

**WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST**  
**DOMESTIC ABUSE**

**Warwickshire**  
**Multi-Agency Risk Assessment**  
**Conference Operating Protocol**

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	
1.1 Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.....	4
1.2 Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference Operating Protocol.....	4
<b>2. Partner Agencies</b>	
2.1 MARAC Agencies.....	4
2.2 Core partner agencies.....	5
2.3 Role of Domestic Abuse Counselling Service (DACS).....	8
2.4 Induction of New MARAC Representatives.....	8
2.5 Role of Agencies at MARAC.....	9
2.6 When a MARAC Representative is unable to attend.....	10
2.7 Information to be shared.....	10
2.8 Offering and Acceptance of Actions.....	11
<b>3 Governance and Performance Management</b>	
3.1 Objectives of MARAC.....	11
3.2 MARAC Steering Group.....	11
<b>4 Process of the MARAC</b>	
4.1 Identification of MARAC cases.....	13
4.2 Criteria for Referral to MARAC.....	14
4.3 “Repeat” cases.....	15
4.4 MARAC and Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence.....	15
4.5 Referral to MARAC.....	16
4.6 Victim Consent for Referral.....	17
4.7 MARAC Case list / Agenda.....	17
4.8 Actions before the MARAC (where safe to do so) .....	17
4.9 Research.....	18
4.10 Victim Contact before the Meeting (where safe to do so) .....	18
4.11 Is the perpetrator informed of the meeting and the risk management plans?.....	19
4.12 MARAC Meetings.....	19
4.13 MARAC Chair and Deputy Chair .....	19
4.14 MARAC Attendees.....	19
4.15 Minutes and Administration.....	20
4.16 Warwickshire MARAC Information Sharing Protocol.....	20
4.17 Confidentiality Statement.....	21
4.18 What information can be disclosed at a MARAC?.....	21
4.19 How will the information be used? .....	21
4.20 Action Planning.....	22
4.21 What happens after a MARAC? .....	22
4.22 Emergency MARACs.....	23
4.23 Raising concerns about Risk Management Plan.....	24
4.24 Referral to and from other MARACs.....	24
4.25 Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS).....	26
4.26 MARAC disclosure into court proceedings.....	27
4.27 Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).....	27
<b>5 Equality</b>	
5.1 Identifying needs and actions.....	28
5.2 MARAC Membership.....	28

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

5.3 Monitoring.....	28
<b>6 Evaluation.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>7 Conflict Resolution and Complaints</b>	
7.1 Between MARAC Agencies.....	29
7.2 Complaints from victims, individuals and non-MARAC agencies.....	29
<b>8 Breaches.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>9 Withdrawal.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>10 Review.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendix A SafeLives DASH Risk Indicator Checklist</b>	
<b>Appendix B Warwickshire MARAC Referral Form</b>	
<b>Appendix C MARAC Confidentiality statement</b>	
<b>Appendix D MARAC Research Forms</b>	
<b>Appendix E MARAC to MARAC Referral Process</b>	
<b>Appendix F MARAC to MARAC transfer request</b>	
<b>Appendix G MARAC Representatives Handover Form</b>	
<b>Appendix H Key Contacts</b>	
<b>Appendix I SafeLives MARAC: How to complain guidance</b>	

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences**

A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a multi-agency meeting to which domestic abuse victims, who have been identified as at high risk of serious harm or homicide, are referred to. The MARAC is attended by representatives from a range of statutory and voluntary sector agencies.

During the meeting relevant and proportionate information is shared about the current risks, enabling representatives to identify options to increase the safety of the victim and any other at risk parties such as children. The MARAC then creates a multi-agency action plan to address the identified risks and increase the safety and wellbeing of all those at risk.

The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim. However, taking in to account the UK law which prioritises the safety of children, the MARAC will also make links with other multi-agency meetings and processes to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator.

At the heart of a MARAC is the working assumption that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of the life of a victim to be able to identify and manage the risks, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety.

The victim does not attend the meeting but is represented by an IDVA who represents their views and wishes and ensures that victim's safety remains the focus of the meeting.

MARACs operate as one element of a wider infrastructure designed to protect and support victims of domestic abuse which also includes, for example, Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVCs).

The purpose of MARAC is to reduce repeat offending and increase the safety of domestic abuse victims and their children, at the same time improving the level of professional support they receive.

### **1.2 Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference Operating Protocol**

The purpose of the MARAC Operating Protocol (MOP) is to establish accountability, responsibility and reporting structures for the MARAC and to clearly outline the MARAC process. The following guidance will inform and advise all partner agencies of the role and function of MARACs, as well as their responsibilities in fulfilling their part in the partnership.

The MOP complies with Warwickshire's safeguarding policies for both adults and children. The MOP is designed to enhance existing arrangements for safeguarding, public protection and information sharing rather than replace them.

## **2. Partner Agencies**

### **2.1 MARAC Agencies**

All contributing agencies are considered vital to the effective operation of a MARAC. The MARAC is not exclusive to specific agencies, however in order to make the MARAC as effective as possible and create the greatest impact specific agencies have been identified as 'core partners'.

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

When an agency is signed up to the MARAC protocol, the MARAC Steering Group determines whether each core partner will receive full MARAC documents (agendas, nominals, minutes and action trackers) or just agendas and action trackers. This will be determined on whether it is deemed proportionate and necessary for each individual agency to receive full information. If an agency in receipt of only agendas and action trackers wishes to receive the nominal or minutes for a particular case, this request should be sent in writing to the MARAC Coordinator. The Coordinator will then liaise with the MARAC Chair who will determine if the information sharing is proportionate and necessary in the circumstances.

For an agency to participate in the MARAC as a core partner, there are 2 requirements. They must identify and commit to the following:

## a) Strategic Lead

A senior strategic manager who can influence processes and make decisions on behalf of their agencies. The strategic lead will be responsible for making the necessary strategic links within their professional groups and other safeguarding responsibilities in addition to being a member of the MARAC steering group.

## b) MARAC Representative

Senior operational manager who will be present at MARAC meetings, who will report as necessary and agree to, and ensure fulfilment of, actions on behalf of their agency. They will also take responsibility for feeding back any operational issues to their strategic lead to ensure that MARAC is an effective operational and strategic tool.

## 2.2 Core partner agencies

Core Agency	Partner	Strategic MARAC Lead	MARAC Representative	Documents received for the MARAC process
Warwickshire Police				Full documents
				Full documents
Refuge Abuse Service <sup>1</sup>	Domestic Support		IDVAs attend on a rota system	Full documents
Warwickshire County Council	Children's Services			Full documents
Warwickshire County Council	Adult Services			Full documents

<sup>1</sup> Domestic Abuse Support Service includes: IDVA Service, MARAC Coordinator, Sanctuary scheme, WINGS, Outreach Support, IRIS, Multi-Agency training and refuge accommodation (24 Units).

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

Warwickshire County Council – People Directorate			Full documents
Rugby Borough Council			Full documents
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Housing			Full documents
North Warwickshire Borough Council Housing			Full documents
Stratford District Council			Full documents
Warwick District Council			Full documents
Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust			Full documents
Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service			Full documents
Community Rehabilitation Company			Full documents
National Probation Service			Full documents
George Elliot Hospital			Full documents
South Warwickshire Foundation NHS Trust			Full documents
University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire		NA – UHCW do not attend meetings, updates are sent in	Full documents
NHS Arden Cluster (CCG Primary Care)		TBC	
Warwickshire County Council – Education Safeguarding	TBC	Education do not attend the MARACs but reports are sent in	Agendas and action trackers only
P3 - People Potential Possibilities			Agendas and action trackers only
Orbit Housing Association			Agendas and action trackers only
Youth Justice		TBC	Agendas and action trackers only
Family Intervention Counselling Service			Agendas and action trackers only

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Midland Heart	TBC	TBC	Agendas and action trackers only
Compass	TBC		Agendas and action trackers only
Platform Housing Group	TBC		Agendas and action trackers only
Bromford Housing Association	TBC	TBC	Agendas and action trackers only
Affinity Sutton	TBC		Agendas and action trackers only
WM Housing Group	TBC	TBC	Agendas and action trackers only
Change Grow Live			Agendas and action trackers only
Clarion Housing Group			Agendas and action trackers only
Victim Support			Agendas and action trackers only

Agencies that may be involved on a case by case basis include but are not limited to:

- Registered Social Landlords
- Warwickshire Refuge Service
- Families First
- Education Safeguarding
- Rugby hospital
- Army Welfare Service
- Specialist SV and CSA Charity
- MAPPA
- Specialist SV Charity
- Specialist DA Counselling and Therapy Service
- Citizen Housing

## **2.4 Induction of New MARAC Representatives**

### **2.4.1 New representatives from an existing MARAC agency**

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

The agency must contact the MARAC Coordinator and inform them of the name, role and contact details of the new representative. The MARAC Coordinator will then contact the new representative and arrange an induction meeting.

It is the responsibility of the agency to ensure the new representative understands the purpose of MARACs and the role and responsibilities of the MARAC representative.

Where possible the new representative should shadow the existing representative at a MARAC meeting before attending on their own. This would include assisting with researching cases, and feeding back any actions to the agency following MARAC, in order for the new representative to learn about the process whilst being supported by an experienced member of staff.

Short videos and Toolkits are available for each agency attending the MARAC on SafeLives website, links below, which assists in to clarifying an attendee's role as MARAC representative.

<http://www.safelives.org.uk/practice-support/resources-marac-meetings/resources-people-referring>

<https://safelives.org.uk/practice-support/resources-marac-meetings/marac-videos>

## 2.4.2 New MARAC Agency

New agencies who wish to attend the MARAC must contact the MARAC Coordinator. The MARAC Coordinator will then forward the request to the MARAC Steering Group Chair. The request will be considered at the next MARAC Steering Group.

If the request is approved, the MARAC Coordinator will provide the agency with a copy of the Warwickshire MARAC resource pack and arrange an induction meeting.

If the request is denied, the Chair of the MARAC Steering Group will contact the agency and explain the reasons for the request being denied at this time. This does not preclude the agency from submitting a request in future.

## 2.4.3 Induction

The MARAC Coordinator will undertake an induction meeting with each new MARAC Representative. During this meeting the MARAC Coordinator will:

- Check that the representative has received their resource pack and answer any questions.
- Check that the representative understands the purpose of MARACs and what their role as an agency representative at the meeting will be.
- Ensure that the representative is familiar with the process of the MARAC itself. This should include:
  - Their role as MARAC Representative/ agency lead.
  - Referral processes, how to research and report on actions and relevant deadlines.
  - The role of other agencies, especially the IDVA service.
  - The governance arrangements including the role of the steering group, Information Sharing Protocol and MARAC Operating Protocol.



# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

- If appropriate, check that the new representative has been briefed by any previous agency MARAC representative and/or has been given a copy of the representatives' handover form (see Appendix G)

The MARAC Coordinator will also introduce new members at their first MARAC and follow-up after their first MARAC meeting to ensure that any queries have been answered and that the new representative is confident in their role as MARAC Representative.

## 2.5 Role of Agencies at MARAC

Representatives who attend MARACs should have knowledge of the process and are able to support and advise their staff about MARAC processes and protocols. This will frequently relate to proportionate information sharing and giving colleagues a sense of the strengths and limitations of the process.

Each agency has a responsibility to ensure their staff have the appropriate knowledge of this protocol and its implementation.

## 2.6 When a MARAC Representative is unable to attend

Each agency will update the MARAC Coordinator when their MARAC Representative is unable to attend a MARAC (for example due to ill health or annual leave).

The agency will arrange for a deputy or suitable replacement to attend. Should this not be possible, at the very least information regarding each case should be returned to the MARAC Coordinator 2 days prior to the meeting using the appropriate Research Form provided (see Appendix D). If those identified in a case are not known to the agency, a "nil return" should be submitted.

## 2.7 Information to be shared

### 2.7.1.Type of information

Each agency will bring relevant information to the meeting. Guidance on the kind of information each agency can bring is detailed in SafeLives "Disclosure of information at Marac FAQs" which can be found at [www.safelives.org.uk](http://www.safelives.org.uk).

Information shared at MARACs should be proportionate and relevant to the case and contribute to assessing the risk to the victim and children or inform a safety plan.

Such information includes:

- Is the case known to each agency?
- What is known about the individuals concerned? E.g. names, aliases, date of birth, addresses
- Levels of any current interventions/ support offered
- Any assessments that have been undertaken and the outcomes of these
- Known wishes of those concerned
- Is anyone in the case (victim, children, perpetrator) listed on any registers e.g. child protection, sex offenders
- Referrals made to other services

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

- Any disclosures made relating to domestic abuse
- Records of attendance/ contact with those concerned
- Known carers of those concerned or others regularly attending the address
- Details of any other individuals with the appearance of care and support needs associated with the case and the potential risks to them.

The questions on the MARAC Research Form (Appendix D) will help to collect this information.

## **2.7.2 How far back should agencies research?**

When considering the historical nature of the data, please consider the relevance to current risk management. Further guidance can be found in SafeLives “MARAC FAQs for MARAC practitioners” which can be found at [www.safelives.org.uk](http://www.safelives.org.uk).

## **2.8 Offering and Acceptance of Actions**

All agencies that attend the MARAC do so as they are able to contribute to reducing the risk posed to high risk victims.

This could be through direct provision of a service or support; ability to provide advice; making staff aware of the case so that if that each agency can best support the victim and keep their own staff safe.

It is for this reason that an Agency’s MARAC Representative should hold a position that has authority to offer and ensure fulfilment of actions on behalf of their agency.

## **3 Governance and Performance Management**

### **3.1 Objectives of MARAC**

- To share information to increase the safety, health and wellbeing of adult victims and their children.
- To determine whether the perpetrator poses a significant risk to any particular individual or the general community
- To jointly construct and implement a risk management plan to support those at risk and reduce the risk of harm
- To reduce repeat victimisation
- To improve agency accountability
- To improve support for staff involved in high-risk domestic abuse cases.

This is achieved by:

- Identifying cases of High Risk domestic abuse
- Risk assessing the victims for risk of harm
- Referring into the appropriate and specialist agencies for support
- Providing research from all agencies

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

- Meeting and information sharing amongst all the agencies
- Action planning to minimise further risk of harm
- Follow up and maintaining contact with the victim

## 3.2 MARAC Steering Group

### 3.2.1 Purpose

Warwickshire has a well-established MARAC steering group that meets to discuss and review systems and procedures.

The purpose of the steering group is to ensure proper accountability on the part of participating agencies in the MARAC to their representatives, to one another and to victims. It provides a platform to embed the process in key local partnerships, to promote sustainability and to ensure the MARAC demonstrates that it is a process which is structured to deliver equality of outcome to all.

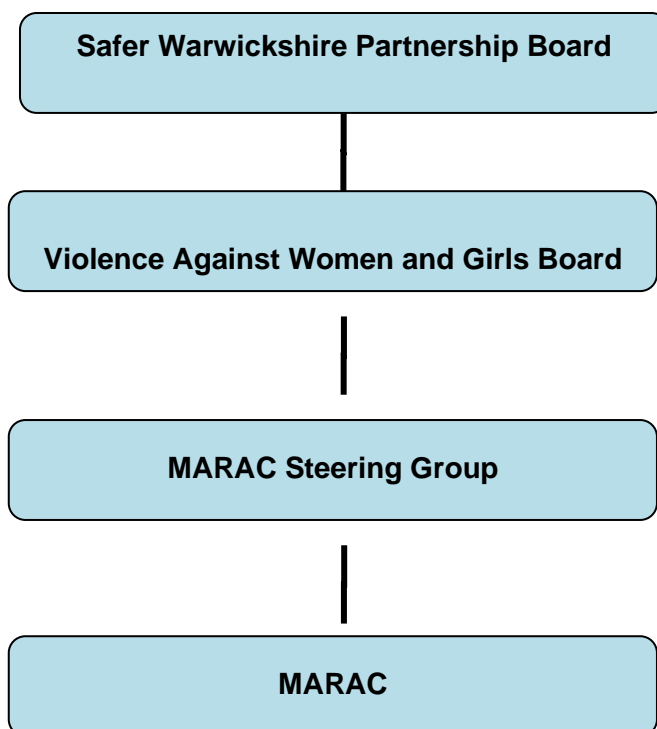
### 3.2.2 Aims

The MARAC Steering Group has 2 aims:

- To provide strategic governance to the MARAC in order to reduce repeat victimisation and reduce levels of harm posed to high risk victims of domestic abuse in Warwickshire.
- To provide quality assurance to the MARAC.

### 3.2.3 Aims

The MARAC Steering Group reports to the Warwickshire Violence Against Women and Girls Board:



# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

## **3.2.4 Responsibilities**

The MARAC steering group will be responsible for monitoring & steering the Warwickshire MARACs performance by:

- a) Monitoring and evaluating the data from MARAC
- b) Ensuring that effective partnerships are maintained with other safeguarding and public protection bodies and other MARAC areas.
- c) Monitoring and regularly assessing the overall performance of the MARAC and ensure it operates in line with the principles of an effective MARAC.
- d) Addressing operational issues.
- e) Reporting to the Violence Against Women and Girls Board on biannual basis by the MARAC Steering Group Chair.
- f) Overseeing efforts to raise awareness of the MARAC to key stakeholders
- g) Participating in reviews following a homicide where appropriate
- h) Ensuring that the MARAC operates in line with legal responsibilities and keeps up to date with changes in legislation and national guidance.

## **3.2.5 Frequency of Meetings**

The MARAC Steering Group will meet for a minimum of four times a year.

## **4 Process of the MARAC**

### **4.1 Identification of MARAC cases**

#### **4.1.1 Identification of domestic abuse cases**

Agencies should identify domestic abuse through the implementation of their own policies e.g. routine enquiry.

#### **4.1.2 Risk Assessment**

Once domestic abuse has been identified, agencies should undertake a domestic abuse risk assessment. The Violence Against Women and Girls Board have endorsed SafeLives **Domestic Abuse Stalking and Honour Based Violence Risk Indicator Checklist (DASH RIC)** as the tool to identify the risks faced by someone experiencing domestic abuse. The DASH can be found in Appendix A.

Any professional can use the DASH, and training is available to support this. As not all agencies have the capacity to have staff trained and experienced in domestic abuse and the use of the tool the client could be referred to a specialist domestic abuse service for assessment.

Once the RIC has been completed the number of 'ticks' or 'yes' answers should be assessed.

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

Following disclosure of domestic abuse either a risk assessment or referral to a specialist domestic abuse service should be made within 2 working days of the disclosure.

A link to Safelives guidance on risk identification can be found below.

<https://safelives.org.uk/practice-support/resources-identifying-risk-victims-face>

There is a specific Young Persons DASH Risk Indicator Checklist available to assess the level of risk for those aged 16-17, this can be accessed via the below link.

<https://safelives.org.uk/node/517>

Following research by the College of Policing and a decision by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC), Warwickshire Police now utilise the Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA) framework to identify risks. Although Police no longer utilise DASH they will continue to recognize it use by other agencies & professionals. Further details in relation to DARA can be found here: [Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment \(DARA\): Information for stakeholders \(college.police.uk\)](#)

## 4.2 Criteria for Referral to MARAC

The threshold for referring a case to the Warwickshire MARAC is based on the victim being considered to be at high risk of serious harm through domestic abuse, stalking or honour based violence. Whether someone is “high risk” can be determined in 3 ways:

- I. Professional judgement
- II. Actuarial assessment (14 ‘ticks’ using the SafeLives-DASH RIC)
- III. Escalation (3 incidents reported within 12 months)

### 4.2.1 Professional judgement

If a professional has serious concerns about a victim’s situation, they should refer the case to MARAC. There will be occasions where the particular context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly. *This could reflect extreme levels of fear, cultural barriers to disclosure, immigration issues or language barriers particularly in cases of ‘honour’-based violence.*

Professional judgement involves an assessment of dangerousness based on an individual practitioner’s consideration of a situation but will naturally use the information from the DASH checklist to inform this judgement. However, in addition to using the DASH it is crucial that professionals use their full range of knowledge to make an assessment; this knowledge will usually be gained through experience, reflection and deliberation. This form of assessment relies heavily on the skill and experience of the practitioner in order to make an informed decision of likely risk. The reasoning for the threshold being met should be clearly articulated on the referral form.

This judgement would be based on the professional’s experience and/or the victim’s perception of their risk even if they do not meet criteria 2 and/or 3 below.

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

## 4.2.2. Actuarial Assessment

This is the number of 'ticks' on the DASH checklist. If there are 14 or more 'yes' boxes ticked the case meets the MARAC referral threshold. This is also referred to as "visible high risk".

## 4.2.3 Potential Escalation

The number of police callouts to the victim as a result of domestic violence in the past 12 months. This criterion can be used to identify cases where there is not a positive identification of a majority of the risk factors on the list, but where abuse appears to be escalating and where it is appropriate to assess the situation more fully by sharing information at MARAC. Safelives indicate that the threshold to be used is when there have been 3 or more incidents in a year mean the case should go back to the MARAC. For example, three attendances at A&E, three police call outs or three calls to make housing repairs. It is acknowledged that this is guidance, and that in Warwickshire, this figure would give too many MARAC cases for the resources available. Warwickshire is considering this within a DA problem profile. As an interim we consider this threshold to be met where 3 or more standard or medium risk incidents are reported to the police within a 12 month period.

Particular attention should be paid to a practitioner's professional judgement in all cases. The results from a checklist are not a definitive assessment of risk. They provide a structure to inform judgement and act as prompts to further questioning, analysis and risk management whether via a MARAC or in another way.

## 4.3 "Repeat" cases

### 4.3.1 Identification and Referral

A repeat MARAC case is one which has been previously referred to a MARAC and at some point in the twelve months from the date of the last referral a further incident is identified between the same victim and perpetrator(s). The incident/act of abuse does not need to be 'criminal', violent or threatening but should be viewed within the context of a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. Some events that might be considered a 'repeat' incident may include, but are not limited to:

- Violence or threats of violence to the victim (including threats against property);
- Unwanted direct or indirect contact from the perpetrator and/or their friends or family;
- A breach of police or court bail conditions;
- A breach of any civil court order between the victim and perpetrator; or
- Any dispute between the victim and perpetrator(s) including over child contact, property, divorce/separation proceedings, etc.

Any agency may identify this further incident (regardless of whether it has been reported to the police). Where a repeat victim is identified by any MARAC agency, that agency should refer the case back to the MARAC, regardless of whether the behaviour experienced by the victim meets the referral threshold of visible high risk, escalation or professional judgement.

### 4.3.2 What is not a "Repeat"

The definition does not include cases which are being referred for a second time for any other reason than where there has been a repeat incident. There are specific instances where a second referral might be made

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

but no repeat incident has occurred, such as, for example, where a perpetrator is about to be released from jail, where potential risks are identified but no specific threats have been made and the case is discussed in order to make sure that every agency is aware and able to put in place any appropriate safety measures.

Incidents that occur more than 12 months after the last MARAC referral do not constitute a repeat incident.

### **4.3.3 Flagging and Tagging**

To identify repeat victims of domestic abuse regardless of to whom it is reported, all MARAC agencies should have the capacity to 'flag and tag' their files following the latest referral so that they are aware if a service user/client experiences a repeat incident.

The MARAC Steering Group recognises that not all agencies are able to meet this need yet, and as of October 2015, a statement is being prepared detailing the combined position of the Warwickshire MARAC agencies.

## **4.4 MARAC and Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence**

It is recognized that domestic abuse cases involving 'honour based violence' (HBV), or 'forced marriage' (FM), can contain risks that are very different from other forms of domestic abuse. For this reason in such cases, consideration will be given to either being dealt with at an Emergency MARAC or at a closed session of the next scheduled MARAC.

The attendance at such a MARAC will be at the MARAC Chair's discretion and will be limited to those agencies required based on the risks and needs of the individuals in each case.

## **4.5 Referral to MARAC**

Once a MARAC case has been identified the professional should inform their agency MARAC Representative.

If the agency does not have an identified MARAC Representative they should contact the MARAC Coordinator (see MARAC Key Contacts Appendix H).

### **4.5.1 Referral Forms**

The MARAC Representative is to ensure the Warwickshire MARAC Referral Form (Appendix B) is fully completed and submitted to the MARAC Coordinator using the following secure email address:

If the referrer does not have secure email, then the MARAC Coordinator should be contacted to obtain the password for the relevant MARAC. The referral should then be sent in a password protected zip file to:

Further information, advice and guidance; can be obtained at any stage in the process by contacting the MARAC Coordinator.

Any hand written or incomplete referral forms will be returned.

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

## 4.5.2 Deadlines for Referrals

MARAC referrals must be submitted no less than 12 working days prior to the next MARAC. Referrals received after this deadline will automatically be listed at the following MARAC. If the referring agency considers this time delay to be too great, they should contact the MARAC Chair and Coordinator and discuss the possibility of an Emergency MARAC being held. This is to ensure that all referrals are heard at MARAC within 6 weeks of disclosure. (See section 4.22 Emergency MARACs below).

MARAC Agency representatives will receive in December the MARAC dates and referral deadlines for the forthcoming year from the MARAC Coordinator.

## 4.5.3 Thresholds

Providing the referral form demonstrates the MARAC threshold for referral has been met, all referrals will be heard at the MARAC, there is no further criteria to be met.

## 4.6 Victim Consent for Referral

It is the responsibility of the referring agency to notify the victim of the MARAC referral being made. Once the MARAC process and reason for referral have been explained to the victim, their consent for the referral should be sought.

The victim's consent for the referral must be indicated on the MARAC Referral form. If the victim does not, or is not able to consent to the referral, there are still a number of grounds for making the referral and this should be indicated on the MARAC Sharing of Information without Consent section of the MARAC referral (see Appendix B). This must be completed when the referral is submitted to the MARAC Coordinator.

## 4.7 MARAC Case list / Agenda

The MARAC case list / Agenda will be circulated to agencies 8 working days prior to the MARAC meeting.

The Warwickshire MARAC meets separately in 3 locations, geographically splitting the case load. The case list for each MARAC is ordered in such a way that agencies working in specific areas may leave once their cases have been completed.

The Warwickshire MARAC meetings cover the following districts and boroughs within the county:

### North MARAC:

- North Warwickshire Borough
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough

### South MARAC:

- Stratford on Avon District
- Warwick District

### Rugby MARAC:

- Rugby Borough



# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

## 4.8 Actions before the MARAC (where safe to do so)

The MARAC does not take away responsibility for immediate actions in relation to the safety of high risk victims from agencies, particularly with statutory duties.

Listed below are some examples of what agencies can do:

- Police will undertake appropriate immediate actions prior to MARAC e.g. flagging of addresses, referrals to support services, Police Watch.
- Where children are involved Warwickshire inter-agency child protection procedures should be followed by the referring agency to ensure that the welfare of the child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Where adults with the appearance of care and support needs are involved Adult Services should be informed so they can commence actions to assess and where necessary protect any person with care and support needs.
- Referrals can be made to the Sanctuary Scheme for target hardening options to be assessed.
- Referral to Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) within the Domestic Abuse Support Service.

All actions already undertaken are to be reported to the MARAC Coordinator by email.

## 4.9 Research

### 4.9.1 Responsibilities of MARAC Representatives

Once the MARAC agenda has been received it is the responsibility of the agency MARAC Representative to ensure all cases are researched prior to the MARAC meeting. The Warwickshire MARAC Research Form can be found in Appendix D and will be sent out with the MARAC agenda.

### 4.9.2 Research Forms

The purpose of the Research form is to focus the information researched and the Chair will request each agency to respond to these questions when verbally presenting their information at MARAC, where relevant and proportionate.

### 4.9.3 Scope of Research

The information sharing legislation requires only information which is relevant and proportionate to be shared. Research on a perpetrator might reveal history of abusing other victims or other significant criminal behaviour that is relevant to the case even if it took place several years ago. For example, if someone committed a serious sex offence or has a history of domestic abuse, or other violent behaviour going back many years, then this is likely to be relevant to the case and should be shared.

There are a number of questions on the Risk Identification Checklist which ask “has the perpetrator ever...” In order to have an accurate assessment of risk and therefore be able to adequately safety plan it’s important to know whether they have “ever” done these things.

As a general rule we would not expect a case to be appropriate for a MARAC referral if the only risk factors were historic ones and none related to abuse which had occurred within the last three months. So research should relate to the current situation for the victim and more historical research should be relevant to specific

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

risks. It's important to remember however that risk is fluid and each victim's situation will differ and therefore it is essential that professionals consider each case based on its own circumstances.

## **4.10 Victim Contact before the Meeting (where safe to do so)**

Contact with the victim prior to the meeting will normally be through an IDVA.

IDVAs support high risk victims of domestic abuse and it is their role to ensure that the views of victims are also brought to the MARAC. IDVA's aim to keep the victim's perspective and safety at the centre of proceedings.

The MARAC Coordinator will inform the IDVAs of all referrals received within 2 working days of receiving the MARAC referral and an IDVA will proactively attempt to contact each victim prior to the MARAC to discuss safety planning and to be able to bring their views to the meeting, if it is indicated on the referral that the victim consents to support from DVSW, and a safe telephone number has been provided.

If there is no IDVA involvement e.g. the victim does not want their support then the responsibility for communication with the victim remains with the referring agency.

## **4.11 Is the perpetrator informed of the meeting and the risk management plans?**

No. It would defeat the purpose of the MARAC if the perpetrator was informed about the risk management plan. The perpetrator may become aware of the meeting taking place but should not be informed of the risk management plan.

Participants should take extraordinary care not to inadvertently inform the perpetrator of any element of the risk management plan.

## **4.12 MARAC Meetings**

The Warwickshire MARAC meets in 3 locations, each on a monthly basis. The locations are as follows:

	North MARAC	Rugby MARAC	South MARAC
District/ Boroughs covered	North Warwickshire	Rugby	Warwick
	Nuneaton and Bedworth		Stratford on Avon

## **4.13 MARAC Chair**

The Warwickshire MARAC is chaired by:

- The MARAC Chair, the Detective Inspector (Safeguarding) within the Domestic Abuse Rape & serious sexual offences Team (DART), Warwickshire Police.
- Deputy Chair Chairs, representatives from the Core Partner agencies agreed by the MARAC Steering Group

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

The role of the Chair / Deputy Chair is to:

- Ensure confidentiality is adhered to;
- Structure the meetings; and
- Ensure that agency representatives understand agreed actions and which agencies are responsible for the completion of each action.

Additionally, the aim of the Chair of the MARAC is to establish and maintain a process that addresses the safety of high risk victims of domestic abuse in the area in partnership with other agencies. In order to do this they must ensure the MARAC is as consistent, transparent and accountable as possible.

## **4.14 MARAC Attendees**

Each MARAC agency should ensure their MARAC Representative attends the MARAC meetings for their area.

### **4.14.1 What to do if the MARAC Representative is not able to attend**

Each agency will update the MARAC Coordinator when their MARAC Representative is unable to attend a MARAC (for example due to ill health or annual leave).

The agency will arrange for a deputy or suitable replacement to attend. Should this not be possible, at the very least, information regarding each case should be returned to the MARAC Coordinator 2 days prior to the meeting using the Research Form provided (see Appendix D). If those identified in a case are not known to the agency, a “nil return” should be submitted.

### **4.14.2 Monitoring of attendance**

Attendance at MARACs is monitored by the MARAC Steering Group and non-attendance is recorded and reported to agency’s strategic MARAC lead.

### **4.14.3 Observers at MARAC**

Requests for observers to attend MARAC should be made in writing and sent to the MARAC Coordinator. Due to the highly sensitive information that is shared at MARAC, it is at the discretion of the MARAC Chair for observers to attend.

## **4.15 Minutes and Administration**

### **4.15.1 MARAC Coordinator**

Coordination and administration of the Warwickshire MARAC is through the Warwickshire Domestic Abuse Support Service. This service is commissioned by Warwickshire County Council, provided by Refuge.

### **4.15.2 Minutes and Actions**

The minutes and actions from each MARAC will be circulated by the MARAC Coordinator within 8 working days of the MARAC meeting.

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Minutes for closed and/or emergency MARAC meetings will be circulated to the invited attendees.

## **4.16 Warwickshire MARAC Information Sharing Protocol**

The Warwickshire Information Sharing Protocol has been adopted by the MARAC core agencies. This document ensures that each of the agencies is aware of the confidential nature of the data being discussed and the treatment of any data that they hear, see or receive in relation to the MARAC process.

A copy of the Information Sharing Protocol can be accessed using the link below.

<https://safeinwarwickshire.files.wordpress.com/2020/04/awarwickshire-infosharingprotocol-for-safe-in-apr2020.pdf>

Notwithstanding MARAC Agencies own responsibilities to, and policies on, information sharing, whilst the protocol is being developed, any agency that needs guidance on the information gateways available to them should contact the MARAC Coordinator. A copy of the SafeLives GDPR guidance can be accessed using the link below.

<https://safelives.org.uk/resources/gdpr-guidance-england-and-wales>

## **4.17 Confidentiality Statement**

At the beginning of each meeting the Chair / Deputy Chair will ask attendees to sign the attendance sheet. Signing the attendance sheet commits each attendee to abide by the MARAC confidentiality statement which is available at each meeting and the Chair / Deputy Chair will draw attendees' attention to this statement prior to the cases being discussed.

Where meetings are conducted by a telephone or video conference a copy of the confidentiality statement will be circulated with the calendar invite for the meeting. Attendees will be asked to confirm that they have received and understood the confidentiality statement at the beginning of the meeting. This will be recorded in the minutes. A copy of the confidentiality statement can be found in Appendix C.

## **4.18 What information can be disclosed at a MARAC?**

Any relevant information that relates to the high risk level of the victim and her/ his family can be shared. Further information is held within the MARAC Information Sharing Protocol.

Agencies and their representatives are required only to advise on fact and professional judgement not personal opinion.

As each decision to share information must be made on a case-by-case basis, if there is any doubt as to whether disclosure is appropriate, specific legal advice should be sought.

## **4.19 How will the information be used?**

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

The information that is shared is used at a MARAC meeting to construct a risk management plan that will attempt to address the risks faced by the victim and their family. It will also include a consideration of the risks faced by agency staff, neighbours or colleagues, and indeed the perpetrator.

## **4.19.1 Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk**

Where safeguarding issues concerning children, young people and adults with the appearance of care and support needs / care and support needs are identified, Warwickshire Safeguarding Procedures will be followed and where appropriate a referral made Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

## **4.19.2 Further Disclosure**

Information disclosed within the MARAC remains the property of the originating agency. Decisions as to further dissemination of the information, or any actions as a result of the information shared, will be with the agreement of the originating agency representative at the MARAC. This does not affect any statutory responsibilities.

## **4.20 Action Planning**

### **4.20.1 Identification of Risk**

MARAC actions will reflect the risks identified, and risk management plans developed will increase the safety related to the victims, children, perpetrators, staff or individuals.

High risk victims of domestic abuse have diverse backgrounds and due attention will be paid to these factors and the additional risks that this may pose to the victim. The MARAC will strive to develop an action plan to address these needs and reduce the risks posed as a result.

### **4.20.2 Risk Management**

The meeting will agree any necessary future actions that assist in the management of risk.

Having identified those individuals at risk in each case, followed by the specific risks posed to those individuals, the meeting will consider the measures necessary and available to manage the risks identified.

These measures will be documented in a risk management plan using the RARA risk management tool to focus the plan. Namely, aiming to Remove, Avoid, Reduce, or Accept the risk as appropriate.

### **4.20.3 Actions**

These will be allocated by the meeting to specified MARAC agencies. It will be the responsibility of the specified agency to take the action away from the meeting and ensure its completion.

The MARAC Coordinator is not mandated to 'chase' agencies in this regard.

Results for actions should be copied to the MARAC Coordinator in addition to any agencies as identified in the action. The MARAC Coordinator will retain a list of actions allocated and results provided.

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

## **4.21 What happens after a MARAC?**

### **4.21.1 Agency Responsibilities**

Agencies are responsible for recording their own actions at the meeting and ensuring that all actions are completed. MARAC minutes will include the actions but agencies must NOT wait for the minutes before completing their own actions.

Agencies are responsible for fulfilling their responsibilities within the agreed timeframe and confirming to the MARAC Coordinator that they have been completed, highlighting any issues arising when undertaking the action.

### **4.21.2 Updating the victim**

After each MARAC the referring agency should update the victim on the outcome of the meeting, including risk management plan and the support that agencies are offering, unless a more appropriate agency is identified to do so during the MARAC.

### **4.21.3 Professionals meetings**

Convening a professionals meeting should be considered when nominals are discussed during the MARAC. There is no set criteria for determining whether a professionals meeting is required and should be determined on the individual circumstances of each case or where it becomes apparent that the case would be too complex and/or time consuming to be discussed in a MARAC meeting. This is to ensure that enough time is dedicated to robustly risk assessing and ensuring a tailored action plan is put in place.

The MARAC Chair / Deputy Chair and any core agency can recommend that a case should be listed for a professionals meeting. Once suggested and if agreed by a majority of the MARAC attendees, the referrer will convene the meeting unless another agency is identified to do so during the MARAC. The professionals meeting should be arranged to take place as soon as possible, no later than ten working days of the MARAC. The minutes of the meeting and action tracker should be circulated to the attendees, MARAC Chair, Coordinator and Admin Assist. Once received the MARAC Coordinator or Admin Assistant will ensure that the professional meeting minutes are appended to the MARAC minutes.

## **4.22 Emergency MARACs**

An emergency MARAC meeting is an exceptional event, and is only called when a high risk victim is facing risks deemed to be so imminent that agencies have a duty of care to act at once, rather than wait for the next MARAC meeting.

### **4.22.1 When to call an Emergency MARAC**

An Emergency meeting will be called when it is felt that the risk presented by the perpetrator is so great that issues of public or individual safety far outweighs those rights of confidentiality. This will include:

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

- Significant risk of harm
- Escalating abuse
- Possible Homicide
- Risk to the children

Emergency MARACs may also be called when the risk is not imminent, but a risk management plan is required before the date of the next MARAC (which could be up to 6 weeks away).

## 4.22.2 Process for calling an Emergency MARAC

The process for calling an Emergency MARAC Meeting is as follows –

- An initial referral by any agency to the MARAC Coordinator
- MARAC Coordinator discusses the case with the MARAC Chair, all decisions will be recorded.
- If the Chair agrees to the need for an Emergency MARAC, a meeting will be arranged within 24 hours.
- The MARAC Coordinator will contact the relevant agencies and make them fully aware of the current situation, and to arrange the emergency meeting as soon as possible.
- The referring agency must attend the meeting, to confirm (and update where appropriate) the accuracy of information being provided.
- Urgent actions should be agreed and executed immediately to safeguard the victim and other individuals identified as being at risk.
- The case details and agreed actions of the emergency MARAC meeting should be recorded in the same way as other MARACs, so that it can be further reviewed at the next MARAC meeting and brought to the attention of all other agencies.

## 4.23 Raising concerns about Risk Management Plan

After a MARAC, an agency can raise any concerns about whether the risk management plan put in place at MARAC adequately safeguards the victim by contacting the MARAC Chair and Coordinator by email. The MARAC Chair will consider the email and feedback to the agency raising the concern within 3 working days. The MARAC Chair and Coordinator will consider:

- amending and recirculating the risk management plan; and/or
- convening a review MARAC.

## 4.24 Referral to and from other MARACs

There will be occasions when a high risk victim needs to be referred to a MARAC in another area, or where a referral is received in Warwickshire from another area. This could include:

- Change in circumstances for the victim e.g. permanent or temporary re-location; and
- Where the victim experiences risk in more than one MARAC area, e.g. perpetrator may live in another MARAC area.

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

## **4.24.1 Agency referrals to another MARAC**

All MARAC Agencies can make a referral to another MARAC as appropriate, and where links are not readily available, advice and guidance should be sought from the Warwickshire MARAC Coordinator.

This could be the case where an incident occurs whilst the victim is visiting Warwickshire, but the both the victim and perpetrator live elsewhere. In such cases, the risk will be predominantly in the other area and as such the risk should be managed at that area's MARAC.

Similarly, an incident could occur elsewhere, but the risk be predominantly in Warwickshire, and thus the case be discussed at a Warwickshire MARAC.

## **4.24.2 MARAC to MARAC Referrals**

### Agreeing to share information with another MARAC:

- If it becomes apparent whilst a case is being discussed at the MARAC, that a referral will need to be made to another MARAC, then agency representatives present can agree to the information being shared.
- In signing the confidentiality agreement at the start of the MARAC, agency representatives agree to allow the sharing of MARAC minutes with other MARACs, should the need for a MARAC to MARAC referral arise after the Warwickshire MARAC.
- Any agency representative having any concerns regarding this option for a particular case, should raise them during the case discussion.
- Where safe to do so the victim should be informed of the transfer to another MARAC but consent of the victim is not required for this additional referral. Gaining consent from the victim can help effectively engage the victim with services.

### Process for MARAC to MARAC Referrals:

- MARAC to MARAC referrals are completed by the MARAC Coordinator.
- In each case the MARAC to MARAC Referral Process (Appendix E) should be followed and a MARAC to MARAC transfer request (Appendix F) completed. This process is designed to promote a consistent, victim focused response to the transfer of cases.
- Any information shared will be made following the Warwickshire MARAC Information Sharing Protocol.
- The following information should be shared unless agreed otherwise:
  - MARAC minutes relating to that case;
  - the original referral form;
  - a completed MARAC to MARAC transfer request (Appendix F); and
  - any other documentation that is relevant to the new MARAC.

## **4.24.3 Receiving referrals from another MARAC**

Any referrals to the Warwickshire MARAC's from out of area will be directed to the MARAC Coordinator for inclusion at the appropriate MARAC. All referrals from other MARACs will be accepted.



# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

The Warwickshire MARAC Coordinator will follow the MARAC to MARAC referral process.

#### **4.24.4 Discussion at more than one MARAC?**

It is acknowledged that it is only usually appropriate to discuss a case, and thus manage the risk, at one MARAC. However, if the risks are such that discussion in two areas would be beneficial then this should not be ruled out.

#### **4.24.5 Victims re-locating post MARAC**

Where an agency becomes aware that a MARAC victim is leaving the area, then that agency should complete a MARAC to MARAC referral form and send this to the MARAC Coordinator. A copy of the MARAC to MARAC referral form can be found at Appendix

If an agency becomes aware that a MARAC victim has moved out of Warwickshire the MARAC Coordinator should be contacted and a request made for a MARAC to MARAC transfer to the new area where the victim is residing. In order to make the transfer, the MARAC Coordinator will require the following additional information:

- victim's new out of area address;
- the date of the move;
- confirmation of whether the survivor's contact information is safe;
- whether the survivor has been informed and consents to the MARAC to MARAC referral; and
- if the survivor not been informed of the MARAC to MARAC referral or does not consent to the transfer, the information sharing without consent section of the MARAC to MARAC referral form should be completed.

#### **4.24.6 Responsibility of agencies to take actions and/or communicate with their counterparts in another area**

As with all MARAC cases, case management is the responsibility of each agency at the MARAC. It is therefore the responsibility of each agency to ensure that their counterpart in the new MARAC area is notified of a MARAC case where appropriate, particularly where this relates to specific actions (in particular, this will affect the police and children's services).

#### **4.25 Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS)**

The purpose of the scheme is twofold: to provide a set of recognised procedures for sharing information with a victim, or potential victim, of domestic violence and abuse; and to provide consistency in the way disclosures are managed.

Under the scheme an individual can ask police to check whether a new or existing partner has a violent past (a 'right to ask' application), or an agency can apply for a disclosure if the agency believes that an individual is at risk of domestic violence from their partner (a 'right to know' application). DVDS applications should be considered as part of the safety planning prior to, and during the MARAC.

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

Applications are discussed at the DVDS Discussion group which is heard following the MARAC and attended by four core agencies (police, probation, IDVA and Children's Social Care) in line with the below Home Office guidance.

More information can be found in the below guidance from Safe Lives MARAC DVDS Guidance and the Home Office.

<https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/DVDS%20guidance%20for%20MARACs%20FINAL.pdf>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/575361/DVDS\\_guidance\\_FINAL\\_v3.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575361/DVDS_guidance_FINAL_v3.pdf)

## 4.26 MARAC disclosure into court proceedings

MARACs should only be required to disclose information by an order of the court. Where a court requests disclosure of documents, the MARAC will follow the principles outlined by the working party of the Family Justice Council/CAADA document 'MARAC and disclosure into court proceedings' published in December 2011 which can be accessed via the link below.

[https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/fjc\\_marac\\_guidance\\_dec2011.pdf](https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/fjc_marac_guidance_dec2011.pdf)

## 4.27 Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPP)

The purpose of MAPP is to protect the public, including previous victims of crime, from serious harm from violent and sexual offenders.

The MARAC agendas are sent to the MAPP Administrator who checks for MAPP involvement both past and present. Relevant information is sent to the MARAC Coordinator who shares the information during the meeting.

Where the victim has been referred to MARAC and the alleged perpetrator / perpetrator is being managed at a level 2 or 3 MAPP meeting, information relating to the risk management plan in respect of the victim should be shared to avoid duplication of resources. Following the MARAC meeting the MARAC Coordinator will provide the MAPP Coordinator with a copy of the MARAC minutes (if this is agreed to be necessary during the MARAC) and the names and contact details of any allocated Independent Domestic Violence Advocate or Independent Sexual Violence Advocate, together with any other professional who has relevant information about the victim. Following this, the MAPP meeting will take priority, and the IDVA / ISVA must be invited to attend the MAPP meeting. The MAPP meeting will ensure that the risk assessment and MAPP Risk Management Plan effectively identify and put in place actions to protect the victim. The IDVA / ISVA will provide feedback to MARAC, where appropriate.

Where MAPP L2/3 offenders are being panelled in outside forces, but the victim resides in Warwickshire, that decision will be made regarding ongoing MARAC reviews on a case-by-case basis, with support and guidance to be provided by the Warwickshire MAPP Coordinator as required.

## 5 Equality

# WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

## Framework

The MARAC will strive to ensure equality for all through its policies, processes, membership and actions. The MARAC is covered by the Equality Act 2010 which The Act protects people from discrimination on the basis of 'protected characteristics':

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership (currently this only applies in terms of employment – not service delivery)

### **5.1 Identifying needs and actions**

In order to ensure MARACs address the diverse needs of high risk victims of domestic abuse the discussion will include consideration and recording of any particular needs and actions required to address these needs linked to the protected characteristics as stated in the Equality Act 2010 (see above).

### **5.2 MARAC Membership**

Where appropriate, specialist services/ workers will be asked to attend MARAC meetings to provide advice and support regarding reducing risk for high risk victims with diverse needs. This may include:

- Male victims/ LGBT/ BME Specialist workers from DA support service
- Midwives
- Learning Disability Team

### **5.3 Monitoring**

The MARAC Steering Group will collect and analyse data relating to diversity through the performance management process. This will enable the Steering Group to monitor whether the pattern of referrals reflects the diversity within the population. Where there is a significant deviation between the local population and referrals, action may be required to redress this.

## **6 Evaluation**

### **6.1 Data Collection**

The MARAC Coordinator is responsible for collating MARAC data on behalf of the MARAC Steering Group. The Steering Group will define the data to be collated on an annual basis. The SafeLives MARAC data form will be the minimum data collected. Other data to enable effective local performance management will also be collected and reported.

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE**

## **6.2 National MARAC Development**

The Warwickshire MARAC is committed to providing data to national structures in support of national MARAC development.

## **6.3 Local Performance Reporting**

The MARAC Steering Group will include data and performance management in its reports to the Violence Against Women and Girls Board.

## **6.4 Quality Assurance and Self-Assessment**

The Warwickshire MARAC is committed to further development and will participate in self-assessment and quality assurance programmes provided by SafeLives.

## **7 Conflict Resolution and Complaints**

### **7.1 Between MARAC Agencies**

Within the MARAC, conflicts and disagreements may arise. If a resolution cannot be found within the MARAC itself, the matter will be escalated to the MARAC Steering Group via the MARAC Chair, or if not appropriate, directly to the MARAC Steering Group Chair.

If agencies wish to make complaints concerning risk management and the MARAC process then the complaint should be submitted in writing to the Chair of the MARAC Steering group.

If the matter to be addressed does not relate to MARAC risk management or the processes around the MARAC, these should be resolved between the respective agencies outside of the MARACs or the MARAC Steering Group.

### **7.2 Complaints from victims, individuals and non-MARAC agencies**

Complaints regarding the MARAC process should be submitted in writing to the MARAC Steering Group Chair for resolution.

Complaints regarding agencies, which may include their decision to disclose information, should be addressed to the agency concerned. All MARAC agencies will have policies and processes in place to correctly respond to any complaints received regarding their services and organizations.

Where a victim wishes to make a complaint they should be provided with a copy of the Safelives guidance on making a complaint which can be found at Appendix I.

## **8 Breaches**

Any breach of this protocol may increase the risk of serious harm or homicide to an already high risk victim. It is the responsibility of each MARAC agency to ensure they are both familiar with their responsibilities contained in and a signatory to this MARAC Operational Protocol and the MARAC Information Sharing Protocol.

# **WARWICKSHIRE AGAINST**

---

# **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

## **9 Withdrawal**

Agencies can withdraw from this protocol by the following process:

- The Agency who wishes to withdraw must formally write to the MARAC Steering group.
- The reasons for withdrawal must be discussed at the MARAC steering group meeting.
- The MARAC Steering Group Chair will acknowledge the withdrawal in writing. Any agency who wishes to withdraw will be invited to clarify how they will engage with the protection of high risk victims of domestic abuse.

## **10 Review**

The protocol will be reviewed annually or as required by the MARAC steering group.

Next review due no later than: July 2024