



Draft

East Dunbartonshire

Violence Against

Women and Girls

Partnership

Strategy

2026 – 2029



Contents

Foreword	3
Our Vision, Aim and Priorities	4
What is Violence Against Women and Girls?	5
Impact of VAWG on Children and Young People	6
Why a Gendered Approach?	6
Equally Safe	7
Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) – Local Outcome 4	8
Governance, Accountability and Improvement	9
EDVAWGP Delivery Plan 2026-2029	10
Appendix 1	21

Foreword

The safety of women and girls across East Dunbartonshire is our priority. Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)] is an unacceptable and preventable issue. Partners across East Dunbartonshire are committed to preventing and eradicating this gender-based violence and addressing the underlying attitudes and systems that perpetuate it.

This three-year strategy has been developed by the East Dunbartonshire Violence against Women and Girls Partnership (see Appendix 1 for partners) to drive local activity with the aim of ending VAWG in East Dunbartonshire. A collaborative approach is vital because all sectors of local government and society have a critical role to play in tackling this issue.

Our strategy aligns with [The Scottish Government's and COSLA's Equally Safe Strategy](#) which is the national strategy to address all forms of violence against women and girls, specifically violence, abuse and exploitation directed at them because of their gender. This behaviour is predominantly carried out by men and stems from deep-rooted gender inequality which is unacceptable in modern-day Scotland. Our strategy seeks to prevent VAWG from occurring in the first place, as well as ensuring an effective response to those affected and to those who perpetrate it. It seeks to build on the significant progress that has already been made to date in tackling and preventing VAWG in the East Dunbartonshire Council area.

This strategy will require substantial and sustained effort and commitment from all partners and agencies to support a safe East Dunbartonshire for women and children affected by VAWG.

Our Vision, Aim and Priorities

Vision

A strong and flourishing East Dunbartonshire where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation — and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.



Aim

A strong and flourishing East Dunbartonshire where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation — and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.



Priorities

- Priority 1** Preventing VAWG before it occurs.
- Priority 2** Support early intervention.
- Priority 3** Build a broad and shared understanding across our society and communities of what VAWG is, how it affects those who have experienced it, its impact on society more generally, the scale of the problem, and what causes it – to reduce the harm together.
- Priority 4** Build political, institutional, sectoral, organisational, community and personal commitment, and contribution to preventing and tackling VAWG.
- Priority 5** Hold perpetrators of VAWG to account, supporting change where possible.
- Priority 6** Deliver sustainable, informed and safe specialist and universal service responses for victim/survivors' that are holistic and meet victim/survivors' individual needs.
- Priority 7** Promote an intersectional approach to preventing, reorganising and responding to the compounding inequalities and risks that some women, children and young people may experience as a result of their ethnicity, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or immigration status.



What is Violence Against Women and Girls?

Definition - The phrase violence against women and girls is used to describe violent and abusive behaviour directed at women and girls because they are women and girls. It is behaviour which is carried out predominantly by men. It is an abuse of power and stems from systemic, deep-rooted women's inequality. VAWG limits women's and girls' freedom and potential, and is a fundamental violation of human rights. Our shared understanding defines VAWG as a form of gender-based violence (GBV). GBV is defined as "any form of violence used to establish, enforce or perpetuate gender inequalities and keep in place gendered orders". While the terms VAWG and GBV are sometimes used interchangeably, VAWG is a subset of GBV specifically targeting women and girls due to their unequal status in society.

VAWG is linked to gender inequality, and an abuse of male power and privilege. It takes the form of actions that result in physical, sexual, economic and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affront to their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.

This strategy's definition of VAWG includes the actual and threat of:

- Physical, sexual, psychological, emotional and financial abuse occurring in the family, within the general community, and in institutions in both physical and digital spaces/places
- Domestic abuse/coercive controlling behaviours, stalking, rape, incest, sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation
- Commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), including prostitution, lap dancing, stripping and pornography
- Human trafficking, including for the purposes of domestic servitude, sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, which may include gangs and organised criminal networks
- Child abuse occurring within family settings, including domestic abuse, and sexual abuse by male family members including siblings
- Child sexual abuse and exploitation including the production and sharing of indecent images of children
- Honour-based abuse, including forced marriages, female genital mutilation (FGM), dowry abuse and 'honour based' coercive control and killings.

Boys experience domestic abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation in significant numbers. That is why the Equally Safe Strategy covers all children and young people. This strategy recognises that women, children and young people may experience multiple forms of VAWG simultaneously and across their lifetime.

Impact of VAWG on Children and Young People

Violence against women and girls can have a significant impact on children and young people's lives, including their health, education, wellbeing and future life chances. Boys and girls are subject to harm through violence and abuse. Children and young people experiencing domestic abuse can have their safety and wellbeing severely undermined because of being exposed to domestic abuse. The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 recognises the impact on children, acknowledging how they are victims of coercive control and abuse whether directed at them or not. All children witnessing domestic abuse are being emotionally abused. Some children may also be directly physically or sexually abused by the perpetrator. Young people may be experiencing or perpetrating abuse in their own relationships. There is significant evidence of links between domestic abuse and emotional, physical and sexual abuse of children. The term Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is used to describe a wide range of stressful or traumatic experiences that children can be exposed to whilst growing up. This can include domestic abuse, physical, verbal or sexual abuse, and physical or emotional neglect. The more ACEs individuals experience in childhood, the greater a child's likelihood of experiencing poor health and other negative outcomes in adulthood.

Why a Gendered Approach?

A gendered approach recognises that violence or abuse against women must be considered in a historical context, looking at the meanings, impact and consequences in terms of how men and women are expected to behave within societies' views of masculinity and femininity. A gendered analysis explains how violence against women has persisted for centuries, being seen as 'acceptable' within the social environment. Such an analysis allows the Partnership to understand that the prevalence, intention and consequence of abuse is different for men and women.

The East Dunbartonshire VAWG Partnership recognises:

- That, statistically, men are overwhelmingly the main perpetrators of gender-based violence (violence perpetrated against someone based on their gender) and women are, statistically, overwhelmingly the victims of such violence.
- That prevention of VAWG is everyone's responsibility.

Equally Safe

Work to prevent and eradicate violence/abuse against women and girls is interwoven into a range of Scottish Government strategies, programmes and frameworks. But the principle one is [Equally Safe](#) which specifically seeks to address violence/abuse against women and girls.

The Scottish Government, in partnership with COSLA, published 'Equally Safe': Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating VAWG in 2014. This was subsequently refreshed in 2023.

The vision is of a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that contribute to it.

The strategy highlights the need for every area of Government and wider society to play a role in tackling this issue. It calls on the engagement of Police Scotland, NHS and Community Planning Partnerships, as well as the civil and criminal justice systems, social work, housing, education, media, businesses, employers, trade unions and third sector organisations to play their part in creating a society where all women and girls can feel safe, respected and equal in our communities.

To achieve the aims of the strategy, work will be shaped around the four Equally Safe priority outcomes:

1. Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls.
2. Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically.
3. Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people; and
4. Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

The framework provides a shared understanding of the causes, risk factors, and scale of violence and abuse against women and girls, and highlights the need to prioritise prevention. It recognises the need to work collaboratively with partners by making best use of available resources and with clear governance and process. It has therefore been used as the basis for developing local outcomes.

Whilst Equally Safe is the strategic driver for preventing and eradicating VAWG in Scotland, the strategy is also interwoven into ECHR (European Convention of Human Rights), national legislation, local strategies, programmes and frameworks. These local policy areas include:

- East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Local Outcomes Improvement Plan
- East Dunbartonshire Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan
- Justice Service Plan
- Children's Services Plan
- Local Police Plan for East Dunbartonshire
- East Dunbartonshire Council's Mainstreaming Equalities Outcomes.

Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) –

Local Outcome 4

Local Outcome 4: East Dunbartonshire is a safe place in which to live, work and visit.



East Dunbartonshire boasts a significantly lower crime rate than the Scottish average, with 3,075 total crimes reported in East Dunbartonshire in 2025-2026, 162 were sexual crimes and 34 were crimes under the Domestic Abuse Act 2018 – compared to 315,357 crimes in Scotland overall with 16,430 sexual crimes and 3,170 Domestic Abuse Act crimes. However, despite this, East Dunbartonshire faces persistent challenges such as the concerning increase in domestic incidents (79%) and sexual crimes (5%) on the previous year's figures. These specific issues directly contradict the overarching vision of a safer community for all.

The priorities of East Dunbartonshire's VAWG Partnership are intrinsically linked to, and essential for the achievement of, Local Outcome 4 and the broader vision of the LOIP.

The VAWG Partnership aims to set out its actions and priorities by directly addressing the rise in domestic abuse and sexual violence. By focusing on preventative measures, raising awareness and providing targeted support for victims and survivors of violence against women and girls through their partners, the VAWG partnership will contribute to reducing these specific crime types thereby enhancing the overall safety and wellbeing of East Dunbartonshire residents.

The actions will not only aim to reduce reported incidents, but also foster increased confidence in reporting, ensuring that all women and girls are safer and feel more supported, ultimately moving us closer to the vision of our truly thriving and successful East Dunbartonshire.

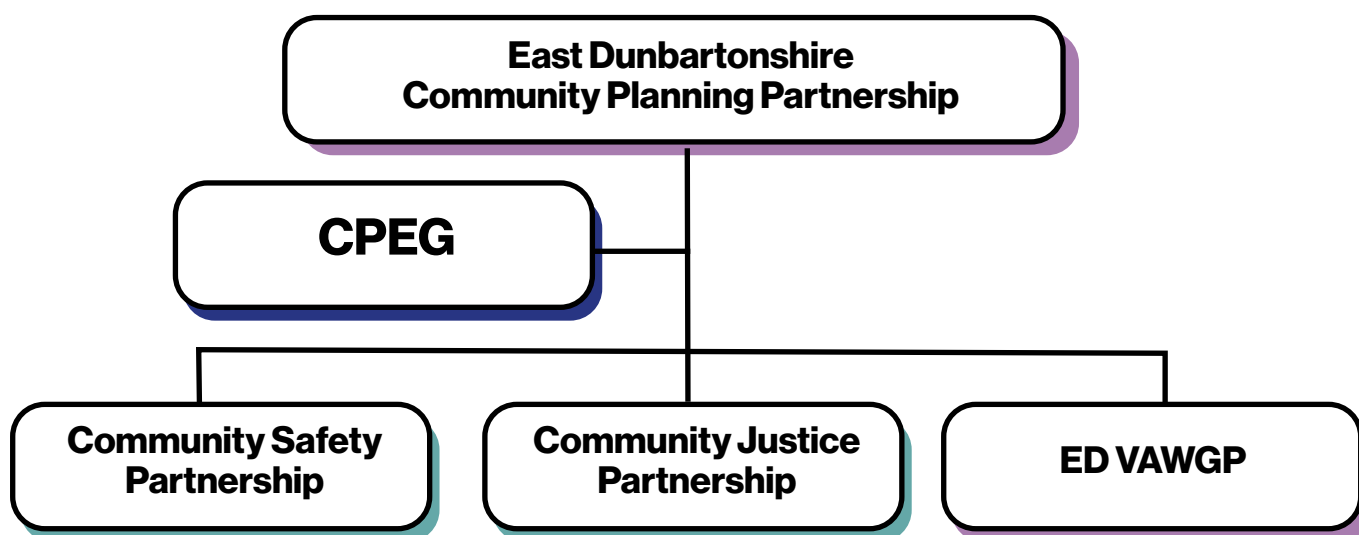
Governance, Accountability and Improvement

The East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership has overall responsibility for delivering the local violence against women strategy. The delivery of outcomes associated with the strategy will be the responsibility of the East Dunbartonshire Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership (ED VAWGP). Strong partnership engagement is essential to informed decision making, resource mobilisation and achievement of shared goals. The ED VAWGP will seek to continually develop, improve and learn.

One of the ways in which the partnership will be able to develop, improve and learn is by undertaking the VAWG Needs Assessment Tool. The tool is an important aide in bringing together partners from across different services and policy areas to raise awareness of everyone's role and help identify opportunities to drive forward improvements to prevent violence and maximise the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people.

The tool supports Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy for Preventing and Eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls, which sets out the Scottish Government and COSLA's joint vision for a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.

Over the lifespan of this strategy the ED VAWGP will demonstrate robust arrangements for governance, performance and accountability. The partnership will provide regular updates to the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership through the Community Planning Executive Group Local Outcome 4 lead (see diagram below). The ED VAWGP will report annually on progress against our delivery/action plan and will publish this report for information. We will also ensure that our delivery plan remains up to date and delivers improvement on priorities which reflect local needs, circumstances and aspirations.



EDVAWGP Delivery Plan 2026-2029

Priorities		Objectives
1	Preventing VAWG before it occurs	• Positive gender roles are promoted • People enjoy healthy positive relationships • Children and young people develop an understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships from an early age • Individuals and communities recognise and challenge violence and abusive behaviour
2	Support early intervention	• Women, children and young people access relevant, effective early intervention • Service providers competently identify violence against women and girls, and respond early and effectively to women, children and young people affected
3	Build a broad and shared understanding across our society and communities of what VAWG is, how it affects those who have experienced it, its impact on society more generally, the scale of the problem and what causes it – so that we can reduce the harm together.	• There is greater awareness of the impact of violence against women and girls how it affects individuals and across our society. • Achieve improved understanding of the scale of violence against women and girls by improving our data collection and using this information to provide evidence to support improved responses.
5	Build political, institutional, sectoral, organisational, community and personal commitment, and contribution to preventing and tackling VAWG.	• Women and girls are safe, respected and equal in our communities • Women and men have equal access to power and resources
5	Hold perpetrators of VAWG to account, supporting change where possible	• Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified early and help to account by criminal and civil justice processes • Relevant links are made between the experience of women, children and young people in the criminal and civil justice processes
6	Deliver sustainable, informed and safe specialist and universal service responses for victim/survivors that are holistic and meet victim/survivors' individual needs.	• Improve access to specialist service provision across the local authority. • Mainstream services are better equipped to identify and respond to the needs of women, children and young people. • Improved service provision in the local authority area – reflecting the needs of women, children and young people, including those from diverse communities.

Priorities		Objectives
7	Promote an intersectional approach to preventing, reorganising and responding to the compounding inequalities and risks that some women, children and young people may experience because of their ethnicity, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or immigration status.	

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
1;4	Roll out of Equally Safe at School (ESAS) across East Dunbartonshire.	Introduce ESAS on a staged basis within all secondary schools and ESAS Development Plan for 2026-2029.	All schools registered as ESAS schools and key staff completed e-learning module, with attendance at ESAS School Leads meetings.	ESAS Co-ordinator	2026 for registration, embedding 2026-2029
1;2;3	Continue to deliver the MVP programme in schools.	- Delivery of MVP sessions within all secondary schools and updated MVP Development Plan for 2026-2029. - All primary and secondary schools will follow national health and wellbeing curriculum as outlined by Education Scotland.	- Schools will complete quality assurance and self-evaluation forms, with attendance at MVP School Leads meetings. - As evidenced in school improvement and curriculum planning.	MVP Co-ordinator Head Teachers	2026-2029

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
1;3	Strive to educate children and young people on topics related to sexual violence and misogyny with a focus on gender, consent and language.	• Deliver educational workshops to young people on topics related to sexual violence and misogyny. • Deliver educational workshops within community settings. • MVP Leads for all secondary schools to link with White Ribbon Scotland to complement MVP delivery. • Procure White Ribbon promotional materials for display in staff offices and support rooms.	• Number of educational workshops delivered, number of attendees and feedback collected. • Teem meeting notes. • Copy of workplace guide • Included within rolling multi-agency calendar. • Wide range of multi-agency partners attending training. • Promo materials displayed in staff offices and support rooms.	MVP School Leads/MVP Co-ordinator Prevention workers from Women's Aid and Rape Crisis White Ribbon speakers	2026-2029
1;3	Establish a programme of community and workplace education.	• Work towards achieving White Ribbon status. • Explore options for partners to identify core training needs and local third sector organisations to deliver training/awareness sessions.	• Establish a steering group, delivery plan and network of White Ribbon speakers. • Develop day survey to identify core training. • Deliver an identified training program. • Number of: • Training/ workshops delivered • Participants • Feedback forms.	ED VAWGP	2026-2029

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
2;7	Encourage survivors to report incidents and seek help by ensuring services are supported to identify VAWG by a programme of ongoing training and awareness raising.	• Ensure staff are appropriately trained in the public and third sectors. • Engage with private sector/retail to offer training advice and guidance. • Establish a programme to raise public awareness.	• Training records. • Dash Risk Identification Checklist (RIC) – DASH RIC is used to identify risks and where necessary encourage survivors to report to the police. • Numbers of reports to specialist services, Police, Adult Support and Protection and Child Protection teams are recorded. • Evidence in engagement with private sector and retail.	ED VAWGP	2026-2029
2;5	Safe and Together model embedded into all services.	• We will support implementation of the Safe and Together model.	• There will be a standing agenda item on the ED VAWG.	Safe and Together Steering Group Safe and Together Trainers	2026-2029

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
1;2;3;4;5;6;7	Support the development of trauma-informed practice across partner agencies in relation to violence against women.	- We will support the implementation of trauma-informed practice. - Ensure appropriate trauma-informed workplace policies and practice are in place.	- There will be a standing agenda item on the ED VAWG. - Cross representation on ED VAWGP and East Dunbartonshire Aces and Trauma Collaborative (EDATC).	East Dunbartonshire Council, East Dunbartonshire Association for Mental Health (EDAMH) Management Team EDACT Trauma-Informed Practice Co-ordinator	2026-2029

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
1;2;3;4;5;6;7	Planned communications Strategy linked to: Public education campaigns (using consistent messaging).	• Create a short-term communications subgroup. • Promote 16 Days. • Promote International Women's Day. • Up-to-date information on VAWG is readily and easily accessible. • Ongoing social media and public campaigns promote understanding of VAWG and how to report concerns. • Public protection website is regularly updated with information on VAWG and how to report concerns.	• Awareness messages/ events linked to key dates in the year. • Social media statistics. • Formal /informal feedback form. awareness campaigns. • Multi-language resources available.	ED VAWGP Communications Subgroup. Council Communications Child Protection Committee	2026-2029
3	A process for sharing learning and good practice.	• Individual services with identify case studies where learning and improvements need to be shared. • Share anonymised data/ case studies at VAWGP meetings and other relevant partnerships.	• Case studies are complete. • Improvements are made where appropriate.	Advocacy Support Safety Information Services Together East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid (EDWA) ED VAWGP	2026-2029

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
3;7	Greater understanding of the needs and issues related to violence against women and girls in East Dunbartonshire.	• Collate all available local evidence to understand trends and areas of improvement. • Establish data/evidence subgroup. • Interrogate and analyse all available evidence/ data.	• Establish a regular review of the available evidence and share any learnings.	ED VAWGP	2026-2029
4	Roll out Equally Safe at Work (ESAW) across East Dunbartonshire.	• Promote, through the ESAW partnership, the VAWG strategy.	• Team meeting discussions and minutes produced by Chair.	Equalities	2026-2029
1;4;7	Appropriate workplace policies are in place and communicated to staff.	• Policies reviewed and updated annually. • Communicated through team meetings, supervisions, email communication and verbal communication.	• Policies are in place. • Team meeting minutes.	ED VAWGP	2026-2029

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
5	Effective interventions are delivered by Justice Social Work.	• Delivery of Up2U • Domestic Abuse perpetrator programme. • Delivery of ADVANCE-D (Intimate Partner Violence through substance use) programme. • VAWG partnership understands the effectiveness of court-mandated interventions • Interventions are effective • Justice Domestic Abuse Working Group update VAWGP regularly.	• Analysis of user feedback forms following completion of orders. • Re-offending rates are reduced. • Input from Justice Social Work Domestic Abuse Working Group at VAWG partnership regarding Interventions.	Justice Social Work Community Justice Co-ordinator	2026-2029
3;5	Raise awareness of the experiences of women, children and young people accessing justice and influence changes to the system.	• Work with survivors to collate information on women's experiences. • Provide an advocacy service to women and children through their Adult Advocacy team, and Children and Young Persons.	• Circulation of the weekly ASSIST bulletin. • Presentation of case studies at different forums.	Community Justice Co-ordinator ASSIST ED VAWGP	2026-2029

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
5;6	Support the delivery of an effective Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) response to high-risk victims of domestic abuse in East Dunbartonshire.	Improve the quality and consistency of MARAC referrals, information-sharing and safety planning to ensure timely, co-ordinated, perpetrator-focused risk co-ordinated, perpetrator-focused risk management for women at highest risk.	- Output: % of MARAC referrals with a completed DASH risk assessment. % of cases with full-multi-agency information sharing. % of actions completed within agreed timescales. - Outcome - Reduction in repeat MARAC cases within 12 months. - Reduction in repeat police call-out for domestic abuse among MARAC cases. - Survivor-reported increased feeling of safety and understanding of safety plans.	MARAC coordinator Police Scotland NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health and Social Care Partnership Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate Justice Services	2026-2029
6;7	Carry out mapping of local and national support services.	- Establish short-life subgroup to focus on this review. - Ensure partners are aware of local services and referral process.	This will be added to EDVAWG meeting on a quarterly basis.	ED VAWGP	2026-2029

Associated Priorities	Actions	Activities	Evidence	Lead	Timescales
4;6	Provide emotional support to assist survivors to process trauma, build self-confidence and overcome effects of VAWG.	Ensure specialist services are available to women, young people and children that are designed to support individuals to overcome the effects of VAWG.	Feedback, evaluations and testimonials.	All specialist services EDAMH Violence Against Women team; ASSIST; EDWA; schools	2026-2029
3;7	Work with partners to ensure that specialist violence against women services are accessible for women who have: disabilities, learning or physical; communication difficulties; and language barriers.	Partners are aware of local services and referral process.		ED VAWGP	2026-2029

Appendix 1

East Dunbartonshire VAGW Partnership:

28 Partners

- Police Scotland
- ASSIST
- EDAMH
- Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action
- Citizen Advice
- Deafblind Scotland
- Rape Crisis
- East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid
- Say Woman
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
- Early Years Low Moss
- Criminal Justice – Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)
- Intensive Support Team – HSCP
- Adult Social Work/Day Services – HSCP
- Trauma Informed – HSCP
- Early Years East Dunbartonshire
- Community Justice Partnership East Dunbartonshire
- Community Protection – East Dunbartonshire Council
- Community Planning Partnership – East Dunbartonshire Council
- Education – East Dunbartonshire Council
- Corporate Communications – East Dunbartonshire Council
- Child Protection – East Dunbartonshire Council
- Community Safety – East Dunbartonshire Council
- Child Social Work – East Dunbartonshire Council
- Adult Protection – East Dunbartonshire Council
- People Development – East Dunbartonshire Council

Other formats

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or in audio format and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council on 0300 123 4510

本文件可按要求翻譯成中文，如有此需要，請電 0300 123 4510。

اس دستاویز کا درجہ اسٹیکسٹ کرنے پر (اردو) زبان میں ترجمہ کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ براہ مہربانی فون نمبر 0300 123 4510 پر رابطہ کریں۔

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਨੁਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0300 123 4510 ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Gabhaidh an sgrìobhainn seo cur gu Gàidhlig ma tha sin a dhìth oirbh. Cuiribh fòn gu 0300 123 4510

अनुरोध करने पर यह दस्तावेज हिन्दी में भाषांतरित किया जा सकता है। कृपया 0300 123 4510 पर फोन कीजिए।

