

Ashiana Network is:

A company limited by guarantee, Company Number 2972903

The company is also a registered charity, Charity Number 1042440

Registered Office:

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For further information about Ashiana and/or referral to any of our services please contact us:

Tel: 020 8539 0427

Email: info@ashiana.org.uk

Website: www.ashiana.org.uk

Find us on Facebook

Ashiana Network

Stopping violence in our lives and in our communities.

Who We Are

Ashiana Network provides specialist services to girls and women at risk of domestic violence and harmful practices. We work with young women from South Asian, Turkish and Middle Eastern communities, and empower them to make their own decisions through providing specialist housing, advice and support services.

We also offer counselling services to women we support and carry out preventative work through awareness raising and training around harmful practices and domestic abuse.

Ashiana

Forced Marriage



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What is a Forced Marriage?

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised or abuse is used to force them to do so. A child under the age of 16 is considered under age for legal consent.

They may face pressure to marry or feel that they do not have a choice. For example, threats, physical violence, financial pressure, blackmail, threats of disownment, sexual violence and emotional or psychological pressure (eg being made to feel as though they are dishonouring or bringing shame on the family.)

A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties consent to the assistance of their parents or a third party such as a matchmaker in choosing a spouse.

Anyone can be a victim of forced marriage regardless of gender, class, relationship or abilities. It can be an extremely distressing situation.

Whilst there can be no justification for forced marriage, there are several reasons given such as:

- Preventing 'unsuitable' relationships (interracial/interfaith, LGBT)
- Preventing 'promiscuous' behaviour
- Strengthen family links
- Financial rewards
- Assisting claims for UK residence and citizenship
- Ensuring care for people with additional needs



The consequences of forced marriage can be devastating and lead to greater risks e.g. marital rape (for women this can lead to unwanted pregnancy) or abuse from the extended family.

The government made forced marriage a criminal offence in England and Wales in 2014 to protect victims and send a clear message that this practice is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In 2017 the government introduced lifelong anonymity for victims of forced marriage to encourage more victims of this hidden crime to come forward.

The Law takes Forced Marriages seriously, forcing someone to marry can result in a sentence of up to 7 years in prison.

If you or anyone you know is at risk of forced marriage there are people and services to help you.

The FMU (Forced Marriage Unit) operates a public helpline to provide advice and support to victims of forced marriage as well as to professionals dealing with cases.

Phone; 020 7008 0151

Email: fmf@fco.gov.uk