

Domestic violence – information and advice

Don't suffer in silence



Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a crime and you do not have to deal with it alone.

When you suffer from domestic violence you can feel very alone. But you're not. And while there are other people out there suffering in the same way it is important to also be aware that there are many people and organisations which can help and support you.

Statistics show that one in four women experience domestic violence at some stage in their lives. We know that anyone can be abused. Domestic violence takes place across all social groups, regardless of age, religion, culture, ethnic background or sexuality.

In a number of cases the abuse is carried out by a man and the victim is a woman. But domestic violence can also occur within lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships and can be suffered by men in heterosexual relationships.

Whatever form it takes, domestic violence is unacceptable and a violation of your human rights. Our tenancy agreement states that: *'You must not cause or tolerate other members of the household to use or threaten to use violence against anyone else living in the property. Domestic violence includes, but is not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse and the imposition of social isolation. If you cause or permit domestic violence the landlord may take legal action to evict you.'*

What is domestic violence?

The phrase 'domestic violence' makes most people think of physical abuse. Domestic violence can involve behaviour by your partner such as slapping, beating and kicking, which can at its worst lead to permanent injury. But there are also other ways your partner can abuse you. These can be sexual, emotional and mental, for example:

- Threatening to harm or kill you or your children
- Forcing you to have sex when you don't want to or in ways you don't like
- Criticising and humiliating you, for example, saying you are ugly, worthless, a bad parent or unable to get by on your own
- Isolating you from your family and friends. Not allowing you money, food or sleep – making you a virtual prisoner in your own home.

Often it's not only you who is affected by the abuse, your children can also suffer emotionally by seeing a parent being abused by their partner.

We also know that domestic violence is very rarely a one-off event. It does tend to get worse and to happen more often over time.

Remember

- You are not alone
- Your partner has no right to beat, verbally or sexually abuse you or your children. Assault is a criminal offence
- You are not to blame. You are not responsible for the abuse. It is your partner who must take responsibility for their actions
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol is not an excuse for violent or threatening behaviour
- Violence is never the way to solve conflict in the home
- You can survive and move on from an abusive relationship.

How to get help

We know it can be difficult to ask for and find help. Domestic abuse can undermine your confidence and make you feel unable to act. But there are lots of people who can help and advise you on the course of action which is best for you.

If you feel you or your children are in immediate danger from your partner then your first priority must be the safety of yourself and your family. **If you are in immediate danger, call 999 for the police emergency service.**

You can also contact your local Area Housing Office and ask for a transfer away from the violence. You will need to speak to your Housing Officer about this. We may need to ask you about the abuse you have suffered, your family circumstances and whether you have reported the incidents to any other agencies. We recognise that this may be very difficult and painful to discuss. You will be offered a private interview, the same gender interviewer and access to an interpreter and translations as required.

We recommend that you get independent general advice from a solicitor, Law Centre or Citizens Advice Bureau. You should also let the police know. They have specialist workers in the Community Safety Units to help victims of domestic violence.

If you are a violent man and wish to stop your abusive behaviour towards your partner you can contact the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) on 020 7633 9181.

What we will do

Ealing Homes takes all incidents of domestic violence very seriously. All domestic violence incidents are given the highest priority and are dealt with as Category A. This means that we will interview you within 24 hours of the report being made and that your case will be investigated within nine working days. Interviews can take place face to face or over the telephone. Your Housing Officer will agree an action plan with you and you will be given a copy. Your Housing Officer will take timely, effective and consistent action to tackle the problems by using the range of measures available to us. This will include working with our partner agencies.

Witness support

Support will be provided to you throughout the whole process of dealing with the issue. The level of support given will need to be tailored to meet the your needs and the circumstances of the case. As a minimum, standard regular contact with you will be maintained, keeping you as fully informed as possible throughout the process. Other support may include:

- Providing additional security measures to your home, i.e., locks
- An interpreter if English is not your first language
- Explaining each stage of the process to you
- Using professional witnesses and/or surveillance to gather additional evidence to support a case
- Using professional witnesses to provide evidence to support a case
- Liaising with Victim Support and other relevant agencies to provide additional support and/or counselling
- In extreme circumstances moving witnesses, either temporarily or permanently, for their protection.

With your consent, we will provide reports of domestic violence to Victim Support. Victim Support is the national organisation for victims of crime, witnesses, their families and friends. Trained staff and volunteers help victims, witnesses and their families and friends at court by familiarising them with the venue and procedures before the hearing, supporting them on the day and arranging further help afterwards.

Community Safety Unit

With your consent, we will provide reports of domestic violence to Hanwell Police Community Safety Unit. The police can use the information provided to investigate crime successfully and/or for intelligence, ultimately looking towards building the confidence of the community which they serve.

What you should do

If you are a victim of domestic violence, you should:

- Be ready to call 999 if you or your children are in danger
- Keep some money and a set of keys in a safe place
- Find out about your legal and housing rights, for example, talk to a solicitor
- Keep copies of important papers (passports, birth certificates, court orders, marriage certificate) in a safe place and have them readily available to take with you should you decide to leave
- Carry a list of emergency numbers with you: police, relatives, friends, your children's school, your solicitor, social worker, domestic violence services etc.

Safety planning checklist

- Tell someone you trust about the abuse
- Make calls from a phone box or a friend's house
- Report any injuries to your GP so there is a record of the abuse
- Talk to family and friends about staying with them in an emergency
- Think about escape routes. Rehearse your escape plan and make sure both you and your children can get away safely in an emergency
- Pack an emergency bag. Include clothing, medication, money, keys, important documents, small toys for children.

For more information contact

East Area Office

16-20 New Broadway
Uxbridge Road
Ealing

London W5 2XA

Tel: 020 8825 8822

Email: housingeast@ealing.gov.uk

West Area Office

301 Ruislip Road
Greenford
Middlesex UB6 9SE

Tel: 020 8825 8833

Email: housingwest@ealing.gov.uk

Useful numbers

ASB Team East

Tel: 020 8825 8400

Freephone: 0800 011 3920

Email: asb@ealinghomes.net

ASB Team West

Tel: 020 8825 8600

Freephone: 0800 011 3932

Email: asb@ealinghomes.net

Repair Link East

Tel: 0800 181744

Email: repairs@ealinghomes.net

Repair Link West

Tel: 0800 181541

Email: repairs@ealinghomes.net

Tenancy Support Team

Tel: 020 8825 6779

Email: tenancysupport@ealinghomes.net

Social Services
Tel: 020 8825 8000

Citizens Advice Bureau
Tel: 020 8825 7711

Ealing Law Centre
Tel: 020 8574 2434

Witness Support
Tel: 020 8566 6940

Environmental Health
Tel: 020 8825 6633

Services for children

National Child Protection (NSPCC)
Helpline (24 hour)
Tel: 0808 800 5000
Web: www.nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine (24 hour)
Tel: 0800 1111
Web: www.childline.org.uk

The Hideout
Web: www.thehideout.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre
Tel: 01206 873820
Web: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Careline
Tel: 020 8514 1177

Domestic violence support

Local police
Tel: 020 8810 1212
Community Safety Unit
Tel: 020 8246 9617
Emergency: 999
Web: www.met.police.uk/dv/

National Domestic Violence Helpline
(24 hour) and Women's Refuge
Tel: 0808 200 0247
Web: www.refuge.org.uk

Ealing Domestic Violence
Co-ordinator
Tel: 020 8825 6426

Women's Aid
Tel: 0845 702 3468
Web: www.womensaid.org.uk

Ealing IMS (Mediation Service)
Tel: 020 8575 9500
Email: admin@ealingmediation.org.uk

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

Broken Rainbow
Tel: 0845 260 4460
Web: www.lgbt-dv.org

Gay Men's Shared Housing Project
Tel: 020 8743 2165

Male victims of domestic violence and sexual assault

Male Advice Line and enquiries
Tel: 0845 064 6800

Mankind UK
Tel: 01273 510447
Web: www.mankinduk.co.uk

Haven Project
Web: www.thehavens.org.uk

Support for people from multicultural backgrounds

Southall Black Sisters
Tel: 020 8571 9595
Web: www.southallblacksisters.org.uk

Muslim Women's Helpline
Tel: 020 8904 8193/020 8908 6715
Web: www.mwhl.org

Jewish Women's Aid Helpline
Tel: 0800 591203

Somalian Women's Centre
Tel: 020 8752 1787

Kiran – Asian Women's Aid
Tel: 020 8558 1986
Web: www.rdlogo.com/cwp/kawa/

Chinese Information and Advice Centre
Tel: 020 7692 3697
Web: www.ciac.co.uk

Refugee Council
Tel: 020 7346 6777
Web: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Refugee Action
Tel: 020 7654 7700

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Tel: 020 7008 0230
Web: www.fco.gov.uk

Immigration Advisory Service
Tel (office hours): 020 7967 1200
Tel (emergency out of office hours):
020 7378 9191
Web: www.iasuk.org

Other services

Shelter Advice Line (24 hour)
Tel: 0808 800 4444
Web: www.england.shelter.org.uk

Rights of Women
Tel: 020 7251 6577
Web: www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

