

Faith Leaders' Declaration on Domestic Abuse

15 July 2015

As faith leaders in the United Kingdom we are speaking out, alongside leaders of our own and other faiths, against all forms of domestic abuse. We commit ourselves to addressing domestic abuse both within our own faith communities and in wider society. We look to be a force for good in promoting positive and effective action at both the local and national level. We will appoint advisers to encourage the use of good practice guidelines to address domestic abuse within our communities and to monitor the implementation of these guidelines.

We recognise that women and men are equal in rights, dignity and value, and affirm that:

1. *Domestic abuse* in all its forms is unacceptable and irreconcilable with the teachings of our, or any other, faith or worldview;
2. *Domestic abuse* affects women and men of all ages and should be understood as the abuse of a person through physical, sexual, psychological, spiritual, emotional, social, or financial means as part of a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour within an intimate or family-style relationship, including forced marriage and so-called 'honour crimes';
3. *Domestic abuse* remains a serious problem that occurs within our own faith groups as well as in the wider communities which we serve;
4. *Domestic abuse* demands our attention, support, and care for those affected, and we will always make the safety of survivors of abuse our highest priority, particularly women and children;
5. *Domestic abuse* must be addressed in collaboration with a range of stakeholders (including police, local authorities, and support agencies), and we will learn from them, support them, and publicise their work in all appropriate ways; and
6. *Domestic abuse* is a widespread social problem, and as faith leaders we recognise our unique opportunities for challenging harmful beliefs, preventing abusive behaviour, and providing safe spaces for those affected by abuse.



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