

# Women on the move: the journeyscapes of domestic violence

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## Hidden journeys

- Women's domestic violence journeys have been under-researched, not least because of the ongoing risk of abuse that many women face if their new location became known to the abuser.

*"I was so scared of him; so frightened just to get in the car and drive off somewhere. I thought he'd always find me; and that he'd be violent towards my family if I did go – because I've tried many times before."*

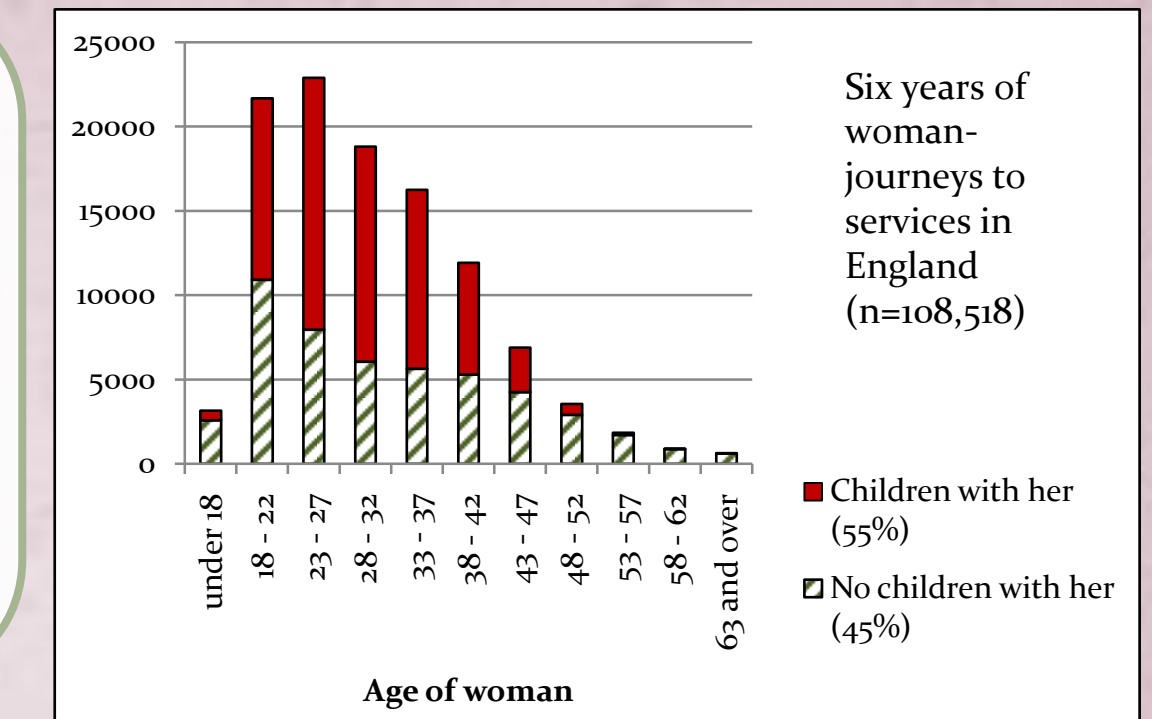
[Violet - Age 35, with a 6 year old boy. White British ethnic origin. Journey of 3 years from owner-occupied in London Periphery to private rented in a town in a very Rural area]

*"I had no other options – I'd tried everything. He'd agreed all the conditions in 2009 – not to stalk me, not to follow, not to abuse me – he'd been on the IDAP programme [Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme run by Probation for convicted domestic abuse perpetrators]."*

[Deborah - Age 29, with 5 year old boy and 3 year old girl. Asian Sri Lankan ethnic origin. Journey of a month from owner-occupied in London to a women's refuge in a Midlands city]

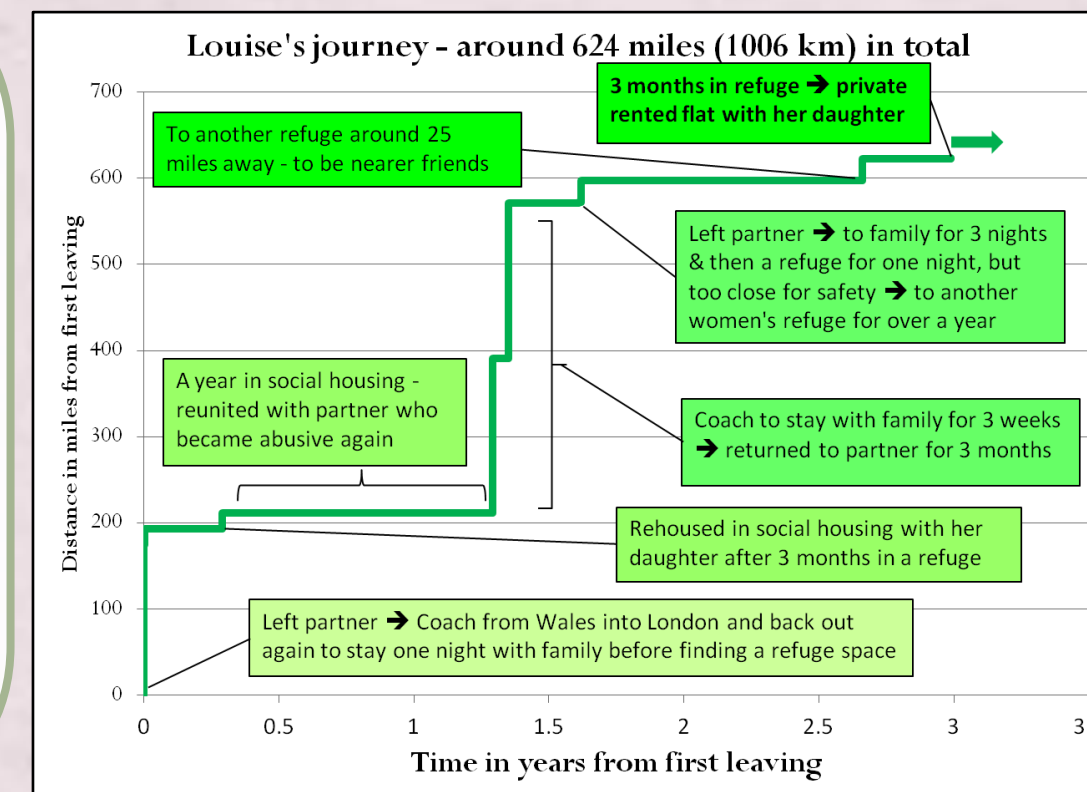
## Who moves? Journeys and Demographics

- Strongly gendered.
- In 2009-10, of all people relocating to access any type of Supporting People support service in England due to domestic violence (n=18,232) only 1.3 per cent (n=241) were male.
- A wide range of women relocated: women were aged between 15 and 88, from all ethnic origins (67.4% were White British), and 8.2% were disabled.
- Over half the women had children with them, and women with children tended to travel further.



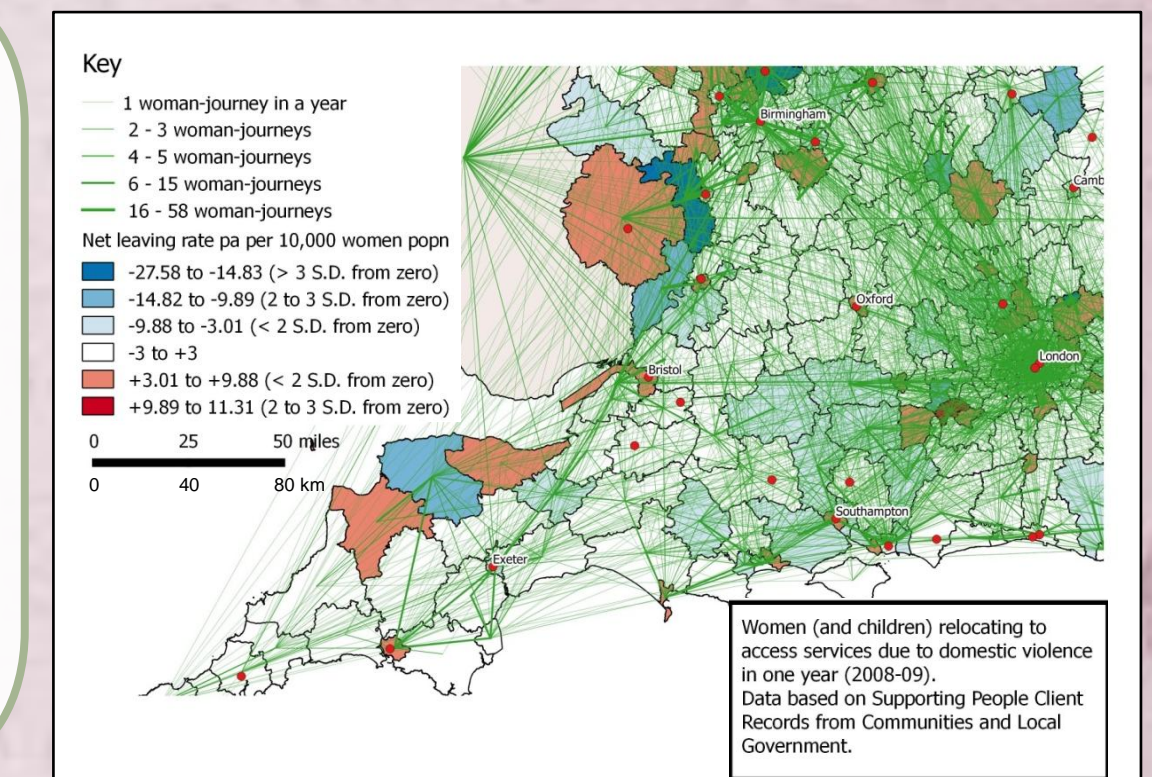
## The need for mixed methods research

- This research uses administrative data from an England-wide funding programme of support services (2003-2010) - over 100,000 relocation journeys by women to access services.
  - It also uses more detailed evidence of the journeys of individual women and children generated via interviews, surveys and groupwork.
  - This shows the multiple stages of relocation journeys – such as Louise's journey.
- (Age 28, with 7 year old girl. White British ethnic origin. Journey from rented social housing in a city in Wales to private rented in a town in a Rural area)

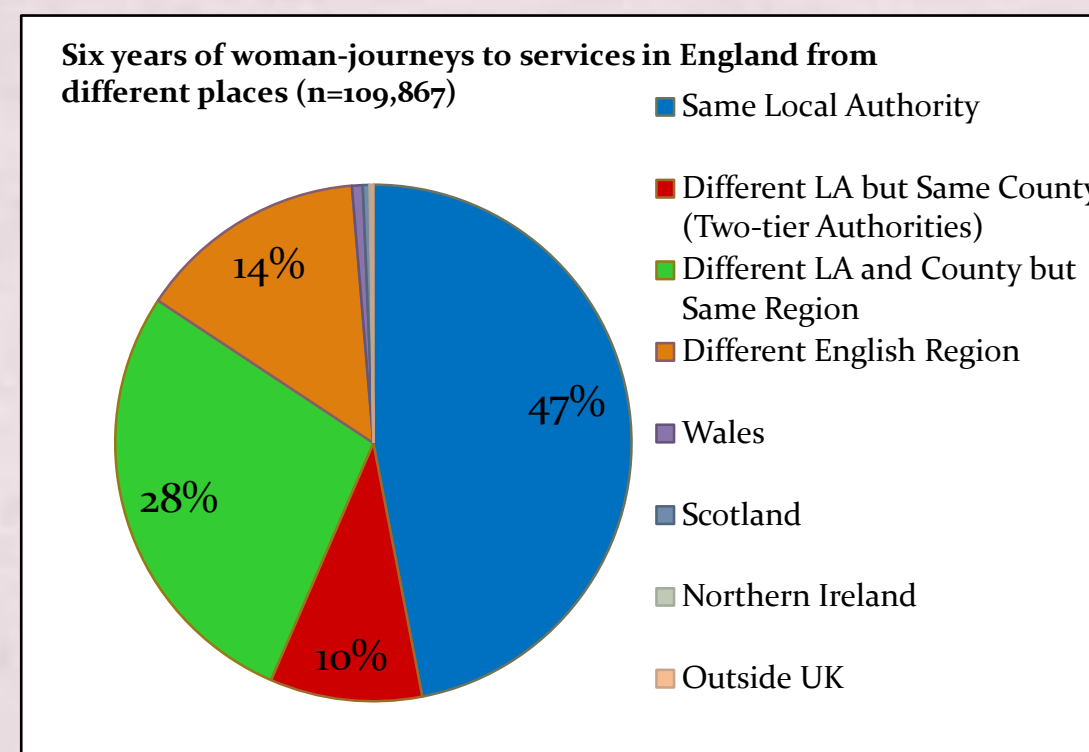


## Where? Journeys and Places

- Women were travelling short and long distances to and from all types of Local Authority.
- Most places have a net rate of around zero, though some Local Authorities experience net leaving (red on the map) and others net arriving to access services (blue on the map).
- Most journey stages were relatively short distances – including close to half being within the same Local Authority.
- Individual relocation journeys aggregate into a pattern of spatial churn, with a lack of strong flows to or from any part of the country.



## The scale of women's forced relocation

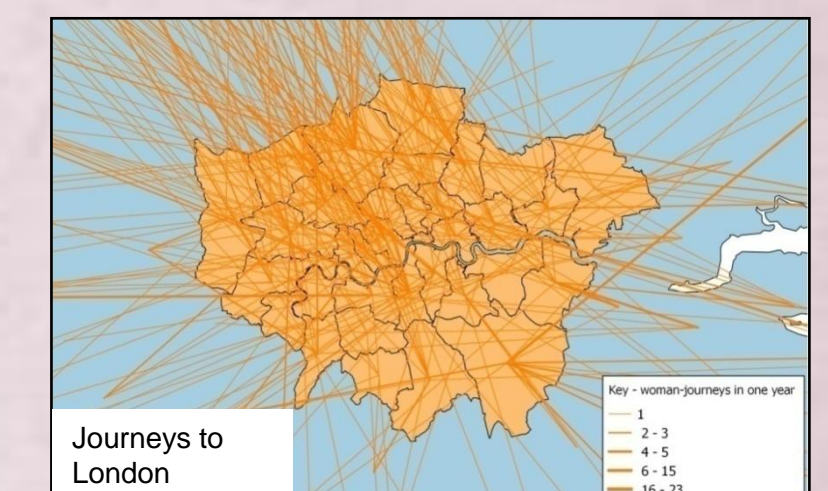
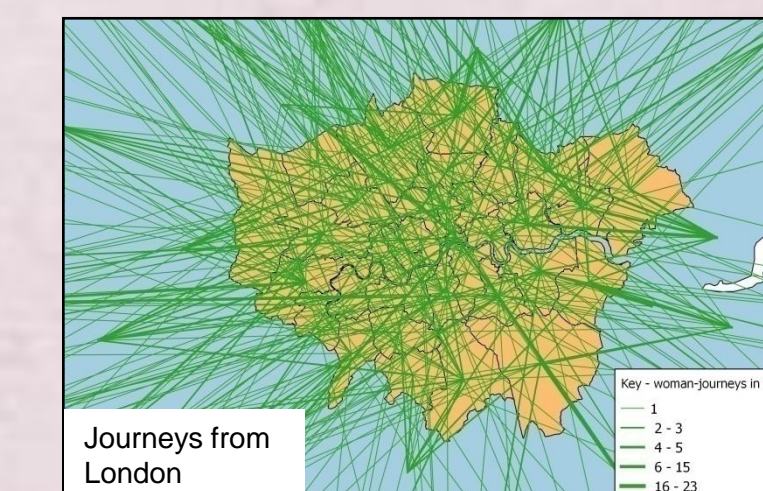
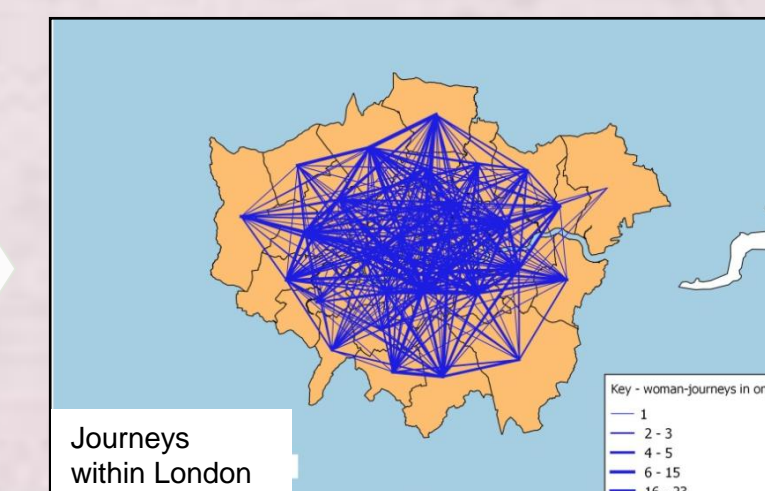


- Tens of thousands of women and children relocate due to domestic violence in England each year.
  - Nearly half access services within their own Local Authority, but others have to travel further – crossing administrative boundaries and often losing rights and possessions.
  - Most (85%) stay within the same region – indicating that regions could be the key scale for service planning, to ensure that women and children travel as far as they need to escape the abuse, but are not forced further than necessary due to constraints of administrative boundaries or service provision:
- a concept of women's "journeyscapes".



## Policies and Services

- Though most women and children travel within their region, most domestic violence services are planned and provided much more locally.
- In addition, services are experiencing funding cuts and restrictions – sometimes requiring them only to take local women.
- Mapping women accessing services in London in one year shows that most change local authority, but stay within London (the blue flow lines); and that more women leave London (green lines) than come to London from elsewhere (orange lines).



## Changing journeys into "journeyscapes"

- Women's journeys can be enormously disruptive for individuals – which is invisible within the spatial churn at the local, regional or national scale.
- But the displacement of the initial forced escape is reinforced by social policies and state administrations which provide services only at the local scale.
- Thinking about journeyscapes would mean that services and housing are organised at the right scale to enhance women's control over their domestic violence mobility.

*"I don't like the fact that I'm having to be all over the place – that I'm not settled anywhere. And I still can't say that there's something solid for me and my kids."*

[Faith - age 29, with 3 year old girl and 1 year old boy. Black African ethnic origin. Journey from private rented in outer London to a women's refuge in East London]

*"I can't wait to just get in to a new place and just sit - not physically, but mentally. To be able to just -[sigh]- it's done; and just wake up and be all like – this is it – I'm going, I'm moving – not just plodding, plodding, plodding."*

[Louise - age 28, with 7 year old girl – see her journey graph above]

*"I can't say a bad thing about my journeys – apart from that they've been cold, hard and sometimes I've been hungry; and during those journeys I've sometimes been miserable – but it had a good outcome!"*

[Cathy - age 46, no children. Black Caribbean ethnic origin. Journey from owner-occupied in an East Anglian town to private rented in West London]

For further details:  
[www.womensjourneyscapes.net](http://www.womensjourneyscapes.net)

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