**Councillor Andrew Slaughter, Leader of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham ——— ”**

**“ Without Standing Together the police in Hammersmith and Fulham would simply not be able to make a substantial difference in the lives of victims of domestic violence. The partnership provides support, encouragement, advice and expertise in a sadly neglected area of volume crime. Policing is a compromise between principles and pragmatics. With the help of Standing Together every call to a violent abuser is more likely to reach a successful conclusion enabling officers to take a more robust approach where in the past they may have seen no opportunity for helping the victim.**

**Standing Together also helps to change the culture in which we live and work. Domestic violence is one of the hidden crimes which most affect the ability of people to live productive lives. By allowing organisations to work together in a more operationally effective way we can give meaning to the idea that such crimes are abhorrent and will not be tolerated.**

**Chief Superintendent Anthony Wills, Borough Commander of Hammersmith and Fulham Metropolitan Police Division ——— ”**

**Standing Together  
Against Domestic Violence  
Annual Report 2002**

This report was produced by:

Standing Together Against Domestic Violence  
Room 44D  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Polish Centre  
238 – 246 King Street  
London W6 ORF  
Telephone: 020 8748 5717  
Fax: 0208 8748 5921  
Email: [admin@standingtogether.org.uk](mailto:admin@standingtogether.org.uk)  
Charity Number: 1088844  
Company Number: 4283131  
Registered Office as above



The ground breaking co-ordinated response to domestic violence in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

Standing Together grew out of many years of vigorous multi-agency work in the Hammersmith and Fulham Domestic Violence Forum.

Standing Together was launched in Fulham in November 1998 and was extended to the whole Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in December 2000.

The essence of Standing Together is partnership. In the pages that follow, each partner's role is described – their contribution to the co-ordinated response is summarised. The actions they have added in 2002 as a result of the development of our work together are listed, together with their plans for further enhancing their contribution in the next year.

### **The members are:**

Hammersmith and Fulham Metropolitan Police Division  
ADVANCE Advocacy Project  
The Crown Prosecution Service, West London Branch  
Probation Service – London Probation Area  
Charing Cross Hospital  
Awareness In Practice

Voluntary Sector Advice and Support Services including:

- Domestic Violence Intervention Project
- Hammersmith Women's Aid
- Hammersmith and Fulham Community Law Centre

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham:

- Community Safety Unit
- Social Services Department

Observer Status:

- West London Magistrates Court
- Blackfriars Crown Court

And on the Specialist Domestic Violence Court management group:

- Kensington and Chelsea Metropolitan Police Division
- Eaves Women's Aid
- Victim Support Kensington and Chelsea
- The Witness Service

## **Definition of Domestic Violence**

Standing Together partners have agreed the following definition of domestic violence:

***“Domestic violence includes any form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse within or after an intimate relationship”.***

## **Aims**

- To increase the safety of survivors of domestic violence
- To increase the safety of children who live with domestic violence
- To hold abusers accountable and responsible for their actions
- To ensure that the onus for doing so lies with the statutory and other agencies rather than with the survivor
- Whilst acknowledging that each agency maintains its independence, to ensure that all the agencies involved work in an integrated and co-ordinated way to achieve these objectives
- To provide accountability to the public, to survivors and to other agencies for the way in which domestic violence is handled
- To test and develop effective policies, procedures and practical measures which can be integrated into the ongoing work of agencies

## **Structure**

There is a round table Steering Committee in charge of policies, procedures, practice and monitoring. Members are held accountable by protocols agreed between each agency and Standing Together. Each member is present because they have an active role to play in the co-ordinated response.

All the partners are represented on the Steering Committee which is currently chaired by the Divisional Commander of the Metropolitan Police.

A Charitable Trust has been formed to provide a management structure for future expansion.

### **Operations meeting**

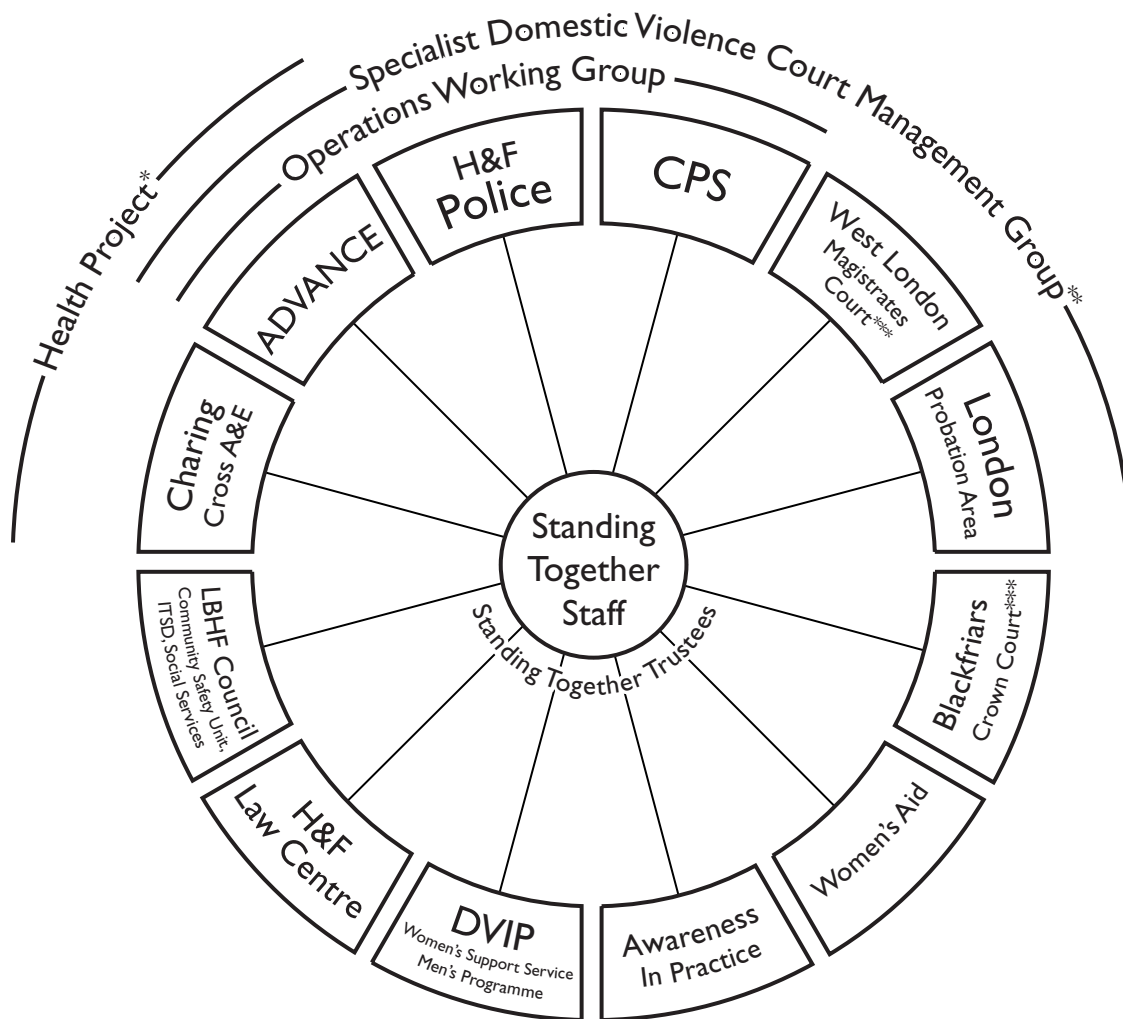
Key partners meet monthly to discuss the detail of cases and lessons learned, for feedback and recommendations where appropriate to the Steering Committee.

### **Specialist Domestic Violence Court Management Group**

There is a management group of key agencies involved in the Specialist Domestic Violence Court, which includes representatives of Kensington and Chelsea organisations. It reports to the Steering Committee.

### **Domestic Violence Witness Support Group**

This group brings together the agencies involved in providing support to victim/witnesses at the Specialist Domestic Violence Court. It reports to the Court Management Group.



The Civil Project involved working with various agencies, including: ADVANCE, CPS, LBHF Council, local solicitors and individual survivors of domestic violence.

- \* Please refer to the end of CRP Project Reports for full details of the Civil and Health Projects activities.
- \* Kensington and Chelsea agencies also form part of this group.
- \*\* Observer status.

Partnerships do not just happen. Standing Together employs staff who:

- convene and service the groups previously mentioned;
- draft protocols and procedures for discussion;
- document the policy and procedural changes agreed, and the thinking behind them;
- offer support as necessary to ensure that all partners have an equal say – in particular, the voluntary sector agencies working directly with survivors;
- work with staff at all levels in partner agencies to promote understanding of domestic violence and define best practice in the context of each organisation's work;
- ensure that this development work with individual agencies is fed into the partnership and the implications and opportunities it creates fully explored;
- plan, co-ordinate and deliver training to staff in partner agencies;
- research the feasibility and detail of new developments, commissioning external experts if appropriate;
- manage the process of consultation with survivors – deciding on appropriate questions to ask, then ensuring that material generated really does influence the partnership's actions and that the consultation is a safe, positive and respectful experience for participants;
- receive, input and analyse monitoring data on behalf of the partnership, and report on it and what it means;
- raise funds as necessary to implement change; then account to funders;
- keep up with best practice in this country and abroad and make sure it informs our work;
- spot opportunities for further development in line with Standing Together's aims;
- promote policy and practice change at all levels locally and nationally to improve the safety of survivors of domestic violence and their children.



**Left to Right:** Nic Hunter, Peta Sissons, Paul Kilkenny, Beryl Foster, Debbie Seaborn, Samantha Banton

**...by improving the way the Police respond to 999 calls.**

Police in Hammersmith and Fulham operate a positive arrest, charge and prosecution policy in which the over-riding priority is to protect the victim and any children who may be present. In practice this means that where the offender is present or easily traced they MUST be arrested if a level of arrest exists.

**Police officers called out to domestic violence incidents will:**

- Photograph victim and scene
- Arrange medical examination by FME
- Take statement (MGI I) from victim
- Consider other witnesses to crime and record details
- Refer victim to ADVANCE

**The Community Safety Unit will:**

- Ensure that the case file is sent to the CPS to agreed deadlines when a charge has been made
- Carry out additional investigation at the instigation of the CPS
- Liaise with the CPS as necessary concerning an update on all cases
- Check the CPS monthly case list against Police records to identify cases that have not been flagged as domestic violence
- Represent the Police at monthly Operations meetings where the detail of case preparation and victim safety is discussed.
- Share both anonymous and case-specific information with partners in line with Standing Together protocols.

***The night my husband was removed by them, this year, two officers came. They took him into one room and took me down to the kitchen, but they were both absolutely supportive and they absolutely said – they don't change, we are taking him away for you to have a rest.***

Survivor

## Police have...

- Produced a laminated card for officers checklisting action to take at an incident.
- Attended the Specialist Domestic Violence Court regularly.
- Trained all operational staff on what is expected of them in dealing with domestic violence – this is the second year that all staff have received this training.

### The training included:

- the recent work and achievements of the police role in the partnership, results of the work over the past two years, and new developments.
- the police domestic violence arrest policy, the associated actions officers are expected to take, and how management will support the work of front line officers.
- the detail of effective evidence collecting and how police actions at the scene can best assist in building the prosecution case
- the work of ADVANCE and the support police officers can expect from the Advocates; how and when to offer referral to ADVANCE to survivors at the scene; discussion of the most appropriate way to do this in order to promote take-up by survivors
- detail on the completion of Form 78 (where children are present at an incident) to take account of the procedure set up by Standing Together members DVIP and Hammersmith and Fulham Social Services. This involves DVIP carrying out an assessment of the risk to these children, based on their expertise in working with perpetrators and supporting women, which is used to inform action Social Services may take in response to the Form 78.
- the chance to consider what those experiencing domestic violence have said they need from the police and other criminal justice agencies.

### Next year:

- The Borough Police Divisional Strategy will include objectives for domestic violence which will guarantee police action.
- The Police with Standing Together will train all operational staff again on the detail of what is expected of them.

***“ Training is always a useful means of improving our performance and emphasising that domestic violence is a crime which can be resolved but something more inspiring started to appear. Officers no longer questioned the importance of this issue or the difficulties of achieving a prosecution but were concerned for the welfare of the victim and ways of increasing their safety. After 30 years experience of our approach to these issues this is indeed a change to be proud of.***

*Chief Supt Anthony Wills*

**”**

## ...by offering individual confidential support to all victims who call the Police.

Police officers offer every victim a referral to ADVANCE. ADVANCE is a specialist independent support agency which advocates on behalf of survivors. Their aim is to ensure that the victim/survivor and any children are safe and understand what is happening at all stages.

### ADVANCE advocates

- Are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to talk to the victim/survivor when police are called to a domestic violence incident.
- Listen to survivors and believe them.
- Give immediate safety advice; arrange crisis intervention if necessary.
- Arrange local refuge places if needed via Hammersmith Women's Aid, who are members of Standing Together.
- Explain the criminal procedures and act as a link if needed for the victim.
- Receive information from the Police and Courts about the detail of case progress and pass it on to the victim.
- Give advice on civil protection and referral to local solicitors.
- Provide advocacy, referral and detailed support with other issues as needed (eg housing, welfare benefits, immigration, child safety).
- Refer to and work with appropriate support services as requested:
  - Any victim/survivor whose particular needs means s/he needs additional support, e.g. due to language, culture, ability, sexuality, or drug or alcohol dependency.
- Refer to DVIP Women's Support Service any woman who needs group work and individual support long-term.
- Meet monthly with operational partners to address problems and shortcomings and share successful interventions.
- Attend the Specialist Domestic Violence Court on a weekly basis to provide advocacy for any Hammersmith and Fulham witness attending court.

**“** *If you have no voice. If you can not speak, then who speaks for you? They did. I love them for that.* **”**

Survivor

## ADVANCE have...

- Developed their approach to safety planning via a series of in-depth development and training sessions; produced pilot documentation to use in recording this intervention with individual survivors.
- Attended the Specialist Domestic Violence Court every week to offer support to survivors.
- Participated in the development of the Witness Support Group and resulting policies and resources.
- Taken part in training and briefing sessions for Police, Magistrates and Court staff.
- Together with Standing Together partners DVIP, Hammersmith Women's Aid, Victim Support, Eaves Women's Aid and other survivor support agencies, received training from Hammersmith Community Law Centre on the detail of civil protection orders available to survivors.
- Commissioned and carried out a survey of their users to gain feedback on the ADVANCE service, and users' experiences of solicitors.
- Worked with a local firm of solicitors to specify and ensure an appropriate service to ADVANCE clients.
- Started a dialogue with police and solicitors around response to injunction breaches.

## Next year:

- ADVANCE will work with local solicitors to offer training to police officers on injunctions.
- ADVANCE will link with the Standing Together Statistics Tracker on risk assessment in case tracking.
- ADVANCE with Standing Together will review the implementation of systematic safety planning and risk assessment.

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***Being taken seriously by the statutory groups and being seen as the experts gives the advocates a vital role in being the voice of the survivor. Having a co-ordinated response means that my work with survivors is backed up, knowing if I have to refer the client to another agency that they will get a good response because we have shared aims and objectives worked out together.***

*Bear Montique, Manager, ADVANCE*

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## ...by prosecuting cases in court based on all the evidence – not just the victim/witness’s statement.

### The Crown Prosecution Service will:

- Ensure that all offences of domestic violence are thoroughly reviewed in accordance with the Code of Crown Prosecutors and in the light of the CPS Policy for prosecuting cases of domestic violence.
- If the victim is unwilling to substantiate the allegation or makes a withdrawal statement, use its best endeavours to proceed in the absence of the victim, maintaining continuous liaison with the police throughout.
- Inform the Police of any proposed alteration or discontinuance of charges before the decision is taken.
- Ensure the Police are given adequate notification of future hearings, especially trial dates.
- In the event that the Crown Prosecutor is supplied with information at court which impacts on sufficiency of evidence/public interest criteria, he/she should apply for an adjournment to liaise with the police officer to determine whether the case should proceed.
- Arrange case conferences in the event that the defendant elects a crown court hearing.
- On conviction, provide an up to date record of previous convictions and cautions.
- Meet on a monthly basis with the operational partners to address problems and successes and to learn from case experience.

***“ It’s not like you are being vindictive...it’s out of your hands. He can’t blame you, authorities higher than you have said that this is it, and it is in the public interest to do that (prosecute) even if you didn’t want to, simply because (the accused) will go on and do it with other partners and it is in the public interest. ”***

Survivor

## CPS have...

- Taken part in training all operational police staff. The CPS input covered:
  - the content of the victim's statement, in detail and the rationale on which this is based
  - documenting this in three places, and how and why each can be used
  - interviewing techniques
  - evidence other than the victim's statement, and how and why each can be used:
    - other witnesses
    - medical evidence
    - photos of injuries
    - photos of the scene
    - forensic – if a weapon was used
    - recent communications – phone calls, text messages, letters
- Ensured that the Specialist Domestic Violence Court is prosecuted by suitably trained and senior Prosecutors with a full understanding and awareness of the issues surrounding the prosecution of domestic violence cases.

## Next year:

- The CPS with Standing Together will examine the potential for improving links between civil and criminal justice systems in tackling domestic violence.
- The CPS will seek to take forward the work begun in 2002 on the contribution which expert witnesses might make to the prosecution of cases.

“ ***Being part of Standing Together encourages the CPS to work in tandem with other organisations to help us see how our actions and input affect the community at large.*** ”

*Funmi Okubajo, Senior Prosecutor*

## ...by co-ordinating all agencies working in the pilot Specialist Domestic Violence Court at West London Magistrates Court.

Partner agencies have agreed a detailed protocol to govern the operation of the Specialist Domestic Violence Court. They have agreed the following aims for the pilot:

1. To increase the effectiveness of the judicial system in providing
  - protection and support to victims and witnesses of domestic violence
  - appropriate sanctions to perpetrators
 and by reducing delay through effective case management.
2. To further increase co-ordination of agencies, including the Crown Court, involved in supporting victims and witnesses and dealing with perpetrators.
3. To explore the potential for linking civil courts in to the criminal justice process at WLMC.

West London Magistrates Court deals with cases arising from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Therefore all defined domestic violence cases from both boroughs coming before the West London Magistrates Court will be subject to the Protocol.

Standing Together is grateful to agencies in Kensington and Chelsea who have been willing to develop their own work so as to aim for consistency in handling cases before the court. In particular, Kensington and Chelsea Police, Victim Support, and Eaves Women's Aid are working closely with us on the detail of practice at the court.

The court sits every Thursday at West London Magistrates Court. Hearings take place in the morning, and trials are listed in the afternoon. The aim is to list all cases falling within the protocol's definition of domestic violence before the Specialist Domestic Violence Court.

**“** *When I walked into the Witness Box he was still on the left, visible there for me and it was really hard. If it wasn't for the eye contact from the women from ADVANCE I don't think I would have been able to get through the day.* **”**

Survivor

## with the support of West London Magistrates Court...

- Negotiated with the Lord Chancellor's Department and Hammersmith and Fulham Council a Local Public Service Agreement to pilot the Specialist Domestic Violence Court.
- Negotiated a detailed protocol between Police, CPS, the Court, London Probation Area, Inner London Family Proceedings Court and victim/witness support agencies (ADVANCE, the Witness Service, Victim Support Kensington and Chelsea, and Eaves Women's Aid) to govern the operation of the court and all agencies' roles in it.
- Held discussions with the Courts Service HQ on the exchange of information with the county courts.
- Delivered training and briefing sessions for magistrates and court staff on the protocol.
- Produced an information leaflet and a comments leaflet for victim/witnesses attending the Specialist Domestic Violence Court.
- Begun sittings in the Specialist Domestic Violence Court from mid-October 2002.
- Held a formal event on 2 December 2002 at which the Solicitor General, Harriet Harman MP, launched the court.
- Established the Domestic Violence Witness Support Group and the Specialist Domestic Violence Court Management Group.

### Next year:

- The Court will produce a Bench Book to assist magistrates hearing domestic violence cases.
- The Court will train all Legal Advisers in domestic violence awareness.
- We will continue to explore the issues involved in the exchange of information with the county courts.

“ ***The way we are now dealing with domestic violence cases has lessons for all our work – case management, treatment of witnesses, monitoring and evaluating. I think our learning curve will extend beyond domestic violence cases.*** ”

*Helen Parry, Clerk to the Justices,  
West London Magistrates Court*

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## ...by improving the information available to sentencers, including bail and sentencing options in protecting victims and holding offenders accountable.

London Probation Area supports the aims of Standing Together to increase the safety of those subject to domestic violence and hold perpetrators accountable for their illegal behaviour.

Where alleged offenders are on bail, London Probation Area will inform Standing Together of any change in bail conditions relating to probation hostel residency (other conditions of bail are the responsibility of the police and CPS).

The protocol for the Specialist Domestic Violence Court says that where a defendant pleads or is found guilty and a community penalty is a stated option, the court will consider requiring the defendant to attend for assessment as to his/her suitability for attendance on the Domestic Violence Prevention Programme.

### London Probation Area will:

- Provide a Pre-Sentence Report (PSR) on offenders to assist in sentencing decisions; where appropriate this will include assessment of suitability for attendance on the specialist Violence Prevention Programme. In doing this work London Probation Area will make all reasonable efforts to contact ADVANCE, the Police Community Safety Unit and any other relevant agency in order to receive relevant information about the pattern of offending, civil injunctions, Children Act Proceedings, child protection matters or any other information relating to the case. If the survivor does not want this information to be shared with the offender through access to Probation records, this must be clearly stated in writing.
- Inform Standing Together of any recommendations for domestic violence programme in PSR's and final outcomes in sentencing.
- Provide a place on the specialist Violence Prevention Programme for every offender sentenced to it.
- Inform Standing Together of any breach proceedings.
- Share with Standing Together information about the level of attitudinal / behavioural change of participants who have completed Probation Service Domestic Violence Prevention Programmes.
- Assess, manage and periodically review the level of risk in all cases.
- Invite the representatives of the Police and ADVANCE to any planning meeting connected to the Management of Risk and Dangerousness Procedure.
- Report any incidents causing concern by a client of the service using the Serious Incident Reporting criteria as per the handbook entry.
- Liaise closely with ADVANCE with a view to meeting victim/witness needs in the most efficient way.

***“ There was not such a thing as re-education when this thing first happened to me... I think it's an excellent thing. I think it's so important.***

*Survivor*

## London Probation Area have...

- Contributed to a report for London magistrates, providing information about the content and effectiveness of the Domestic Violence Prevention Programme they run. Home Office research has found that this type of programme was far more successful than other forms of Court disposal in preventing repeat violence; where repeat violence did occur, more successful in reducing the frequency; and successful in reducing the coercive and controlling behaviour often associated with domestic violence. Statistics from the London Probation programme show that of 102 men who completed it in its first four years, five had re-offended.
- Made domestic violence awareness and good practice part of the core training for probation officers supervising offenders.
- Joined the Management Group for the Specialist Domestic Violence Court.
- Had a Senior Probation Officer attending the domestic violence court every week.

## Next year:

- London Probation Area will ensure that all probation officers attend courses on domestic violence which include report writing and information about the content and effectiveness of the specialist Domestic Violence Prevention Programme;
- London Probation Area will ensure that there is a qualified probation officer in the Specialist Domestic Violence Court at all times.

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*The Probation Service in Hammersmith and Fulham have welcomed the significant changes that have taken place in the management of Domestic Violence cases... Standing Together's holistic approach has in our view brought more perpetrators to account. We have benefited from an improved relationship with the Police, who are willing to share information regarding call outs to domestic disputes, thus enabling us to take an informed view when writing Pre Sentence Reports, and early notification of re-arrest for similar offences when the Offender is already subject to a Community Rehabilitation Order. ADVANCE enables us to fulfil our duties towards the victim, both in terms of protection and through knowledge of the victim's feelings, which are essential for inclusion in the Pre Sentence Report and during supervisory periods. The trust that has developed between ADVANCE workers and the Probation Service is extremely beneficial in the overall management of the case.*

*Heather Miller, Senior Probation Officer*

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## ...by developing closer links between the civil and criminal justice systems.

In 2001 Standing Together received funding from the Home Office Crime Reduction Programme to explore the potential for links with the civil courts and develop appropriate initiatives as part of the co-ordinated response.

### We have:

- Organised training by the Community Law Centre for Standing Together partner agencies who directly support individual survivors on the remedies available in the civil justice system.
- Built a link with Inner London Family Proceedings Court, who have briefed ADVANCE advocates on detailed procedure and the support available at the court to applicants for Family Law Act orders who are unrepresented. This is particularly useful for women who do not qualify for Legal Aid and cannot afford to pay a solicitor – the cost can be up to £1000.
- Made links with local solicitors and begun to develop good practice guidelines for solicitors dealing with domestic violence, in the context of the Law Society's Family Law Protocol.
- Taken up with local solicitors and the Law Society the issue of "warning letters", which some solicitors believe have to be sent before an application for an order can be made.
- Organised training and briefing sessions for magistrates, and a multi-agency "walkthrough" exercise exploring the potential links between civil and criminal systems via a case study approach.
- Negotiated an information exchange protocol between Inner London Family Proceedings Court and the Specialist Domestic Violence Court; and begun to understand the issues and barriers involved in developing a similar link with the county courts.
- Produced for consultation a draft "ideal process" setting out the links that could be made between civil and criminal systems as a case goes forward.

Standing Together partner DVIP has developed the Safe Contact Project, in partnership with CAFCASS and the Coram Child Contact Service. DVIP offer risk assessment on men referred by the family courts to help their consideration of child contact issues. DVIP's reports aim to provide the courts with the most definitive information possible regarding the man's history of behaviour and attitudes, an analysis of risk and how that risk may be affected by particular interventions. The need for this project is reinforced by the early experience of the Specialist Domestic Violence Court, where applications for bail conditions and bail variations often cite child contact.

***He was taken in (by Police) on the Tuesday night...an appointment was set up for me to go with my DVIP counsellor on Thursday, the next day, to make a statement at the solicitors chosen by ADVANCE. ADVANCE were liaising with the police, they chose a solicitor, the next day on Friday I went to court. He never came back to where we lived, he never came back. He wasn't allowed to.***

Survivor

## ...by offering screening and intervention at two pilot NHS sites in Hammersmith and Fulham.

In 2001 Standing Together received funding from the Home Office Crime Reduction Programme to develop work with the Health Service as part of the co-ordinated response. The aim of the project was to create institutional change in the health care response to domestic violence at three pilot sites in the borough – Charing Cross Hospital Accident and Emergency, Charing Cross Walk-in Centre, and Parsons Green Walk-in Centre. (Charing Cross Hospital A&E Department and Charing Cross Walk-In have now been merged, they are known as the Emergency Primary Care Assessment Service EPCAS).

### As a result, these health sites now:

- Display posters and information material about domestic violence;
- Screen every female patient over the age of 16, and any male patient who exhibits indicators of abuse;
- Where abuse is identified:
  - Offer written information on sources of help where the patient wants it;
  - When the injury lends itself to photographic documentation, take photos;
  - Document the results of screening in patient records, for possible use in any future court proceedings;
  - Offer immediate referral to ADVANCE (24 hours a day, seven days a week) where the patient wants it.

The Intimate Partner Violence Protocols have been agreed at these sites to cover all aspects of this work. Part of this has been the training of medical staff to:

- Give them a brief understanding of the effects of domestic violence
- Brief them on how to create a safe and confidential space for disclosure to take place
- Ask routine questions (for which there are a range)
- Know how and where to document findings (at a different place/dependent on health site)
- Offer an overview of services provided by ADVANCE and DVIP
- Inform them on how to make appropriate referrals

Partnership working has been key to this development. ADVANCE and DVIP (Women's Support Service) have contributed to training medical staff, by introducing their services and clarifying options that can be offered to survivors. DVIP offer ongoing individual and groupwork support to women as they reflect on what is happening to them and what their options are.

**“** *The first time I asked the screening question, I thought that this patient would have no idea what I was talking about. The patient said that she had experienced domestic violence but years ago when there was no help. She was so pleased that we were asking.* **”**

Nurse practitioner, Walk-in Centre

## ...by giving a voice, in all the work we do, to women who have experienced domestic violence.

A founding principle of Standing Together is “putting the survivor at the centre of the change process”. We believe in empowering women; we know that where agencies plan change, however well-intentioned, without the involvement of people with current, first-hand knowledge of the issues there is a serious risk that the safety of women and children will be diminished not increased.

### We have put this principle into practice in the following ways:

- Survivor agencies took a lead in the development of Standing Together, alongside the council and the police.
- Voluntary sector agencies working directly with survivors (ADVANCE, DVIP, the Community Law Centre and Women’s Aid) are equal partners in the management of Standing Together, on our Steering Group alongside all the criminal justice system agencies, the council and the health service.

### We have also talked directly with survivors themselves:

Early in the development phase we carried out a consultation exercise with survivors, mainly women then living in refuges. Respondents supported the idea of the case going forward without the victim’s participation if necessary, provided appropriate support and advocacy was in place.

We have developed a consultation group of survivors, aiming to establish a group of women who, having been fully informed about what is involved, would like to form an ongoing “focus group” whom Standing Together would consult on a regular basis. Our aim is to build a direct voice for survivors in to the ongoing work of Standing Together – to get to a position where we can consult with an informed group of survivors about our detailed plans before we implement them. This work has been governed by a protocol agreed with agencies in Hammersmith and Fulham working directly with survivors.

In 2001 and 2002 we have held a total of seven consultation meetings. Each one was on a topic directly relevant to Standing Together’s current development work and the material was used, with the survivors’ permission, to inform practice as it developed. In 2003 we intend to continue this important work.

The process has depended on the skills and commitment of our consultant Vicky Grosser, and Bhupinder Virdee from DVIP, who have run the consultation meetings for Standing Together. Vicky has the specialist skills needed to ensure a safe and positive experience for the women whilst also achieving useful consultation material for Standing Together; Bhupinder brings skills and current experience of direct work supporting individual survivors as well as a link in to the day to day work of Standing Together. We thank them both – and we thank all the women who have generously shared their experience with us.

“ *I have liked giving something back to support other women who experience domestic violence. It was good to be here, to contribute to changes being possible.* ”

Survivor

## **...by holding agencies, and the partnership as a whole, accountable for the work.**

To do this, Standing Together monitors the effectiveness of the co-ordinated response in general, and of each member agency's performance in particular, using a specially developed computer program called STATS. STATS enables us to track individual cases through the criminal justice system, and has the potential to identify risk, improve victim safety, and stop offenders from slipping through the cracks in the system.

Entering, updating and interpreting the data is a complicated and resource-intensive process. STATS data is derived from police and other agencies' records, and these records are updated as the case moves from arrest to charge and so on. Thus it is necessary not only to collect relevant data, but also to 'clean' it, that is to refer back to the source agency at the end of each collection period, in order to obtain updates on those cases which were in some way unresolved at the time that their data was initially collected.

Through STATS the partnership is developing its understanding of the detail and pitfalls of monitoring information, and the issues involved in measuring for example repeat victimisation. STATS is ground-breaking in its ability to simultaneously track cases through all stages of the criminal justice system, and provide a statistical overview (against user-definable criteria, and within user-definable time frames) of the performance of the system as a whole.

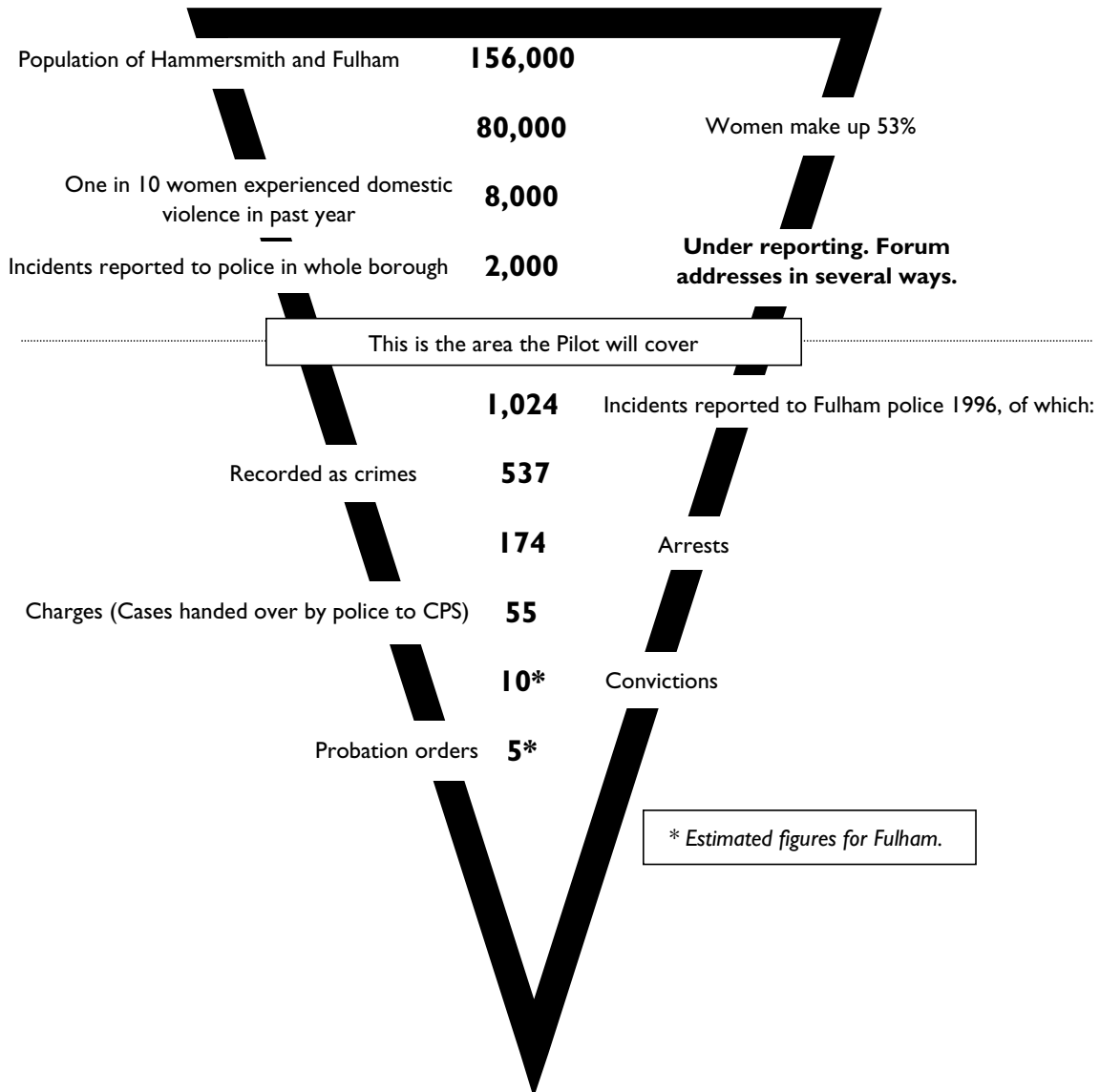
STATS operation is governed by protocols safeguarding confidentiality and use.

### **In addition, Standing Together staff promote the work by:**

- Participation in local networks e.g. Domestic Violence Forum
- Networking and sharing information with colleagues and other interested parties from throughout the UK and abroad
- This year visits have included politicians and delegations from France, India, New Zealand, Norway and Papua New Guinea
- Providing speakers at events
- Contributing to law reform processes

## ARE WE HOLDING THE PERPETRATORS ACCOUNTABLE?

These 1996 figures show the extent of case attrition, and were the starting point in Standing Together's work.



Standing Together is having an impact on case attrition. Convictions as a percentage of charges have more than doubled, although numbers remain small.

We continue to monitor progress.

	1996 (Baseline year) Fulham only	1999 (Year 1) Fulham only	2000 (Year 2) Fulham only	2001 (Year 3) Hamm & Fulham
<b>Incidents reported to Police</b>	<b>1024</b>	<b>1351</b>	<b>1457</b>	<b>2031</b>
<b>Recorded as crimes</b>	<b>537</b> 52%	<b>830</b> 61%	<b>793</b> 54.5%	<b>1318</b> 65%
				4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 79%
<b>Charges</b> <i>As percentage of crimes</i>	<b>55</b> 10%	<b>149</b> 18%	<b>199</b> 25%	<b>177</b> 13.5%
				4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 19.8%
<b>Charges finalised to Court</b>	-	<b>41</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Convictions</b> <i>As percentage of charges</i>	<b>10</b> 18%	<b>15</b> 36.5%	<b>27</b> 54%	<b>35</b> 39%

**Please Note:**

West London Magistrates Court only, no Crown Court data

Standing Together went Borough wide in Year 3 from Pilot area in Fulham Years 1 & 2. Figures dip at start and rise in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, after Police Division Trained.

The following may not be sufficient for the reader to gain a full understanding of the charity's financial position. A full copy may be obtained from Standing Together, Room 44D, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Polish Centre, 238 –246 King Street, London W6 ORF.

**Standing Together Against Domestic Violence**

**Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st March 2002**

<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>2002 Total £</b>
Community Fund	0	29,539	29,539
Grants	0	167,176	167,176
Other incomes	5,741	0	5,741
	<u>5,741</u>	<u>196,715</u>	<u>202,456</u>
	=====	=====	=====
 <b>Outgoing Resources</b>			
Directly charitable	0	168,753	168,753
Management & Administration	505	22,402	22,907
	<u>505</u>	<u>191,155</u>	<u>191,660</u>
	=====	=====	=====
 Net Movement in funds	 5,236	 5,560	 10,796
Balance forward	0	0	0
 Balance 31/3/02	 <u>5,236</u>	 <u>5,560</u>	 <u>10,796</u>
	=====	=====	=====

All activities were continuing.

There were no other gains/losses other than as shown above.

**Standing Together Against Domestic Violence**

**Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2002**

	2002 £
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Debtors	9,964
Cash at bank	86,575
	<u>96,539</u>
Creditors - amounts due within one year	85,743
<b>Net Current (Liabilities)</b>	<u>10,796</u> =====
<b>Reserves</b>	
Unrestricted Funds	5,236
Restricted Funds	5,560
	<u>10,796</u> =====

In preparing these Accounts, I have taken advantage of the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small companies.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees on 26<sup>th</sup> February..... 2003.

*W. S. M.*  
.....  
**Trustee/Director**

All the funders who have made the work possible. This includes the member agencies who have given their staff time and resources in both the development and delivery of the co-ordinated response.

**Grants have been received this year from:**

- Home Office (Crime Reduction Programme)
- London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham Safer Communities Programme
- Regensis Hammersmith and Fulham
- The Community Fund (NLCB)
- Camelot Foundation

**Trustees of Standing Together:**

- Rohan Collier (Chair)
- Helen Ball
- Cecilia Barrett (Secretary)
- Julia Dick (Treasurer)
- Jill Maddison
- Clive Soley
- Anthony Wills

**Staff of Standing Together**

- Beryl Foster, Director
- Nic Hunter, Locum Tracker (April–July 02), Co-ordinator
- Sonia Keddo, Information and Systems Officer (until February 02)
- Paul Kilkenny, Tracker (from June 02)
- Nicole Jacobs, Health Development Worker (until June 02)
- Samantha Banton, Health Development Worker (from June 02)
- Debbie Seaborn, Civil Law Development Worker (job share)
- Peta Sissons, Civil Law Development Worker (from June 02, job share)
- Shirley Canderton, Administration and Data Collection Worker (April–November 02)
- Philip Naylor, Finance Worker

**Volunteers of Standing Together**

- Mary Sakho
- Louise Cohen

All partner agencies on the Steering Committee and the Specialist Domestic Violence Court Management Group, who generously share their time, experience and ideas.

Staff in each agency who collect and share data with Standing Together.

All our colleagues throughout the country who have supported Standing Together in word, action and deeds.

Hammersmith and Fulham Community Law Centre for its role in employing Standing Together staff while the Standing Together Trust was developed to take over the management of funds and staff.

Leeds Inter-Agency Project and staff associated with the Leeds Domestic Violence Court, for their generosity in sharing information and experience with us.

Anthony Wills, whose personal commitment to Standing Together this year as previously has shown itself in so many practical ways, as well as in his support to the staff in his role as Trustee and Chair of the Steering Committee.

Harriet Harman MP, Barbara Roche MP, Dame Sally Powell, Jennette Arnold AM and the Greater London Authority, for their interest and support in 2002.

Councillor Andrew Slaughter and councillors and officers of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham for their ongoing support.

Dr Susan Edwards, for her commitment and work with us again this year.

Nicky Gier and Marina Rosario, our anchor persons at the Police Station.

Vicky Grosser and Bhupinder Virdee, who have enabled the survivor consultation that has informed our work this year.

All the survivors who shared their experience with us in the hope that doing so would improve things for other women and children. Thank you.