



“Engaging men & boys in condemning violence against women & girls”

White Ribbon Campaign Town Award Programme

We would like to invite you to join the 40 towns and local authorities, including Leeds, York, Bristol, Lancashire County Council, Calderdale, Burnley, Bury and East Staffordshire, who have gained the nationally recognised White Ribbon Campaign Town Award. The award will help you demonstrate your commitment to reducing domestic violence.

Every year three million women and girls experience rape, domestic violence, forced marriage, stalking, sexual exploitation and trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM) or honour crimes in the UK. There are clear connections between violence against women and social problems such as child poverty, social exclusion and homelessness. *The vast majority of violence against women is perpetrated by men.*

The White Ribbon Campaign Town Award is for Councils demonstrating their commitment to the aims of the White Ribbon Campaign (WRC):

- *In particular involving men and boys in prevention activities.* By mobilising men the anti-violence against women & girls (VAWG) message increases in effectiveness and reach.
- Addressing and altering social norms that lead to violent behaviour against women
- Increasing awareness on the issue and providing services aimed at reducing the incidence of domestic violence.
- Mobilise the entire local community under the goal of ending violence against women and girls.

The WRC Town Award pack includes:

- Guidance notes.
- Action plan template to complete.

Once you have submitted an action plan the WRC-UK will contact you to assist you in gaining the WRC Town Award.



Upon approval the council will receive the WRC Town Award certificate, which entitles the council to use the WRC logo and receive full support from WRC staff. In addition, In addition, WRC Town Award Councils will have their logo and direct link to their homepage featured on the WRC website. Furthermore they will be invited to attend White Ribbon Town events including an Ambassador seminar for six plus recruited members and town conferences.

The cost of application to become a White Ribbon Town is £400.00

An optional White Ribbon Towns Award plaque can also be ordered from WRC upon request, the cost of which is £150.00.

The Award is reviewed on a biannual basis through a similar process to the initial application, and for which there is a cost of £400.00 that covers the expense of accreditation and a contribution to the charity's core costs.

For any additional information and advice, please contact WRC-UK at info@whiteribboncampaign.co.uk or call 01422 886545.

Chris Green

Chris Green
UK Director WRC-UK



White Ribbon Campaign Town Award Benefits

- As a White Ribbon Town the authority will be awarded a certificate or glass plaque that offers public recognition of the authority's commitment to ending violence against women and girls. In addition you may also use the internationally recognised WRC logo on materials produced to combat violence against women.
- Access to materials, information and support from the main office of the WRC that will support the authority's own development of an anti-VAWG strategy.
- The WRC Town Award provides evidence that you are carrying out your Public Equality Duty for employees and service users [Equality Act 2010]
- 10% off WRC merchandise.
- Access to the networks and contacts that the WRC has developed to further their goal of ending violence against women and girls.
- The process of gaining the WRC Town Award provides a focus for developing a campaign that can reach men and boys with the message that VAWG is unacceptable.
- The production of an action plan can support longer term planning and WRC can maintain momentum by supporting the authority in implementing this. Through sustained campaigning we can change the cultures of violence which might try to legitimise VAWG.



Briefing Note – The Equality Act 2010

A Call to Duty

The Equality Act 2010 provided legislation with the aim of “eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct which is prohibited by the Act”.ⁱ This is further supported by the Public Equality Duty under which all public authorities must demonstrate compliance with the underpinning Act.

With abuse and violence towards women and girls being a large and long-standing problem throughout the UK, it is clear that public authorities already have a legal duty to address it within their own organisations and the broader local community.

The White Ribbon Campaign takes a unique approach to the issue, encouraging men to promote a change of attitude, using their voice to make a stand and raise awareness. Attaining the WRC Town Award will act as *positive evidence* that you are working to meet your responsibilities under the new legislation in tackling this important community issue.

In December 2011 more than 5.94 million people were directly employed in the public sectorⁱⁱ. Every year in the UK more than 1 million women suffer domestic abuse and more than 360,000 are sexually assaultedⁱⁱⁱ, many of whom may well be employed by you or live in your community. The above statement is not just a concern of human rights campaigners because reducing VAWG is now the goal towards which every public body under UK law must now work. Every decision, appointment, service provision or procurement is now affected by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, an Act which aims to address all forms of discrimination including the abusive treatment of women within the UK.

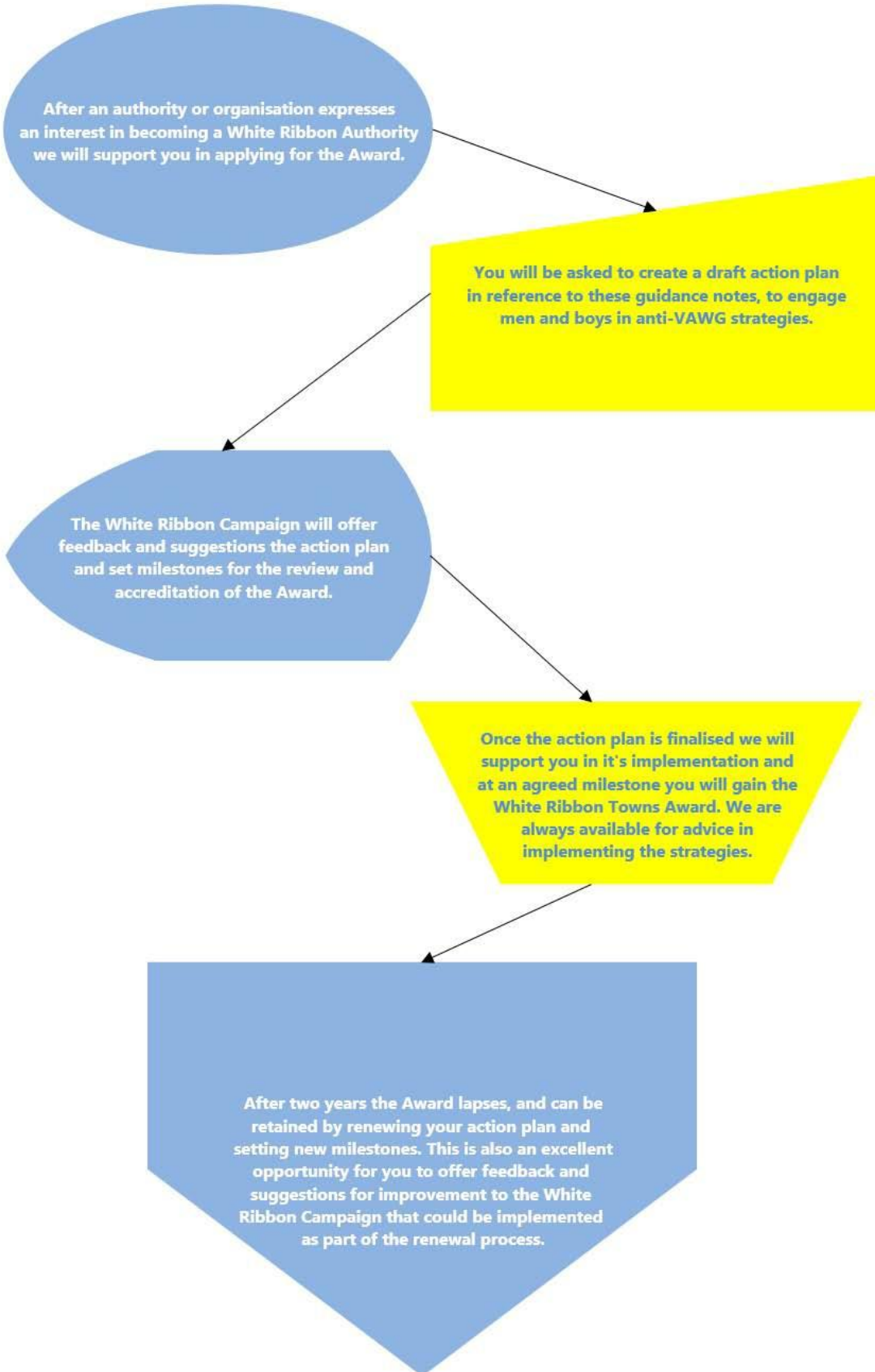
Looking Within

Examining public authority policy could benefit your organisation significantly:

- As a Service Procurer - challenging attitudes and discrimination fosters better community relations and early prevention measures could lead to cost savings in providing emergency services such as DV family teams, social services legal teams and housing.
- As an Employer – recent tribunal cases where employers have failed to challenge even the most basic discriminatory behavior have resulted in compensation/costs orders at unprecedented levels. You can quickly develop and implement policies to challenge discriminatory behavior and attitudes using the Equality and Human Rights Commission ‘toolkit’ for employers.^{iv}



The Process





The Action Plan

The aim of the award is that the authority should express a commitment to involving men in anti-VAWG and produce a preliminary action plan on how this commitment will be achieved. The WRC team will work with the authority on the development of an action plan and goals, providing feedback and suggestions as necessary. The authority should appoint a senior individual to act as a liaison with the WRC and to oversee implementation.

This action plan should include specific and measurable goals so as to make implementation and evaluation easier. These should be aimed at reducing incidents of violence against women such as discrimination, harassment or victimisation and fostering good community relations. This should hold with a specific White Ribbon emphasis of increasing male participation in anti-VAW events and strategies as well as raising awareness and the profile of these issues amongst men. It is important to remember that although domestic violence is a key issue, it does not occur in isolation from the broader cultural context which might seek to legitimise such violence and hence require a holistic approach.

An action plan template developed by WRC is included as part of the application process and examples from past Awards are available on request.

Key Points

- Milestones to be achieved
- Ways to involve the local community
- Involve and educate men and boys in an anti-VAWG strategy
- A rough calendar of events, including ways of commemorating White Ribbon day
- A commitment to awareness raising and providing training on VAW within your authority
- Methods of monitoring attitudes and effectiveness of strategy
- Engagement in different areas; you can check out WRC resources on music or sport for inspiration
- To co-operate where possible with other anti-VAWG organisations
- Distribute information on VAWG as widely as possible, including through linguistic or cultural barriers
- Explore different values of masculinity through discussions and workshops





WRC Town Award Campaign Ideas

Without encouraging men to challenge beliefs and attitudes and enlisting men and boys as partners against gender-based violence we are only addressing half the solution. White Ribbon Towns aims to mobilise entire communities to end violence against women.

Increasing and maintaining public awareness on issues related to VAWG plays a major part in WRC activities.

Case Studies:

Examples from recipients of the WRC Town Award can be found at <http://www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk/node/302>

Local Innovation Awards:

Why not integrate your WRC Town Award with the Government's local innovation awards scheme? An in-house project could be funded via the 'Supporting People' budget. A successful project could be the first on this issue to achieve 'Beacon Council' status, with national recognition and financial benefits for the community.

Programmes:

Corporate: For businesses of any size, domestic violence and other forms of violence against women are increasingly seen as an important issue due to the huge impact on the health and well-being of employees as well as the effect on productivity. Becoming a White Ribbon Campaign employer gives businesses an award to show that their organisation is a safe place for anyone experiencing violence or harassment of any kind. WRC will provide full support to employers to promote understanding and awareness of the issue, and help to put DV policies in place.

Ambassadors: The Ambassadors Programme encourages high profile men to show their support for the aims of White Ribbon Campaign. There are various levels of commitment dependent on the individual's ability to incorporate raising awareness into their daily working and personal life. There is also a Youth Ambassadors Programme.



Schools and Community Groups: Here is the opportunity to address gender norms and attitudes towards violence before they become deeply ingrained. There is an opportunity to create an informed support network for young people experiencing domestic abuse at home or in their personal relationships. Raising awareness and understanding of the unacceptability of domestic violence can also act as a way of enabling greater support for survivors as they are more likely to disclose to family, friends or neighbours than service providers. Increasing the general public's knowledge and understanding therefore will enhance the ability of these people to guide those experiencing DV to safe and appropriate support.



Community Involvement



Community based initiatives involve a high level of ownership by local people creating social demand for change through awareness. There are a number of well documented evidence based approaches which have worked successfully in this way to change attitudes. The WRC has material and campaigns that can help to involve community groups such as faith organisations or sports clubs. Take a stand at a local festival or gala and spread the message of the WRC to a lot of people in a short space of time. These activities should aim to increase the sense of community ownership of the project, and help to create and sustain overall awareness and action.



White Ribbon Day

White Ribbon Day, held annually on the 25th November (United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), is one major opportunity to raise awareness and involve the entire local community in activities aimed at asserting the unacceptability of VAWG. The authority should organise, encourage and support local initiatives that commemorate and mark this day as part of the White Ribbon Award. The range of activities can include the current campaigns of the WRC such as “These heels are made for walking” and “These hands are not for hurting!” as well as work with sports teams or music venues.

Please visit the WRCs website for suggestions on further activities or to get involved in our national campaigns; <http://whiteribboncampaign.co.uk/getinvolved>



It is important that the awareness of VAW should be maintained all year round, not just in November. Emphasis should be given at transmitting the anti-VAW message to the local male population.

This can be done through material aimed specifically at male audiences, some of which can be obtained from WRC-UK; <http://whiteribboncampaign.co.uk/resources>

Media

The authority should also incorporate this message into its own informational and promotional material (e.g. posters, brochures, newsletters, social media). Draft press releases available from WRC.

Partners

White Ribbon Ambassadors, celebrities, community leaders or persons in positions of authority also play a key role in providing a public face and leadership for anti-VAWG activities in their area. Authorities can work with existing Ambassadors and help to expand their membership.

Local Businesses

It is also important to involve local businesses as these can make invaluable partners with substantial resources and contacts through which anti-VAWG can be promoted. Identifying which businesses also act to reinforce exploitative attitudes is also important, particularly when authorities have power over licensing terms for lap dancing clubs etc.





Events

- Heels Walk where men commit to walking in high heels, literally placing themselves in victim's shoes and demonstrating their solidarity with anti-VAW campaigns.
- A 'Washing Line', made of t-shirts with the public's messages and feelings regarding VAW written on them.
- Football, rugby and other sporting events often provide a fantastic way to reach young people in innovative ways.
- An information stand at Galas, festivals and auctions
- Business conferences e.g. business and professional associations, trade unions.

Take the Pledge

Encourage men and boys to sign the WRC pledge "I pledge never to commit, condone, or remain silent about men's violence against women in all its forms." This can be done via text or the internet. More details here <http://www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk/makepledge>

Places

Promoting WRC initiatives and expanding the reach of the campaign should be undertaken by involving and cooperating with local services, such as;

- Libraries could facilitate meetings and debate; display information; provide access to useful online resources.
- Schools could organise children and family orientated activities that promote positive male role models and counter gender stereotyping. They could include theme-days; competitions; VAWG prevention planning group involving students, parents and staff.
- Sport clubs and gyms could display male targeted visual material; promote positive male roles by organising meetings, competitions, etc. In addition, the authority could encourage local sports clubs to sign up for the White Ribbon award and sponsor special sport events e.g. White Ribbon Cup tournament.
- Social Landlords could promote the campaign in its housing offices and newsletters.





Dealing with and Supporting Victims of VAW

Information and Training

Since an authority's employees may have first-hand access to local individuals, it is very important that all the relevant members of staff receive domestic violence awareness training and understand the broader context of VAWG. It is vital that the community has access to information and advice on domestic violence and VAWG in general either through local work by the authority and volunteers, education in schools, and making resources available online.



Issues may differ depending on the racial and ethnic composition of the community, e.g. female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage services. If appropriate, staff should also be made aware of these. This can be through the authority's own services or specialist organisations such as WRC.

Disseminating information through the print and social media can prove an invaluable tool in reaching people. Overall making it easy for people to educate themselves and get involved is key and this is best achieved through a mix of strategies.

Support services

Anti-VAWG strategies require a strong network of support services for victims, such as women's refuges and appropriate policies in the police or housing services to identify and address incidences of violence. It is important that the authority is able to identify what support services are available in their area and if they are sufficient and current. Furthermore, the authority should provide support and counseling to children who witness violent behavior in their families so that they can build healthy and respectful relationships in the future.

To tackle VAWG at its source the authority should ensure the availability of support services for men who want to change their violent behavior towards their partners and other family members. Accredited perpetrator programmes should be accessible not only for men mandated to attend by the courts as part of their probation order or with a recommendation from the family court but also as self-referrals. A balanced service working with perpetrators, victims including women, children and the wider community is essential to tackling the issue of VAWG.



Further Information/Links

More ideas and information can be found on the WRC website at www.whiteribboncampaign.co.uk

For contacting the WRC call on 01422886545 or email at info@whiteribboncampaign.co.uk

Third Parties working in the anti-VAWG sector

- <http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>
- <http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/>
- <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/>
- <http://www.caadv.org.uk/>
- <http://refuge.org.uk/>
- <http://www.brokenrainbow.org.uk/>

i Guidance on the main aims of the Equality Duty 2010 at

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty/guidance-on-the-equality-duty>

ii

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/may-2012/statistical-bulletin.html>

iii

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/jul/22/domestic-violence-conviction-rate-high>

iv

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/projects/your-business-workplace-policies-on-domestic-abuse-and-mental-health/domestic-abuse-is-your-business/>