

Domestic abuse:

supporting and signposting

Everyone has a right to live safely, free from violence and abuse.

Abuse is when someone hurts another person or treats them badly. It can happen once or lots of times. It can be by someone who has a personal connection, like a relative, someone they're married to now or have been married to in the past, a civil partner, fiance/fiancee, or someone they're in an intimate personal relationship with.

Abuse can include:

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

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident, or several separate ones.

If you're a victim of abuse, or think someone else could be, it's important to tell someone you trust so you can get help and emotional and practical support.

This could be:

- ▶ The police. If you're in immediate danger, always call 999. For non-emergencies, dial 101.
- ▶ An RHP employee: email customer.support@rhp.org.uk or call 0800 049 5409
- ▶ The National Domestic Abuse Helpline: call 0808 2000 247



Domestic abuse: how RHP can help

Domestic abuse is a serious crime and we're committed to providing a sensitive and confidential response to anyone who reports it. We work in partnership with the appropriate agencies to take reasonable and proportionate steps to support any victim of domestic abuse living within our properties.

We recognise the significant impact that domestic violence and abuse can have on an individual's life. We also recognise that some victims are vulnerable, and consequently RHP employees report any allegation or suspicion of abuse in accordance with current safeguarding regulations. Victims of abuse have the right to be treated fairly in a way that respects their human rights, independence, and choice.

We will:

- ▶ listen. We will treat all reports confidentially wherever possible and protect the anonymity of both victims and witnesses. Exceptions to this may be where we believe someone is at a serious risk of harm, or we have concerns for the welfare of a child.
- ▶ take a victim centred approach in responding to reports of domestic abuse. We recognise that evidence of domestic abuse may not be easily available, and we will work with the victim to ensure they are safe.
- ▶ refer to and work with supporting agencies to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and ensure they are safe.
- ▶ follow any recommendations of the local authorities Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), we will follow any recommendations or action plans that may arise from them.
- ▶ assess the risks posed by perpetrators of domestic violence in a way which is necessary, proportionate, and safe.
- ▶ ask for evidence where legal action is to be taken, and some verification may be needed where certain solutions, such as management transfers, are being considered.

- ▶ offer extra security to victims and their homes, where appropriate.
- ▶ consider temporary accommodation and / or a referral to the Management Transfer Panel to consider a permanent move where it is evidenced that a victim and/ or their family are at high risk of direct harm.
- ▶ support victims to rebuild their lives by working with them and other support agencies.
- ▶ ensure that where children and young people are affected by domestic abuse, they too have access to services as early as possible. RHP will signpost families to Achieving for Children where appropriate.
- ▶ consider addressing the behaviour under our ASB (antisocial behaviour) policy or Tenancy Agreement if appropriate, where victims are unable to engage, and where the behaviour is having an impact on neighbours.
- ▶ take legal action against perpetrators of domestic abuse where necessary with the co-operation of victims, witnesses, and police.

We recognise that incidents of domestic abuse are extremely sensitive. However, we may share relevant information with local agencies such as the police, to deal with cases more effectively by either gathering extra evidence to carry out enforcement measures against the perpetrator or sharing information in the interests of the victim and/or their dependants to provide better or more effective support.

What we can't do

- ▶ Victims and support agencies are expected to engage and work with us. If a victim or agency doesn't want to work with us, we may not be able to help.
- ▶ Provide temporary accommodation for Homeowners - however we will signpost to supporting agencies.
- ▶ Take legal action without evidence or the support of victims, witnesses, and the police.

If you need someone to turn to for advice or confidential support, there are several specialist organisations that can help.

Domestic abuse support

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

This Freephone 24-hour helpline, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence. The Helpline can give support, help and information over the telephone. All calls are completely confidential. It offers translation facilities for callers whose first language is not English, and a service for callers who are deaf or hard of hearing is available.

Phone: **0808 2000 247**

EACH counselling and support

EACH provides support via Ascent. Ascent provides a service for those affected by domestic and sexual abuse in London. Services include confidential counselling, in Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Pashto and English. Email infoascent@eachcounselling.org.uk or call **0208 577 6059**.

Women and Girls Network

Offers free and confidential specialist emotional support for women and girls who have experienced recent or historic sexual violence and abuse. Phone: **0808 801 0660**.

- ▶ **Victim Support** offers free services that can help victims of any crime to deal with what they have been through. Services are available to everyone, whether the crime has been reported and regardless of when it happened. Phone: **0808 1689 111**.

- ▶ **Ascent** provides specialist counselling and advice services to women and girls affected by domestic/sexual violence. Phone: **0808 802 5565**.
- ▶ **Rape Crisis South London** provides independent support and therapeutic services to female survivors of sexual violence. Phone: **0808 802 9999**. Open daily from 12 to 2.30pm, and from 7am-9.30pm.
- ▶ **The Havens** are Sexual Assault Referral Centres set up as a joint initiative by the MPS and the NHS to ensure that victims of rape and sexual assault get the help they need.
- ▶ **Hourglass** offer support for older people who have experienced, or are at risk of, any kind of harm, abuse or exploitation. Phone: **0808 808 8141**, 9am to 5pm every Monday to Friday.
- ▶ **Counselling Directory** connects you with professional counsellors and therapists near you.
- ▶ **Relate** provides counselling and support services for couples, families, and young people.
- ▶ **SignHealth** is a specialist service for deaf adults and children who have experienced abuse. The service offers practical and emotional support to deaf people who are experiencing domestic abuse, witnessed domestic abuse and to those who have survived it
- ▶ **Jewish Women's Aid** provide practical and emotional support, therapy services and a confidential free helpline. Phone: 0808 801 0500, open 9.30am to 9.30pm Mondays to Thursdays

- ▶ **Revive Housing Scheme** is Homefinder's latest division, specialising in relocating domestic abuse survivors to permanent social housing in a new and safe environment in a different part of the country. The service provides an alternative way to find social housing for survivors without the need to compete against other high priority groups. This is a service for existing Housing Association and Council tenants.
- ▶ **Bright Sky** is a free mobile app available in five languages, providing support and information to those concerned that someone they know is experiencing domestic abuse
- ▶ **Safe Spaces**: walk into a TSB bank branch, any Boots UK store, Superdrug Pharmacy, Morrisons Pharmacy, or one of the independent pharmacies and ask to use their Safe Space. Victims can use a private room to make telephone calls, speak to a trained member of staff and access information about available support services.
- ▶ **Hollie Guard**: a smartphone app that provides enhanced levels of protection. If you're in danger, with a simple shake or tap it activates Hollie Guard, immediately notifying your chosen contacts, pinpointing your location, and sending audio and video evidence directly to their mobile phones.
- ▶ **Choice Support**: support for people with learning difficulties.
- ▶ **Rail to Refuge**: free train travel for those fleeing domestic abuse.
- ▶ **Respeito** - domestic abuse support for Portuguese-speaking men and women in London. Call **0300 365 2800**

Richmond

Safety First Scheme

Aims to reduce repeat victimisation by improving home security for victims who have been subjected to violence and abuse (or threats) from people who do not normally live with them.

Hestia

Provides Independent Domestic Abuse Advocacy (IDVA) support and refuge accommodation for victims and their children suffering from domestic abuse. To contact an independent IDVA, call (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm). If you're looking for a refuge space, call **0808 169 9975** (Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm) or email refuge.space@hestia.org.uk.

One Stop Shop

Free drop-in service providing legal advice, information, and support to those experiencing domestic abuse. Phone: **020 3879 3544** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

Kingston

Domestic violence hub

Telephone: **020 8547 6046**

Email: kingstondvhub@refuge.org.uk

Hillingdon

Hillingdon Domestic Abuse Advisory Service

Phone: **07874 620954**

Email: HDAAS@hillington.gov.uk

Hillingdon DA MARAC

Phone: **0208 246 1798**

Email: timothy.moriarty@met.pnn.police.uk

Hillingdon Women's Centre

Phone: **01895 259578**

Hounslow

Domestic and sexual abuse outreach service

Provides free and confidential advice and support to anyone in Hounslow affected by domestic and sexual violence. This can include Forced Marriage, so called "Honour" Based Violence, Stalking and Harassment.

If you would like to talk to someone you can call **07810 031 780** in confidence to discuss your options and practical ways to stay safe. Open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Email: communitysafety@hounslow.gov.uk.

One Stop Shop

The One Stop Shop provides free, confidential, support and advice for anyone living in Hounslow experiencing domestic and sexual violence or other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls.

If you need free, confidential advice or information, you can contact the Hounslow One Stop Shop on **07810 031 780** (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm) or you can attend in person at the Hounslow One Stop Shop.

The Arts Centre

1st floor

Treaty Shopping Centre

Hounslow

TW3 1ES

No appointment needed. Open every Wednesday from 10am - 12pm.

Support for young people

- ▶ **Childline** is a free 24-hour counselling service for children and young people. Phone: **0800 1111**
- ▶ **Off the Record** is a charity based in Twickenham, providing drop-in counselling, information and sexual health service for young people aged 11–24 who live, work or study in the Borough of Richmond Upon Thames. Phone: **020 8744 1644**.
- ▶ **The Purple Elephant Project** provides therapeutic support for children and their families affected by attachment, developmental trauma or life experiences.

Support for male victims

- ▶ **Men's Advice Line** is a free, confidential helpline for any man experiencing domestic violence and abuse from a partner, ex-partner or other family member. Phone: **080 8801 0327**
- ▶ **Survivors UK** provides information, support and counselling for men who have been raped or sexually abused. Phone: **020 3598 3898**
- ▶ **Mankind** is a confidential helpline for male victims of domestic abuse and male victims of domestic violence across the UK. Phone: **01823 334244**

Support for people at risk of forced marriage or honour-based violence

- ▶ **Forced Marriage Unit** is a public helpline to provide advice and support to victims of forced marriage as well as those who are worried about a friend or relative or professionals dealing with cases. Phone: **0207 008 0151**
- ▶ **Karma Nirvana** helps people to escape from forced marriage and honour-based violence. Phone: **0800 599 9247**
- ▶ **Asian Women's Resource Centre** is a specialist women's organisation, providing support to BMER (Black, Minority, Ethnic, Refugee) women and children across London and provides advice and information, counselling, advocacy, outreach and support groups and services. Phone: **020 8961 6549/ 5701**
- ▶ **Southall Black Sisters** offers support for Black (Asian and African-Caribbean) women. Services available only in certain boroughs.
- ▶ **Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO)** provides support for Middle Eastern and Afghan women and girls who are at risk of honour-based violence, forced marriage, child marriage, female genital mutilation and domestic violence and to promote their rights. Phone: **0207 920 6460** (Monday to Friday, 9.30am-5.30pm).
- ▶ **Chinese Information and Advice Centre** provides a wide range of support for people facing immigration issues, women and children (including victims of domestic violence), asylum seekers and refugees, homeless people, as well as those in need of benefits and welfare advice. Phone: **0300 201 1868**

Support for the LGBT community

Domestic abuse affects approximately one in four lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people in their lifetimes. This may include abuse related to their sexual orientation or gender identity, such as threatening to 'out' someone to their work or family.

GALOP

Provides advice and support to lesbians, gay men, bisexual, and transgender people who have experienced homophobic or transphobic hate crime or violence in the Greater London area, including sexual abuse.

Phone: **020 7704 2040**

Stonewall Housing

Provides free confidential advice on safe housing for LGBT domestic abuse victims in London. Phone: **020 7359 5767**

The Gender Trust

Advice and information for all those affected by gender identity issues in the United Kingdom.

Support for perpetrators

- ▶ **DVIP Hammersmith and Waterloo**: support for men to learn to change their behaviour and have safer, healthier relationships.
Phone: **020 7633 9181**
- ▶ **The Respect Phoneline**: a confidential and anonymous helpline for people who want to stop being abusive and turn their lives around.
Phone: **0808 802 4040**.