



Domestic Abuse Policy

Policy

1 Introduction and Purpose:

- 1.1 This Policy sets out how Irwell valley homes will take steps to assist and support any person experiencing or threatened with domestic abuse, it applies to all customers including those living with our tenants regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability or financial status
- 1.2 Anyone can be affected by domestic abuse, it happens in all types of relationships and from all backgrounds, and the impact that it can have on survivors and their families is far reaching and can last throughout their lives.
- 1.3 Approximately 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will experience domestic abuse at some point in their life. On average 2 women are killed each week in the UK as a direct result of domestic abuse. 62% of children living in households where there is domestic abuse are directly hurt by the abuser.
- 1.4 Preventing and ending domestic abuse is everybody's responsibility and irwell valley homes recognise the critical role they can play in tackling this issue. As a housing provider irwell valley homes is well placed to recognise the signs of domestic abuse, as our front line housing teams and contractors go in and out of our homes every day, they will come into contact with survivors and perpetrators and are uniquely placed to identify physical, financial and coercive abuse.
- 1.5 We recognise that irwell valley homes alone, cannot tackle all of the issues relating to domestic abuse, and we are committed to working collaboratively with agencies and partners through a coordinated approach in our response to reports of domestic abuse.
- 1.6 Due to the sensitive nature of domestic abuse, Irwell Valley Homes has a separate domestic abuse policy and procedure, however they are closely linked with the Irwell Valley Homes safeguarding vulnerable adults and children policy and procedure and the anti-social behaviour policy and procedure.
- 1.7 In line with standard organisational practice we will seek to identify and prevent incidents of domestic abuse through close and careful tenancy management. This will include gathering appropriate information at the application and letting stage, introductory tenancy procedures, ongoing tenancy engagement and effective inter-agency working. Where it is in our power to do so we reserve the right to use enforcement action against perpetrators of domestic abuse to protect vulnerable customers, including the use of civil injunctions and possession proceedings.

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 1 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

1.8 Our approach to dealing with domestic abuse is supported by our mission statement, which seeks to “create the conditions in which customers and colleagues can enjoy living or working and realise their potential”, further supported by our corporate priorities and our behaviours.

2. Policy Statement:

2.1 Irwell valley homes take a zero-tolerance approach to domestic abuse.

2.2 We will raise awareness of domestic abuse with our customers and colleagues highlighting our approach.

2.3 We will support and be involved in local and national initiatives to raise awareness of domestic abuse.

2.4 We believe that all our customers and households should not live in fear of violence or abuse from any person, including their partner, their former partner, or any member of their household or extended family.

2.5 Any person experiencing domestic abuse will be treated in a supportive and sympathetic way, and their report will be taken seriously.

2.6 The victims disclosure alone will be sufficient information for Irwell valley homes to act upon the report as a matter of priority and provide appropriate advice, assistance and support to the victim and their family. The support will be victim led and our approach will be victim focused and trauma informed at all times.

2.7 We understand the need to work with and engage with perpetrators to try and stop the cycle of domestic abuse and so, where appropriate, we will support perpetrators of Domestic Abuse in trying to change their behaviour and recognise the detrimental effect their behaviour can have on victims and others.

2.8 We will also robustly challenge perpetrators of Domestic Abuse and will take enforcement action where it is appropriate to do so, as well as support legal action being taken by partner agencies to protect victims of domestic abuse from further harmful behaviour.

2.9 Irwell valley homes recognises that domestic abuse is a criminal act and as such those experiencing it are considered to be victims of crime.

3. Policy Scope;

3.1 This Policy applies to all Irwell valley homes customers living in properties owned and managed by Irwell valley homes (IVH). For colleagues who may be experiencing Domestic Abuse or are perpetrators of Domestic Abuse, please refer to the appropriate Policy relating to Domestic Abuse and Colleagues

3.2 This Policy and any accompanying procedure sets out IVH’s approach and commitment to supporting customers who may be at risk of, or experiencing domestic abuse, as well as how

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 2 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

we will deal with the perpetrators responsible for the domestic abuse.

4. Definitions:

4.1 IVH adopts the statutory definition of domestic abuse outlined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which is based on the existing cross-government definition. This states; Domestic abuse, or domestic violence, is defined across Government as any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender or sexuality.

'Abusive behaviour' is defined in the act as any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional or other abuse

For the definition to apply, both parties must be aged 16 or over and 'personally connected'.

'Personally connected' is defined in the act as parties who:

- are married to each other
- are civil partners of each other
- have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- are or have been in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- are relatives

4.2 This definition includes honour-based abuse, female genital mutilation and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender, religion or ethnic group.

4.3 What constitutes domestic abuse is commonly misunderstood, and it is important to remember that no single act defines it; there are a wide range of activities and behaviours that amount to domestic abuse which are often dangerous and can be life-threatening. Some examples of these are:

4.4 Controlling behaviour

This is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 3 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

4.5 Coercive behaviour

Coercive behaviour is an act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

4.6 Coercive and controlling behaviour is a sustained pattern of behaviour that stop short of serious physical violence, but amounts to extreme psychological and emotional abuse. Victims of coercive control can have every aspect of life controlled by their partner, often being subjected to daily intimidation and humiliation. Coercive and controlling behaviour underpins domestic abuse. These behaviours are often used as the primary mechanisms for achieving power and control in an abusive relationship and these behaviours reinforce the threat or reality of physical abuse

4.7 Harassment

This is a crime involving behaviour that takes place more than once, and the perpetrator's actions must have an unwanted effect on the victim. Under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, it is an offence for a person to pursue a course of conduct that amounts to harassment of another person, and that they know (or ought to know) what amounts to harassment. The Act defines harassment and states: "References to harassing a person include alarming the person or causing the person distress." A 'course of conduct' in the case of harassment of a single person must involve conduct on at least two occasions.

4.8 Stalking

There is no specific legal definition of stalking. However, it is helpful to know that in cases of stalking there is a pattern of unwanted, fixated and obsessive behaviour which is intrusive. It can include harassment that amounts to stalking or stalking that causes fear of violence or serious alarm or distress.

4.9 Physical Abuse

Can include; hitting, punching, kicking, slapping, hitting with objects, pulling hair, pushing or shoving, cutting or stabbing, restraining, strangulation, choking.

4.10 Sexual Abuse

Can include; rape and coerced sex, forcing a victim to take part in unwanted sexual acts, refusal to practice safe sex or use contraception, threatened or actual sexual abuse of children.

4.11 Financial abuse

Can include; controlling money and bank accounts, making a victim account for all their expenditure, running up debts in a victim's name, allowing no say on how monies are spent, refusing to allow them to study or work.

4.12 Psychological and Emotional Violence and Abuse

This has a profound impact upon victims and their children. It can leave a victim with little confidence that they can do anything to change the situation. Examples include:

- Creating isolation e.g. not allowing them to see other people, preventing them from making their own friendships, not allowing them to go anywhere on their own, causing them to be depressed and then using this against them.

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 4 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

- Use of threats e.g. threats to kill their family, children, friends, pets; to throw them out and keep the children; to find them if they ever leave; to have them locked up; to tell everyone they are mad
- Putting them down – humiliating and undermining them in front of others or in front of their children; telling them they are stupid, hopeless, unlovable, that no one would believe them, or that they are a bad parent.
- “Gaslighting” which is a form of manipulation commonly seen in abusive relationships. It is a form of emotional abuse where the abuser bullies the victim about their judgment or perception of reality.

4.13 Discriminatory Abuse (with reference to Forced Marriage)

This may manifest itself as any of the other categories of abuse, however what makes discriminatory abuse distinctive is it is motivated by oppressive and discriminatory attitudes towards a person’s:

- Disability
- Physical appearance
- Learning disability
- Mental ill-health
- Sensory impairment
- Race
- Religion
- Gender/ gender identity
- Age
- Culture
- Sexual orientation
- Appearance

4.14 Family and Inter-generational Domestic abuse

Approaches have traditionally focused upon heterosexual partner abuse and more recently have been seen to address abuse in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships. More focus is required to address family and inter-generational abuse, and how it differs from partner abuse, for example if the perpetrator is the victim’s teenage or adult sibling, child or grand-child. Careful consideration is required when dealing with family and intergenerational abuse due to the complexities of family composition and safeguarding implications.

4.15 Elder Abuse

Elder abuse can be detrimental to a victim’s wellbeing due to problems with mobility, mental health and social isolation. Older people may have come to accept some aspects of domestic abuse as the ‘norm’ dependent upon their generation.

4.16 Wellbeing

The Care Act 2014 specifies that freedom from abuse and neglect is a key part of a person’s wellbeing. The Care Act guidance outlines specific aims to stop abuse and neglect, prevent harm and address what has caused the abuse. The guidance outlines that abuse takes many forms, and practitioners should not be constrained in their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect. It describes numerous types of abuse including:

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 5 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

- Domestic violence
- Psychological abuse
- Financial and material abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse

5. Safeguarding

A significant number of adults who need safeguarding are often experiencing domestic abuse in some form. Despite the overlap between supporting abuse victims and safeguarding adults the two have developed separate professional practices.

- 5.1 If domestic abuse is an isolated issue and there are no other safeguarding concerns then support can be sought via forums such as MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference).
- 5.2 If there is more than one safeguarding issue present, such as domestic abuse in addition to physical or mental health disabilities then a referral should be made to Safeguarding Adults so that services can be coordinated to deal with the potentially complex issues.
- 5.3 However, we will always encourage colleagues to make a Safeguarding Adults referral even if it is just for information so that agencies are mindful of our concerns, as there may be other issues we are not aware of.
- 5.4 Children exposed to an environment of domestic abuse are mentally and emotionally harmed by the abuse. Exposure to domestic abuse can cause both short and long term adverse psychological effects for the child, that can continue into adult life. This means that in domestic abuse cases where children are present practitioners have a duty to involve Children's Services to ensure any children are adequately safeguarded.

6. Our commitments

- Supporting and assisting customers who are experiencing domestic abuse, including young people and children.
- Delivering an effective and efficient service to victims of domestic abuse in line with legislation and IVH's current policy and procedures.
- Raising awareness of domestic abuse, including the implications for the services that IVH provides within the community.
- Preventing Homelessness caused by customers suffering from domestic abuse. This may include providing support to enable victims to remain in their own homes, or providing alternative accommodation, where possible. If we cannot provide alternative accommodation or it is not safe to do so within our stock, we would support the customer to secure alternative accommodation in conjunction with the Local Authorities and other key statutory and voluntary agencies.
- Working with our partners to minimise and manage risk to victims. Being flexible enough to respond to individual needs.
- Making sure that the service provided is available to all sections of the community.
- Raising awareness of the impact of domestic abuse and the role IVH colleagues play in responding to reports of domestic abuse.

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 6 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | | Review dates: October 2023 |

- We will consider best practice in developing our approach towards Domestic Abuse and we will be open to learning from others and share our experiences.
- We will adopt a multi-agency approach towards tackling Domestic Abuse and will seek the support of other agencies to assist us in developing the best possible solutions. This will include offering effective support and advice to victims.

7. Aims:

- 7.1 To ensure all our colleagues are appropriately trained in recognising signs of domestic abuse and are clear about how to escalate their concerns
- 7.2 Ensure that those colleagues who deal with reports of domestic abuse are well trained to confidently support victims and their families to increase safety and reduce risk, in partnership with specialist agencies
- 7.3 When dealing with reports our colleagues must be led by the wishes of the person experiencing the abuse. Colleagues will need to consider risk, safeguarding and child protection concerns, and deal appropriately with those concerns. Where these concerns do not exist, the guiding principle should be that our response to domestic abuse is customer led.
- 7.4 Ensure we have colleagues who are confident and competent in challenging perpetrators of domestic abuse using appropriate legal remedies.
- 7.5 Identify those perpetrators who want to address their behaviour by making appropriate referrals and signposting to local and national organisations who deliver behaviour change programmes and offer support to perpetrators trying to break the cycle of their abusive behaviour.
- 7.6 To make sure our customers know what our approach is when responding to reports of domestic abuse, and they know how they can access our services if they are experiencing domestic abuse. We will support victims to take appropriate legal measures to protect themselves and their families.
- 7.7 Signpost victims to where they can access help with the use of civil and criminal laws, to offer them protection and to prevent further abuse
- 7.8 IVH is committed to raising awareness around domestic abuse through its customer contact, website, social media campaigns and work within our communities.
- 7.9 Ensure our volunteers, engaged customers and contractors are made aware of this policy, and their responsibility to report any concerns they may have about potential domestic abuse, to IVH colleagues.
- 7.10 To make sure our service response to domestic abuse is easily accessible to all customers who are experiencing domestic abuse. We recognise that some victims face additional barriers and discrimination when trying to access services and IVH recognise the need to work in a coordinated way with other specialist agencies to overcome these barriers.

7.11 We will, where appropriate, complete Domestic Abuse Risk Assessments (DASH) and

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 7 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | | Review dates: October 2023 |

contribute to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

We will include additional LGBTQI+ inclusive questions when completing DASH RIC assessments with victims from the LGBTQI+ community.

7.12 When dealing with domestic abuse full consideration will be given to our safeguarding responsibilities, including the reporting of criminal behaviour to the police, details of which are included in the safeguarding vulnerable adult and children policy and procedure and the anti-social behaviour policy and procedure.

8. How will IVH respond to reports of domestic abuse

8.1 When a victim reports domestic abuse in person, we will ensure that they can be supported confidentially and discreetly by a trained colleague.

8.2 If they make a disclosure by other means, i.e. over the phone, they will be offered immediate domestic abuse support contact numbers and safety advice. We will plan to meet with them in a safe place of their choice if they require further support or assistance.

8.3 IVH recognises that victims and witnesses of Domestic Abuse need support and assurance from us if they are to retain confidence in our ability to successfully support them. To make this possible we will:

- Treat the report seriously and believe the victim
- Record every report, considering sensitivity/confidentiality issues
- Allocate a named case worker
- Protect the identity of the victim/ witness, and only reveal it to perpetrators or their representatives with the persons permission
- Work with other relevant agencies in a coordinated way in providing support and advice
- Where possible we recommend the taking of swift and effective action against perpetrators to protect victims from further abuse
- Keeping victims and witnesses informed at all stages of the case
- We will agree an action plan with the victim/survivor and be led by them.
- We will keep in close communication with them if it's safe for them to do so and review our actions and levels of support frequently as agreed through the action plan
- We will offer improved security to a victim/survivor's home where a need is identified in the form of "target hardening". This may be in partnership with local support agencies
- We will carry out appropriate repairs to our property if the damage was caused by the perpetrator.
- We will assist those experiencing domestic abuse, access appropriate services as early as possible and provide advice to allow them to make choices about what to do next.
- Ensure that where children and young people are affected by domestic abuse, they have access to services as early as possible.
- Challenge perpetrators appropriately and make referrals to specialist agencies who provide support and offer advice to perpetrators

9. Assessing risk

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 8 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

- 9.1 Where domestic abuse is identified, we will aim to carry out a risk assessment (using the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and “Honour”- based violence (DASH) Risk Identification Checklist) and work with specialist agencies to help with safety planning and support for the victim/survivor and their children.
- 9.2 We will share information with the local MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) where the risk rating threshold has been met.
- 9.3 We actively participate in MARACs, where information is shared between agencies involved in domestic abuse cases. We will ensure that any actions assigned to IVH through the MARAC process are completed
- 9.4 In cases where the threshold is not met, with the agreement of the victim/survivor, we will make referrals to other relevant agencies, including adult safeguarding, to identify support mechanisms for the victim and the family
10. Legal Action against perpetrators
- 10.1 We will make full use of our own civil legal tools, for example civil injunctions where it’s appropriate to do so to protect victims.
- 10.2 We will support and assist victims, where necessary, when making applications for Non molestation Orders and Occupation Orders under the Family Law Act. IVH may consider funding such applications should the victim have no recourse to public funds
- 10.3 If the perpetrator is an IVH tenant, and the victim is not living in the tenancy or has decided to leave the tenancy, IVH will consider taking possession of the perpetrators tenancy if we believe it is proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances to do so, and there is sufficient evidence to persuade the courts
- 10.4 If the perpetrator recognises their abusive behaviour is not acceptable and is willing to access services specialising in perpetrator behaviour change programmes, IVH will signpost and provide advice on how to engage with these services.
11. Housing
- 11.1 We understand that many victims may not wish to move home in order to maintain local and family connections or avoid disruption to their children and their schooling. We aim to work with the victim to take action to manage the risks posed to them in remaining in their home. We will refer them to the NCDV (National Centre for Domestic Abuse) specialist support agency who can provide appropriate support and legal advice in relation to housing.
- 11.2 If the property is a joint tenancy with the perpetrator, we will support the victim if s/he wishes to remain in the property. We will refer the victim to independent legal advisors who can provide the necessary advice
- on seeking an occupation order,
 - or a court order to transfer the tenancy into their sole name,
 - or serving an NTQ to end the tenancy, and IVH will, where possible, take action against the perpetrator.

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 9 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | | Review dates: October 2023 |

11.3 In circumstances where the victim requires temporary accommodation in order to be safe, we will work with specialist agencies and the local authority to ensure the victim secures accommodation

11.4 If the victim requires permanent rehousing, we will support the victim in securing alternative accommodation. We will work with the appropriate support agencies and the local authority, in finding alternative accommodation where the risk to the victim is able to be managed and where the victim will be safe.

11.5 In cases where the domestic abuse victim is offered IVH accommodation as a permanent solution to their housing problem, we will ensure that the tenure no less than the tenure they had originally.

11.6 If the victim secures private rented accommodation, IVH will signpost the victim where possible to the tenant bond scheme

12. Safeguarding

12.1 We will follow our Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Children Policy and Procedure for protecting children and adults where we believe a child or adult is at risk due to an abusive relationship.

13. Training

13.1 Make domestic abuse awareness training mandatory for all IVH colleagues.

13.2 Ensure all front-line colleagues receive regular appropriate training in relation to domestic abuse, how to spot the signs of potential domestic abuse and how to escalate their concerns.

13.3 We will train our staff who deal with rents and money advice, to spot the signs of economic and financial abuse, and how to support victims where this abuse has been identified.

13.4 Ensure that those officers dealing directly with domestic abuse victims are appropriately trained and resourced so that they can deal with reports confidently and competently. We will ensure that these colleagues also receive one to one support on a regular basis to ensure their wellbeing.

14. Information sharing

14.1 We will comply with GDPR regulations and ensure information remains confidential and is stored appropriately

14.2 We will share information with other agencies like the Police, Children and Adult Services, Education, Health, through agreed data exchange protocols, in circumstances where it is necessary and proportionate to do so, and where exemptions under data protection rules allow us to do so. We will advise victims and perpetrators when we are sharing/ or have shared information with other agencies and why we believe it was appropriate to do so.

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|---------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 10 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

15. Raising Awareness

15.1 Publicise our approach to raise awareness amongst colleagues and customers, with the aim of increasing reports of domestic abuse.

15.2 Be involved in local and national campaigns and initiatives to raise awareness of the issues and impact of domestic abuse

15.3 Develop useful information in plain language for victims and witnesses for example leaflets, providing advice and signposting where they can get emergency support and how they can access appropriate services from IVH. E.g. Victims who identify as LGBTQI+ will be given the choice if they would prefer to be referred to the LGBT IDVA and local LGBTQI+ support services

15.4 Ensure appropriate information and publicity is available on our website and other social media platforms

16. Reasonable Adjustments

16.1 IVH is strongly committed to fairness and making sure that everyone has the same opportunities to access our services. This Policy meets the requirements set out by the Equality Act 2010 and aims to prevent unlawful discrimination; we recognise that domestic abuse can disproportionately impact those people with protected characteristics.

16.2 We will take additional steps in the application of this policy and make reasonable adjustments to ensure compliance with the Act.

16.3 We will be flexible in our approach to each individual and will work with them to arrive at an effective response to their report, taking into account the risks identified and what the victim is wanting to do.

16.4 We also recognise that Domestic Abuse complaints can often be very complex and can affect individuals and families in different ways. We will ensure that we take a trauma informed approach and obtain advice and work closely with specialist agencies to ensure victims receive all the support they need.

16.5 IVH understand the values of collaboration and co-operation in tackling Domestic Abuse and are committed to ensuring that customers and colleagues and key agencies are actively involved in the development and review of our policies and procedures.

16.6 We will ensure that we will record and monitor all reports of Domestic Abuse to assist in the planning and development of the service and to identify our key priorities in this area for the future.

17. Complaints

17.1 Any party involved in a domestic abuse case can make a complaint to IVH if they are not satisfied about how the case has been handled. When a complaint of this type is made IVH will follow the process set out in our complaints policy and process

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|---------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 11 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

Responsibility

The Director of Customer & Communities is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

Performance Indicators/Targets/Standards

Internal standards dictate that domestic abuse and safeguarding case management information must be held on the Association's IT systems. In the instance of highly sensitive/confidential information, arrangements must be made to hold the information in a more secure environment.

This policy will be reviewed for effectiveness and policy/legislative change on a bi-annual basis by the author.

Current Legislation

This policy is informed by the following legislation and regulation:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Crime and Security Act 2010
- Family Law Act 1996
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Equality Act 2010
- Housing Act 1996
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- Human Rights Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Police and Justice Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law)
- Children's Act 1989 and the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013

Equality and Diversity Implications

Irwell Valley Homes is committed to treating people with honesty, dignity, respect, and trust. This applies to colleagues, customers potential customers, contractors, and Board Members. At IVH:

| | | |
|--|----------------------------|---------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 12 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | Review dates: October 2023 | |

- Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.
- Diversity is recognising difference and responding positively to those differences.
- Inclusion is about creating an environment where our services and employment opportunities are accessible to all.

IVH will be mindful of the Equality Act 2010 in all its actions and will consider all the protected characteristics of the Act which are: Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Age, Marriage/Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity explicitly. Further to the protected characteristics, IVH will be mindful of socio-economic disadvantage and will do everything in its power to minimise this and other forms of disadvantage.

Cross Reference Documents/Good Practice

- Domestic Abuse Procedure
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Children Policy and Procedure
- Anti-social Behaviour Policy and Procedure
- Access & Customer Care Strategy
- Neighbourhood Management Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection Policy and Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection of Colleagues Policy
- Employee Domestic Abuse Policy
- Allocations and Empty Homes Policy

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------------|
| DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY | Author Tara Logan | Page 13 of 13 |
| Approved by/when: Leadership Team 24.11.2021 | | Review dates: October 2023 |

Domestic Abuse Procedure 2022

Introduction

This procedure should be followed by all Irwell Valley colleagues who have a responsibility to log and investigate all complaints of domestic abuse and violence (DAV).

Types of abuse include, but are not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional
- Financial abuse and economic
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Using coercion and control
- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Stalking
- Honour-based violence
- Online or digital abuse

When working in our neighbourhoods it is the responsibility of all our Irwell Valley colleagues and our contractors to understand, recognise and report Domestic Abuse. When we are dealing with reports of Domestic abuse, it should be done sensitively and with the safety and support of the victim placed at the centre of our approach. In the first instance any suspicions or concerns of domestic abuse should be reported to the Community Safety Officer (DAV Case Managers). This can be done directly via a ASB1ST action raised on QL. In an emergency the first responder must contact 999 and request the appropriate emergency services without delay.

Below is a list of steps to be taken by the Case Manager (“CM”) they should follow these when they receive a report of Domestic Abuse. These are guidelines and should be followed where possible, but each case should be taken on its own merit and in line with our other policies and procedures, ensuring all safeguarding concerns are met. Within our general-let properties the Case Manager will be the Community Safety Officer for that area. Within our 50Plus and supported schemes the Case Manager will be the Independent Living Manager.

This procedure has been specifically designed into sections to allow the user to refer to relevant sections as and when required.

Contents

1. Initial response
2. Safety Planning
3. Support
4. Training
5. Legal Tools
6. Review and feedback
7. Confidentiality

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 1 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | Review date: April 2023 | |

1.0 Initial response

- 1.1 The victim's safety and wellbeing should be the immediate priority. Where there is an immediate risk to harm to the victim, family, or others, the appropriate emergency services MUST be contacted without delay to request immediate assistance for the victim.
- 1.2 Initial responses to DAV cases are approached from a risk management, safety planning perspective. Victim safety is paramount to how we make initial contact with a victim. We use a range of approaches and tools to ensure we can safely approach and support all victims of DAV.
- 1.3 When a report of DAV is received, a log should be made on the QL contact management system under ASB1ST, and the tree category DOM_ABUSE, 1ST_A. An action will be sent to the relevant Case Manager ("CM")
- 1.4 An email will be generated and will need to be sent to the Case Manager (CM)
- 1.5 All reports of Domestic Abuse should be logged as category A ASB and response times should fall in line with our ASB procedure for dealing with Category A ASB Cases.
- 1.6 In all reports of Domestic Abuse, the victim should (where possible) be contacted and full details of the case should be taken within one working day of the report being made to the association.
- 1.7 The victim will be appointed a single point of contact. This will be the CM. The CM will provide the victim with their direct contact details during the initial contact.
- 1.8 If the victim requests a same sex colleague as their CM, this request will be met without any unnecessary delays.
- 1.9 Initial complaints of domestic abuse maybe 'disguised' and reported as other forms of ASB, in the first instance. When dealing with ASB complaints it is the responsibility of the CM to consider during case supervisions with Community Co-ordinators (CC) if concerns exist that may require further investigation relating to potential DAV. If required, the response should be changed in accordance with this.

2.0 Safety Planning

- 2.1 CM's work in partnership with statutory agencies and specialist DAV support services, to ensure the victim receives specialist advice and support without any unnecessary delay. The multi-disciplinary team should have clear roles and actions that they are responsible for ensuring are completed. The victim's voice should be central to their support to ensure they are empowered to make decisions in their best interests.
- 2.2 Child Protection – All DAV cases involving children MUST be referred into the local authority's Children Safeguarding team. When a child or vulnerable adult is at risk an appropriate referral should be made to Social Services or Adult Services.

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 2 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | Review date: April 2023 | |

- 2.3 A DASH-RIC (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence Risk Indicator Checklist **MUST** be completed with every victim) ‘The First Time, Right Time’ approach is key to risk identification and victims receiving the appropriate safety planning and support:

DASH https://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/pdfs/gm_marac_ref.pdf

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Score of 14+ ‘Yes’ responses | = MARAC referral |
| Score of 10 – 14 ‘Yes’ responses | = Referral to local specialist DAV service |
| Score of less than 10 ‘Yes’ responses | = Victim advised of local specialist DAV support and encouraged to access these services. |

In addition to the standard DASH screening form, IVH follow the ‘Safe Lives’ approach to using 2 additional DASH screening tools where it is appropriate to do so:

1. S-DASH - Stalking DASH further screening form
2. H-DASH - Honour based violence further screen form

S-DASH <https://www.dashriskchecklist.co.uk/stalking-advice/>

H-DASH <https://www.dashriskchecklist.co.uk/honour-based-abuse/>

A DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour Based Violence) **Risk** Identification form should be completed and emailed to MARAC@gmp.pnn.police.uk or uploaded on GM MARAC SharePoint (Case Manager’s should be registered and have access to GM MARAC SharePoint – if not please contact your manager)

IVH recognises that that the standard DASH-RIC form does not always meet the needs of all our customers and the outcome scores can appear lower for victims within the LGBTQI+ community. LGBTQI+ victims are less likely to score 14+ as the DASH form contains questions that are specifically designed to be used to support cis heterosexual women.

The Case Manager **MUST** use ‘appendix 1’ ‘ROAR’ – LGBT Professional judgement specialist considerations checklist’ with LGBTQI+ DAV victims. LGBTQI+ victims must be given additional information in relation to specific DAV LGBTQI+ support with Greater Manchester (GM) dasupport@lgbt.foundation. Within GM there is a specialist LGBT+ IDVA (Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate) who works with Independent Choices <http://www.domesticabusehelpline.co.uk/> All LGBTQI+ DAV victims must be asked if they would prefer to be referred to the specialist IDVA. The LGBT+ IDVA accepts referrals from all GM locality area.

- 2.4 Professional judgement: if a professional has serious concerns about a victim’s situation, they should refer the case to MARAC. There will be occasions where the context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly. This could reflect extreme levels of fear, cultural barriers to disclosure, immigration issues or language barriers particularly in cases of ‘honour’-based violence. This judgement would be based on the professional’s experience and/or the victim’s perception of their risk regardless of the DASH score.

| | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 3 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | | Review date: April 2023 |

- 2.5 A referral to the local MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) should be made following the above DASH-RIC guidance but by also applying Professional judgement (see above). Before referring into MARAC, the Case Manager will check if there is a current MARAC already in place for the victim.

The aims of MARAC are.

- To safeguard victims of domestic abuse
- To manage perpetrators behaviour
- Information sharing and action planning
- Make links with all other safeguarding processes i.e.) Children’s services
- Representation of victim’s voice and views
- Safeguard professionals

The Case Manager will attend the MARAC meeting. For further information regarding the MARAC please use the following Safe Lives link

<https://safelives.org.uk/practice-support/resources-marac-meetings>

- 2.6 Target Hardening – IVH take a victim centred approach to supporting victims to remain living in their home, where it is safe to do so. The Case Manager will arrange a ‘target hardening’ property assessment to ensure the property is made safer and deters any adverse perpetrator behaviour. These may include sash jammers, security lights, extra bolts, chain locks, window alarms, window locks and fire-proof letter boxes.
- 2.7 Where there is an identified risk to staff safely working with the victim then appropriate safety measures must be implemented i.e.) paired visits, visit with police, visit away from the property etc.
- 2.8 The Case Manager may also request a property marker via GMP, so that the DAV risks are clear to the police in an emergency and may result in a quicker emergency response time. Property markers are requested via the Public Protection Unit.

3.0 SUPPORT

- 3.1 IVH take a victim focused approach to supporting our customers who experience DAV. IVH use a harm reduction, person centred, trauma-informed approach to support all victims of DAV. IVH work within wider Community Safety Partnerships across GM to ensure appropriate support is offered to all victims, whilst risks are identified, understood, and managed.

- 3.2 Services that can provide support include:

- In-house Tenancy Sustainment Team
- In-house Rent Support Team
- In-house Community Co-ordinators
- Local Authorities
- Independent organisations including charities and specialist support groups, i.e.) Karma Nirvana – Honour based violence and forced marriage, Women’s Aid
- Health & Social care teams
- Other housing providers

| | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 4 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | | Review date: April 2023 |

- Police (including victim support)
- Refuges and outreach services, i.e.) Fort Alice

3.3 All victims of DAV should be given information for their local specialist DAV support agencies and understand how when and how they can contact these services. Referrals into specialist DAV support services should be made with the consent of the victim or in accordance with the above DASH-RIC/MARAC referral process.

3.4 All high-risk DAV victims will be allocated an IDVA via the MARAC process.

3.5 Children are victims of DAV regardless of whether they experience the abuse directly or indirectly. All DAV cases involving children should be referred into the local authority Children’s Safeguarding team, regardless of consent.

3.6 IVH Tenancy Sustainment Team

Where a victim of domestic abuse requires additional tenancy support and gives consent, a referral to the IVH Tenancy Sustainment Team will be made raising a referral via action code TEN-1STSUS via QL. This will generate into a referral for a Tenancy Sustainment Coach who will open a Tenancy Sustainment case.

3.7 Support with Joint Tenancies

If any tenancy is a joint tenancy, then both the tenants will have joint responsibility to adhere to the terms of the tenancy and will be liable for rent and any incurred rent arrears. Both the victim and perpetrator should be advised to seek independent legal advice in relation to their tenancy. They will also be given the contact details of their local Citizens Advice, Welfare Rights, and the local authority housing options team. IVH will support the victim to retain possession of the tenancy where it is appropriate and safe to do so.

Any amendments to any tenancy should be victim focused and should ensure the safety of all involved all amendments are done in line with other policies and procedures set out by the association.

Financial Support

Further financial support is available to DAV victims in relation to managing household finances, applying for benefits, and accessing specialist debt advice, if appropriate. If a victim needs to temporarily live away from their home, the Case Manager will inform the Rent Support Officer and seek specific tenancy advice/support in relation to rent payments. It may require support to make an application for housing benefit, discretionary housing payments, Council Tax Support, Universal Credit, Child Benefit etc. External grant funding may be sought dependent upon the victim’s individual circumstances. Each case will be assessed on its own merit with appropriate additional finances support offered.

3.8 IVH work with victims from diverse backgrounds. We recognise that some victims will require additional support to overcome barriers for us to effectively support them.

3.9 Language & Culture

| | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 5 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | | Review date: April 2023 |

All IVH employees have access to Language Line & NRCPD registered sign language interpreters.

Language translation, braille and sign language support will be provided to ensure there is effective communication and understanding.

<https://signhealth.org.uk/with-deaf-people/domestic-abuse/> - BSL video toolkits

<https://www.nrcpd.org.uk/> - Find a registered NRCPD sign language interpreter

Family members, friends and children of the victim will not be asked to provide language support during support meetings. This may prevent the victim's voice been fully heard and understood and risks may go undetected. The CM will not conduct sensitive meetings in front of children as it is inappropriate for children to be present during sensitive conversations relating to DAV.

The Case Manager will check if the victim requires a same sex translator/interpreter and adhere to this request if it is required. When booking a translator/interpreter the CM will consider if it is appropriate to meet in person or conduct the meeting by telephone. The CM will also consider the victim's cultural background, religious beliefs/non-belief and seek to find a good translator match for the victim. The CM will book out an appropriate length of time, with the option to extend the meeting should the victim make a disclosure and further time is required. The CM will ensure the translator is provided with an understanding of their role and the purpose of the meeting, in advance of it taking place. Providing clear instruction and guidance to the translator/interpreter seeks to avoid any mistakes or misunderstandings occurring (i.e.) where there is no direct word translation, the translator MUST advise the CM. This will allow the CM to either rephrase, ask for alternative word options or provide an explanation of the meaning of the word. Culturally specific phrases, similes and metaphors are not to be used during language translation/interpretation as these can cause confusion and misunderstandings.

Case Manager's will explore victim's culture, beliefs, and non-beliefs during the initial stages of working with a victim. This will enable any culturally specific practises and beliefs which are important to the victim to be understood, so that the CM is respectful and person-centred in their approach with the victim.

Where there are culturally specific practises are illegal and abusive under UK law the CM will be unsure this is understood by both the victim and perpetrator and that appropriate action is taken to keep the victim safe. Where the CM suspects that a victim, child or other may be at risk of harm of cultural practises e.g., Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour-based violence, Exorcism practise, Forced Marriage, underage marriage, these will be immediately reported to the Police and other appropriate statutory services without delay.

3.10 Gender

IVH recognises that victims of domestic abuse are predominantly women. However, men are also the victims of domestic abuse, but may not report or reach out for support as frequently as women. IVH also recognises that gender is fluid and that victims may identify as transgender, non-binary or by other gender terminologies.

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 6 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | Review date: April 2023 | |

The Case Manager will check with all victims which pronoun they use, and which gender they identify with. The Case Manager will use gender neutral language and refer to victims and perpetrators by name, rather than by their gender. Where a victim has legally changed their name or prefers to be known by another name IVH will ensure that they use the victims preferred name.

IVH recognises that traditional gender structured barriers exist within some external DAV support services i.e.) the Freedom Programme. IVH recognise that transgender and non-binary DAV victims may want to access similar but alternatively structured programmes and support. The CM will ensure that all LGBTQI+ victims are aware of the LGBT+ Centre DAV Support services and Freedom Programme which focuses on healthy relationships but does not focus on gender and sex.

Further information and contact details can be found via the link:

<https://hsm.manchester.gov.uk/kb5/manchester/directory/service.page?id=kmMCSy239Co&directorychannel=2-6>

3.11 LGBTQI+

IVH recognises that some of the external DAV structures that we may operate within are culturally heteronormative. Processes and screening tools such as the standard DASH-RIC form does not always meet the needs of all our customers and the outcome scores can appear lower for victims within the LGBTQI+ community. LGBTQI+ victims are less likely to score 14+ as the DASH form contains questions that are specifically designed to be used to support cis heterosexual women. IVH will use the 'ROAR' appendix 1 form in addition to the standard DASH-RIC for LGBTQI+ victims to ensure fairness and equality for all our customers.

3.12 Vulnerable Adults/Disabilities

IVH recognises that some victim's options and choices may appeared be limited in relation to accessing DAV support services and staying safe. Victims may have other vulnerabilities and disabilities that impacts their ability to independently access services. The CM will seek to identify any additional support measures that are required to support vulnerable/disabled victims of DAV. The CM will ensure that adequate support resources and provisions are provided to ensure that fair and equal access to services is provided.

3.13 Older People

On average, older victims experience abuse for twice as long before seeking help as those aged under 61 and nearly half have a disability. Older clients are underrepresented among domestic abuse services. Generational attitudes towards relationships mean some older victims might accept the abuse as "the way it's always been". When working with older people the Case Manager will explore with the victim some of their wider contextual concerns to fully assess their support needs and make extra considerations as to potential barriers that may prevent an older person engaging with support i.e.) generational attitudes and stigma, traditional roles and previous societal of acceptance 'putting up this the abuse', potential external family pressures, caring responsibilities, mobility issues, illness, frailty, detrimental financial impact, memory problems and fluctuating capacity. The Case Manager will work in partnership with Adult and Older Persons services to ensure older victims needs are fully understood and that they are supported to access appropriate services and stay safe.

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 7 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | Review date: April 2023 | |

Older women may be from a time where it was not socially acceptable to talk about problems in their relationships; where women's roles were confined to the home and divorce or separation were taboo.

<https://safelives.org.uk/spotlight-1-older-people-and-domestic-abuse> - Further Older Persons Guidance & Advice

3.14 Children & Young People

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 now recognises children as victims of domestic abuse. Historically children have often been the hidden victims of domestic abuse. Children who see, hear, and witness domestic abuse are adversely affected. Children's voices can go unheard and unseen. The long-term emotional impact of 'Adverse Childhood Experiences' (ACE's) can negatively impact on the mental and physical development of the child into their adulthood. Ultimately ACE's can contribute to a reduce life-expectancy for that child in later life. The Case Manager will ensure that any DAV cases involving children are referred into Children Services within each GM locality. The Case Manager will work in partnership with Children's Service to ensure that child's voice and wishes are heard, their daily experience is known by services, and the impact of the domestic abuse for that child is understood and acted upon.

Young people in the 16 to 17 age group can also be victims of domestic violence and abuse. IVH works in partnership with Youth/Young Persons Services GM wide to offer additional emotional, financial, housing, and educational/employment support. Young people to come forward and get the support they need, through a helpline or specialist service support.

- **AVA project** website at avaproject.org.uk
- **NSPCC** website at www.nspcc.org.uk
- **ATL** website at www.atl.org.uk

4.0 Training

4.1 All frontline colleagues receive the following training:

- Basic domestic abuse training.
- Have a good understanding and awareness of domestic abuse.
- Can recognise signs of domestic abuse and are able to report incidents of domestic abuse.
- An understanding that reports of domestic abuse can be made via many differs sources, including through other parties or witnesses.

4.2 All CMs responsible for dealing with domestic abuse cases should:

- Have the appropriate specialist training in dealing with domestic abuse victims and alleged perpetrators and be trained in completing the DASH risk assessment.
- Be given regular and up to date training in-line with changes in legislation and changes in practice within Local Authorities on effectively dealing with domestic incidents.
- Be able to competently complete an inhouse vulnerability risk assessment and make referrals where required to relevant organisations.

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 8 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | Review date: April 2023 | |

- Recognise that LGBTQI+ victims can face additional barriers to accessing DAV support and the standard DASH-RIC can give lower scores for a victim who is at high risk.

4.2 We will ensure that there is:

- Access to GM MARAC SharePoint contact in place with MARAC leads across all Local Authorities, to check if our customers have been referred to MARAC.
- At least two colleagues who can comprehensively check and assist colleagues with completing MARAC DASH risk assessments.
- At least one domestic violence champion available to offer support and assistance to colleagues dealing with domestic abuse cases.

5.0 Tools

5.1 In some cases it may be suitable for IVH to take legal action against a perpetrator or seek the assistance other statutory agencies such as the police, probation, and children’s services to use a range legal intervention measures to disrupt and deter abusive, harassing, and intimidating behaviour.

5.2 Legal tools

Injunction orders, including:

- A Non-Molestation Order
- An Occupation Order
- Restraining Order
- Anti-social Behaviour Injunction
- Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DPVO)
- Bail conditions
- License conditions
- Prohibited Steps Order
- Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (‘Clare’s Law’)
- Child Protection Plans
- Supervised contact around accessing any children
- Care Orders/Partial Interim Care Orders
- Demotion of Tenancy
- Closure Order or Partial Closure Order
- Notice Seeking Possession
- Eviction
-

6.0 Review and Feedback

6.1 Each case will be reviewed in line with our Domestic Abuse Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Complaints policy.

6.2 The Tenancy Services Manager will be responsible for spot checking cases to ensure consistency and efficiency in dealing with cases. Any issues raised will be addressed and relevant training offered, where required.

| | | |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 9 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | Review date: April 2023 | |

- 6.3 Where legal action is being considered with a DAV case, the Case Manager will seek legal advice prior to making decisions on dealing with cases of domestic abuse and violence.
- 6.4 During case closure victims will be asked for feedback in relation to the support and actions IVH have taken. Feedback can be given verbally or sent via email to with the Case Manager or the Tenancy Services Manager.

7.0 Confidentiality

- 7.1 Confidentiality when dealing with cases of domestic abuse is very important. Information relating to DAV cases includes personal and special category data. Victims should be advised as to how their data will be handled, stored, and shared. No information should be shared with any other person or organisation, including referral agencies, without the consent or permission being granted, unless there is a serious risk or concerns of serious harm or risk to children or vulnerable adults. In these cases, our safeguarding policy and procedure should be followed.
- 7.2 When a management move or forwarding address is given or known to the association this should not be shared with any other person or organisation without the consent of the victim.
- 7.3 All colleagues should be aware of the various methods perpetrators will use to access personal information about their victims, this can include requesting information direct from the organisation in several different forms. Colleagues must be vigilant and aware that victims of DAV may be coerced, controlled, and forced to give IVH permission to speak to the perpetrator. IVH colleagues have the right to refuse to share information if they suspect the victim is being forced to give permission to disclose information.

| | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 10 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | | Review date: April 2023 |

‘ROAR’
Stonewall Housings
LGBT* Domestic Abuse Advocacy Service

(Pilot) LGBT* professional judgement special considerations checklist –

This pilot document is a set of LGBT* specific ‘special considerations’ to be used in-conjunction with the SafeLives DASH-RIC. Its purpose is to inform your professional judgement when assessing the risk associated with domestic abuse or HBV experienced by LGBT* people. ‘Yes’ answers indicate a heightened risk for consideration under professional judgement only.

(Please do not add to the DASH-RIC score.)

| Organisation | Client Reference Number |
|--|-------------------------|
| Date of assessment: | |
| Gender | |
| Is your gender the same as that assigned at birth? | |
| Do you identify as intersex or non-binary? | |
| Preferred pronoun | |
| Sexuality | |

Copyright ©Stonewall Housing
12.03.14

NB: Trans* or T* is an umbrella term to describe a broad spectrum of gender identities that include transgender, intersex, gender queer or non-binary people.

| | Yes (Tick) | Comments |
|--|---------------|----------|
| | | |

| | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 11 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | | Review date: April 2023 |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | Is this your first relationship since identifying as an LGB and/or T person? | | |
| 2 | <p>Has (.....) threatened to out or has outed you to family, work, children, friends, education, services, religious or other communities regarding:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your gender identity</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your sexuality</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your HIV status</p> | | |
| 3 | Has (.....) any history of hate crime/incidents, harassment, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic views or criminal charges related to the above? | | |
| 4 | <p>Has (.....) threatened to withdraw/ disrupt contact with children, due to your ...</p> <p>Sexuality?</p> <p>Gender identity?</p> | | |
| 5 | Do you use non prescription drugs/chems (G, Tina, Methadrone etc) alcohol? | | |

| | | | |
|----|--|--|--|
| | <p>Do you have concerns about consent when using drugs/chems/ alcohol?</p> <p>Does (...)coerce you into using chems/ alcohol?</p> | | |
| 6 | <p>Do you feel that you are at risk of contracting HIV , HEP C or any other STI?</p> | | |
| 7 | <p>Does (.....) try to prevent you from expressing your gender identity or refuse to relate to you in your chosen gender identity?</p> | | |
| 8 | <p>Does (.....) try to prevent you from accessing essential medications, surgery, services or other medical treatments?</p> | | |
| 9 | <p>As an LGBT* person do you fear or have you experienced 'honour based' violence or forced marriage as a result of your family/ religion/ culture/communities beliefs regarding sexuality/ gender identity?</p> | | |
| 10 | <p>Does () identify as</p> | | |

| | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--|
| | Lesbian | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Gay | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Bisexual | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Heterosexual | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | | |
| | Trans | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Intersex | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Non-binary | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Cisgender | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | | |
| | Is there more than one person involved in the abuse? | | |
| 11 | Does (.....) blame the abuse on your sexuality or gender identity? | | |
| 12 | Have you ever experienced or been threatened with: conversion therapies / corrective rape / exorcisms/ talisman/ corrective behaviours | | |
| 13 | Has (.....) threatened you with being taken out of the country to a place where there is an increased risk due to your sexuality/gender identity? | | |
| | Is a report to the Home Office a concern? | | |

| | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--|
| 14 | Has (.....) attempted to isolate you from support? | | |
| 15 | As an LGB and or T person, are you reluctant to approach services? | | |
| | Or have you been refused access to services or inappropriately referred? | | |
| 16 | Do you have concerns about safety online- by (.....)? i.e. FB/Twitter/Grindr/Gaydar/girls /trans friendly | | |
| 17 | Do other characteristics also feature in the abuse you experience or make you more susceptible? For example: | | |
| | Age | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Class/financial disadvantage | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Disability | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Ethnicity | | |
| | Gender | | |
| | Immigration Status | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Pregnancy/childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Marriage/civil partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| | Religion/belief | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| SafeLives | |
| DASH RIC Score | |

Has this case been taken to MARAC?

Were there gaps in service provision available

Further Comments/ Information

**Created by LGBT DAF and the Roar Project, part of Stonewall Housing 12.03.14
Copyright ©Stonewall Housing**

| | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 16 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | | Review date: April 2023 |

‘Permission granted to reproduce this document for assessment, evaluation, and training purposes.
Commercial copying, hiring or lending is prohibited.’



| | | |
|---|-------------------------|---------------|
| Domestic Abuse Procedure | Author: Laura Norris | Page 17 of 17 |
| Approved by/when: Andrew White/March 22 | Review date: April 2023 | |