



# CHANGING LIVES, CHANGING SYSTEMS:

LESSONS FROM  
REDUCING AND PREVENTING  
DOMESTIC ABUSE

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“IT’S NOT TRUE TO SAY THAT  
PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC  
ABUSE SLIP THROUGH THE NET –  
THERE ISN’T A NET. THEY’RE JUST  
NOT BEING IMPACTED AT ALL BY  
THE EXISTING RESPONSE...  
WE WANTED TO BUILD A NET.”

**DRIVE PARTNER**

**We have identified twelve lessons from Drive for organisations and funders seeking to contribute to systems change:**

**1**

**Start with the problem rather than a predetermined solution**

**2**

**Bring together the right organisations to tackle the problem**

**3**

**Show that a new approach is possible in practice**

**4**

**Build for impact - test and evolve your model and develop the evidence that it works**

**5**

**Establish the right structures for collaboration and engagement**

**6**

**Find and work with the right people**

**7**

**Invest in relationships at every level**

**8**

**Invest in making it work**

**9**

**Be ambitious for change**

**10**

**Tell as well as show - develop a new narrative to reframe the problem**

**11**

**Work with the context - go with the grain of the system at the same time as stretching it in the areas that matter**

**12**

**Find the right funding mix to enable these ways of working**



## FOREWORD

The biggest social issues can seem overwhelming – and sometimes, that can stop us asking if there’s a different way to solve them.

Take domestic violence and abuse. Of course, we must always provide survivors with all the help and support they need. But if we are to end and prevent domestic abuse, we need to stop asking ‘why doesn’t she leave?’, and instead ask ‘why doesn’t he stop?’ – and then find ways to make that happen.<sup>1</sup>

For too long, services to address perpetrator behaviour have been few and far between. In 2014, it was estimated that only 1% of perpetrators of domestic violence were receiving any form of intervention at all. That’s why leading organisations seeking to make a lasting difference to the issue came together to develop a new approach – Drive.

Drive works directly with perpetrators, holding them accountable and challenging them to change their behaviour, and brings together local services from police and probation to social care and children’s services, to tackle their abuse and protect victims and survivors. With a robust independent evaluation by experts at the University of Bristol showing that Drive significantly reduces the risk to victims and survivors, the model is now being expanded across the country.

Drive represents a new approach to a longstanding issue, changing the way that the criminal justice system, social services, other public agencies and charities respond to domestic abuse, and shaping policy as well as practice. We have used our learning from this new approach to influence national policy, including the Domestic Abuse Bill currently before Parliament. There is now much wider recognition that an effective response to domestic abuse must include tackling perpetrators.

During the Covid-19 crisis we’ve seen a major increase in domestic violence, and Drive has developed new ways to support victims, perpetrators and practitioners in response.

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<sup>1</sup> Drive recognises that anyone, regardless of gender, can be a victim or a perpetrator. The personal pronouns in this phrase reflect the data about the most common scenarios.

Critical to Drive's success has been the range of partnerships that the initiative has catalysed and brought together, including commissioners, funders, governments, providers and charities. Intensive investment in relationships has gone hand-in-hand with a can-do approach to delivery and a flexible, problem-solving mindset. But this could easily have led to another 'small but perfectly formed' pilot project, if not for the Drive partners' relentless focus on their shared end goal – creating a new system that makes victims safer. This focus is down to clear, committed and consistent leadership, supported with a blend of philanthropic and statutory funding.

Drive has shown how with the right approach, charities can change public sector practice, policy and funding from the bottom up, always driven by the direct views, needs and experiences of real people and their lived experience.

Over the years our organisations, like many others, have been part of conversations about systems change, what it is and how to make it happen. With Drive we have been practically working to create systems change. Now we want to share what we've learnt on the journey, to help others bring about systems change, whatever the issues they work on.

We hope this report can help us all to shape, change and develop systems to tackle huge social issues – something we need now, as we build back after one crisis and prepare for the next, more than ever.

Emily Bolton,  
*Director, Social Finance*

Duncan Shrubsole,  
*Director of Policy, Communications and  
Research at Lloyds Bank Foundation for  
England and Wales*

# Executive Summary

The Covid-19 pandemic has been shadowed by a second crisis – a surge in domestic violence and abuse. As a result, we've also seen a welcome, if overdue, increase in the attention and urgency given to tackling this issue. The Drive partnership has been working to change the response to domestic violence and abuse since 2015, building on the partners' years of experience.

Respect, SafeLives, Social Finance and Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales formed the Drive partnership with the ambition to change the way that statutory and voluntary agencies respond to high harm perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse. Drive pursues this aim through three connected strands of work on practice, policy and attitudes:

- Developing and testing a practical model of working with perpetrators
- Promoting a stronger focus on perpetrators in national policy
- Changing the narrative on domestic abuse from 'why doesn't she leave?' to 'why doesn't he stop?'

Drive has made a real difference to the safety of victims and survivors of domestic abuse. A rigorous external evaluation found that where perpetrators were referred to Drive, victims and survivors were ~3 times less likely to experience physical violence compared to people with no contact with Drive.

It has also contributed to changes in the thinking, decisions and practice of a range of different agencies, well beyond the scope of the activities or partners funded by the programme, including:

- Shifts in the attitudes and practices of local services working on domestic violence and abuse
- Improved coordination and multi-agency working on perpetrators
- Increased attention to perpetrators in national policy and funding priorities

This is what makes Drive an example of **systems change** – influencing the overall response to domestic violence and abuse by the police and criminal justice system, by social services and other parts of local government, and by the wider voluntary sector.

During 2020, Drive has built on these achievements to accelerate its work on systems change – influencing national policy debates and supporting a wider range of agencies and practitioners to engage with and address domestic violence and abuse during lockdown.

The Drive Partnership commissioned this study to draw out and share insights and wider lessons from Drive on how systems change happens, and how charities, funders, policy makers and others can contribute to real, lasting change. The report draws on interviews and discussions with Drive partners and delivery organisations, police officers, commissioners and other stakeholders, and a review of programme and policy documents.

This report sets out the story of Drive and how these lessons have been applied in practice, and draws out some more specific ideas and suggestions for organisations working to change systems.



To find out more about the Drive project, visit:

<http://driveproject.org.uk/>



# What is Drive?

Drive aims to make adults and children experiencing domestic violence and abuse safer, by tackling the abusive behaviour of high harm perpetrators – the people who pose the greatest risk of serious harm or murder to people they are in intimate or family relationships with.

Drive has developed to have three main strands:

- Developing and testing a **model of working with perpetrators in a total of seven sites across England and Wales**
- Promoting a stronger focus on perpetrators in national **policy in both England and Wales**
- Changing the **narrative** on domestic abuse – from ‘why doesn’t she leave?’ to ‘why doesn’t he stop?’

Maximising the interplay between these strands has been an important element of Drive’s approach to systems change. Achievements and learning from local delivery have informed national policy engagement, while the central Drive programme team have collated learning from across the programme, and captured insights and intelligence at national level to feed back to local stakeholders.

Drive began in 2015 with a pilot phase in three sites (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf, Essex and West Sussex), and expanded into four new sites (Cardiff, Croydon, West Mercia and West Midlands) in 2018 with new funding and a revised model.

Drive has four different sets of funders:

- The Home Office has been a key funder of programme delivery, with a Police Innovation Fund grant for the three pilot sites and a Police Transformation Fund grant for the second phase.
- Local Police & Crime Commissioners and local authorities co-funded the Home Office grant, and funded initial programme development in the pilot sites and continue to be key funding and delivery partners to date.
- Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales (LBFEW), Comic Relief and the Tudor Trust also fund the programme. While Comic Relief and Tudor contributed to an innovation fund to allow local experimentation, LBFEW has funded a central staff team, database and, crucially, a robust evaluation.

- In 2020, the National Lottery Community Fund made a significant grant to fund the next three years of the programme, combining replication in three new areas with work to promote wider workforce development and systems change at national level.

The Drive service model incorporates intensive individual work with perpetrators to address their behaviour, and bringing agencies together to coordinate a response that aims both to disrupt abusive behaviour and to provide targeted support to tackle risk factors and barriers to behaviour change.

*“Perpetrators can have lots of different barriers to behaviour change. Drive has the creativity and tenacity to work through all those barriers until all the perpetrator is left with is his own behaviour.”*

STAKEHOLDER

The core elements of the Drive service model (as they have evolved over time) are:

- A **panel**<sup>2</sup> – a regular meeting to share intelligence on individuals perpetrating domestic abuse, and to agree on coordinated actions in response across a range of criminal justice, statutory and voluntary agencies. As well as allocating individuals to Drive case management, the panel tasks other agencies with different actions to disrupt abusive behaviours (new probation conditions, police visits or even arrest) or tackle risk factors (for example, rehousing a perpetrator away from the victim). Agencies attending the panel typically include police, prison, probation and offender management, children’s social services, housing, drug and alcohol misuse and victim support as well as the voluntary sector organisation responsible for delivering Drive in that area.
- **Case management** – intensive, 1:1 engagement for up to 12 months, by an assigned Case Manager employed by the Drive delivery organisation. The Case Manager works with the perpetrator on a personalised plan to prevent abuse. They identify issues which co-present with abusive behaviours – for example, finance / debt, housing, mental health or substance misuse – and develop a targeted plan to address these, always with the aim of reducing / managing risk to victims and children. The Case Manager draws in other agencies as appropriate, as well as holding the perpetrator to account for abusive behaviour, identifying opportunities for disruption and working with them on a one to one plan for behaviour change.

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<sup>2</sup> Similar to and drawing learnings from panels operating in different parts of the country e.g. Northumbria Police Force Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC).

# DELIVERY ORGANISATION LOCATIONS

Drive partners:

**Respect**



**Richmond Fellowship**  
(Birmingham & Sandwell)



**The Change Project**  
(Essex)



**Cranstoun**  
(Worcestershire)



Safer Merthyr Tydfil  
Merthyr Tydfil Mwy Ddiogel

**Safer Merthyr Tydfil**  
(Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf, Cardiff)

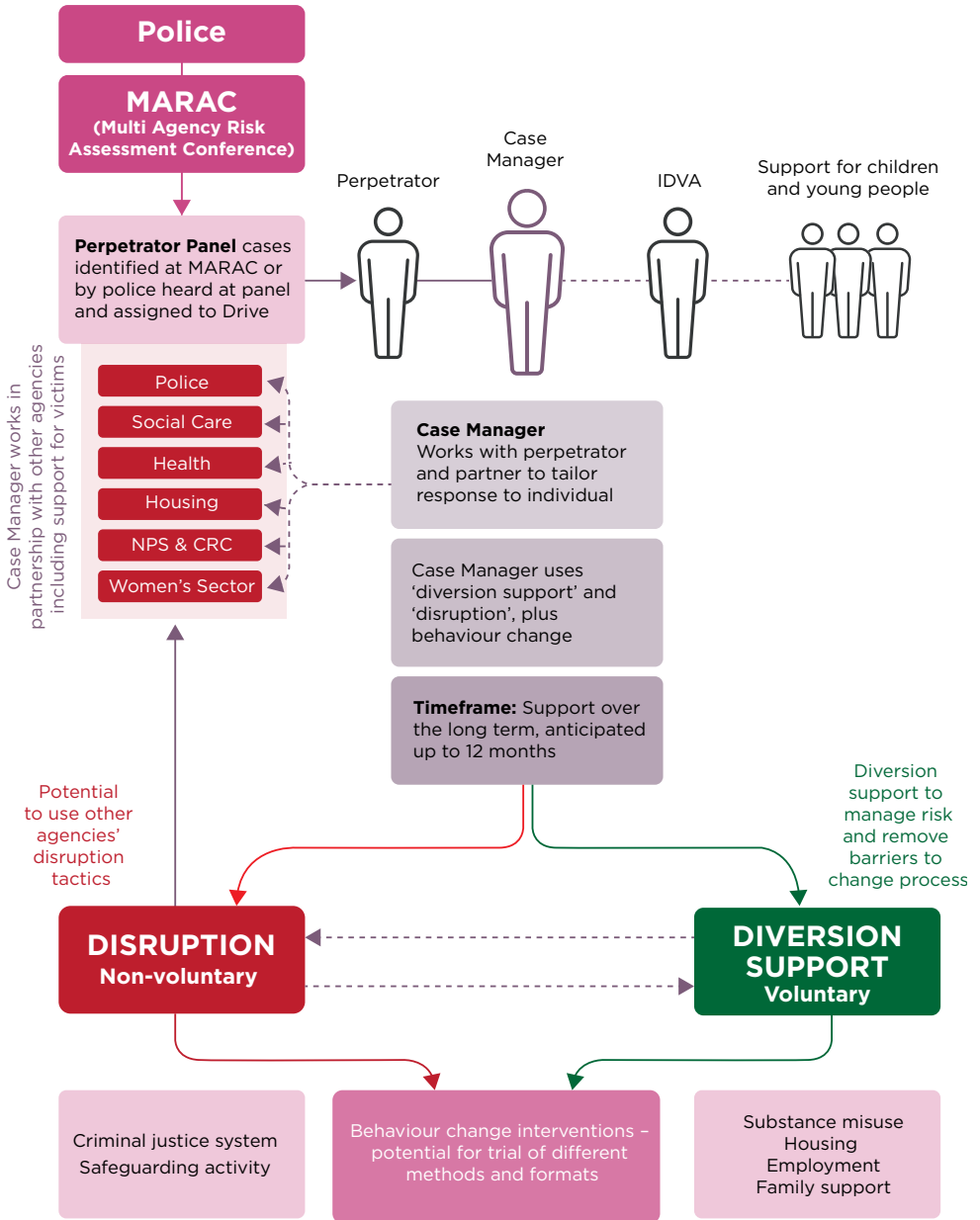


**Rise Mutual**  
(Croydon)



**Hampton Trust Richmond Fellowship**  
(West Sussex)

**FIGURE 1: THE DRIVE MODEL**



*“It’s targeted behaviour change work directed at the specific behaviour, the specific profile ... and the needs – if someone’s got nowhere to live, then it’s pointless trying to work on behaviour change.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

- **Coordination** – Case Managers refer individuals to other agencies directly as well as via the panel, accompany them to ensure they take up support, and follow up / share information to ensure that each service takes account of risk and maintains the safety of victims. Delivery organisations work in close coordination with victims’ / survivors’ services. Where perpetrators do not engage directly with Drive, coordination and information-sharing is the main Drive intervention, focused on disruption and risk management, while continuing to seek opportunities for engagement in future.

*“We don’t take ownership of the case, we don’t swoop in and rescue someone from probation or whoever, we work alongside them ... Drive acts as a bridge to shuttle back and forwards between different agencies, and highlight where people are falling through the cracks.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

- **Support and quality assurance** – Each delivery organisation holds regular internal case reviews, and Case Managers receive regular clinical supervision. Drive has a small team of expert Practice Advisors who work closely with Case Managers on the most challenging cases, as well as providing ongoing training and guidance.
- **Local champions** – In the second, expansion phase, a Drive Fellow was assigned in each site – a senior police officer whose role is to champion Drive to the police and other criminal justice agencies.
- **Feedback** – the Drive pilot phase included an independent evaluation, with randomised allocation of cases to allow robust comparison between perpetrators involved with Drive and a control group. Data from this evaluation has been published on a rolling annual basis. With Case Managers in ongoing contact with perpetrators, they also provide other agencies with feedback on individual cases at the regular panel meetings.

This study focuses on the period from 2015-19. During 2020, Drive has accelerated its efforts to bring about systems change. For example, the partnership brought together over 80 organisations in a joint call for a national perpetrator strategy alongside the new Domestic Abuse legislation. Drive also secured significant

## DRIVE TIMELINE

	DRIVE	KEY EXTERNAL EVENTS
2014	<p>Social Finance's Impact Incubator explores domestic violence</p> <p>Development of partnership and model</p> <p>Proposal to Police Innovation Fund</p>	<p>HMIC Everyone's Business report</p>
2015	<p>Engagement with pilot sites</p> <p>Development of local business cases and local stakeholder engagement</p> <p>Lloyds Bank Foundation commits funding</p> <p>Recruitment of Programme Director</p>	<p>Coercive and Controlling Behaviour criminalised as a new distinct offence in the Serious Crime Act</p>
2016	<p>Delivery organisations and evaluator appointed</p> <p>Project launch</p> <p>Funding received from Police Innovation Fund</p> <p>Recruitment of local and central teams</p>	<p>Violence Against Women &amp; Girls Strategy</p>
2017	<p>Development of local inter-agency working</p> <p>Proposal to Police Transformation Fund</p> <p>Launch of Drive Fellowship scheme</p> <p>'Drive in a box' codification of Drive model</p> <p>Year 1 evaluation report</p>	<p>Joint Targeted Area Inspection on multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse</p> <p>Launch of VAWDASV workstream, as part Framework to support positive change for those at risk of offending in Wales 2018-2023</p>
2018	<p>Police Transformation Fund funding awarded</p> <p>Mobilisation and appointment of delivery organisations in phase 2 sites</p> <p>Engagement with Home Office around Domestic Abuse Bill and future plans for Drive</p> <p>Launch in phase 2 sites</p> <p>Year 2 evaluation report</p>	<p>Domestic Abuse Bill Consultation chapter on perpetrators</p> <p>APPG on perpetrators of domestic abuse established</p> <p>Pre-legislative committee on Domestic Abuse Bill</p> <p>HMIP report on Community Rehabilitation Companies' work on domestic abuse</p>
2019	<p>Accreditation of Drive high harm perpetrator training programme</p> <p>'Deep dive' external review of Drive casework (see Lesson 3)</p> <p>Drive requested to input to Home Office Comprehensive Spending Review submission</p>	<p>Home Office estimates annual cost of domestic abuse in 2016/17 at £66bn</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Bill introduction and second reading</p>

funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for systems change, including a national workforce development programme, and ongoing work to identify and address key systemic gaps, such as improving the response for BAME communities.

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen an increase in domestic violence and abuse, followed by a welcome increase in attention and urgency to tackling abuse. In response to this new context, Drive has shifted focus to support a wider range of agencies, as well as putting additional resources into its own services to increase the safety of adult and child victims and survivors during lockdown.

# How has Drive helped to change systems?

*“What Drive has started to do is to shift the focus away from derisking each organisation to derisking the victim.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*Drive has made a real difference to the safety of victims and survivors. Up to September 2019, Drive had worked with over 1,300 perpetrators. An independent evaluation by the University of Bristol found that victims/survivors were nearly 3 times less likely to experience physical violence or abuse when the perpetrator had been referred to Drive than people in a control group with no Drive intervention.*

Drive has achieved this by working directly with perpetrators. It has also contributed to changes in the thinking, decisions and practice of a range of different agencies, well beyond the scope of the activities or partners funded by the programme. These changes include:

- Shifts in the attitudes and practices of **local services working on domestic violence and abuse**
- Improved **coordination and multi-agency working on perpetrators**
- Increased attention to perpetrators in **national policy and funding priorities**
- Changing attitudes and approaches to work with perpetrators in the **wider women’s sector**

This is what makes Drive an example of systems change – influencing the overall response to domestic violence and abuse by the police and criminal justice system, by social services and other parts of local government, and by the wider voluntary sector.

While there is still a long way to go to scale and sustain these changes, their significance becomes clear by comparison with the situation before Drive began.



*“People were trying not to look at high harm perpetrators. Everybody sort of implicitly knew these individuals were there, but everyone was hoping somebody else would be responsible for it.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“It’s refreshing to see that the emphasis is starting to be that if you don’t work with perpetrators then we’ll always have a significant issue with domestic abuse.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

## LOCAL SERVICE PROVISION

In the sites where Drive has been most successful, there have been significant shifts in the attitudes and ways of working of a range of local statutory agencies, with increased attention to perpetrator behaviour as well as supporting victims.

*“At the first child protection meeting, social workers were moving physically away from [the Drive Case Manager] ... they now would recognise that they can’t hold the victim accountable for safeguarding the children because the abuse wasn’t her fault, she’s not the one in control.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

*“All the agencies now consider perpetrators – Drive has mainstreamed that conversation, that concept is now part of core business.”*

STAKEHOLDER

## COORDINATION AND MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

There have also been major improvements in information sharing and multi-agency coordination in relation to perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse.

*“The MARAC [Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference] focus used all to be on the victim and safeguarding but now the conversation includes the perpetrator and actions by different agencies to deal with the perpetrator – and that wasn’t happening before.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“There’s been a move [by statutory agencies] to say ‘we can all tackle this, we can help you with this if you help us with that.’ There’s a willingness to work together for better results.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

## POLICY AND FUNDING PRIORITIES

This shift in focus is mirrored by greater attention to perpetrator behaviour at more strategic levels, from local commissioning priorities to national policy.

*“The landscape has changed ... there’s a realisation among commissioners now that we need to look at the family as a whole, and the perpetrator is part of the family.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

*“[Drive] has really started the wider conversation about responding to perpetrators ... It’s very much on the agenda of commissioners across England and Wales.”*

STAKEHOLDER

For example, Drive has worked with the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime on mapping domestic abuse volumes across London and developing options for a response to high-risk, high-harm and serial perpetrators for the whole of London. As part of the recent funding opportunity made available by the Home Office, there is potential to develop this further along with supporting local authorities to deliver a range of programmes for perpetrators and support for victims at all levels.

The UK government’s Domestic Abuse Bill and related consultation process included a series of new commitments to address perpetrator behaviour, and explicitly referenced Drive as an example of good practice. In line with Drive’s response to the consultation, these include an emphasis on multi-agency working, information sharing and better use of criminal justice datasets. As the Bill entered committee stage in June 2020, Alex Chalk MP, the minister responsible at the Ministry of Justice, hailed Drive’s contribution to shifting the debate on perpetrators.

*“We commend the work of the Drive partnership of Respect, SafeLives and Social Finance, who have done so much to change the narrative and to shift the focus from ‘Why doesn’t she leave?’ to ‘Why doesn’t he stop?’. I want to be absolutely clear that we fully recognise the need for increased focus on perpetrators and are ambitious in our aim to transform the response to those who have caused this appalling harm.”*

ALEX CHALK MP, PARLIAMENTARY  
UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE

Government funding priorities have also shifted significantly. Drive has engaged closely with the Home Office to make the case for perpetrator work and share its evidence of impact, as well as convening the wider sector to call for a strategic response to perpetrators.

In March 2020, the Budget announced further funding “for innovative new approaches like the Drive programme” to “reduce the number of serial perpetrators”. In August 2020, an additional £1.1m fund was launched to support local areas to replicate the Drive model, along with £5m to roll out or expand other initiatives working directly with perpetrators of domestic abuse. This represents a major shift in government policy and priorities.

## WIDER WOMEN'S SECTOR

Official unease around working with perpetrators was initially mirrored in the women's sector (see Lesson 10), with many organisations deeply uncertain about the value of this work. Through its combination of high quality delivery and rigorous evaluation, Drive has demonstrated the impact of this approach on the safety of adult and child victims and survivors.

With this contribution to the evidence base and the consequent shift in government funding priorities, a range of agencies from the women's sector have now begun their own work with perpetrators, including leading organisations such as Women's Aid. For example, 17 projects in the Home Office's most recent round of Violence Against Women & Girls funding involved work with perpetrators.

*“The women's sector had been passionately nervous ... now a number of larger organisations have started to move into this space in terms of delivery – we've seen a significant shift in a small space of time.”*

STAKEHOLDER

Drive continues to play an active role in this shift, most recently convening over 80 organisations, including leading lights in the women's sector, the children's sector and criminal justice agencies, to call for a national perpetrator strategy alongside the Domestic Abuse Act.

# Understanding Drive's contribution to systems change

This report seeks to understand how Drive has contributed to systems change. At the heart of Drive's approach was a new analysis of the problem and a shared ambition for change – Drive started with the problem rather than jumping straight to a solution.

Starting with why the programme exists has been fundamental. The ambition to build a new national response to perpetrators is core to who came together in the partnership. The Drive organisations bring different strengths and specialisms, and between them speak to all the different audiences who need to be engaged in change, including policy makers, statutory services and commissioners, and the voluntary sector. The focus on system change has kept senior leaders in each partner organisation close to the programme. It has also shaped how Drive was set up and how it has been delivered and developed to maximise its contribution to wider change. The mix of partners, the ways of working they have established together and their shared ambition have in turn shaped what is involved in Drive delivery.

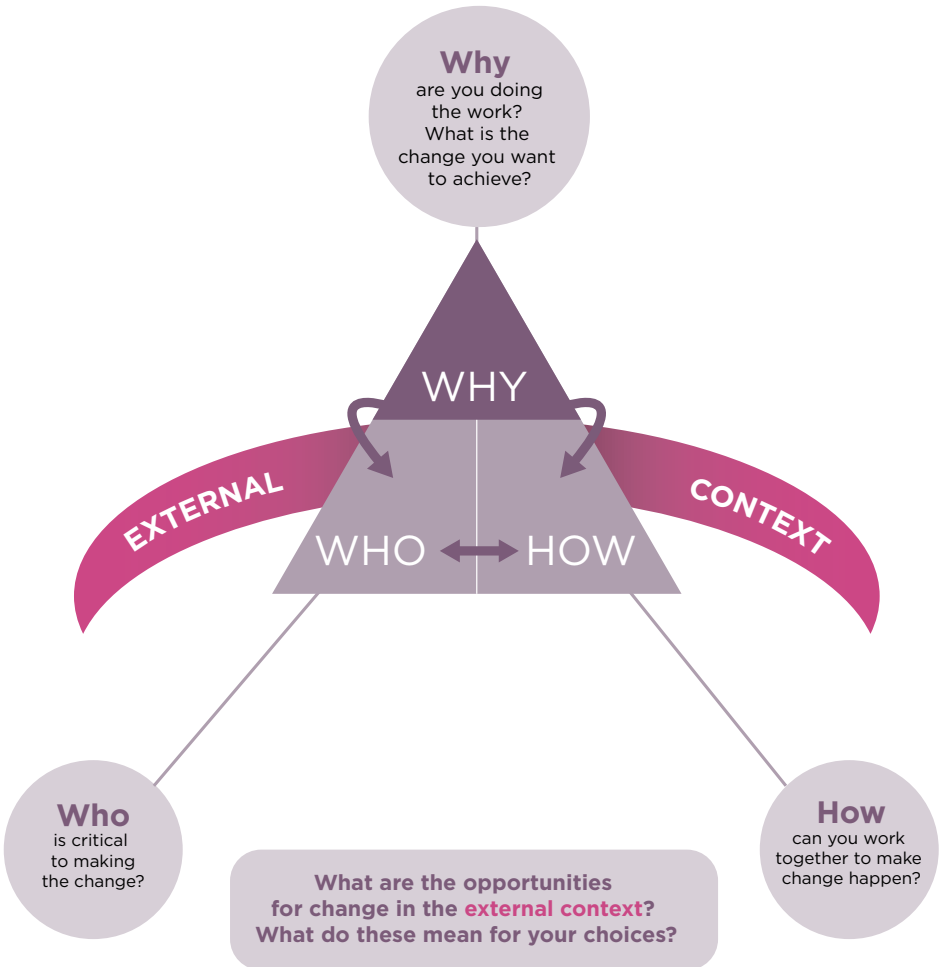
It is also essential to recognise that Drive has operated in a wider context that, while often challenging, has enabled change and provided levers for influence at both national and local level. These include:

- Significant political will and attention to domestic abuse, from the then Prime Minister down
- Structures, notably the new Police & Crime Commissioners, that enabled innovation and could provide additional funding in response to this policy priority
- Wider shifts in professional discourse and understanding of domestic abuse and its consequences

More broadly, the fact that domestic violence and abuse was widely understood as a critical but neglected issue, and that engagement with perpetrators was largely missing from the response, created a relatively open space for new approaches. In more 'crowded' issues, where there is a larger set of established actors and ways of doing things, the room for change may be more constrained.

We hope this model is useful to other organisations seeking to contribute to systems change. The rest of this report explores these elements in more detail and seeks to identify specific, actionable lessons from Drive's experience.

**FIGURE 2: APPROACH TO SYSTEMS CHANGE**



# Lesson 1: Start with the problem

*“The starting point was: how do we create a national response to perpetrators that keeps families safe?”*

DRIVE PARTNER

In 2014, Social Finance established the Impact Incubator – a joint initiative with a group of funders to stimulate new responses that could make a difference to intractable social problems. Initial research prioritised a number of ‘cold spots’ – big issues with limited funding attention, and relatively small scale voluntary and community sector responses, creating an urgent need for new, transformative approaches at scale.

After extensive desk research and consultation with voluntary and statutory agencies working in domestic abuse, Social Finance decided to focus on perpetrators. With only 1% of perpetrators receiving any kind of intervention, the opportunity to do more to tackle the cause of violence and abuse was clear.

One of the organisations consulted was SafeLives, which had pioneered the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) model of support for victims of domestic abuse, and supported its rollout across England and Wales, as well as the Independent domestic violence advisors (IDVA) role. However, despite improving provision for victims, their analysis had found that the number of victims at high risk had remained constant between 2005 and 2015.

Respect, the national membership organisation for work with perpetrators, was also part of the initial Impact Incubator consultations. Their specialist expertise was essential to develop a safe and trusted intervention. While they already had a leading role in this area, Respect had not at that time worked with high harm perpetrators, and saw potential to achieve a bigger change by working in partnership.

In parallel, Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales (LBFEW) was developing a new strategic funding approach, going beyond its traditional model of funding frontline delivery to influence policy and practice on a larger scale. The foundation had funded work on domestic and sexual abuse for 30 years, and saw this as an early priority for their new approach.


*“Our paths crossed at the right time ... they were doing something on the right topic, at a time when [LBFEW] were looking to make a signature investment.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Coming from different starting points, each organisation had arrived at a common intent to shift attention to the cause of domestic violence and abuse – perpetrators' behaviour. Many programmes and partnerships are developed in response to a funding opportunity, or in order to build on or sustain an existing initiative. Drive began with four organisations coming together around a problem which they had each already identified independently, with a shared ambition for system change.

This has shaped Drive in three fundamental ways from the outset:

- It enabled the Drive Partnership to jointly articulate the changes they wanted to see, and to maintain a consistent focus on these shared goals.
- It brought different organisations together with an explicit recognition that each one held a different piece of the jigsaw, and this has encouraged the partners to focus on bringing each other's strengths into play in search of the best solution.
- At the same time, it has allowed partners to stay open-minded about the specific solution and approaches required to bring about change, and to change these, sometimes significantly, in response to lessons and changing circumstances.



“NOBODY TOLD US TO BE IN A PARTNERSHIP WITH EACH OTHER, WE CHOSE EACH OTHER. WE INITIATED IT AND THEN WE WENT LOOKING FOR THE MONEY TO DO IT.”

**DRIVE  
PARTNER**

The contrast to funding-driven relationships, where organisations often seek to protect their position or ‘share’ of a programme, or are constrained to focus on predefined targets or deliverables, even when these are at the expense of the bigger picture, is startling.

Building a partnership around a problem, rather than an opportunity, probably requires a degree of luck – the right organisations, the right topic and the right time. However, Social Finance’s collaboration with foundations through the Impact Incubator was focused on exploring problems and investigating the scope for new solutions, and this allowed it to make its own luck to some extent.

## LESSONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Bring potential partners / funders together** to develop a shared analysis and ambition for change, rather than starting with a solution

**Funders can play a key enabling role** by investing in this kind of initial exploration, providing organisations with the capacity, freedom and confidence to start thinking differently



## Lesson 2: Bring together the right organisations

*“We’ve all brought different things to Drive, which has helped shape how people have thought of it and what it’s for.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

### THE DRIVE PARTNERSHIP

Drive partners and external stakeholders are clear that the partners could not have achieved as much working separately as they have together.

*“There’s no way Drive could have done what it’s done without the mix of organisations and people in that central partnership to bring things up to a bigger scale.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

SafeLives had always focused on developing and testing new service models, and working with local and national statutory actors as well as the voluntary sector to get these adopted more widely. Fundamentally, this is how Drive has sought to promote system change. However, this approach can create resistance, especially when entering a new area, such as work with perpetrators.

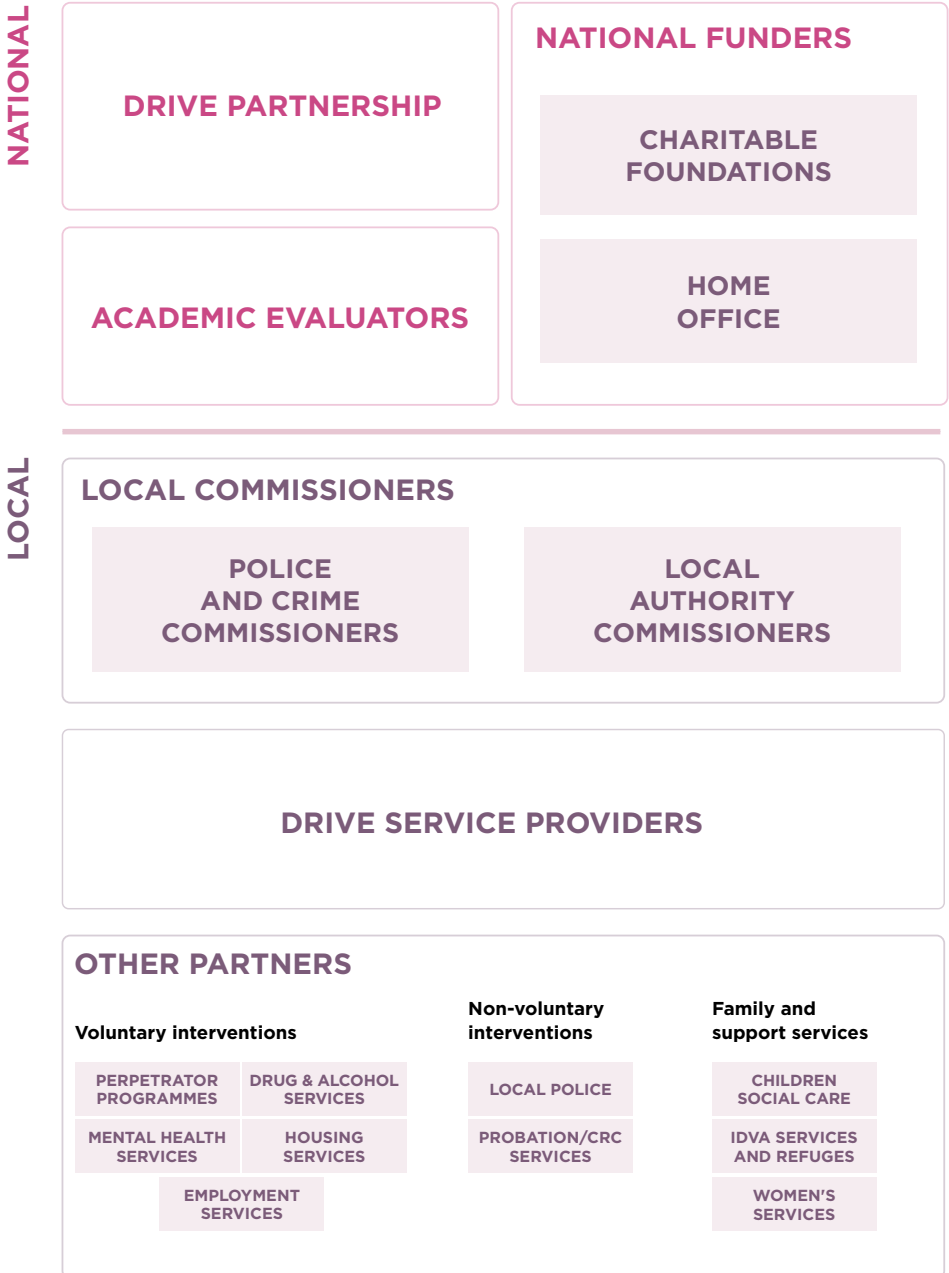
As with other under-recognised and under-resourced issues, organisations working on domestic abuse had good reason to fear that a new emphasis on perpetrators might come at the expense of their existing work with victims and survivors. Respect’s involvement has been critical in this context, both due to their expertise in working with perpetrators as the figurehead for work with perpetrators, and because they are seen by the wider sector as being firmly “on the same side”.

*“Respect can make colleagues within the sector feel safe and that the key things are still recognised...”*

*[the Chief Executive] personally carries extreme respect and credibility within the sector and reassured people on issues which otherwise they would have worried about ... it was essential to have the people who are really acknowledged as knowing what they’re talking about.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

**FIGURE 3: DRIVE COLLABORATORS**



Bringing these two perspectives together – protecting victims and changing perpetrator behaviour – has been at the heart of Drive’s approach and achievements, and can be seen at local level, where Drive delivery organisations work alongside victim support services, as well as nationally.

The two organisations brought very strong existing networks and relationships with key national and local actors, across government, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector.

*“We occupy places in a whole series of networks. ... Between us, we probably already knew most of the key people, the ‘weather makers’, or we had channels of communication across these networks.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

With no previous background in domestic abuse, Social Finance occupied a more neutral position, which gave them a perceived independence. Their expertise in quantitative and financial analysis, innovation and programme management, drawing on the Peterborough probation Social Impact Bond and other experiences, meant that they had a credibility that was critical for early engagement with funders and commissioners, as well as the delivery capability to make the pilots work.

*“Social Finance’s involvement allowed the domestic abuse sector to present issues that they’d been grappling with for decades in language that made sense to me as a commissioner.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“[Commissioners and policy makers] want to hear the analysis and numbers that sit around a proposed policy change – there’s a level of trust with an organisation who isn’t part of the sector asking for money, and clearly has the skills to deliver the right quality and depth of analysis.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

The ability of the partnership to bridge a range of ways of working, perspectives and audiences has been critical to achieving more than the sum of the parts.

*“Right from the start, Respect was thinking ‘how do we develop practice with perpetrators who are resistant to change?’, SafeLives was thinking ‘how do we gather the data to show that this is important?’, Social Finance was thinking ‘how do we get this to scale?’”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“On their own, none of the partners would have had the same voice when it comes to speaking to central government.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Build partnerships with complementary skillsets** and credibility across all the relevant audiences, and the ability to bridge between these audiences

**There can be value in involving a ‘neutral’ partner** with limited history in a sector who may be seen as more independent or credible by external audiences

## DELIVERY ORGANISATIONS

In each site, Drive ultimately depends on its delivery organisations. These are VCS organisations with a specialism in domestic abuse, although not all had a track record of working with perpetrators. Looking at the sites which have seen more change in the wider system, the Drive provider was also:

- Locally embedded
- Well connected to victim support services and the wider women’s sector
- Committed to Drive as a new way of working

*“They were a really strong VCS provider ... that was really critical to success ... they were able to work across the different agencies. It was a relatively small local authority area, where everybody already knew each other. They also delivered the IDVA [Independent Domestic Violence Adviser] services, and the story made sense to them – they’d seen the same perpetrators and the same victims ... the daughter of the mother of the grandmother.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Drive is a deeply relationship-driven programme. It has changed attitudes and practices of a range of agencies through persuasion, responsiveness and building

personal and organisational relationships of trust and cooperation. While this requires ongoing investment and persistence, organisations with strong pre-existing statutory and voluntary sector relationships clearly had a head start.

*“What’s keeping people in it [at an early stage] are the existing good partnership relationships with the [delivery organisation]. They are well regarded and well connected. The lead staff member is highly experienced and other agencies have a lot of faith in her and willingness to stick with her.”*

STAKEHOLDER

By comparison, organisations without these networks struggled initially to build engagement.

*“Coming in from outside, you have a mountain to climb before you get to the starting line.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

*“[The delivery organisation] hadn’t ever worked in the same space as statutory agencies ... they didn’t have the right relationships or understanding of who to link with. For example, they didn’t have good links with children’s social services, because they hadn’t needed to know who those people were ... they were where victims services were 10 years ago ... not as visible, not always prioritising meetings or events or workshops, perhaps not focused on making connections and relationships.”*

STAKEHOLDER

Where providers have gone beyond delivery to start winning hearts and minds more broadly, this reflects a deep commitment by the organisation to Drive as a new way of working with perpetrators.

*“I immediately fell in love with it. I thought ‘this is what we have to be doing’. It’s a revolutionary way of working with perpetrators.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

By contrast, some providers saw Drive as just another commissioned service – this is what often happens when a national organisation funds local delivery to its own specification.

*“It wasn’t our own initiative – we do similar things but we have other interventions alongside that ... Drive is a standalone project which doesn’t have these.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

- **Identify delivery organisations** who are deeply embedded in their local area and have existing relationships with other key actors
- **Seek delivery organisations who are committed to the new approach** / change you want to see

These considerations are probably more important than deep specialist expertise – not all the Drive delivery organisations had experience of working with perpetrators, for example.

## LOCAL AGENCIES

Drive is ultimately seeking to change the way that the criminal justice system and other statutory agencies respond to perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse. This requires engagement both with individual agencies and at a ‘whole system’ level.

Good relationships with victim support services have been essential to maximise victim safety and enable both Drive and victims’ services to use intelligence from the other’s perspective. This structural emphasis on keeping the victim at the centre of the work has also helped to allay concerns among statutory agencies about “putting investment into criminals” which Drive faced. Where the Drive delivery organisation provides or is co-located with these services, this has been particularly valuable.

*“We’ve had good collaboration with IDVAs and that means we really keep the victim central.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

*“The IDVA provider was fully on board ... that’s been critical for making it feel like an extension rather than creating competition or conflict.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Police sponsorship is essential for Drive to function effectively on the ground. While the involvement of Police & Crime Commissioners helped to open doors, especially at strategic level, the Drive Fellow – a serving senior police officer championing the programme – has been critical operationally.

*“The police are really busy. New initiatives come and go. So it’s important to have someone within the police service to make sure Drive stays on the agenda and make sure the police were on board.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“The Drive Fellow has helped enormously – it’s just easier when a police officer is being spoken to by another police officer.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

Offender management agencies have been the hardest to get on board – reflecting the significant overlap between Drive case management approach and their own statutory responsibilities. This has largely been resolved through persistent work on relationships and transparency – for example, the recent National Probation Service ‘deep dive’ (see lesson 3).

*“Probation were initially ‘Why are you working with my clients? Where does your responsibility stop? How does it relate to mine?’ – but [over time] ... they began to see the value and the distinctive contribution that Drive could make ... the same person was regularly participating in the perpetrator panel and that allowed them to discuss and resolve any tensions and stress points.”*

STAKEHOLDER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Engage** and work **with** all the **agencies** you ultimately want to take **responsibility for change**

## Lesson 3: Show that a new approach is possible in practice

*“Frontline staff are desperate to do something about it, and [Drive] offers them something to do.”*

STAKEHOLDER

Discussions of systems change tend to focus on policy, attitudes, narratives, ‘nudges’ that can shift people’s behaviour or decisions and/or wider structural / environmental factors. These are often seen as more scalable and/or sustainable than new programmes or services. So it’s notable that direct intervention with perpetrators is at the heart of Drive’s approach to systems change.

This partly reflects the fact that, while there were established programmes for perpetrators seeking to change their behaviour, there was minimal provision for high harm perpetrators when Drive began. While there was huge interest in changing perpetrator behaviour, there was no consensus about the right ways to achieve this. There was a need for a practical intervention, to show policy makers and agencies on the ground that it was possible to take any action at all in such a risky, under-explored and overlooked area.

*“There was a desperation for something different. Domestic violence is dangerous and frightening. Different agencies had different perspectives on it, and different responsibilities and expectations and protocols ... Nobody knew what to do.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

The initial Drive model was developed through extensive collaborative work and partnership building with local stakeholders and agencies, in partnership with Police & Crime Commissioners (PCCs), in order to lay the groundwork and commitment for effective delivery. This ensured that the design of Drive responded, and was seen to respond, to the issues that mattered in each site.

*“The PCCs in the pilot sites all put in funding for development work in their areas, alongside funding from the Impact Incubator – so we had six months with shared resource to really commit to doing it properly with an end in mind. Otherwise we’d just have been sitting around talking about the idea of working in partnership, rather than getting into the actual nitty gritty of it.”*

DRIVE PARTNER



It was essential above all to demonstrate safe, effective delivery. Drive's commitment to quality and consistent focus on the safety of adult and child victims of abuse has been key to impact and to building the confidence of statutory agencies to work on such a dangerous issue.

Over time, the development of a strong central quality assurance offer, including accreditation for Drive training, has further built the confidence of local statutory agencies.

*"The access to advice and support and good practice is really valuable. It's similar to how I can go to the National Crime Agency or the College of Policing ... when we're scratching our heads about how to deal with a particular perpetrator ... it allows me to feel confident that we're doing the right thing, that we're aligned with good practice from the HMIC [HM Inspectorate of Constabulary] perspective."*

STAKEHOLDER

The specific mix of components that Drive has evolved has also been critical to making it a success – in particular, the combination of intensive 1:1 case management with effective multi-agency coordination has ensured that the tangible results are visible to local stakeholders, and allayed concerns about safety and duplication of effort. The momentum for wider systems change has been grounded in real examples and experience of local agencies, rather than a theoretical case for change.

"SHOWING THAT IT DOES ACTUALLY WORK, PROVING THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO WORK WITH PERPETRATORS WHILE KEEPING THE SAFETY OF VICTIM AND FAMILY PARAMOUNT"

**DELIVERY ORGANISATION**

*“We were as transparent as possible, sharing everything we were doing ... Once it was launched, case management delivered tangible benefits [to probation] in terms of intelligence, workload, but also benefits for victims and families – and we could concretely show that the job is different from theirs.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“Regular reporting using case studies and examples of real disruption or effective engagement, that meant good accountability and it generated buy-in from senior strategic stakeholders.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

The recent ‘deep dive’ by the South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner and the National Probation Service illustrates the value of practical solutions, and a transparent and collaborative approach to delivery, in influencing statutory systems. Drive providers worked with the teams on the deep-dive, providing support and reassurance on quality and practice.

*“The programme was very open to the deep dive, and happy to adopt the learning points ... they came across as a partnership, and they need to learn from partners in order to integrate into the wider landscape ... that started to change the thinking of senior leaders within statutory services and offender management. That openness shows a maturity and confidence in their service.”*

STAKEHOLDER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

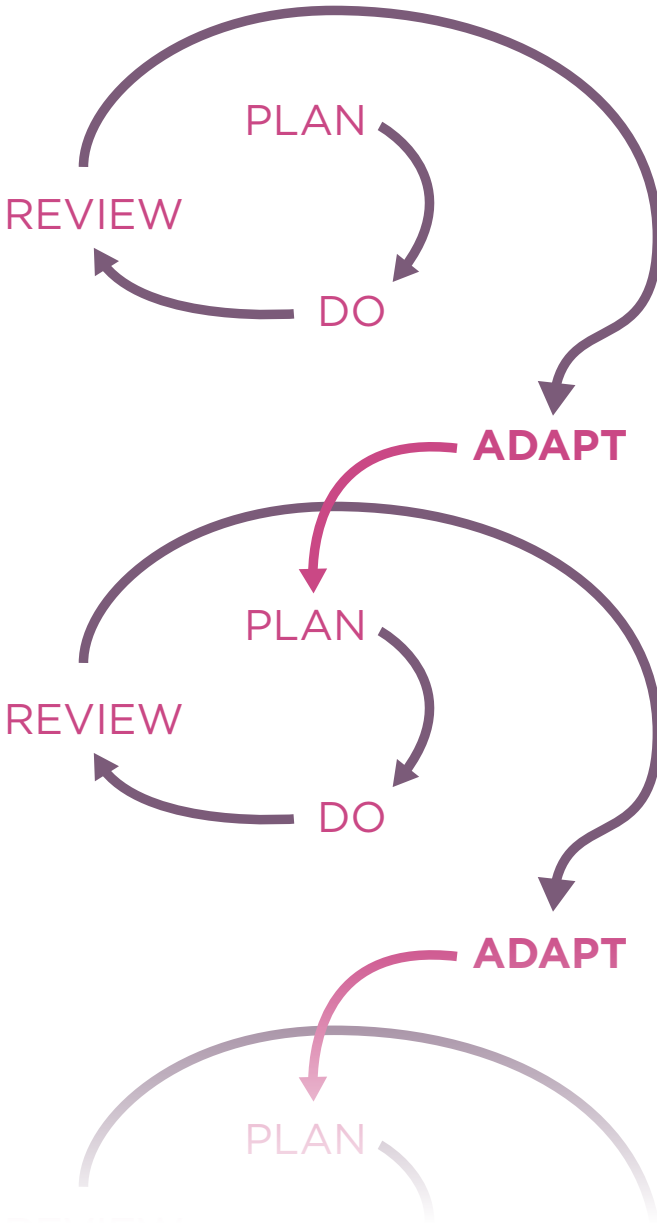
**Deliver** concrete activities that demonstrate that a new approach is possible

**Develop your model in collaboration** with the agencies you want to engage with it, and ensure that design and delivery address their concerns (for Drive, the safety of victims and survivors)

**Communicate** activities, results and learning as frequently and transparently as possible, and be open to sharing and scrutiny of your model

**Funders can play an enabling role** by providing resources for upfront engagement and design, recognising that organisations often need to redeploy existing staff for programme development

**FIGURE 4: LEARNING AND ADAPTING TO DELIVER CHANGE**



## Lesson 4: Build for impact and scale

“An intervention with an evidence base plus Drive shining a light on it”

DRIVE PARTNER

Drive was designed to build and test a model with the maximum potential for impact, sustainability and scale:

- Multiple sites to learn about contextual factors and enable sharing of good practice
- Build on existing nationwide infrastructure to enable future scalability
- Live evaluation and management data to ensure safety, build engagement and develop evidence to influence national policy
- Learning and adaptation to refine the model and identify the critical components for success

**Delivery across multiple sites** was built into Drive from the outset. Working on such a complex issue, with a very limited evidence base, the partners knew that to persuade people that Drive could be generalisable, they would need to show the model could work in a variety of contexts. This also allowed the programme to identify the key components that needed to be in place in every setting, and those elements that could be locally defined or adapted.

By working in several sites at once, Drive could share learnings and more effectively manage risks across the pilots, increasing the likelihood of successful problem-solving and the chance that at least one site would achieve good results.

As one Drive partner said, when one site was struggling, “we knew that the model had the potential to succeed because we had other sites to compare with, and that meant we were able to put central resource into resolving it”.

For delivery organisations, Drive Fellows and other local agencies, it also created a sense of being part of a bigger programme, beyond the boundaries of their own patch, as well as opportunities for mutual support and learning.

*“Having sites that have worked very differently has been really helpful. Drive has brought us together regularly to share experiences. Particularly when it’s felt difficult to engage with other agencies, it’s been good to learn from where others are also struggling or hear about the tactics they have used.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

Drive aligned itself to existing **nationwide infrastructure**, specifically the MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference), a regular local meeting to discuss victims at high risk of murder or serious harm. All areas in England have a MARAC, and connecting Drive to this established process gives it a clear home or ‘landing pad’ in the system in new areas.

The Drive **evaluation** took a rigorous approach, comparing perpetrators who were randomly allocated to receive Drive interventions with others who did not. This level of rigour was essential in the first instance to test whether Drive worked, who it worked for and what characteristics or criteria were important for success, and above all whether it was safe.

It has also been critical in changing the thinking of commissioners and statutory agencies, both about Drive and about work with perpetrators more broadly. In a contested and risky area such as this, credible, independent evaluation data is critical to show that interventions are both effective and safe.

*“Commissioners saw the need for work with perpetrators. However, there was no evidence that anything worked, so they couldn’t see the way to build a business case ... People want an answer that works. The evaluation has been the way to unblock their Catch 22.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Ensuring this level of rigour was challenging – randomisation meant that statutory agencies were not involved in case selection, and that Drive did not always take the cases they would have prioritised. For delivery organisations, there was a tension between their desire to start out cautiously, and the need for a large enough caseload to ensure that the evaluation could generate statistically meaningful conclusions.

*“Probation were very concerned about [randomised] selection onto the cohort – they wanted to ensure that there was defensible decision-making – ‘what if a non-selected client kills someone, how do you defend that decision not to select?’”*

STAKEHOLDER

However, over time, the ability to provide evidence of impact – in terms of the increased safety of adult and child victims – and above all publishing live, annual reports during the pilot phase, has been critical to build the engagement of commissioners, policy makers and other senior stakeholders.

*“The biggest thing is that Drive has been able to demonstrate outcomes with a group of complex perpetrators that a lot of agencies would be very uncomfortable about engaging with ... Achieving that success and being able to evidence it, in the face of scepticism that you can’t engage with these people, that their behaviour can’t be changed... The evaluation has been very robust ... They’ve done well to hold their nerve and focus on ensuring that we had an evaluation product that would stand up to scrutiny.”*

STAKEHOLDER

The evidence that Drive has generated has also had an influence at policy level, raising the profile of work with perpetrators and reassuring decision-makers that it is a worthwhile investment.

*“My opinion of perpetrator programmes has followed the evidence ... The evidence base is now strong where previously it was not.”*

JESS PHILLIPS MP, SHADOW MINISTER FOR DOMESTIC ABUSE (SPEAKING DURING THE 3RD COMMITTEE READING OF THE DOMESTIC ABUSE BILL)

Both the overall model and specific case management practices have evolved in response to **learning**. For example, Drive was initially limited to people who were not involved in current / ongoing criminal justice proceedings. However, it rapidly became clear that this would make it extremely difficult to identify referrals, and so Drive was opened to all MARAC cases and other high risk perpetrators. To make this work, Drive developed guidance for criminal justice system partners and courts, to ensure that referrals would be appropriate and would not unduly influence sentencing decisions.

Learning from the pilot highlighted the importance of local ownership and leadership from within the criminal justice system. The second phase incorporated this, building in the Drive Fellow role and requiring every site to commit to a regular perpetrator panel. The programme continues to evolve, for example most recently in further strengthening its collaboration with victim support agencies.

The programme has a central innovation fund to support local experimentation and this has also been an important driver of learning and adaptation.

*“Case Managers were finding it really difficult to access mental health support for their clients. They used the innovation fund money to get an expert in domestic violence and mental health to develop a protocol for working with perpetrators with complex mental health needs. So now that’s a resource for the sector.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

As well as demonstrating that Drive is having an impact, the evaluation has been an important source of learning for the wider system.

*“The annual evaluations demonstrating that harm had actually reduced, there was a quantifiable drop in abusive behaviours ... we used this as a benchmark to develop realistic performance management for our work with perpetrators. Senior people will just say ‘make it stop, make it all better’ – so we could use the evaluation data to put nuance on that, and move towards ‘this is a bit better and that’s good.’”*

STAKEHOLDER

The learning approach is supported by a central team to capture lessons and translate them into new approaches and practical resources (such as guidance and accredited training). It also requires a spirit of curiosity and open-mindedness – although Drive partners invested heavily in understanding the problem and developing a solution, they have remained open to new ideas and ways of doing things.

*“Drive is an example of saying ‘we don’t know what will work, we don’t know the answers yet’. That language allows people to try new things and be bolder without worrying about getting it wrong.”*

STAKEHOLDER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Test the model / approach in multiple sites / contexts** to create a sense of generalisability and increase the chances of success

**Invest in rigorous evaluation**, hold firm to the evaluation protocol to ensure that it produces robust evidence, and publish emerging results and learning on an ongoing basis

**Actively evolve the model / approach** in response to learning

**Operate with a spirit of openness to learning** in order to build the strongest model for the future

**Funders should be prepared to fund the ‘additional’ costs of testing and development**, such as rigorous evaluation, management information systems, delivery across multiple sites and central support and learning

# Lesson 5: Establish the right structures for collaboration

*“The most healthy partnership of all the ones I’m in”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Drive has built strong structures for collaboration both at the national level, and in delivery sites.

## THE DRIVE PARTNERSHIP

The Drive Partnership contrasted with partners’ experiences of working with others in the sector at that time, even where they have set out to work collaboratively.

*“Explicit partnership work like this is quite new for the sector – we do occasional joint statements or joint meetings with officials, but this feels different. It’s a more developed way of working together, and it’s the first time it’s happened in relation to work with perpetrators.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

The strength of the partnership reflects a shared commitment to equity and building relationships of mutual trust and respect (lesson 7), as well as the vision and ambition of the programme (lesson 9).

It also reflects the governance structures of the partnership, in particular the monthly Drive project board. This is made up of the Chief Executives of Respect and SafeLives, Directors of Social Finance and LBF EW, and the Drive Director. This is very different from typical project boards, which either meet relatively infrequently, with operational decision-making devolved to project management, and/or have less senior members. Having one of the main funders on the project board is also highly unusual, and has been equally significant in how Drive has worked.

*“Our other partnerships feel quite different [from our experience of Drive].”*

DRIVE PARTNER



The regular involvement of senior staff, especially the two Chief Executives, has been critical to the strength of the partnership and the way Drive has worked. It has meant that there is organisational will to commit resources and clear obstacles, and encouraged a focus on strategy as well as delivery.

While Drive funds the attendance of senior staff from Respect, SafeLives and Social Finance at the monthly project boards, partners go far above and beyond the level of the formal funding. The Chief Executive of Respect, for example, dedicates a day of her four day week to Drive, which represents a huge commitment, especially for a relatively small organisation.

All the partners value LBF EW's involvement in the project board, although there were initially some concerns about opening up Drive's day-to-day operations to one of its main funders. However, by cementing LBF EW's engagement with the programme, this has turned out to be invaluable in enabling Drive to learn, evolve and take risks. It has also given Drive direct access to LBF EW's wider expertise in communications and policy engagement.

*“It has been key for ensuring that the funder recognises the value of their investment. It's been fundamental to making this kind of risky innovation in practice project work at all.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Similarly, the Drive Director post was deliberately structured to maximise collaboration. While the post is housed in SafeLives, the Drive Director reports to the project board as a whole. The post is funded by LBF EW to ensure independence from statutory funding streams and commitment to the wider ambition of the partnership.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Establish** management and governance **structures which foster collaboration**

**Commit to the partnership**, and invest senior leadership time in regular engagement

Funders can play a key role here by **funding a meaningful commitment of leaders' time**

**Funders can also add value** when they take an active part in **project governance and leadership**

## LOCAL STRUCTURES

*“Drive is a catalyst for organisations to start working together on a new approach to perpetrators”*

DRIVE PARTNER

At local level, it's been essential to build the right relationships and structures for collaboration at both strategic and operational levels, and this has taken time to get right in each site.

*“There was strategic ownership, but not the detail of getting things done – the steering group were senior people saying ‘yes we must sort this out’ but the people who could actually do it weren’t in the room and weren’t told. ... The more strategic you are, you have the authority to sign up to an ambition, but you don’t have the closeness to what it means to actually do things. By year 2 we had the right people to understand why things weren’t happening and work towards resolution.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“[The area] wanted to put Drive into their existing governance, so there was no new strategic forum to engage key decision makers and make them feel it is part of their business. Instead the focus was on operational case management. We had to retrospectively introduce strategic governance.”*

STAKEHOLDER

As Drive has developed, it has built a structure for operational collaboration into the heart of the model – the perpetrator panel. The local multi-agency panel has been key to shifting the thinking, as well as the practice, of other agencies. It is a forum for joint assessment, selection, action planning, coordination and feedback that brings agencies to work together on perpetrator behaviour.

*“What Drive has done is enable social services not just to ‘send someone off’ but to work alongside perpetrator provision and jointly deliver services to the victim and perpetrator.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

As well as increasing their sense of ownership and responsibility for work with perpetrators, the panel allows other agencies to hear about positive outcomes and share in Drive's success, which has been critical to building their engagement.

*“Statutory agencies especially tend only to see people in crisis – they spend a lot of time in darkness. Collaborative working enables positive feedback loops from the agencies who are following up, so they can see the good results of individual case management, they can see that victims are safer from what the IDVA tells them.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Where it works well, the panel is also a space for Drive to challenge attitudes and hold agencies to account for taking actions that focus on the perpetrator rather than the victim.

*“There was one man on remand for serious assault, and he was phoning the victim regularly to check on her, and he’d told her if she didn’t answer he’d send someone round to hurt her. [Other agencies] were saying ‘just don’t answer the phone.’ The panel was my opportunity to say to them ‘this woman has kept herself safe for years because she’s the expert at keeping herself alive, she knows she’s in danger if she doesn’t answer, we need to support her, we need to stop him.’”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

Where possible, the panel has been built on existing forums coordinating responses to domestic abuse in each site, and this has enabled quicker uptake and adoption by local agencies.

*“It was probably easier for us to make things work because we already had a centralised MARAC.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“We said, let’s add it on to the end of our IOM [Integrated Offender Management] meeting, because the agencies were already committed to that.”*

STAKEHOLDER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Build governance structures for delivery** that engage all the agencies you ultimately want to take responsibility for change – at both strategic and operational levels

**Align these with existing structures and established ways of working**



## Lesson 6: Work with the right people

At every level, Drive is characterised by committed individuals who seek to understand the issues, focus on solutions and invest in relationships, and this has been key to its success.

The ongoing involvement of senior leaders from each partner organisation has been critical in maintaining a consistent focus on the end goal while managing the challenges of delivery.

*“The Chief Executive involvement is what’s enabled Drive to become more than the sum of its parts – a partnership between organisations, working strategically together, looking at the bigger picture.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

The Drive Director’s leadership style and approach have also made an enormous contribution. Her commitment to ensuring delivery and managing relationships while also keeping the bigger picture in sight, so that the whole programme remains focused on change, is at the heart of Drive’s success.

*“I think Drive would be nothing without [the Drive Director] ... Her leadership has been a central component of making change happen.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“[The Drive Director] deserves massive credit for her ability to look both ways simultaneously – being on top of the delivery detail and thinking really big. It needs the right person in that role to achieve the right progress on both these fronts at once.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Programme staff shared professional backgrounds with the people that Drive is trying to influence and engage with – a lesson applied in a more formalised way with the Drive Fellows, senior police officers representing Drive to the police.

*“The partners had people from criminal justice backgrounds who could talk to the statutory sector and make it feel credible to them.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“The advisors are practitioners, they come from a practice background – that’s really important to show people at the frontline that they genuinely understand.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

There has been a consistent focus on ensuring that people working on Drive bring the right values, mindset and ways of working. For example, candidates for the Director role were interviewed and jointly selected by the Drive Partnership. The successful candidate was not a specialist in domestic abuse, but was deeply committed to the Drive approach and ways of working.

*“I saw that Drive was framing the response to perpetrators in a much bigger bolder way. I was already bought in to the rationale. It was long overdue and exciting, an unknown space, and the involvement of experts from both a victim and a perpetrator perspective meant it would be done safely.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Similarly, recruitment of frontline Case Managers was overseen by Drive staff working in collaboration with local delivery organisations.

*“One of the things I think was good was taking the time and resources to get good people in, with the right values and potential. They did have related experience of service provision, but they weren’t necessarily specialists in domestic violence.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

These examples illustrate that organisational partnerships are always also dependent on individual relationships.

*“The Service Manager was someone with local knowledge ... it was very important to have someone who was able to operate contextually, understand people and build the relationships.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

*“You need the right people who know what’s going on, and either they are the decision maker, or they have access to the decision maker so they can get stuff done.”*

STAKEHOLDER

Of course, this means the loss of a few key champions within the system can have a major impact.

*“The domestic abuse service was decentralised ... that one person acting as a single point of contact was lost. With Drive at a steady state, we probably deprioritised it as one among many initiatives.”*

STAKEHOLDER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Identify and work with individuals who have legitimacy** and relationships within the system you want to influence, and who can represent and champion your new approach effectively

In recruiting and managing people, **focus on the values and ways of working you are trying to promote**, as much as on knowledge or skills

Funders can play a key role here by **encouraging and supporting organisations to invest in getting the right people at every level**, including dedicated programme leadership

# Lesson 7: Invest in relationships at every level

*“Lots of sitting down and listening and understanding each other’s roles”*

STAKEHOLDER

Drive has made an ongoing, active investment in relationships, at every level from the frontline to the central partnership. Effective collaboration is at the heart of the Drive model, and the consistent value placed on partnership drives behaviour throughout the programme and has been critical to success.

## THE DRIVE PARTNERSHIP

The high degree of shared intent, equity and mutual trust between the Drive partners reflects a deliberate, consistent focus on building strong relationships and putting the partnership first.

*“There is a recognition that the relationship itself is part of the work – it might as well have been a line on the Gantt chart because people have put time and effort into the relationship.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Every programme aiming at social change involves partnership. However, the depth and quality of relationship between the Drive partners is remarkable, and feels essential to how the programme has developed and achieved results. For example, there’s usually a marked distinction between the lead partner / prime contractor and junior partners / sub-contractors in funded partnerships – including other partnerships that Respect and SafeLives are involved in. Both internal and external stakeholders report that there is no clear ‘lead’ identity in the Drive Partnership. Instead, there is a strong sense of shared identity.

*“If I didn’t know my paycheque came from [organisation] and I didn’t have separate [organisation] meetings, I don’t think I would think of myself as working for [organisation] rather than Drive ... Nobody’s saying ‘we are in charge’.”*

DRIVE PARTNER



Partners respect and value each other's different remits and contributions, and there is a genuine sharing of capabilities, with partners supporting and encouraging each other to focus on the areas where their strengths are best suited. This began before programme implementation, with staff from Respect, SafeLives and Social Finance working closely together on designing the programme model and engaging local stakeholders (see below).

***“We haven't tried to become each other or absorb each other's skillsets.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

***“It helps that we didn't have the same specialisms ... in terms of avoiding direct competition, enabling all of us to appreciate what the others are bringing and learn from them.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

All the partners have shown wholehearted commitment and willingness to embrace the risks of working together. Respect's experience as the smaller partner is a good illustration of how this has worked in practice, and the courage and generosity required to make the partnership work.

***“It wasn't a crowded space, and we had a strong position in it, so it was potentially quite risky for us for a bigger organisation to move in ... I said, ‘if we do this, we have to do it whole-heartedly, we can't go in expecting it to fail – it's all or nothing.’ Instinctively I felt we had to meet everyone at least halfway in terms of trust, and avoid the pitfall of everyone starting by protecting their own position.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

The role of Social Finance, as a neutral actor who could mediate between two organisations with established histories and positions in the sector, was key in bringing the partnership together.

***“Social Finance are to be credited in really arguing to put time into building those relationships.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

The partners have continued to put significant effort into maintaining constructive and positive relationships. Key to this has been a willingness to raise issues ('naming the elephants') and resolve them in a respectful, adult-to-adult way.

*“It was a messy beginning. There were lot of discussions about how to avoid the potential tensions if we were to work together, and acknowledge why things had gone wrong and how, before we worked on shared aims for Drive.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

For example, when a technical adviser post was added, the initial assumption was that SafeLives would employ this post, as they held the grant and already employed the Drive Director. However, supported by the other partners, Respect and SafeLives were able to discuss this in a spirit of equity.

*“It suddenly struck me that we’d sleepwalked into an unbalanced situation ... I raised it at the project board, and everybody agreed that there was a better fit with Respect and it would rebalance the partnership [for Respect to be the employer].”*

DRIVE PARTNER

## LOCAL SITES

Drive’s work in local sites demonstrates the same commitment to relationships.

*“The partnership work has been really brilliant – to make this victim safer or stabilise this person’s behaviour, these are the services that need to be engaged – or putting 3-way responses in place, for example if a perpetrator is engaging with drug & alcohol services then use that as a way in.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

This started before the programme, with staff from Respect, SafeLives and Social Finance spending time in potential pilot sites to establish relationships and build local engagement and buy-in.

*“There was lots of really good groundwork by key people from all three organisations to get buy-in and build understanding and commitment in three local areas at the start – rather than parachuting in a model, or a local organisation bidding in to a national pot and ringing round to get some bid candy.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“You need to make sure partners and agencies understand what’s being delivered and why and feel part of it ... You have to start from the off with conversations with all the partners involved in victim support and offender management and make sure it’s a joint shared commitment that they want to be part of and not imposed on them.”*

STAKEHOLDER

This intensive upfront investment in relationship building is highly distinctive, compared to many programmes where local stakeholder engagement can only happen after funding is secured. Even so, external respondents still wanted more, and Drive has maintained a similarly intensive focus on relationships, dealing with resistance and keeping people on board throughout.

*“It takes lots of conversations, with an explicit focus on building buy-in all the time ... It continues to require a lot of attention, especially when there’s turnover or individuals move on.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“[Tension with probation] was resolved by the Service Manager plugging away ... agencies have got on board now. The first year was tough, then the second year was our flying lap.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Invest time and effort at every level** in organisational and personal relationships, and model the behaviours you hope to foster in practice

**In partnership working, explicitly focus on equity** (e.g. minimise the lead / sub distinction)

**Be generous** both in what you give up and in what you support other partners to keep (‘who’ll be best at doing this’ rather than ‘who it will be best for’ or what will protect / enhance my position)

**Be honest and open in naming and resolving tensions**, and build trust through ongoing engagement and collaboration

**Start building relationships with system actors, potential collaborators and other stakeholders as early and intensively as possible**

## Lesson 8: Invest in making it work

*“The right people doing the right things at the right time”*

DRIVE PARTNER

From the beginning, Drive partners have brought their different capabilities to bear in order to mobilise the programme, maintain relationships and momentum, and keep delivery on track. Even before the programme started, Social Finance's ability to translate data from SafeLives, government and other sources into a coherent business case was vital to get funders and commissioners on board.

*“The business case focused on repeated presentation by the same perpetrators at the MARAC, and translated this into costs such as police call outs and demand on children’s social service. It made it actionable for commissioners by linking the outputs to human outcomes ... The way they used the evidence to show both the human costs and the cost savings triggered me to take action.”*

STAKEHOLDER

Before Drive had recruited any central programme staff, the partners deployed existing staff to build relationships, design the initial model, and launch the pilots.

*“The amount of work that went in pre-inception, the engagement with everyone who'd have a part to play in the delivery, that was crucial – winning hearts and minds before the programme landed.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

The value of this intensive upfront investment in mobilisation can be seen by comparing Drive with another project with domestic abuse perpetrators in a neighbouring area, which has taken much longer to get up and running.

*“Twelve months into the funding, there’s still nothing on the ground ... turning even quite a lot of money into actual delivery is really hard.”*

STAKEHOLDER

Partners have continued to put significant central resource into tackling problems and finding practical solutions to issues such as governance and information sharing. This has been critical to build momentum, overcome scepticism and ensure effective management of risk and victim safety.

*“SafeLives and Respect did a lot of work and intensive support to [the delivery organisation] to help resolve these issues. They put extra resources in, and I think they got more involved than they thought they would have to, but they did it.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“You turn up, do what you say you’re going to do, show results, keep advocating for the perpetrator behaviour perspective.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

All projects involve troubleshooting, but Drive has shown a distinctive ability to deploy people and resources in an extremely flexible and responsive way – identifying existing specialists, drawing on Drive funding to backfill replacements, and seconding staff into the programme for significant periods. All partners have stretched their existing resources, for example to ensure effective communications and public affairs support in the absence of dedicated funding.

*“We can support the PCC’s office, which is often very small, with things like business cases, stakeholder engagement and connecting them to the bigger picture.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“[Other Drive partners] have a much more agile workforce and ability to deploy people into projects if there’s a need.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

While larger organisations such as Social Finance have greater capacity to respond in this way, it also reflects conscious choices to maximise their added value to often under-resourced and over-stretched specialist organisations – notably maintaining a relatively generalist team who can be reassigned to different projects supported by Social Finance as demand arises.

Drive’s response to Covid-19 demonstrates the value of this kind of flexibility. Throughout the pandemic, the safety of adult and child victims and survivors has remained Drive’s highest priority, and the programme has adapted its activities accordingly. For example, Drive has developed a new online support offer for a wider range of professionals who aren’t specialists in domestic violence and abuse, to help them identify and address abuse during lockdown.

Drive has also been able to maintain existing activities, such as the pan-London perpetrator response strategy, which could easily have been dropped

during this period of crisis. Again, this reflects Drive's ability to keep things moving, as well as the momentum that the programme has generated through a track record of delivery and investment in relationships.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE**

**Deploy resources responsively and flexibly** to resolve problems and maintain momentum

**Funders can fund in ways that enable responsiveness**, for example by covering the costs of backfilling or additional central / externally commissioned specialist support



## Lesson 9: Be ambitious for change

*“We all have absolutely the same goal of making a genuine social impact – that’s never wavered”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Drive is remarkable for its ambition and boldness. While there is still a long way to go, stakeholders are clear that the programme’s level of ambition has been important in what it has achieved so far. As described above, all the partners came into Drive in pursuit of a shared ambition for system change – and they have held this end in mind throughout programme development and delivery.

The demands of delivery and accountability can easily absorb all the attention of organisations managing large funded programmes. By contrast, Drive partners have worked hard to maintain their initial focus on the big picture and been bold enough to take strategic risks, seizing opportunities to bid for a significant expansion of the programme in phase 2 before the completion of the pilot, and thinking beyond the continuation of the programme to call for a much wider response to perpetrators.

*“It took us time to get there – developing this wider agenda at the same time as keeping sufficient focus on whether the Drive model itself actually works and is delivering the change it’s supposed to.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“The scale of ambition is different – when SafeLives and Respect say ‘oh, it would be good to get £3-4m’, Social Finance say ‘well we’ve costed it at £160m’.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

For example, when the Home Office invited Drive to discuss rolling out across England, the partners could easily have responded with a detailed funding proposal to replicate their model. Instead, they chose to promote a wider strategic agenda, highlighting the need for a comprehensive response to perpetrators – beyond any particular organisation or model.

Similarly, the recent successful bid to the National Lottery Community Fund has an explicit focus on addressing the systemic gaps Drive has identified, such as closer integration with mental health and children’s services, and a better response to the needs of BAME communities. At every turn, the Drive partners have sought to stretch their impact, and achieve the widest possible change.



*“We shifted our ambition – from getting ‘our thing’ (Drive) bigger, to changing the whole response. It would have been relatively easier to sell our thing ... but all the partners were very committed to the bigger picture and the idea of generous leadership ... we’re resituating Drive in the bigger picture of the change that everybody wants.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Being bold doesn’t mean being foolhardy, though. Social Finance talk about being “responsibly entrepreneurial – spotting opportunities, but then going at them properly and robustly.” Especially for an issue like domestic violence and abuse, this balance of opportunism and rigour was key.

*“We had the confidence to ask for what was needed rather than what we thought we would get. We were pretty fixed on not doing anything cheap, because it would be dangerous. We set a hard floor rather than taking what was on offer.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

“IT’S NOT TRUE TO SAY THAT PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE SLIP THROUGH THE NET – THERE ISN’T A NET. THEY’RE JUST NOT BEING IMPACTED AT ALL BY THE EXISTING RESPONSE ... WE WANTED TO BUILD A NET.”

DRIVE  
PARTNER

This boldness was underwritten by the resources that Social Finance had secured from philanthropic funders. This was literally the case with the Police Transformation Fund bid, where the final decision was delayed for so long that Drive had to begin mobilisation and finding delivery partners in new sites before the Home Office funding was confirmed.

*“The Impact Incubator funding allowed us to take the risk – we were confident that we were underwritten, even though in the end we didn’t need to draw on it.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Stay focused on the ambition for change**, keep revisiting and extending this as opportunities arise, and be bold in responding to these

**Funders can play a key enabling role by ‘underwriting’ risk** and encouraging organisations they fund to keep thinking and working towards their bigger ambition, beyond their current funding

## Lesson 10: Tell as well as show

*“The Drive partnership ... have done so much to change the narrative and to shift the focus from ‘Why doesn’t she leave?’ to ‘Why doesn’t he stop?’”*

ALEX CHALK MP

Drive made a strategic decision to reframe the narrative around domestic violence and abuse, from ‘why doesn’t she leave?’ to ‘why doesn’t he stop?’.

*“We thought that people were focused on the wrong question. People were always asking ‘why doesn’t she leave?’ as if it was the victim’s responsibility to solve the problem. We realised that if we could ask ‘why doesn’t he stop?’ we could shift the responsibility onto the perpetrator ... We knew that it was too early for any evidence that Drive worked. So the conversation had to be about framing the problem of domestic abuse differently.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

This has provided Drive with a powerful lever for engagement and influence at every level.

*“‘Why doesn’t he stop?’ – that’s a powerful narrative for people who find the idea of putting investment into criminals unpalatable, because you can’t argue with that ... the concept of changing the narrative, that’s seen as something new.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“There’s been a lightbulb coming on in the heads of lots of different people – ‘oh yeah, why were we victim blaming, asking her to change her behaviour when she hasn’t done anything wrong?’ The Drive model forces people to think differently.”*

STAKEHOLDER

Asking a different question offers policy makers and practitioners the possibility of new answers.

*“Asking ‘why doesn’t he stop?’ very much enables policy people to get behind a new approach ... They wanted to be engaged on something new.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

***“Why are we [police and local authorities] spending all our money and time on the victim when she’s not the problem, it’s the perpetrator who’s the problem, and they just move on to a different victim.”***

STAKEHOLDER

Rather than pushing a particular solution, this more open narrative acts to increase attention to the issue – creating the space for the Drive Partnership to develop a wider ambition (see Lesson 9) and for others to move in. It also created interest long before the programme could provide examples or evidence of what worked. For example, the programme launch was picked up by broadcast media, and made the headlines on Radio 4’s Today programme.

A shared narrative gives organisations involved in Drive, from the central partnership to local delivery organisations and police Fellows, a consistent message and way of talking about domestic abuse, which has helped unite these different agencies around a common vision for change.

***“People are saying the same thing in the same way to different people.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

Increasingly, Drive organisations are hearing this framing back from local and national stakeholders, and there is growing attention to perpetrators of domestic abuse by a wider range of organisations. This does not necessarily create new opportunities for Drive – as more people get involved, Drive’s position may become less distinctive. However, engaging more stakeholders is potentially a much more significant contribution to the Partnership’s wider ambition for change than expanding Drive.

It’s important to note that Drive was launched in a context of ongoing tension between the women’s sector and the government over austerity and cuts to victims’ services. Drive partners worked hard to reassure others in the women’s sector, speaking with their contacts and establishing a National Advisory Group with representatives from across the sector.

***“The women’s sector was facing a huge funding challenge. We were very conscious that Drive would be seen as taking their money, and we didn’t want to undermine them. We believed perpetrator support could be additional rather than replacing critical victims’ services. We wanted to support victims at every level, so we wanted to change the narrative.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

In the event, Drive attracted very little pushback, and this in turn provided stakeholders who were interested in new approaches with the confidence to engage.

*“At the SafeLives Conference, the Minister responsible for domestic abuse said ‘Thanks for doing Drive – it’s a great model and it’s not something that government could have done itself.’”*

DRIVE PARTNER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Develop a shared narrative** to reframe the issue and an ‘elevator pitch’ to engage people with new ways of thinking and responding

# Lesson 11: Work with the context

*“Don’t fight a system, work with it.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

## EXTERNAL CONTEXT

The space that Drive has to make change happen depends on the national and local contexts the programme operates in. Drive has been ‘strategically opportunistic’ – taking advantage of external opportunities and levers to push for change.

The unprecedented level of national policy attention to domestic abuse, driven by Theresa May as Home Secretary and then Prime Minister, was critical in creating an enabling climate for Drive.

A key moment was HM Inspectorate of Constabulary’s 2014 report into domestic abuse, *Everyone’s Business*, which concluded that “The overall police response to victims of domestic abuse is not good enough... Many forces need to take action now.”

Yet while there was increasing awareness of the need to change perpetrator behaviour, there was little agreement about how to achieve this. In particular, there was limited evidence on what might work – and some evidence that previous interventions had been unsuccessful. In some ways, the fact that work with perpetrators had always been neglected may have worked in Drive’s favour.

*“It wasn’t a crowded landscape. Most places had almost nothing ... It probably helped that there was a relatively blank piece of paper to work with.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

This meant that there was a real hunger for new solutions, particularly among PCCs, who were themselves new entrants to the field, with a new statutory duty for victim support from 2015.

*“Police & Crime Commissioners were looking to do something exciting in their new roles, and this was something practical and new for them to do.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

The local context has also been critical. At the outset, PCCs who wanted to engage with Drive had already identified domestic abuse as a priority, and were willing to innovate to address it.

Reflecting on Drive's experience to date, the sites which have seen most progress had a track record of collaboration between criminal justice agencies, other statutory services such as children's social services, housing, mental health and drug & alcohol services, and the voluntary and community sector.

***"You need a foundation of multi-agency working, so that there's trust and a shared history – that drives strategic engagement."***

**DRIVE PARTNER**

During implementation, Drive has continued to adapt to the changing context – most recently, in its response to the increased attention and urgency that Covid-19 has brought to the issue of domestic violence and abuse. As well as securing additional resources for services for victims and perpetrators during lockdown, the programme has developed online training and support to help non-specialist professionals identify and manage risks.

## **DIFFERENT NATIONAL CONTEXTS - DRIVE IN WALES**

Drive's experience in Wales demonstrates the importance of an enabling context for systems change. In a smaller nation, with lower turnover in key positions, relationships and networks are much deeper and more well established than in most of the programme sites in England.

***"Our context is quite unique because there are lots of links between individuals across agencies and these are resilient to people moving around because they're still in the same network."***

**STAKEHOLDER**

The Drive delivery organisation was already embedded and respected within these networks, as the provider of local IDVA services. New staff were also drawn from these wider networks, as there was no local pool of expertise in working directly with perpetrators.

**CONTINUED >**

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*“They recruited great Case Managers, including people from homelessness, mental health, probation – so they were able to work across these agencies.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

There was also significant policy attention to domestic violence and abuse, from the Cabinet Secretary down. The strength of local relationships allowed voices and experiences from South Wales to be heard clearly in this debate, and this has already been influential at national level.

*“The Public Health Wales study of ACES [Adverse Childhood Experiences] really drove cross-sector buy-in on the life-course impact of childhood exposure to domestic violence. That galvanised people to realise we need to invest in prevention rather than ploughing money into dealing with the aftermath.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“We’ve had a lot of attention from the policy lead for perpetrators. Drive has had national visibility and it is starting to win hearts and minds from a political perspective.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

At the same time, local stakeholders are clear on the value of being part of a national programme.

*“The Drive training and support has been invaluable... second to none. If you just developed a project within South Wales you wouldn’t have been able to access that kind of support.”*

DELIVERY ORGANISATION

While the enabling context in Wales was helpful, it was also important for Drive to demonstrate that it could operate effectively across multiple sites / contexts in both the countries where Drive is seeking to make a difference.



## WORK WITH THE GRAIN

The programme has also made a deliberate choice to work with the grain of local systems, whilst still stretching them. Doing this effectively involves an ongoing balancing act between fidelity and flexibility which is one of Drive's distinctive strengths.

*“Look for where there can be changes that the system can make that will help – if police change this one thing, if children’s social services change that one thing – then you’re working towards a much bigger shift.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Although Drive's coordinated focus on perpetrators represents something new, its core ingredients are closely aligned with established ways of working and existing multi-agency working practices such as the MARAC. In effect, Drive has tried to inject the perpetrator behaviour perspective into these existing processes. As well as making adoption easier, this helps professionals feel more confident about their role and contribution in such a challenging and risky area.

*“The processes feel familiar ... they fit with what’s already happening – that creates a sense of agency and autonomy that allows stakeholders to feel that they can make it work for them.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“To me, this is Integrated Offender Management for this group”*

STAKEHOLDER

For example, the design of the Drive Case Manager role drew on the existing IDVA model of a single dedicated advocate with an understanding of effective risk assessment and safety.

*“The Victim Support service manager could see the mirror concept between the IDVA approach and the Drive approach – so there was an openness to sit round the table and talk about it.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Drive has developed a model that is flexible enough to adapt to a range of different contexts and fill the specific gaps that local agencies feel, while still recognisable as Drive. This adaptability to local conditions is essential for scaling, allowing different areas to make Drive work for them. There is a tension between enabling

local flexibility and ensuring that delivery stays faithful to the core principles and is sufficiently stable to really test what works, and Drive partners and local delivery organisations have worked hard to navigate this.

*“This is our idea of a model, but it needs to work for you and we need to understand your organisations and your systems and how this can fit and how you can make it work. So the structures look very different on paper in different places, in terms of where it sits, who leads, how the cases come in, but the intervention on offer and the DNA of collaborative working are the same ... a wireframe, not a fixed model”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*“One of the real jewels in the crown of Drive, and something that will help with sustainability, is the flexibility – you have to stick to the panel and the Fellow, but there’s much more space about how you make it work with the existing structures in your area. That’s unusual.”*

STAKEHOLDER

*“We provided training and expert advisors and quality assurance to ensure that local delivery hit the standards, but without taking a cookie cutter approach where everyone had to do everything the same way.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Understand and work with the policy context** and other levers / opportunities for change

**For initial pilots / development, seek areas which share your vision for change**, and have an established track record of effective multi-agency working and collaborative innovation

**Focus on the core principles of the model** / approach, and **be as flexible as possible beyond these**

**Develop solutions that go with the grain of the structures** and ways of working of the system you want to influence

**Funders can fund in ways that maximise the potential for flexibility and adaptation**, for example by avoiding specifying delivery targets or allocating funding for learning, experimentation and implementation of new approaches and ideas.

## Lesson 12: Find the right funding mix

*“Most funders still think there is a sort of splendid isolation – there are things that the state funds and things that independent funders fund, and never the twain shall meet – this project was explicitly about funding alongside the statutory sector.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Drive's blend of different funding sources has been essential to enable it to work as it has.

*“We were keen to get a blended model of commissioner money for local ownership, philanthropic money for independent evaluation and Home Office money as a route into policy.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

The involvement of different funders is valuable in itself. The Home Office funding means that Drive's main policy target is also invested in the programme's success. As policy interest in perpetrators has increased, Drive has been to hand as a tangible example, and the programme has frequently been referenced in policy documents and ministerial speeches. Bringing funding from the Home Office played a major role in attracting local commissioners in the first place, and ongoing attention from central government has helped maintain PCC engagement.

*“That funding counts for a lot in terms of the Home Office continuing to pay attention to Drive – it's been a massive lever on the policy front, opening things up beyond the Drive intervention. And that helps with getting the attention of PCCs.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

Similarly, funding from Police & Crime Commissioners and local authorities generated significant stakeholder interest in the Drive programme sites, as PCCs and LAs are important sources of funding for both statutory services and the voluntary and community domestic abuse sector. The involvement of the PCC has meant that delivery organisations and statutory agencies are accountable to the local policing oversight body, and again this has been a powerful lever for maintaining momentum.

This mix of relationships with funders who have both policy and operational remits, and the effective delivery and robust evaluation that the funding has underwritten, has positioned Drive strongly for ongoing influence and systems change in both the short and long term. For example, during Covid-19, Drive has been able to secure additional funding from the Home Office and MOPAC, as well as philanthropic funders, to extend its services to victims / survivors and professionals.

LBFEW's funding commitment was critical in building confidence among other funders – statutory and philanthropic.

***“That was a massive boost – that they were prepared to commit that much money and that much time. It gave other people confidence that it would be OK to take the risk and get on board.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

Having money for development, innovation and evaluation, as well as delivery, has enabled Drive to respond flexibly and build central capacity to resolve problems across sites, ensure quality and fidelity, learn and evolve, build a solid evidence base and communicate this effectively and influentially.

***“We have the capacity to do stuff properly. Clearly Drive benefits from being a well-resourced project – each organisation has had proper time and capacity to commit, manage delivery and accountability, and for strategic reflection.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

In particular, LBFEW's willingness to fund central support, evaluation and senior staff time has been transformative as well as unusual.

***“Just having money for delivery uses up your brain, you have to put your own resource into making it work, whereas philanthropic money has bought new brains and enabled thinking and strategic partnership work and development.”***

DRIVE PARTNER

The blended funding model, including philanthropic funding which is not earmarked so tightly for delivery, has underwritten Drive's ambition, tenacity and flexibility – including its ability to bid for and secure significant statutory and Lottery funding.

*“The Impact Incubator funding meant that Social Finance had the space and time and money to pull together a process of change upfront”*

DRIVE PARTNER

*We have more flexibility – money from different sources has different constraints, and we can use it in different ways.”*

DRIVE PARTNER

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING TO FOSTER SYSTEMS CHANGE

**Funding from a range of sources for different purposes** can enable greater flexibility and offer routes to wider influence

**Funders can add enormous value by actively seeking to fund in ways that are complementary to other funding sources**, including funding for project management, evaluation, and similar back-office costs that others may not, and by aligning reporting and accountability requirements

**Funders can also make a contribution by lending their convening power, networks**, credibility and expertise to programmes and organisations they fund

## Conclusion

Despite the scale and gravity of domestic violence and abuse, responses have always been piecemeal and under-resourced – with very limited work on perpetrators in particular. The pioneering work of women’s groups and organisations has faced a constant struggle for funding and recognition, and excellent practice has often stayed in the places where it was developed. As in the wider voluntary and community sector, great new ideas flourish, but often only for as long as their extra funding lasts.

With the support of its funders, Drive has been able to embed the programme in local systems and processes of change, and use local learning to influence national thinking, policy and funding flows. This relentless focus on making a difference to the bigger picture *at the same time* as developing and delivering a service that makes victims and survivors safer comes through at every level. Drive’s shift to using the credibility and leverage it has built up to call for the Home Office to pay greater attention to tackling all perpetrators, rather than just securing extra funds to replicate Drive, is the most recent example of this distinctive approach.

At its heart, Drive is a partnership of organisations who bring deep knowledge and commitment, with organisations that can support and encourage them to think and work bigger, and funders who are prepared to underwrite this new way of working – all united around a common ambition of a new approach to tackling domestic violence and abuse.

While much of this report has focused on the nuts and bolts of analysis, organisational relationships, programme design and delivery, and policy influencing, this has all been in the service of that shared ambition. In that spirit, the final word goes to a woman whose abusive partner was referred to Drive:

“*For the first time, someone’s holding him to account, it’s not just me.*”

# Learning from Drive: Summary of lessons

Drive's experience suggests a range of ideas for other organisations to consider, as they seek to maximise their contribution to systems change:

## **Start with the problem rather than a predetermined solution**

- Bring potential partners / funders together to develop a shared analysis and ambition for change, rather than starting with a solution

## **Bring together the right organisations to tackle the problem**

- Build partnerships with complementary skillsets and credibility across all the relevant audiences, and the ability to bridge between these audiences
- There can be value in involving a 'neutral' partner with limited history in a sector who may be seen as more independent or credible by external audiences
- Engage and work with all the agencies you ultimately want to take responsibility for change
- Identify delivery organisations who are deeply embedded in their local area and have existing relationships with other key actors
- Seek delivery organisations who are committed to the new approach / change you want to see

## **Show that a new approach is possible in practice**

- Deliver concrete activities that demonstrate that a new approach is possible
- Develop your model in collaboration with the agencies you want to engage with it, and ensure that design and delivery address their concerns
- Communicate activities, results and learning as frequently and transparently as possible, and be open to sharing and scrutiny of your model

## **Build for impact**

- Test the model / approach in multiple sites / contexts to create a sense of generalisability and increase the chances of success
- Invest in rigorous evaluation, hold firm to the evaluation protocol to ensure that it produces robust evidence, and publish emerging results and learning on an ongoing basis
- Actively evolve the model / approach in response to learning
- Operate with a spirit of openness to learning in order to build the strongest model for the future

## **Establish the right structures for collaboration and engagement**

- Establish management and governance structures which foster collaboration
- Commit to the partnership, and invest senior leadership time in regular engagement
- Build governance structures for delivery that engage all the agencies you ultimately want to take responsibility for change – at both strategic and operational levels

## **Find and work with the right people**

- Identify and work with individuals who have legitimacy and relationships within the system you want to influence, and who can represent and champion your new approach effectively
- In recruiting and managing people, focus on the values and ways of working you are trying to promote, as much as on knowledge or skills

## **Invest in relationships at every level**

- Invest time and effort at every level in organisational and personal relationships
- In partnership working, explicitly focus on equity (e.g. minimise the lead / sub distinction)
- Be generous both in what you give up and in what you support other partners to keep
- Be honest and open in naming and resolving tensions, and build trust through ongoing engagement and collaboration



- Start building relationships with system actors, potential collaborators and other stakeholders as early and intensively as possible

### **Invest in making it work**

- Deploy resources as responsively as possible to solve problems and maintain momentum

### **Be ambitious for change**

- Stay focused on the ambition for change, keep revisiting and extending this as opportunities arise, and be bold in responding to these

### **Tell as well as show**

- Explore developing a new narrative to reframe the issue and an 'elevator pitch' to engage people with new ways of thinking and responding

### **Work with the context**

- Understand and work with the policy context and other levers / opportunities for change
- For initial pilots / development, seek areas which share your priorities / vision for change, and have an established track record of effective multi-agency working and collaborative innovation
- Focus on the core principles of the model / approach, and be as flexible as possible beyond these non-negotiables
- Develop solutions that go with the grain of the structures and ways of working of the system you want to influence

### **Find the right funding mix**

- Seek funding from a range of sources to enable greater flexibility and offer routes to wider influence

### **Funders seeking to foster systems change can also learn from Drive, for example by:**

- Investing in initial exploration of issues, providing organisations with the capacity and confidence to start thinking differently
- Providing resources for upfront engagement and design, recognising that organisations often need to redeploy existing staff for programme development

- Funding the 'additional' costs of testing and development, such as rigorous evaluation, delivery across multiple sites and central support and learning
- Funding a meaningful commitment of leaders' time to the programme
- Seeking opportunities to participate actively in project governance
- Encouraging and supporting organisations to invest in getting the right people at every level
- Enabling responsiveness, for example by covering the costs of backfilling or additional central / externally commissioned specialist support
- 'Underwriting' risk and encouraging organisations they fund to keep thinking and working towards their bigger ambition, beyond their current funding
- Maximising the potential for flexibility and adaptation, for example by avoiding specifying delivery targets or allocating funding for learning and implementation of new approaches and ideas
- Actively seeking to fund in ways that are complementary to other funding sources, including funding for project management, evaluation, and similar back-office costs that others may not, and by aligning reporting and accountability requirements
- Lending their convening power, networks, credibility and expertise to programmes and organisations they fund

# Annexe: Methodology

This review was written by Dan Jones, an independent consultant commissioned by Social Finance and Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales to capture the learning from Drive's work on systems change.

The review draws on interviews and discussions with a total of 31 people from the following organisations involved in Drive:

### *Drive Partnership*

- Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales
- Respect
- SafeLives
- Social Finance

### *Delivery Organisations*

- Safer Merthyr Tydfil
- The Hampton Trust
- The Richmond Fellowship

### *Commissioners*

- Essex County Council
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner
- The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)

### *Police Forces*

- South Wales Police
- West Mercia Police

In addition, the consultant reviewed internal programme documentation, the evaluation of the Drive pilot sites by the University of Bristol, the MOPAC process evaluation of Drive in Croydon, and the Domestic Abuse Bill and associated consultation and pre-legislative hearing materials.

I am grateful to everyone who gave me their time and insight to help me understand and reconstruct the story of Drive. Any errors of fact and interpretation remain my own.

# Acknowledgements

The Drive Partnership (Respect, SafeLives and Social Finance) are immensely grateful to individuals and organisations across sectors who have believed in the necessity of this work and driven forward progress over the last four years. Your belief, generosity and hard work has meant that together we have raised the importance of addressing perpetrators' behaviour and started to show it is possible to make change.

There are many formal and informal partners across the country that are integral to this work and we want to thank you all.

- Home Office's Police Transformation Fund and Police Innovation Fund

## **Academic evaluators**

- University of Bristol - Professor Marianne Hester and her team
- University of Worcester - Professor Erica Bowen & Dr Rosie Erol

## **Funders of Drive**

- Comic Relief
- Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales
- Segelman Trust
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Tudor Trust

## **Police & Crime Commissioners:**

- Essex OPCC
- MOPAC London
- South Wales OPCC
- Sussex OPCC
- West Mercia OPCC
- West Midlands OPCC

## **Local authorities:**

- Birmingham City Council
- Cardiff Council
- Croydon Council
- Essex County Council
- Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough

- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
- West Sussex County Council
- Worcestershire County Council

**Service providers:**

- Cranstoun
- DViP (division of the Richmond Fellowship)
- Hampton Trust
- Richmond Fellowship
- Rise Mutual
- Safer Merthyr Tydfil
- The Change Project

**National Advisory Board Members:**

- Members of the National Advisory Board 2016-2019

**Partners in each local area including:**

- Children's Social Care
- CRC
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Employment Services
- Housing Services
- IDVA Services
- Mental Health Services
- National Probation Service
- Perpetrator programme providers
- Police
- Refuges
- Women's services

**Impact Incubator Funders:**

- Comic Relief
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Treebeard Trust
- Tudor Trust

**Drive:**

- The Drive team
- The staff and boards of Respect, SafeLives and Social Finance



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The Foundation has always supported charities tackling domestic abuse but wanted to do more to tackle the problem at source by challenging perpetrators. The Foundation therefore invested over £1m in the Drive project to help it develop and to measure and evaluate its success as well as being a member of the Programme Steering Group. As part of its work to influence policy and practice and to inspire, inform and encourage others the Foundation has funded this report to share the learnings from Drive.

Social Finance is a not-for-profit organisation that partners with government, the social sector and impact investors to find better ways of tackling social problems and improving the lives of people in need.

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