



DAHA Homelessness & Supported Accommodation Accreditation



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A note on language:

In this document, people experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse are referred to as **'victim(s)'**, **'survivor(s)'** or **'victim/survivors'** and those who use abusive behaviour as **'perpetrator(s)'** of domestic abuse. This language is used to clearly identify which party the framework is referring to; however, DAHA recognises people as multifaceted and should not be defined solely as a **'victim'**, **'survivor'** or **'perpetrator'**.

'Multiple disadvantage' refers to people who experience multiple and intersecting issues at the same time. This often includes issues relating to violence and abuse, homelessness, substance misuse, mental ill health, involvement in the criminal justice system and more.

'Organisation' refers to any registered charity or registered accommodation provider where their primary function is to support people who are experiencing homelessness or require additional support to maintain their accommodation.

Purpose of this pack:

This pack offers information to homelessness and supported housing organisations about the benefits of seeking DAHA accreditation and membership.

Who are we?

Situated in and managed by Standing Together, the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) was launched in 2014 through the ongoing partnership of three agencies: Standing Together, and housing associations Peabody and Gentoo Group – all leaders in innovative solutions to address domestic abuse within housing. DAHA's mission is to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction and adoption of a framework of good practice and an accreditation process for local authorities and housing providers.



Why DAHA Accreditation matters:

There are clear links between domestic abuse and homelessness:



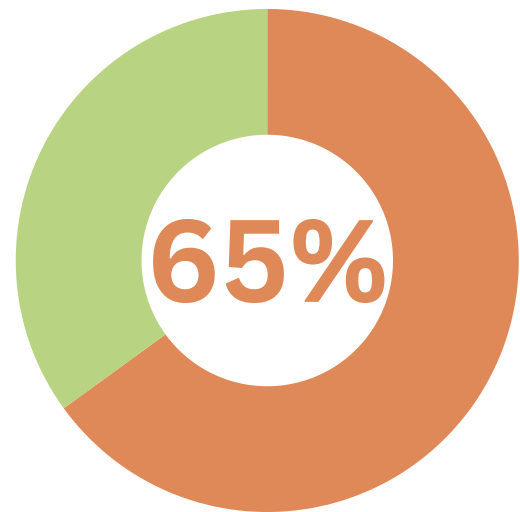
Domestic Abuse is a near universal experience for women who are homeless.¹



LGBTQ+ people are TWICE as likely to experience homelessness.²



The average age of death for women who are homeless is just 43.³



The majority (65%) of homelessness applications are made by women.⁴

Research has shown that domestic abuse is 'near-universal' for homeless women. With overall rough sleeping numbers rising, this means that the number of women rough sleeping is also rising. This is likely to be an underestimate of the true number. Unfortunately, research has shown that, despite these clear links, women experiencing homelessness, substance use and mental health are often not asked about domestic abuse and this is not recognised by homelessness services⁵. Conversely, women with multiple disadvantage often face barriers in accessing specialist domestic abuse services, such as refuges, who often don't have the capacity or experience to effectively support them⁶.

There are also clear links between domestic abuse and homelessness for LGBT+ people, with statistics showing that 61% of homeless LGBTIQ+ young people felt frightened and threatened by their family and 20% felt frightened and threatened by a romantic partner before they became homeless⁷.

Additionally, up to 80% of trans people have experienced emotionally, sexually and physically abusive behaviour by a partner or ex-partner. However, many LGBT+ people's experiences of homelessness aren't captured⁸.

Therefore, homelessness organisations are in a unique position to identify and respond to domestic abuse, particularly for victims and survivors who are more likely to have experienced marginalisation. DAHA accreditation offers a useful, comprehensive framework which has been proven to support organisations to better embed a domestic abuse response in their services.

It is designed to be present everywhere, because it might be needed anywhere. Make the time, to help save lives.

Going through the DAHA accreditation process has put domestic abuse on the agenda at a top level within St Mungo's. This has allowed for dedicated resource to support with the process and had meant improvements to multiple systems. For example, we have made changes to our incident reporting process, ensuring that domestic abuse incidents are flagged appropriately and things like DASH RIC and referrals to MARAC are done on a consistent basis. This in turn means better support for clients and improved safety. Although we aren't DA experts, all staff are now in a better position to recognise and respond to domestic abuse. I recommend all homelessness and supported accommodation organisations look into accreditation.



Being part of DAHA accreditation pilot for homelessness organisations has been invaluable in assessing, developing and improving our response to domestic abuse at SHP. Undertaking an accreditation process to improve our response to domestic abuse across the whole organisation felt like a daunting task, but DAHA's framework has provided clarity by breaking down the accreditation. The process has been really collaborative and we have had a lot of support from DAHA as we have navigated our journey over the past year. We look forward to continuing our work to ensure that survivors and perpetrators of domestic abuse who use our services get the right response, every time.



SSJ has embraced this experience of being a pilot organisation working alongside DAHA to drive best practice in the supported accommodation and homeless sector when responding to domestic abuse. As an organisation, we support and accommodate both survivors and perpetrators and using the structure of the accreditation has really helped us refine our best practice and identify areas of development. We are now in a great position going forwards to ensure our service users and residents receive the best possible response and support to meet their needs.



DAHA Accreditation Framework for Homelessness and Supported Housing Organisations:

DAHA Accreditation is a framework designed to enable homelessness and supported housing organisations to embed an organisational, from strategic to operational, response to domestic abuse. The framework is designed to be flexible and adaptable for all services in your organisation which offer housing or homelessness support to service users. This includes:

Non-accommodation-based services:

- ✓ Rough sleeping outreach teams.
- ✓ Floating support services.

Accommodation-based services:

- ✓ 24-hour hostels.
- ✓ Semi-independent housing.
- ✓ Supported housing.
- ✓ Housing management services, where the housing is not general housing.

Our Values:

Accountability:

Responding appropriately to domestic abuse is complex, especially when survivors and perpetrators are often experiencing other challenges in their lives concurrently. Organisations must hold themselves accountable and approach mistakes with a willingness to learn from them.

Valuing Differences:

Organisations must understand and value the different contributions and experiences staff and service users from a diverse range of backgrounds, histories and identities bring to their organisation, especially staff and service users with lived experience of domestic abuse.

Gender-Informed:

Organisations must recognise domestic abuse as a gendered crime, where men are disproportionately the perpetrators of domestic abuse, and the majority of victim/survivors are women. Organisations also recognise domestic abuse can occur within LGBT+ relationships.

Working towards a CCR:

No single organisation or professional has a complete picture of the life of an individual or family living with domestic abuse, but many will have insights that are crucial to their safety. Organisations must work in partnership with other agencies to promote and contribute to an effective Coordinated Community Response to domestic abuse, including how they hold perpetrators of abuse to account.

Trauma-Informed:

Organisations recognise that survivors in their services will be impacted by trauma because of the domestic abuse itself, and will likely have experienced other traumatic experiences such as homelessness and multiple disadvantage, which compound the impact of trauma. Organisations also recognise the impact of vicarious trauma on staff and volunteers. Therefore, organisations must embed a trauma.

Sustainability:

Organisations must make sustainable and lasting changes to ensure their domestic abuse response becomes embedded in the organisational culture and is not person-dependant.

Integrity:

Organisations undergoing DAHA accreditation must be committed to improving their domestic abuse response to ensure safety and support for survivors is prioritised, whilst holding perpetrators of domestic abuse to account. This commitment must come from the Board and CEO and throughout all levels of the organisation



The Framework:



Infrastructure:

In order to truly embed a sustainable domestic abuse response, organisations must carefully plan, coordinate and resource this work. This section supports organisations to consider how their policies, procedures, systems and staff create the foundation from which the organisation identifies and responds to domestic abuse, thus ensuring staff across all their services are supported to appropriately support survivors and hold perpetrators to account. See below an overview:

Infrastructure:

Strategy & Policy

The standards in this section cover an organisations strategic plan in their response to domestic abuse. Incorporating the voices of people with lived experience, having stand alone policies for service users and having an appointed Domestic Abuse Lead.

Staff development & Support

The standards in this section cover the policies and procedures ensuring domestic abuse is covered in the induction of new staff. Additionally, ensuring there are standalone policies and procedures for staff experiencing domestic abuse.

Enhanced Knowledge

The standards in this section cover what training and further opportunities are offered to staff to develop their understanding of domestic abuse. As well as how an organisation supports staff dealing with vicarious trauma and the impact this has.

Monitoring & Recording

The standards in this section cover how an organisation oversees, tracks, records and reviews cases of domestic abuse in their services. Ensuring they are clearly flagged, reported, recorded and responded to consistently across the organisation.



Coordination:

Domestic abuse thrives in silence and isolation. This section works to counteract this by supporting organisations to focus on the internal and external links they need to make to ensure they are part of a coordinated whole system response to domestic abuse, so survivors are supported and perpetrators are held to account for the harm they cause.

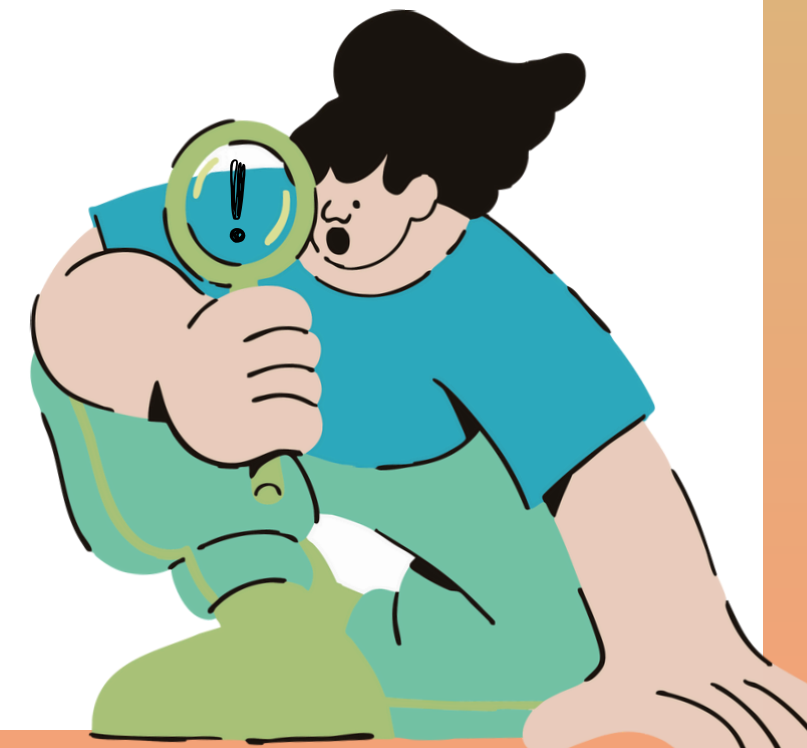
Coordination::

Communications

The standards in this section cover an organisation's internal and external communications; to ensure an organisation's domestic abuse response is well communicated, not only to staff but to service users, which also includes promoting awareness externally.

Partnerships

The standards in this section cover both the strategic and operational partnerships an organisation holds; to ensure they are actively involved with local domestic abuse partnerships and with other relevant organisations, to improve information sharing and risk management outcomes for survivors.



The Framework:



Response:

Organisations must respond to domestic abuse effectively, prioritising the safety of survivors whilst also understanding how to appropriately work with perpetrators. This section supports organisations to ensure their response to domestic abuse is survivor-led and prevents escalation of harm.

Response:

Supporting Survivors

The standards in this section cover how an organisation works to provide survivors with as much autonomy over their lives as possible, whilst building trust. This section also covers how an organisation embeds a trauma-informed and intersectional way of working, ensuring they are being supportive, non-judgemental and believing survivors.

Risk Management

The standards in this section cover how an organisation identifies and responds to domestic abuse; ensuring staff have the relevant knowledge to identify, assess and manage risk, and improve survivor safety. Whilst working in collaboration with the survivor at all times.

Physical Environments

The standards in this section ensure the physical environments available to the survivor are safe, clean, welcoming, and set up with survivor safety in mind. The organisation actively tries to reduce and manage the impact of vicarious trauma on staff.

Perpetrator Management

The standards in this section cover how an organisation manages perpetrators within their services. Staff should work in partnership with both the survivor and perpetrator's professional network to manage risks and improve survivor safety.



Intersectionality:

A one-size-fits-all approach will not be effective for all survivors. Their experiences of domestic abuse and access to safety will differ based on how they overlap and interlink with other systems of discrimination or disadvantage based on identities such as race, gender, sexuality, disability and more. Organisations must recognise how discrimination can present significant barriers for survivors to access support. The requirements regarding intersectionality are woven within all of the standards within the framework. Survivors of domestic abuse, especially those experiencing multiple disadvantage, are not one homogenous group and will have different support needs, as well as face different barriers to accessing support. DAHA recognises the impact of social inequality on survivors, including racism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, ableism and classism, to name a few. An organisation's domestic abuse response must be intersectional and address the specific needs and issues survivors face which impact on accessibility, risk and safety.



The DAHA Accreditation Process:

1 Commit to Accreditation:
Sign up and become DAHA members. Once you've done this you'll have access to the framework and resources to support you through the accreditation process.

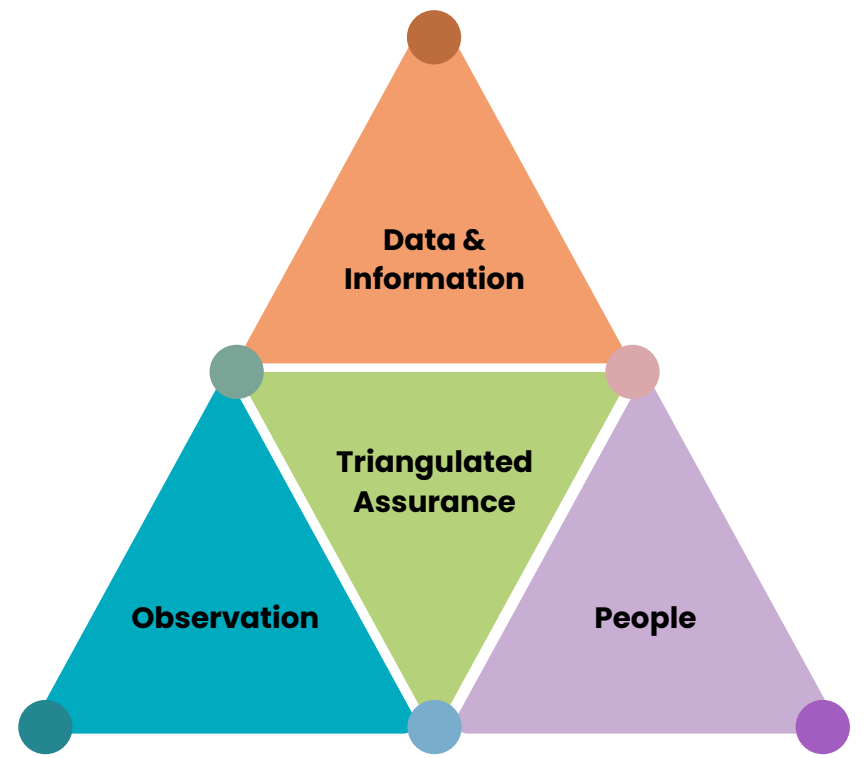
2 Progress through Accreditation:
With the support of the DAHA Homelessness Lead. This will be the work across your organisation to improve your DA response. Timeframe from start to finish for the accreditation process will vary depending on size of organisation, capacity etc. We envisage the process taking between 12 and 18 months, similar to the DAHA accreditation for social housing.

3 Assessment:
Assessment activities take place overtime, rather than all at one in a set time period. We have adopted a triangulated assurance method to ensure the standards are embedded into an organisations practice.

Data and information: These are in the form of written data, strategies, policies, procedures, and other written evidence that is submitted by you.

People: We will speak with key stakeholders such as staff, partners, commissioners, and service users/survivors where appropriate. These conversations will give us an opportunity to understand how things work in practice.

Observe: This will be in the form of case audits, case studies and site visits, so we gain an understanding of how an organisation works day-to-day.




We will adopt a **triangulated assurance approach** to assessment. This will enable us to be assured that standards of good practice are **embedded throughout the organisation**. We consider your written documents, listen to your staff members and observe how you are operating.


4 Accreditation:
Become DAHA accredited for your homelessness & supported accommodation organisation. Accreditation lasts three years, with light touch support provided once accreditation has been achieved, to consider ongoing development.


DAHA Membership:


Homelessness organisations will be able to join as DAHA Homelessness Accreditation members.

DAHA membership offers a range of benefits to support organisations to improve their identification and response to domestic abuse:

 Access to a DAHA Accreditation Lead, to support and guide you with the implementation and embedding of the DAHA standards.


 Access to training and resources on how to identify and respond to domestic abuse. These resources are evidence-based and regularly updated to ensure the latest knowledge and best practice are being shared.


 The opportunity to network with other like-minded professionals committed to tackling domestic abuse, sharing experiences and learning from one another.

 Lastly, by showing your commitment to addressing domestic abuse through joining DAHA, your organisation can enhance its reputation as a socially responsible business, attracting positive publicity and fostering good relationships with stakeholders.

Get in touch

To find out more about DAHA Accreditation for Homelessness & Supported Accommodation Organisations:

 daha_homelessness@standingtogether.org.uk

 Visit our website [here](#).

References

1. Women and Rough Sleeping 1. What is a CCR? Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse

2. No Place Like Home Report, AKT

3. Women's Homelessness: The Stats, SHP

4. Homeless Londoners Report, London Councils

5. Breaking Down the Barriers, AVA

6. Ibid

7. LGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness Report, Crisis

8. LGBT+ British Trans Report, Stonewall

Join DAHA **today**, so a victim/survivor has a **brighter tomorrow**.



