

Policy: Domestic Abuse

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Responsible Executive:	Jill Maddison		
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Related Policies	• Safeguarding and Protection of Adults at Risk Policy • Safeguarding for Children and Young Adults Policy and Procedure • Bullying and Harassment Policy • Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy • Data Sharing Policy • Data Protection Policy		
Appendices	• Appendix one - Types of domestic abuse • Appendix two - Advice and support organisations		

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1. Introduction and rationale to policy

- 1.1 Domestic abuse is a serious crime that often takes place in the home. It impacts on the safety of individuals, households, and communities. Housing for Women (H4W) believe that domestic abuse presents one of the highest risks to personal safety therefore we will deal with all reports of domestic abuse as an emergency.
- 1.2 We believe that our tenants and householders should not live in fear of violence or abuse. We take domestic abuse seriously and are committed to providing a sensitive and confidential response to anyone approaching us for assistance in cases of domestic abuse. We will treat all incidents of domestic abuse reported to us as high priority.
- 1.3 We will work with survivors and victims and respect their wishes at all times and take action where we have the power to do so.
- 1.4 This policy outlines the approach H4W will take to support residents who are involved in incidents that are considered as domestic abuse.

2. Policy Statement (including Scope and Aims)

- 2.1 This Policy relates to all Housing for Women (HFW) tenants, staff of HFW and stakeholders. It also concerns all our partners, formal agencies, and the wider community within the geographic areas within which we operate our services. We have a separate policy for colleagues experiencing abuse in their personal lives. When we deal with reports of domestic abuse, we will also refer to our Safeguarding Policies for Adults at Risk and for Young Children and Adults.
- 2.2 This policy aims to provide a framework to support staff to identify and respond to domestic abuse. It addresses adults and young people who are experiencing (or have experienced) domestic abuse, including perpetrators of domestic abuse. It also covers children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse. This policy will draw on United Kingdom legislation and policy to give practitioners confidence that they are following best practice. This includes the Human Rights Act 1998, Children Act 2004, Care Act 2014 and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. It also embraces recognised best practice for adult and children social care.

The policy aims to improve the safety of our tenants and service users affected by domestic abuse, and to prevent further incidents by encouraging early reporting and rapid response of reported incidents. This policy has been developed to:

- ensure that residents and service users experiencing domestic violence can approach H4W with confidence knowing that staff will be sympathetic and supportive.
- establish close working relationships with local authorities and external support agencies.
- treat all reports of domestic violence seriously and as a matter of high priority.

- put residents in contact with appropriate agencies that can help them in providing specialist advice and support.

We will treat all who experience domestic abuse with respect and dignity, without judgement.

3. Definitions

3.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as the following:

The behaviour of a person towards another person is “domestic abuse” if:

- all parties are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
- the behaviour is abusive.

The behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following

- physical or sexual abuse.
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse or financial abuse
- psychological, emotional, or other abuse; whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct

The following are categories of harm or abuse relating to domestic abuse (but not exhaustive):

Physical -includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, being locked in a room, inappropriate sanctions or force-feeding, inappropriate methods of restraint, and unlawfully depriving a person of their liberty

Psychological or emotional - threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, rejection, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, indifference, harassment, verbal abuse (including shouting or abusive language), cyber bullying, isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks.

Financial or economic - theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits. Acquire, use, or maintain money, obtain goods or services.

Sexual - rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, sexual exploitation, sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Controlling behaviour - 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.

Coercive behaviour - is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten a person.' This includes a range of behaviour which makes a person reliant and/or dependent on another person by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacity for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour. This can also include forced marriage and so-called 'honour violence.'

- 3.2 Children as victims of domestic abuse applies where behaviour of a person towards another person is domestic abuse and a child:
- sees or hears or experiences the effect of domestic abuse and is related to the person(s)
'Related to' in this context:
 - the person is a parent of or has parental responsibility (as in the Children Act 1989) for, the child, or the child and the person are relatives.

Appendix one provides further details relating to the definition of abuse as defined within the Domestic Abuse Act (2021)

4. Policy

- 4.1 Domestic abuse is an abuse of human rights, and in cases of physical and sexual abuse a criminal offence. It often escalates over time in frequency and severity and affects the victim's mental, emotional, and physical well-being. H4W will always adopt a client centred approach when responding to reports of domestic violence.

Many people have difficulty reporting domestic violence because of the fear they are living in, because of the stigma attached to it, or the fear of not being believed. H4W will always begin by accepting as accurate what they are told by the survivor/victim reporting abuse.

We recognise that leaving an abusive partner can take a long time, and many survivors will leave and return on several occasions before leaving for good. H4W staff will be non-judgmental if an individual decides to return to an abusive partner, and they will be aware that leaving can be a very hard thing to do.

H4W will ensure that all colleagues receive training to support those experiencing domestic abuse, that is commensurate with their role in the organisation. All staff will be aware of the action to take and to whom concerns should be raised and escalated as required.

4.2 Trauma informed approach

H4W will employ a trauma-informed approach to supporting those experiencing domestic abuse. We understand that our response requires our staff to recognise the signs and impact of trauma and to view people's difficulties through a 'trauma lens', recognise the increased likelihood of

disengagement from services and the need for trauma-specific services that take into account the need for relational trust and collaboration to be at the centre of intervention. Trauma-informed practice seeks to address the barriers that those affected by trauma can experience when accessing care and services and the role of such practice in early intervention and prevention can be crucial.

This approach will ensure that:

- staff have the ability to receive disclosures of abuse and respond to such disclosures in a supportive, reassuring, and appropriate manner
- staff respond effectively to guarantee compliance with wider multi agency response to domestic abuse

5. Procedures

5.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with any relevant procedures and guidance notes to meet its aims. The following guidance relates to our approach to support those experiencing domestic abuse that are connected to our services.

5.2 Risk factors within domestic abuse

The following are a set of high-risk factors that staff must consider.

- Survivors/victims perception of risk of harm: any tendency to underestimate the harm to them, children, and others.
- separation including child contact: leaving an abusive relationship increases the likelihood of intimate homicide. Many incidents are related to child custody disputes.
- pregnancy or new birth (child under 18 months): abuse can start or escalate during pregnancy and following birth.
- escalation or repeated violence: domestic abuse victims are more likely to become repeat victims with increases in violence.
- community issues and isolation: needs differ amongst ethnic minority survivors/victims, LGBTQ+, newly arrived communities, asylum seekers, older people, people with disabilities, and travellers This may be because of perceived racism, language, culture, insecure immigration status or accessing relevant support services. Be aware of potential forced marriages and honour-based violence in those communities that try to restore their mistaken honour and respect.
- stalking, this includes persistent and consistent calling, texting, sending letters and following the person. Stalking and physical assault are significantly associated with murder and attempted murder. This is not just about physical violence but also coercive control and jealous surveillance.
- coercively control and excessive jealous behaviour: complete control of the victim's activities and extreme jealousy are associated with serious violence and homicide. Perpetrators may try and control professionals.
- mental health, substance misuse: these are not the cause of abuse, but could be contributing factors.

- child abuse, this could be actual or witnessed (it is important that this is reported to the appropriate services at the time of disclosure)
- history of animal abuse, there is a link between animal abuse and domestic abuse.
- suicide and homicide, threats of suicide by the perpetrator have a direct link to homicide in domestic abusive relationships.

5.3 **Methods and approach**

The following sections will outline H4W methods and approach to supporting people who have presented as experiencing domestic abuse.

Asking the question

Individuals presenting to our staff will have indicators of possible domestic abuse. Some residents/service users may show clear indicators of possible domestic violence or abuse, others may not, however staff are aware of potential risk indicators.

The question about domestic abuse should be asked routinely, as part of our assessment process, if safe to do so. Survivors/Victims of domestic abuse are often too afraid or uncomfortable to raise the issue of abuse themselves. Staff should be prepared to ask questions sensitively, but directly. The outcome of this question must be documented as part of the H4W support and risk assessment process. Where staff are unsure, they should seek assistance from the line manager or the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Survivor/victim centred approach

Every effort will be made to ensure that those subjected to domestic abuse are dealt with in a sensitive and sympathetic manner by officers taking a non-judgmental approach.

Key considerations include:

- For meetings to be in the location of their choice (subject to satisfying any concerns about staff safety).
- Meetings to be without children present (if necessary, another staff member can supervise children).
- Translation service being available.
- Survivors/victims may have a friend or advocate present at any meeting.

The survivor/victim centred approach means that we will not interview alleged perpetrators to hear their account of events as we would for other types of anti-social behavior.

Applying a person-centered approach also means that we will assist the survivor/victim to reach a decision which best secures their safety. Housing for Women will do this by reviewing the accommodation, and enabling the level of support the survivor/victim wants

H4W will not usually charge survivors/victims for the damage to their property where the damage was caused by the perpetrator. To send a clear message and deter domestic abuse, H4W will take the strongest possible actions against individuals committing domestic abuse. This may

include seeking possession where they are a tenant or supporting the resident to take legal action.

Staff Awareness

H4W recognises that a resident's housing association may be their first point of contact regarding domestic violence; with this in mind, we will work to ensure that Housing Officers have the skills and knowledge to effectively manage reports of domestic violence and to recognise signs suggesting that a resident may be suffering from domestic violence.

Staff must consider the possibility that cases of reported noise nuisance or other forms of anti-social behavior could be due to the existence of domestic violence. Support Agencies advise that many cases initially recorded as noise nuisance or other anti-social behavior have turned out to be cases of domestic violence.

Risk assessment (DASH)

If a disclosure of domestic abuse is made, a staff member who has received the appropriate training must complete a domestic abuse, stalking, harassment, and honour-based violence (DASH) risk checklist.

Any action taken by staff in respect of domestic abuse will only be done with the consent of the individual unless the DASH identifies a significant risk to the individual or a child's health and wellbeing or the individual lacks capacity to consent.

The DASH risk identification tool is a checklist for staff to help them identify those individuals who are at high risk of harm and whose cases should be referred to a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) in order to manage their risk. Revealing to a woman that they are at high risk of serious harm or homicide can be frightening and overwhelming, equally, explaining that someone is not currently high risk needs to be managed carefully to ensure that they do not feel that their situation is being minimised. Importantly, the checklist is just a tool and guide and not a substitute for professional judgement.

Where staff are unsure, they must seek advice from their line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Staff must also ensure that all H4W processes are completed in line with support and risk assessment procedures.

Multi agency approach

Managing reports of domestic violence requires a multi-agency approach. H4W will ensure that survivors/victims of domestic violence are placed in contact with appropriate agencies for specialist advice and support with their consent. The following list of relevant agencies is not exhaustive:

- Refuge : www.refuge.org.uk
- Woman's aid : www.womensaid.org.uk
- Free 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247
- Local Authority Homeless Persons Unit
- The Police
- Social Services

- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs).

H4W staff can enquire with the relevant local authority to make a referral to the appropriate MARAC, where a range of local service providers, authorities and advice agencies exchange information to assist in planning support packages for the victims of domestic violence.

Multi agency risk assessment conference (MARAC)

Domestic abuse incidents that are assessed as being 'high risk' using the DASH will usually be addressed through the MARAC. MARAC's are meetings where agencies share information about high-risk domestic abuse survivors/victims. A risk focussed, safety plan is drawn up to help support the survivor/victim and try to reduce the risk to them and any children. MARAC works on the assumption that no single agency or individual can see the complete picture of the survivor/victim, but all may have insights that are crucial to their safety. The individual does not attend the meeting but is represented by an independent domestic violence advocate who speaks on their behalf. H4W staff will usually be invited to contribute to the conference.

Aims of MARAC:

- to share information to increase the safety, health and wellbeing of survivors/victims and their children
- to jointly construct and implement a risk management plan that provides professional support to all those at risk and to reduce the risk of harm.
- to reduce repeat victimisation
- to improve agency accountability
- to identify those situations that indicate a need for child protection procedures to be initiated.
- improve support for survivors/victim's involved in high-risk domestic abuse cases.
- A number of agencies are represented on the MARAC including police, social care, drug and alcohol services, domestic abuse services, education professionals, National Probation Service, Mental Health Teams, and Youth Offending team.

Under no circumstances should the perpetrator of domestic abuse be informed if a case involving them has been referred to MARAC. If unsure about the circumstances of a particular case, staff must seek guidance relating to MARAC. H4W staff will comply with the guidance from MARAC when supporting a resident who has been referred for multi-agency support via the conference.

Temporary accommodation/possession action

The general policy guideline is that H4W cannot create two tenancies out of one. In cases of domestic violence, it may be necessary to house the person fleeing violence and then take actions against the perpetrator to regain possession of the joint home. Such action must be agreed by the Housing Manager.

We will work with the local authority and specialist agencies, to organise emergency accommodation if they do not want to return to the property because of fear for their own safety. A survivor/victim living in temporary accommodation will not lose any priority which has been awarded for domestic violence.

Although H4W does not own any emergency accommodation, if the tenant does not feel safe in his/her house, we will put the resident/service user in contact with a Local Authority or a refuge.

We will consider all cases on an individual basis and act in line with relevant legislation and housing regulation.

Perpetrators of domestic abuse

Housing for Women will support survivors/victims to take legal action against perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse and help them access advice about their options.

Where the perpetrator is a H4W resident or household member, H4W may initiate legal action against the perpetrator in accordance with the organisation's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

Where the perpetrator is not a resident or a household member, H4W will refer the survivor/victim to access appropriate support to increase their safety and seek advice on taking legal action.

Prevention

To prevent domestic abuse, H4W will raise awareness and encourage reporting through training, campaigns, and promotion through our communication channels. H4W will make new residents aware of relationship breakdown policies and the implications of joint tenancies.

5.4 Information sharing

Domestic violence disclosure scheme

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), often referred to as "Clare's Law" sets out procedures that could be used by the Police in relation to disclosure of information about previous violent and abusive offending by a potentially violent individual to their partner where this may help protect them from further violent and abusive offending

DVDS is a Police led scheme which has two procedures for disclosing information:

- Right to ask, is triggered by a member of the public applying to the police for a disclosure.
- Right to know, is triggered by the police making a proactive decision to disclose information to protect a potential victim.

Where H4W staff believe that a person is at risk of harm and could be eligible under the scheme, they may refer them to the police via 101.

Confidentiality

Maintaining strict confidentiality is central to H4W's handling of reports of domestic violence. Tenants must feel assured that an abuser will not become aware of their whereabouts if they decide to leave the relationship, or that they have been obtaining advice and support if they are still living with an abuser. To this end, H4W will not give out information about anyone to a third

party without the tenant's written consent, and H4W will not contact the victim to follow up contact made with the housing organisation, unless the victim has given prior permission to do so.

No contact will be made with the perpetrator unless the survivor/victim has given H4W their consent to do so. If contact has been agreed, the resident/service user must be informed of H4W's intention to make contact before doing so on every occasion. The survivor/victim must agree with the date/time that any contact is to take place, including when any letters are going to be sent or telephone calls made.

Safeguarding

There are some circumstances in which we are required by law to disclose information given to us, for example in cases involving safeguarding children or vulnerable adults, or for the purposes of the prevention and detection of crime. We will discuss this obligation with the person making the disclosure where possible. Where we are under a duty to disclose safeguarding concerns, we will refer the matter to the relevant agency in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy and our Data Sharing Policy.

Data Protection

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act 1998 (amendment) order 2004:

- All personal and sensitive organisational information, however received, is treated as confidential.
- This includes anything of a personal nature that is not a matter of public record about a resident, client, applicant, staff, or Board trustee.

Sensitive information:

- Officers will ensure that they only involve other agencies and share information with the consent of the resident concerned.
- Unless: the information is necessary for the protection of young children and vulnerable adults H4W is required to by law, for example Housing for Women cannot withhold information if being questioned by the Police during a criminal investigation.

In the case of joint tenancies, the perpetrator may have the right to access the contents of the tenancy file. Staff must ensure that it is not possible for confidential information from the survivor/victim to be seen by the perpetrator.

Any file notes or letters that are confidential must be clearly labelled or held separately in a confidential section of the file. Information will be shared on a "need to know" basis.

6. Responsibilities and accountabilities

6.1 Role responsibilities

Chief executive

The chief executive retains overall responsibility for the development and implementation of H4W policies.

Director of Supported Housing.

Designated lead for safeguarding has responsibility for this policy.

Ensure all staff under their supervision have access to awareness training on domestic abuse.

Ensure that appropriate staff are trained to undertake domestic abuse stalking and 'honour' based abuse (violence)(DASH) risk assessments.

Ensure that safer recruitment practices are employed in the recruitment of all staff.

Director of Supported Housing and Supported Housing Managers

Will provide expert advice, guidance, and leadership regarding DA in the context of children, young people, and adults at risk.

Multi agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) representatives

Those with appropriate training will be responsible for attending the scheduled MARAC, soliciting and disseminating information in support of the process and offering appropriate advice to Staff regarding disclosures of domestic abuse that may form the basis of a MARAC referral.

Line managers

Ensure all staff under their supervision have access to awareness training on domestic abuse and that domestic abuse is discussed within supervision.

ALL staff have responsibility for compliance with this policy.

7. References

The following legislation underpins this policy.

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Children's Act 1989 and 2004
- Family Law Act 1996
- Housing Act 1996 and 1998
- Protection from Harassment 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – Section 115
- Every Child Matters Framework (2003)
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 S145/S149
- Domestic Violence, Crime & Victims Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Group Act 2006

- The Health & Social Care Act 2008
- Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Prevent duty guidance
- Serious crime act 2015

8. Further information

Director of Supported Housing, Jill Maddison, jill.maddison@h4w.co.uk
Tel: 020 7501 6152, 07483 017193.

Governance Manager – Theodora Ugo, Theodora.Ugo@h4w.co.uk
Tel: 020 3752 3573

Appendix one

Types of domestic abuse as defined by the Domestic Abuse Act (2021)

To deliver an effective response, professionals and agencies should be aware of the different types of domestic abuse.

Intimate partner abuse

- Domestic abuse most commonly takes place in intimate partner relationships, including same sex relationships. Intimate relationships can take different forms, partners do not need to be married or in a civil partnership and abuse can occur between non-cohabiting intimate partners. As with all forms of abuse, abuse in intimate relationships can vary in severity and frequency, ranging from a one-off occurrence to a continued pattern of behaviour.
- Abuse can continue or intensify when a relationship has ended or is in the process of ending. This can be a very dangerous time for a victim including an increased risk to their physical safety. It is a highly critical period for ensuring support for victims, as they may consider returning to perpetrators during the period immediately after fleeing or ending the relationship. Separation can raise both the likelihood and consequences of risk because of the perpetrator's perceived lack of control.
- Post-separation abuse may involve a range of abusive behaviour. It may be facilitated by technology and without effective intervention it can be ongoing and may escalate.

Teenage relationship abuse

Young people can experience domestic abuse within their relationships. Teenagers may not self-identify as victims. They may perceive their relationships to be 'casual,' for example engaging in multiple romantic and sexual partners through dating apps. Those who engage in abusive behaviour may seek to minimise or deny the abuse by stating that they were not in a relationship.

Teenage relationship abuse is not a term that is defined by the 2021 Act, or elsewhere in law. However, if the victim and perpetrator are at least 16 years old, abuse in their relationship can fall under the statutory definition of domestic abuse. Whilst young people under the age of 16 can experience abuse in a relationship, it would be considered child abuse as a matter of law. Abusive behaviours by one young person toward another, where each are aged between 16 and 18 could be both child abuse and domestic abuse as a matter of law. Ultimately, in responding to cases of abuse involving those under 18, child safeguarding procedures should be followed.

Abusive behaviours within relationships between young people can include similar incidents or patterns of behaviours as adult relationships. For teenagers in particular, abuse to harass or control victims can occur through using technology, this includes social media, or location-based tracking apps, such as Find My Friends. Young people's lives are often heavily online-based, and perpetrators of abuse may exploit this, demanding access to passwords and monitoring online activity. Young people may also experience intimate image abuse within their relationships, including threats to expose intimate images.

Teenage relationship abuse often occurs outside of a domestic setting. Victims may feel that domestic abuse occurs only between adults who are cohabiting or married. Teenage victims may find it difficult to identify abusive behaviour, for instance, controlling or jealous behaviour may be misconstrued as love.

Domestic abuse in teenage relationships can be just as severe and has the potential to be as life threatening as abuse in adult relationships. Young people who experience domestic abuse do so at a particularly vulnerable point in their lives. They may experience a complex transition from childhood to adulthood which impacts on behaviour and decision making. It may impact on the way that they respond to abuse or if and how they engage with services.

Due to the stigma attached to LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans) identities, young people from the LGBT community may lack relevant and accurate information on healthy relationships, which may inform behaviour and decision making. LGBT young people may face unique obstacles to seeking help, especially in a context of a first relationship or when first coming out as they may be unable to confide in their peers or family, owing to the reaction they might receive due to their sexuality or gender identity.

Abuse by family members

Domestic abuse may also be perpetrated by a family member: by children, grandchildren, parents, those with “parental responsibility,” siblings, or extended families including in-laws. The definition of “personally connected” makes reference to relatives and relative has the meaning given by section 63 of the Family Law Act 1996 (‘the 1996 Act’), as explained in the ‘Statutory definition’ section of this guidance. Abuse may be perpetrated towards a victim by more than one relative.

Abuse within a family set up can encompass a number of different harmful behaviours. Abuse may be perpetrated as a perceived means to protect or defend the ‘honour’ of an individual, family, or community against alleged or perceived breaches of the family or community’s code of behaviour. It can therefore include ‘honour’-based abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and other harmful practices such as reproductive coercion (and as part of this, forced abortion).

Young people may be at an increased risk of abuse perpetrated by family members. Young people may be inherently more vulnerable because it is harder for them to distinguish between normal and abusive behaviours, and this may especially be the case where the perpetrator is a trusted family member. A young person may find it more difficult to report or disclose abuse by an adult. There may be no safe channel for disclosure, young people may fear the repercussions of disclosure or may not want other family members to get into trouble. There may be an increased risk of abuse by family members for young LGBT people.

In responding to abuse by family members, services should consider the ways in which the patterns of abuse may differ from, or in cases relate to, patterns of abuse found in cases of intimate partner abuse. Services should ensure assessment procedures are used appropriately to identify risk. For example, professionals should be aware that family members are not always protective figures for those who experience intimate partner abuse, as in some circumstances family members may constitute a risk themselves and be complicit in abuse.

Child-to-parent abuse

Abuse within the family includes child-to-parent abuse, also commonly referred to as Adolescent to Parent Violence/Abuse (APV/A) and Child and Adolescent to Parental Violence and Abuse (CAPVA). Child-to-parent abuse can involve children of all ages, including adult children, and abuse toward siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles as well as other family members such as those acting as kinship carers. If the child is 16 years of age or over, the abuse falls under the statutory definition of domestic abuse in the 2021 Act.

There is no specific legal definition of child-to-parent abuse, but it is generally accepted to involve some of the patterns of behaviour that can be found in other relationship contexts. Behaviours can encompass, but are not limited to, humiliating and belittling language, violence, and threats, jealous and controlling

behaviours, damage to property, stealing and heightened sexualised behaviours. Child-to-parent abuse appears gendered, with the majority of cases being perpetrated by sons against their mothers, although men and boys are victims too.

Like other forms of abuse, child-to-parent abuse is characterised by shame and stigma which could mean parents are less likely to report the abuse to the police. Parents may fear being blamed, disbelieved, or conversely having their child taken away from them or criminalised leaving them reluctant to seek help. Recorded incidents likely represent only a small number of real cases as families facing crisis point make the difficult decision to disclose their abuse. Victims of this type of abuse should also receive appropriate domestic abuse response and support.

Appendix two

Advice and support organisations

National Agencies

Emergency Help

Telephone 999 and ask for Police

National Domestic Violence Helpline

A 24-hour helpline run in partnership between Refuge and Women's Aid

0808 2000 247

Refuge

Finds refuge space and/or offers advice and support. Refuge provides accommodation for Black and Asian women and Women with learning disabilities.

www.refuge.org.uk

Women's Aid Federation of England

Provides advice and support and finds refuge spaces across the UK, and a national 24-hour helpline.

www.womensaid.org.uk

Rape Crisis Line

Some boroughs have a Rape Crisis Line. Individual contact numbers can be found on the central website:

www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Samaritans

Provides 24-hour confidential emotional support

Tel: 08457 90 90 90

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants

It provides legal advice to women whose immigration status may be affected by a change in their marital status.

115 Old Street

London EC1V 9JR

Tel: 020 7251 8706

info@jcwi.org.uk

London Agencies:

Dogs Trust – Freedom Project

The Trust provides a free fostering service for dogs and cats of victims in the Greater London Area

who are escaping domestic violence.

Tel: 0800 298 9199

East London Black Women Organization (ELBWO)

It provides advice and support, and access to emergency and safe accommodation for women fleeing DV. Primarily for African Caribbean women but all ethnic backgrounds can be assisted.

Languages: French and Spanish

Forest Gate

E7 OHD

Tel: 0208 534 7545 (Mon/Fri: 9.30am – 5.30pm) // Out of hours pager: 07654 553340

Agencies for men

Men Cry Too

For male victims of domestic violence

Tel: 0121 569 7980

Website: www.mencrytoo.homestead.com

Victim Support Male Helpline

Tel: 0800 328 3623 (12noon – 2pm Mon – Fri)

Mankind Lifeline Project

It provides advice and support to men who experience domestic violence and their children.

Tel: 0870 794 4124 (7.30pm – 9.30 pm only)

Agencies for same sex couples

Broken Rainbow

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Domestic Violence Service UK

Tel: 07812 644 914 (Hotline) // 020 7837 1600 (Tower Hamlets)

Mobile: 07729 253129

Email: info@lgbt-dv.org

Website: www.lgbt-dv.org

Gay and Lesbian Switch Board

PO Box 7324, London N1, Tel: 020 7837 7324