

Institution: University of Northumbria at Newcastle		
Unit of Assessment: 20 (Social Work and Social Policy)		
Title of case study: Improving policing of domestic abuse through enhancing multi-agency coordination		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2011 - 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Pam Davies	Professor	1993-present
Mike Rowe	Professor	2009-present
Paul Biddle	Research Associate/Fellow	2001-present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014 - December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Professor Pam Davies' research at Northumbria University identifies how a focus on the multi-faceted dynamics of victimisation, and on the challenges of marshalling effective criminal justice responses, can improve domestic abuse strategies, policies, and outcomes. This is a key policy challenge, as recent reviews by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in 2014, 2015, and 2016 all relate serial failings in the policing of domestic abuse. Davies' research not only initially benefitted Northumbria Police by enhancing the effectiveness of one <i>local</i> approach, Multi-Agency Tasking And Coordination (MATAC), but directly lead to the <i>national</i> rollout of a further innovative integrated approach called the Domestic Abuse Whole Systems Approach (DAWSA) more widely across criminal justice and community safety agencies. In particular, the latter's methodology is designed to ensure the coordination of multiple criminal justice and social support agencies in identifying, preventing, and remedying domestic violence by working with perpetrators and victims. DAWSA has been adopted by multiple police forces across the North of England and beyond – Cleveland, Durham, North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, and Humberside. It has also guided policy in North Wales and Northamptonshire, and benefitted charities such as Women's Aid and the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance. It now informs the Domestic Abuse Bill presently proceeding through Parliament.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Davies' research focuses on uncovering, understanding, and communicating the complex, multi-faceted, and interwoven elements of victimisation in gender-based violence [R1]. Since 2011, she has demonstrated the ways in which the dynamics of gender-based violence (that underpin domestic abuse) can be effectively tackled through innovative, multi-agency, partnership approaches [R1, R2]. Davies has shown how the inter-relationships between victims, perpetrators, their families, and the wider community are key to effective victim prevention and protection. Responses to domestic abuse cannot be separated from the social context within which it occurs. Under-reporting of domestic abuse persists, and this is linked to the various power dynamics operating within well-embedded patriarchal power structures. Despite an increased gender-sensitive understanding of the complex dynamics of domestic abuse, suffering endures and abuse stubbornly persists [R1]. Davies' research shows that although this is a nationally-acknowledged problem, efforts to challenge it exist at a very local level, in terms of both practical policing and strategy as well as culture and politics. Her work therefore highlights that there is considerable scope for policy learning between local and national levels [R3].</p> <p>Davies' work has delivered new insights into how multi-agency partnerships working to tackle domestic abuse and serial perpetrators can operate safely and effectively. It builds on three research projects, funded by Northumbria Police (via the Home Office Innovation Fund), the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner [R4], and the N8 Policing Research Partnership. These studies investigated and evaluated the effectiveness of domestic abuse perpetrator interventions, assessed the needs of (and support for) victims, and how to share best practices both between forces and amongst their multi-agency partners [R5]. As a result of her research</p>		

into gendered violence and domestic abuse, and her insights into how multi-agency cooperation can enhance capacity for identifying serial perpetrators, Davies was further commissioned to investigate and evaluate the inter-agency response.

In establishing that interventions to reduce levels of domestic abuse are more effective when the - sometimes competing - components of interventions are best tackled in parallel, Davies' research argued that firstly, efforts to *prevent* violence and abuse need *early* intervention and targeting of perpetrators. The second imperative is to *protect* victims and provide sustainable support, focussed on wrap-around provision, forming a holistic approach. Thirdly, this creates a consistent, trustworthy, and supportive environment across multiple services including the police, housing, social services, and education to sustain victim-involvement and, going beyond this, to enhance victim confidence in the criminal justice process [R3].

This way of conducting multi-agency work to tackle domestic abuse can present challenges [R5] and this critical approach was initially brought to an assessment of the Multi-Agency Tasking And Coordination (MATAC) initiative. MATAC is designed to identify serial perpetrators of domestic abuse and deliver a combination of support, prevention, diversion, disruption, and enforcement through a range of criminal justice sanctions and other interventions. Davies' research specialism led to her being asked by Northumbria Police to conduct an evaluation of the project [R4]. Evaluations of the MATAC initiative in Northumbria Police focused on perceived concerns about victim safety in the context of a heightened 'focus on perpetrators' and the MATAC partnership. This feminist-influenced analysis revealed tensions and challenges, but the assessment also suggests that a range of agencies and individuals – with diverse priorities, professional backgrounds and practices – can work together to safeguard victims and tackle serial perpetrators of domestic abuse [R3, R4]. The research showed a 61% reduction in the reoffending rates of domestic abuse perpetrators and a 65% reduction in domestic abuse-related offending. The study also showed that for every pound invested in MATAC there was a social return of investment of GBP14.51 [R4].

Davies also identified that the challenges to innovative multi-agency responses to domestic abuse demand cultural and practice-based changes in how police forces and related safeguarding agencies operate, both independently and cooperatively [R2]. The political and institutional dimensions of facilitating and engendering more effective partnership working require three enhancements: (i) overcoming operational inertia; (ii) co-designing secure processes for knowledge-sharing; and (iii) implementing smooth, integrated, and supportive victim pathways through the criminal justice process [R2, R6]. The research found that political and contextual factors demand a nuanced, *localised* approach across the different institutional dynamics where policing and service provision come together to reduce domestic abuse [R5, R6].

However, Davies' research further showed that domestic abuse is a structural, systemic, and universal condition of society. The lessons learned from MATAC in the North East of England (and which can be rolled out nationally) have shown the value of adopting the "prevent, protect and support" model – through holistic and integrated multi-agency partnerships – to be the most effective approach. MATAC can identify and address the gaps in victim safeguarding, crime prevention, and community safety in a gender-sensitive way [R6].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

R1. Pam Davies (2011) 'Post-Emotional Man and a Community Safety with Feeling', *Crime Prevention and Community Safety: An International Journal*, **13** (1) 34-52.
<https://doi.org/10.1057/cpcs.2010.20>

R2. Pam Davies (2018) 'Tackling domestic abuse locally: paradigms, ideologies and the political tensions of multi-agency working' *Journal of Gender-Based Violence*, **2** (3) 429-446.
<https://doi.org/10.1332/239868018X15392672654573>

R3. Pam Davies and Paul Biddle (2017) 'Implementing a perpetrator focused partnership approach to tackling domestic abuse: The opportunities and challenges of criminal justice localism', *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, **18** (4) 468-487.
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1748895817734590>

R4. Pam Davies and Paul Biddle, Domestic Abuse Serial Perpetrator Interventions Evaluation Report – included within 'MATIC: Tackling the most harmful and serial domestic abuse perpetrators' reports **2017** and **2019** (see E1 and E3). Available on request.

R5. Pam Davies, Mike Rowe, Brown, D. M., and Paul Biddle (2020) Understanding the status of evidence in policing research: reflections from a study of policing domestic abuse, *Policing and Society*, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2020.1762598>

R6. Pam Davies (2020) 'Partnerships and Activism: Community Safety, Multi-Agency Partnerships and Safeguarding Victims', in J. Tapley and P. Davies (eds) *Victimology: Research, Policy and Activism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42288-2_11

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Davies' research and evaluation work with Northumbria Police improved the functioning of the MATAC and enabled its replication by 7 additional police forces. It also resulted in the transition and roll-out to the Domestic Abuse Whole Systems Approach (DAWSA), a multi-agency partnership initiative which has been adopted by North East, Yorkshire, and Humberside police forces, and guided similar policies in Northamptonshire and North Wales police. DAWSA has also brought benefits on the national policy and local practice levels for women's support organisations and informed new national policy for combatting domestic violence.

4.1. Improving effectiveness of the 'Multi-Agency Tasking And Coordination' (MATIC) initiative

The focus of MATAC was *'to intervene pre-crisis and so prevent incidents'* [E1, p37]. However, Davies' research shows that domestic violence is not defined by single incidents. Nor can the institutional response to the hidden, relational, and cultural dynamics of domestic violence be solely predicated on the criminal justice-led view that only sees the crisis points. Davies' recommendations asserted that *'it is important that the MATAC project continuously demonstrates to partner agencies that it prioritises victim-safeguarding'* [E1, p77]. Davies made a number of recommendations on improving the operational practice of the MATAC project, including enhancing the data collection techniques and the ways in which performance indicators in the project are captured and evaluated [E1, p76]. As a result of these recommendations and Davies' ongoing engagement with Northumbria Police, they have now *'expand[ed] existing data collection' to 'capture and collate full details of all interventions undertaken for all perpetrators'* [E1, p77]. This expansion has underpinned delivery of Davies' further recommendation to improve the clarity of presentation, the monitoring of cases, and to ensure that *'[t]his information should then be shared and discussed with partner agencies'* [E1, p77].

These improvements led to a revision to the 'Recency Frequency and Gravity' tool for identifying perpetrators through adding the *number of victims* [E1, p12-14, p123]. Davies' evaluation of MATAC improved partnership working over the duration of the project [E1, p77]. Detective Superintendent (DS) Deborah Alderson of Northumbria Police and Programme Director for Domestic Abuse, confirms the research enabled them to: *'... identify the changes we need to make to coordinate and deliver an effective inter-agency response'* [E2].

4.2. Enabling the transition from MATAC to the Whole Systems Approach (DAWSA)

To effect this cultural change, Davies collaborated with Northumbria Police on a GBP 7,500,000, three-year Police Transformation Fund project, beginning in 2016 [E2]. This new initiative (DAWSA) integrated the MATAC approach within a wider, three-strand model. The first strand

focuses on policing and the courts; the second strand aims to improve information sharing and victim support across the criminal, civil, and family courts; and the third is the MATAC approach. DAWSA brought Northumbria together with five other forces across the North East of England which had not used this kind of approach before: Durham, Cleveland, West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, and Humberside [E3, p15]. It also created a new, comprehensive strategy. According to DS Alderson:

'Pam's recommendations in her MATAC evaluation reports, first in 2017 and then in 2019, and her consistent engagement throughout this process were vital in the transition to adopting the DAWSA including her involvement in the successful GBP7,500,000 Police Transformation Fund bid.' DS Alderson describes Davies' involvement through her evaluation reports as a *'tremendous benefit to Northumbria Police and to the design and implementation of the DAWSA project'* [E2]. Overall: *'Her direct contribution and the insights of her research have been of tremendous benefit to Northumbria Police, not only in respect of the MATAC approach to tackling serial perpetrators of domestic abuse (which has spread to other police force areas) but also, to the design and implementation of the much larger and ongoing DAWSA project.'*

4.3. Impacts on domestic violence policy and practice in police forces across the UK

The Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner praised the DAWSA for demonstrating that *'by working in partnership the scheme has seen many successes which ultimately makes a huge difference and has a positive outcome to those experiencing domestic abuse'* [E3, p4]. During the DAWSA project, Davies' work was used extensively to encourage other forces to adopt the MATAC approach:

'Over the course of the project, over 35 forces attended a MATAC knowledge sharing event, and over 20 different partner agencies. At each event, the MATAC research and evaluation that Professor Davies carried out, was presented and used as the evidence base to show the MATAC works and the research demonstrated the positive outcomes achieved. This had a significant impact on influencing other areas to take on the MATAC model. Using MATAC as an effective means of targeting DA perpetrators is currently being promoted by the Home Office and National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) as best practice in COVID lockdown conditions, to try and keep as many victims and children as safe as possible' [E2].

Similar successes have been seen in the regional partners such as North Yorkshire Police, where Detective Chief Inspector Shaun Page confirms being part of the DAWSA has seen MATAC deliver *'effective targeting of harmful individuals through data analysis, pre-empting the likelihood of domestic violence and engaging with its perpetrators to derail any future harm and break the cycle of abuse'* [E4, p3]. The success of the DAWSA and MATAC approaches have led other police forces across the UK to adopt the methods. In June 2019, North Wales Police's 'Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence' strategy for 2018-2023 confirmed that *'North Wales Police are currently implementing the ADAPT (Agencies Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Tasking) programme (based on the MATAC process used in Northumbria, Humberside, and other North East regions)'* [E5, p9]. Similarly, Northamptonshire Police Force launched a new perpetrator programme called 'Safe Relationships' in September 2019, *'set to improve the lives of people living with domestic abuse in this county, by working with offenders to challenge their entrenched thinking so they take responsibility for their behaviour and start to understand the impact their abuse has on women, children and their families, as well as the wider society'* [E6]. This launch cites the findings of the Northumbria MATAC evaluation as *'a successful Northumbria Police innovation which has been proven to be effective at preventing domestic related abuse, aimed at addressing harmful behaviour in order to prevent reoffending'* [E6].

4.4. Impacts on domestic violence prevention: national policy and practice

The Chief Constable of Northumbria Police, Winton Keenan, confirmed in 2019 that *'We are now sharing this approach nationally with our Transformation project 'Domestic Abuse Whole System Approach' which can only improve the lives of victims and children exposed to this behaviour'* [E3, p5]. Northumbria Police are also working with the Police Reform Transformation Board, The

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College of Policing, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services, The Home Office, and the National Police Chief's Council, to share MATAAC good practice nationally as well as the rest of the work of the DAWSA [E3, p15].

The Domestic Abuse Bill, currently passing through the House of Lords for its second reading [E7], can impose both prohibitions and positive requirements such as a behaviour change programme on perpetrators in Domestic Abuse Protection notices. DAWSA and MATAAC are recognised by Government as successful initiatives, particularly in the case of perpetrator interventions [E8, para 73]. In their response to the draft Domestic Abuse Bill in July 2019, the Government confirmed its support for *'the newly emerging multi-agency tasking and coordination (MATAAC) process'* and directly cited the approach *'to domestic abuse pioneered in Northumbria and rolled-out across the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside and [we] are keen to build on their success'* [E8, paras 12 and 73].

4.5. Impact on non-police domestic violence prevention and victim support agencies

At the request of the Police Reform and Transformation Board in 2019 – and on behalf of the UK Government Home Office – Northumbria Police have embedded MATAAC into national perpetrator management schemes [E3, p15]. This work was carried out alongside two other projects led by major national anti-domestic violence and women's support organisations, namely: the 'DRIVE' project led by Safelives, RESPECT and Social Finance, and the 'Make A Change' project led by Women's Aid with RESPECT [E3, p15]. DAWSA has brought benefits directly to these and other agencies, including the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) which operates an innovative initiative rehousing perpetrators of domestic violence [E9]. Dr Henderson, co-founder of DAHA, explains: *'Coordinating our efforts and pooling our resources through the streamlined DAWSA has enabled a change in our operational practices and resulted in increasing our capacity and ... provision of sustained housing-based support as an essential part of an integrated, multi-agency approach to combatting domestic violence'* [E9].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Ref.	Source of corroboration	Link to claimed impact
E1	MATAAC Report, 2017 published by Office of the PCC and Northumbria Police containing R4	Direct implementation of policy evaluation and recommendations
E2	Testimonial - DS Deborah Alderson – Programme Director for MATAAC and DAWSA	Confirming Davies' role in implementing change
E3	MATAAC Report, 2019 published by Office of the PCC and Northumbria Police containing R4	DAWSA as nationwide best practice
E4	MATAAC regional report North Yorkshire – DCI Shaun Page – foreword	Implementation of DAWSA in North Yorkshire
E5	North Wales Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy 2018-2023 Update on Progress – June 2019	MATAAC guiding domestic abuse policy in North Wales
E6	Press announcement on Northamptonshire 'Safe Relationships' initiative citing Northumbria MATAAC	MATAAC guiding domestic abuse policy in Northamptonshire
E7	Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 – progress to law screenshot	DAWSA and MATAAC as good practice to support Bill
E8	UK Government response to the joint committee report on the draft domestic abuse bill. Session 2017-19 HL paper 378 / HC 2075: July 2019	UK government acknowledging DAWSA and MATAAC as best practice nationwide
E9	Testimonial – Dr Kelly Henderson, Co-founder of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance	Benefits to women's support organisation