



# Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Coproduction Panel

## The role of a panel member and how to apply

We are excited that you are interested in applying to be a member of Hertfordshire's Domestic Abuse Coproduction Panel. This document will help you understand more about:

- **How to apply**
- **Who a Hertfordshire DA Coproduction Panel Member is**
- **What Authentic Voice means**
- **What kind of involvement you can have as a Panel Member**
- **Who SafeLives is**

### How do I Apply?

We are excited that you are interested in applying to be a member of Hertfordshire's Domestic Abuse Coproduction Panel. Please express your interest by submitting this form: **DA Coproduction Panel Expression of Interest Form**

If you would prefer to fill in your form by phone, want to ask any questions or talk anything through, you can contact Cate Sheppard (she/her) between the hours of 9am-6pm Monday to Thursday via telephone **07593 584443** or email [cate.sheppard@safelives.org.uk](mailto:cate.sheppard@safelives.org.uk)

When answering the questions on the form you are not expected to share anything about your lived experience apart from letting us know you have direct and personal experience of domestic abuse as a survivor.

Please also complete our Equity, Equality and Diversity Monitoring form. This helps us understand the demographics of panel members and will support us to develop the project in an equitable and inclusive way.

### Who are Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Coproduction Panel Members?

Current and new members will be people who have been personally impacted by Domestic Abuse as survivors who are keen to use their experience to improve the lives of victim-survivors, with and for people across Hertfordshire. We recognise survivors as experts by experience. We want to hear from you because we believe hearing and acting on your words is the only way to bring about change which improves the lives of victims and survivors.

Panel members are at the heart of Hertfordshire's approach to Domestic Abuse. They will ensure that we are listening to the experiences, needs and insight of victim-survivors. They work with us to build a domestic abuse response that really works for survivors and to change the narrative around domestic abuse.

### Where can I find out more about Hertfordshire County Council's approach to domestic abuse?

If you haven't already seen the [Herts Sunflower Site](#) it has lots of helpful information for survivors and professionals supporting survivors including the [Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2022-25](#)

## What does Authentic Voice mean?

Authentic Voice is the name for SafeLives' work with survivors and the ethos we are striving to work by as an organisation.

These are our six Authentic Voice principles:

**Do No Harm** - Authentic voice is trauma-informed, risk is recognised and addressed with the survivor. We know that harm can occur as a result of what is done and what isn't done

**Experts by Experience** - Survivors bring knowledge and insight gained through their experience of domestic abuse which is vital in building and sustaining better responses to domestic abuse.

**There is no "them and us" with Domestic Abuse.** 'Survivors and professionals bring valuable insight and expertise. Survivors are valued and compensated for their insight and expertise.'

**Heart and Start** - Survivor voices are included at the very beginning and involved through to the end of all work. Survivors create not rate projects and are informed of the impact of their work, and are acknowledged safely.

**Equity, Equality and Diversity** - Anyone can be impacted by domestic abuse and our experience is affected by our different identities, 'intersectionality'. Services must find ways to access the voices they are not hearing.

**Speak Your Truth** - Survivors are not spokespeople for organizations they work with and are not expected to represent other survivors. Survivors can choose what they share, when they share, and who they share with. Survivors recognize the impact their voices may have on others.

**Caring** - Services and survivors work together to understand the potential emotional impact of sharing their voice. Services must give choices in the support they offer survivors; survivors share responsibility in taking care of themselves. Survivors and services learn and develop together - nobody knows everything.

We hope survivors will help to hold us all accountable to these values.

## What kind of involvement can I have?

There are lots of different ways to be involved as a panel member. At the start we will talk with you to understand your experience and individual needs so that can join the panel in a way which works for you. With you and the other panel members we will create an understanding about how we will work together as a group. As a panel member your input will help us work out the panel's focus and priorities.

We will support you to ensure that your involvement is as creative and unique as you are! You will be provided training and development opportunities to help you feel confident in your role. This will include getting to know each other as a group and learning about the Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse and VAWG Partnership and Governance Structure.

How you get involved in the work of the panel is always decided by you. You might feel comfortable to use your experiences publicly, or you might prefer to work privately. This is your choice. You may also bring new ideas that we would love to hear. We recognise that panel members bring with them their own goals and ambitions. We will support you with these.

## Our Commitment to You:

- Work with you to create a panel that suits your interests and working style.
- Provide clear boundaries and expectations.
- You will be paid for each per panel meeting and for other activities you will be involved in, plus travel and food/drink when you're taking in part in panel work.
- A link worker (called an Authentic Voice Coordinator) who will provide regular check-ins, support to engage in the work of the panel and feedback on the results of the panel's contributions.
- Access to support
- Training and development opportunities.

- To manage your data confidentially and in a way that is compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and our Fair Processing Notice.

### Your Commitment to Us:

- To join monthly meetings throughout the year or contribute to these in a way that feels right for you. Currently these are online and may change to some face to face meetings based upon what suits members best.
- Attend reviews to make sure we are working together in ways that suit you and SafeLives.
- To communicate with us around your safety and wellbeing and make use of support that is provided.
- Be comfortable participating and communicating in a group or on a one-to-one basis and in situations which need you to reflect and have self-awareness.
- Disclose if you have an open criminal investigation or court case so that we can explore the impact this might have on the type of work you are able to do.
- Aged over 18.

### Who is SafeLives?

We are striving to ensure our work and mission to end domestic abuse reaches and speaks to all communities, particularly those who are most marginalised. We are going through a period of transition to achieve this and all of us at SafeLives recognise that we must do more to be explicitly anti-racist, anti, homophobic, anti-transphobic and anti-ableism

You can read our Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) statement here: <https://safelives.org.uk/edi-board-statement>

Over the past year we have made some significant changes to improve the way we work (such as working alongside specialist organizations to review all our HR procedures, extensive EEDI training for staff, review of all our public communications to continue to increase the diversity of our voice and our content) - we know we still have further to go. SafeLives Authentic Voice is well placed to be at the heart of this movement for change, as we seek to amplify the voice of all survivors. We invite you to be part of this change.

You can read more about us and our approach to Authentic Voice here: <https://safelives.org.uk/survivor-voices/av-principles-and-model/>