

STANDING TOGETHER AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE

Part 4: Whole Housing Approach Strategy Template/Guidance



**STANDING
TOGETHER**
against domestic abuse

Sept 2021

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Introduction

Purpose of this document

This document offers Tier One Local Authorities a suggested outline and key headings to include in their Strategy for the implementation of Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act (DA Act) for the delivery of safe accommodation support. It considers the requirements of the Part 4 duty and encourages local areas to adopt a more holistic approach to responding to the housing needs of survivors in line with the [Whole Housing Approach](#) model.

This is in line with the MHCLG's statutory guidance for implementation of Part 4, stating that *“strategies do not need to follow a specific format; however, Tier One authorities should ensure the strategy clearly sets out its overall and holistic approach to deliver a rounded offer of support to victims in safe accommodation”*(p.17).

This template has been developed by Standing Together, Althea Cribb (associate), Rebecca Vagi (former Whole Housing Approach Programme Manager), and in partnership with Val Lunn (consultant), who wrote the Part 4 Strategy for Nottingham City Council. We are grateful to Nottingham City Council for their permission to use their strategy as the basis of this template and for suggested phrasing. This document was also developed in consultation with Women's Aid Federation of England (Women's Aid).

Some notes on language

Victim/survivor

These terms are used interchangeably throughout this report to refer to people who have or are currently experiencing domestic abuse.

Perpetrator

This term is used throughout to refer to the person using abuse.

Lived experience*

This term refers to individuals who share their expertise and knowledge based on their first-hand experiencing of domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological or emotional and/or physical and sexual abuse.

*It is important to include the voices of those with lived experience wherever possible throughout your strategy

Specialist domestic abuse service

This term refers to organisations/services independent from the state (i.e. third sector), whose core business is to support victim/survivors and/or perpetrators and/or children and young people impacted by domestic abuse and other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) - including sexual violence, forced marriage, so called 'honour based' violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, trafficking and modern-day slavery.

There is currently no UK government definition of a 'specialist service' in the context of domestic abuse and VAWG services. Within the VAWG sector there is a shared understanding of 'specialism', developed from established knowledge and practice approaches identified by Imkaan and its network of members. Some of these principles have now been adapted into a definition of 'specialist' developed by Welsh Women's Aid, recently adopted by the Welsh Government in [statutory commissioning guidance](#).

Template

1. Introduction

Set the scene, including:

- The need for an explanation of DA as a gendered issue and form of VAWG
- Use local and national data to briefly outline how domestic abuse is a significant issue
- Use local and national research and data to outline the correlation between domestic abuse, homelessness, and housing need.
- Use local and national research and data to outline the need for an intersectional approach to the domestic abuse strategy.

Appendix 3 includes a list of useful resources that can be cited when setting the scene

Set out what is in the strategy section by section

2. Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Within this section include:

- Outline what is in the Act and when it came into force.
- Highlight any gaps within the Act such as support for those with no recourse to public funds.
- Quote the Local Authority duties set out in the Act.
- Give the definition of safe accommodation, highlight what is excluded.
- Give the definition of support services, which includes support for children survivors. This should recognise that support for children is an essential provision in refuge services.
- Outline the Needs Assessment requirement description and the importance for this to be done through a national lens to accurately reflect the support survivors need in accessing safety. E.g. they may need to relocate to a new area.
- List the local and national strategies that link to this strategy.
- This strategy could consider legislation relating to housing in addition to Part 4 (safe accommodation) for example, the two duties listed under Part 7 (homelessness and the Secure Tenancies Act)

For consideration

It is recommended that local authorities do not fulfil their responsibilities to Part 4 and Part 7 in isolation, but to coordinate these responses in a way that follows a victim/survivor's housing journey. For example, local authorities must ensure that when victim/survivors present as

homeless and are considered priority need, that they access quality assured safe accommodation and are provided specialist support within these settings. Equally, where a victim/survivor is leaving refuge and moving on into the community, that they are provided with safe move-on accommodation and support within these settings, and still access services to maintain secure tenancies when applicable.

3. MHCLG Statutory Guidance for the Provision of support to Victims of Domestic abuse, including Children, in Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Services. Issued under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Within this section, reference the MHCLT draft Statutory Guidance, as well as throughout your strategy where relevant. Please note that this is in draft format and subject to public consultation at the time of publishing this template. It can be found here

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/993825/Domestic_Abuse_Act_-_draft_statutory_guidance.pdf

Background Information

The Statutory Guidance was developed in close partnership with the specialist domestic abuse sector, and what has been included has therefore been shaped by them, reflecting their expertise in providing safe accommodation and support to survivors, and the views of those with lived experience.

For consideration

The statutory guidance acknowledges that this duty is ‘separate to local authority housing duties under the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Act 2002 and does not place a requirement on authorities to provide domestic abuse victims with accommodation’.

The guidance however does state that it is possible for support under this (Part 4) duty to be provided in accommodation associated with another duty such as a Housing Act 1996 Part 7 duty. In other words, local strategies can opt to consider the safe accommodation support needs of survivors placed in temporary accommodation (ideally not B&B’s or mixed hostel settings) and more stable accommodation through a Part VII offer.

Survivors accessing emergency accommodation and in need of more stable housing from a local authority because of fleeing domestic abuse will often access this service as a last resort and may be at the point of crisis. Post-separation abuse, which is now recognised in law via the Domestic Abuse Act, is a lived experience for many survivors and may be a time when support is needed most to help sustain safety and freedom from a perpetrator. The safe accommodation needs of

survivors accessing help via the local authority should therefore be considered as part of this strategy. The strategy should state clearly that mixed-sex accommodation are threatening and re-traumatising environments for women who have experienced male violence.

Appendix 4 contains useful reading and references for this section.

Key section from the guidance to include within section 3

Section A4: Support (pg. 10)

Safe Accommodation support should be delivered by knowledgeable and/or experienced specialist providers, charities, and other voluntary organisations whose purpose is to provide support to victims of domestic abuse. This includes considering any specialist domestic abuse services that exist to support people with relevant protected characteristics or with additional and or complex needs.

Section B1: Local Partnership Boards (pg. 11)

The guidance recognises the importance of multi-agency working in responding to the needs of victims of domestic abuse within safe accommodation. Stakeholder feedback highlighted the value of close relationships between local authorities and a variety of agencies, most notably Police and Crime Commissioners and specialist domestic abuse services. The latter deliver expert support to survivors and represent the experiences and needs of survivors and their involvement in the Tier One board should be considered vital for carrying out its responsibilities.

- B1.X All Boards must include relevant representation from services and / or organisations that support the needs of children, ensuring the unique needs of children as victim/survivors of domestic abuse in their own right are adequately considered and addressed, as specified in the Domestic Abuse Act.

Section B2: Local Needs Assessment (p.16)

- B2.X This should take steps to better understand the diverse needs of those accessing support within safe accommodation, including those who share relevant protected characteristics.
- B2.X the assessment should also consider the number and level of need of victims who must flee the local authority area to access safe accommodation. This should include how Tier One authorities are working with their neighbouring local authorities to take account of the needs of victims from outside of the local area. Local areas may benefit from capturing the tenure type that survivor are fleeing from to better understand prevention and earlier intervention strategies.

- B2.X In undertaking the local needs assessment, Tier One local authorities should use the expertise and knowledge of local and national specialist services to support in identifying and understanding the level and types of needs, including the needs of children, disabled victims, victims from minority ethnic or faith communities, and those from the Gypsy Roma and Traveller community [not limited to]. This should include direct input from individuals with lived experiences.
- B2.X Where authorities currently assess the needs for support within safe accommodation alongside need for wider domestic abuse and / or VAWG services, the guidance encourages authorities to continue this approach, ensuring the elements set out in the form and associated guidance is adequately captured.

Section B3: Strategies

- B3.X The needs assessment should consider current local provision and any gaps identified through the needs assessment. This should focus on differing need based on protected characteristics or experiences of multiple disadvantage, substance use and mental health needs.
- B5.X. In giving effect to their strategies, Tier 1 local authorities should have an approach in place to meet the needs of victims coming from outside of their local area. The guidance encourages collaboration with other local authorities to enable easy movement.

Section B4: Giving Effect to Strategies

- B4.X The guidance sets out that all commissioned services should be gender-informed, acknowledging that domestic abuse is both a cause and consequence of gender inequality.
- B4.X In commissioning support services under this duty, Tier One authorities must ensure that services are provided in accommodation that comes within the definition of relevant accommodation as described [see section A3] and should ensure that the delivery of support within these settings meet the agreed and recognised quality standards. This includes MHCLG's Quality Standards, the Women's Aid National Quality Standards, and Imkaan Accredited Quality Standards.

4. Purpose of strategy

Within this section include the following:

Purpose: one sentence.

Aims: Covering adult victim/survivors including children and young people, perpetrators, addressing need, meeting the statutory requirements.

Principles underpinning the strategy:

The following principles are taken from the Nottingham City Council Draft Strategy and are included as suggested phrasing only.

4.1. Gender-informed

Suggested phrasing

The strategy recognises the gendered nature of domestic abuse as “violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately” (CEDAW 1992).

While both women and men experience domestic abuse and harmful practices, the overwhelming majority of victims are women and the perpetrators men.

- *89% of victims of domestic abuse who have been subject to repeat victimisation (over 4 incidents) are women, and are victims of a repeated pattern of coercive control;*
- *women are more likely to experience higher levels of fear and are also much more likely to be killed by their partners or former partners than men.¹*
- *The vast majority of victims/survivors requiring safe accommodation will be women. The interventions provided to maintain safety for women within safe accommodation should also be gender informed.*

Organisations and services commissioned to deliver support services will be specialist with an understanding of domestic abuse as gendered and a cause and consequence of inequality between women and men which intersects with other inequalities.

Gender-informed provision of safe accommodation and support considers the needs of women and men survivors. Separate, single-sex provision of accommodation and support for victim/survivors of domestic abuse is essential for safety.

4.2. Specialist services

Suggested phrasing

¹ Successful Commissioning: a guide for commissioning services that survivor women and children survivors of domestic violence. 2014 Imkaan and Women’s Aid England

This strategy recognises the importance of including the voices of victims/survivors so that their lived experience can become a catalyst for change. We recognise that many practitioners in the specialist sector are survivors themselves and build expert knowledge over time.

4.3. Survivor-led

Suggested phrasing

Commitment to consult with survivors, including those who face intersecting forms of oppression and discrimination, and to co-produce future versions of the strategy.

4.4. Coordinated Community Response (CCR)

Suggested phrasing

Domestic abuse is a complex social problem that impacts people, communities, and services across our society. Agencies and organisations are often responding to one aspect of the issue and/or the same problem from different angles.

Because of its complexity, it can be difficult for victims/survivors to navigate services in order to get the help they need – a study by SafeLives found that 85% of victims/survivors sought help five times in the year before they got the help they needed².

We believe that domestic abuse is the responsibility of everyone and all agencies and therefore, our approach will be underpinned by a Coordinated Community Response³. Through this, we will bring together statutory, voluntary and community sector organisations and groups, including housing and homeless services providers, to work in partnership in an integrated and coordinated manner to address domestic abuse, increase survivor safety and hold perpetrators to account.

4.5. Whole Housing Approach (WHA)

Suggested phrasing

A Whole Housing Approach (WHA)⁴ provides a framework for the domestic abuse and housing sectors to work together to address the immediate and longer-term housing needs of victims/survivors. A WHA considers the needs of diverse communities of survivors across all housing tenure types (social, private rented, privately owned, supported accommodation) to

² <https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Getting%20it%20right%20first%20time%20-%20complete%20report.pdf>

³ <https://www.standingtogether.org.uk/blog-3/in-search-of-excellence>

⁴ <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/whole-housing-approach/>

increases survivor accommodation sustainment and reduce homelessness. A WHA is listed in the new Part 4 Statutory Duty as a form of safe accommodation⁵.

4.6. National and Local VAWG Strategies and National Statement of Expectations. Government VAWG Strategy 2021 priorities are: Prioritising prevention; Supporting victims; Pursuing perpetrators; A stronger system.

Suggested phrasing

This Strategy will align with the four priorities of the national VAWG Strategy 2021-2024⁶ – prioritising prevention, supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators and a stronger system.

In 2016, the Government published its National Statement of Expectations⁷ which sets out what actions local commissioners need to put in place to ensure their response to VAWG is collaborative, robust, and effective. Local strategies are required to:

- *Put the victim/survivor at the centre;*
- *Have a clear focus on the perpetrators in order to keep victims (and those at risk) safe;*
- *Take a strategic, system wide approach to commissioning, acknowledging the gendered nature of VAWG;*
- *Be locally-led and safeguard individuals throughout;*
- *Raise local awareness of the issues and involve, engage and empower communities to seek, design and deliver solutions to prevent VAWG.*

4.7. Coercive Control and Space for Action

Suggested phrasing

This strategy recognises that coercive control is the primary tactic used by perpetrators of domestic abuse. This is recognised in the Act within the definition of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is not a series of incidents of physical violence but a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour which restricts the everyday lives of survivors underpins this strategy, commissioning practice, survivor service delivery, work with perpetrators and prevention work.

⁵ Delivery of Support to Victims of Domestic Abuse, including Children, in Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Services Statutory guidance for Local Authorities across England <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-overarching-documents>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/violence-against-women-and-girls-vawg-call-for-evidence/violence-against-women-and-girls-vawg-strategy-2021-2024-call-for-evidence>

⁷ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/574665/VAWG_National_Statement_of_Expectations_-_FINAL.PDF

We recognise that perpetrators use coercive control to microregulate survivors' everyday lives in order to hurt, intimidate and isolate them and weaponise the home as part of their pattern of abuse.

The impact of the abuser's behaviour is that women adapt their behaviour to cope. Coercive control severely diminishes a survivor's 'space for action', a term introduced by Professor Liz Kelly to describe a woman's ability to be fully self-determining. Survivors' thinking and actions become narrower as her space for action becomes more restricted and limits her ability to seek help, to make a decision to leave an abuser, to protect her children and to even imagine a life free from domestic abuse. This is often described by victims/survivors as the most significant and serious harm caused to them.⁸

This strategy and the practice it promotes will both hold perpetrators to account for their coercive controlling behaviour and extend survivors space for action to feel and be safe in their home or to leave their home to go into refuge if this is what is needed.

4.8. Intersectionality

Suggested phrasing

We recognise that coercive control is interdependent on and reinforced by all forms of oppression and that while all survivors may share some common ground in their experiences, there will be differences related to their marginalisation, background and identity.

These create barriers to accessing support and services including refuge accommodation for survivors who are Black and minoritised, Deaf and disabled, LGBT, face severe and multiple disadvantage, are migrants or have no recourse to public funds.

Victims/survivors are not a homogenous group and their experiences of inequality have an effect not only on how they experience and understand abuse but also how and where they access support and justice.

Services will need to examine how they may be contributing to systems of oppression and practices of exclusion and marginalisation while also seeking to remove the barriers identified.

A Coordinated Community Approach and a Whole Housing Approach will require organisations and services to monitor for and respond to the needs of all [local area's] diverse communities of survivors.

⁸ https://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Costs_of_Freedom_Report_-_SWA.pdf

49. Equality Act 2010

Suggested phrasing

This strategy will align with the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Equality Act 2010 to ensure survivors with protected characteristics as well as those who face multiple disadvantage have access to the safe accommodation support services they need.

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- *Age*
- *Disability*
- *Gender reassignment*
- *Marriage and civil partnership*
- *Pregnancy and maternity*
- *Race*
- *Religion or belief*
- *Sex*
- *Sexual orientation*

The Equality Act recognises that, in certain circumstances, substantive equality will only be achieved if people with different protected characteristics can be treated differently, for example, to reflect their needs. This law enables commissioners of services to actively consider commissioning specialist and single sex services to meet particular needs.

The following section was taken from the Women's Resource Centre [report](#) on why women only services / spaces are needed, shared in the Useful Reading section:

“Many, if not most, women’s organisations are specialists: they work either in a particular field, or with a specific community of women, or both. They have a clear understanding of the needs of women and their specific expertise and knowledge ensures women’s needs are met. Women’s organisations provide women-only space and services. Service users, particularly the most marginalised women, often cite the women-only aspect of the provision as being crucial to their experience and state that their needs could not have been met in mixed spaces.

The desire to access single-sex services stems from women’s experiences of gender-based discrimination and, in many cases, abuse and violence. For many women, including the women interviewed for this report, mixed spaces are not perceived as comfortable or safe spaces. The availability of women-only spaces is therefore crucial to ensuring that women access the support that they need.”

This strategy recognises that systemic oppression has resulted in unmet need for particular

groups. For example, this strategy recognises that demand for additional support is in fact the result of systemic barriers which disproportionately affect survivors with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).

This strategy recognises the imperative of providing cross-border accommodation-based support, such as within refuge services, for victim/survivors escaping domestic abuse and a commitment to providing support for victim/survivors regardless of their local authority of origin.

5. Local Partnership Board

Within this section describe the Local Partnership Board arrangements, including:

- 5.1. Details: Name, where it sits in local structure, role of the board, any delegation.
- 5.2. Membership: list all agencies, specify how this meets the Duty; how specialist providers, including 'by and for' led services, will be on an equal footing to statutory partners and consulted meaningfully.
- 5.3. Sub-groups and their responsibilities / accountabilities. A Housing sub-group is good practice. Outline how survivors will be involved, or any co-production mechanisms. Specify how all providers will be involved.
- 5.4. Voices of those with lived experience: How the Board will incorporate the voices of adults, children, young people, and those who face intersecting forms of oppression, and how the travel, childcare or other access costs are met.
- 5.5. Resourcing this involvement: How the local authority will ensure that survivors & specialist DA services are resourced for their time and expertise.
- 5.6. How the Board will carry out consultation on the strategy.
- 5.7. Responsibilities and what will be implemented.
- 5.8. Reporting and accountability of the Board (local, national): when and how.
- 5.9. How the Strategy will be reviewed including the monitoring and evaluation processes that will ensure progress is assessed, and how services funded under the Duty will be monitored and evaluated.
- 5.10. How organisations can raise concerns.
- 5.11. Where the strategy will be published.
- 5.12. Actions the Board will take in relation to awareness raising and training.

6. Domestic Abuse prevalence in [area]

Within this section outline domestic abuse prevalence nationally and within your local area, including the following:

- 6.1. In setting out the data, highlight where there are gaps, limitations, and challenges. Including where and how Covid has impacted.
- 6.2. Extrapolate from Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) data to give indicative prevalence in area. Limitation of CSEW data: incident based, not reflecting lived experience of coercive and controlling behaviour; hides the fact that women are significantly more at risk than men of being subject to domestic abuse.
- 6.3. Police incidents and crimes (CSEW data states less than 20% of victims report to police⁹).
- 6.4. Any local data/estimates on controlling and coercive behaviours, forced marriage, so-called 'honour'-based abuse, FGM data and any local provision. If there is no local data, draw in national research to give indication of prevalence. For FGM see, e.g., <https://www.forwarduk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/FORWARD-UKs-FGM-Safeguarding-Research-Report-Bristol-Study-2021.pdf>; for so-called 'honour'-based abuse see, e.g., <https://karmanirvana.org.uk/data/>.
- 6.5. Numbers of domestic homicides nationally and locally; where the local homicides took place.
- 6.6. Who are the high-risk survivors? MARAC data, detailed by victims/survivors (demographics, protected characteristics), housing data for MARAC cases. Very brief overview of MARAC local processes/procedures, referencing housing involvement. *(NB: The Strategy should note most local areas focus provision on high-risk victims/survivors; this can lead to standard and medium risk victims/survivors being excluded from services, even though research on Domestic Homicide Reviews suggests many victims of domestic homicide were not assessed at high risk¹⁰. Commissioning should consider how a needs-led approach can be incorporated.)*
- 6.7. Children and young people: including national and local data and local provision.
- 6.8. Perpetrators: including national and local data and local provision.
- 6.9. Other data that may have been collected e.g., from health services.
- 6.10. Prevention: local activities and actions.

7. Needs Assessment and Unmet Need in [area]

Within this section outline the details of the needs assessment, including the following sections:

- 7.1. **Needs assessment methodology:** outline requirements from the Duty/Guidance; time covered and why, organisations asked for data, template used. State data was anonymised, how it was analysed, what the gaps and issues were and the impact of

⁹

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>

¹⁰ <https://www.standingtogether.org.uk/blog-3/domestic-homicide-review-dhr-case-analysis>

any limitations. Data is not enough, and a needs assessment must draw on the experiences of those with lived experience and specialist services.

7.2. Data systems: Describe the data systems in place and the advantages/opportunities, challenges/limits of these, and areas for development.

Note: OnTrack data has nationally been shown to be the best to provide data for the Needs Assessment (<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/ontrack/>).

Set out areas of development for gathering data that can identify unmet need (quantitative and qualitative) in future needs assessments.

How will the systems already in place improve, and collect data in the future? With a focus on capturing information that is useful for meeting needs of survivors.

7.3. Refuges:

7.3.1. challenges, limitations, gaps in data

7.3.2. numbers of accepted and declined referrals; why declined, and what can happen to those victims/survivors turned away (national research / local picture)

7.3.3. survivors accommodated including children (numbers, vacancies, length of stay, including restrictions e.g., license agreements)

7.3.4. any significant barriers to accessing refuge identified through the needs assessment

7.3.5. survivor and specialist provider voice

7.4. Sanctuary Scheme meeting need:

7.4.1. challenges, limitations, gaps in data

7.4.2. survivors provided with scheme (numbers, referral routes, tenure types)

7.4.3. any significant barriers to accessing Sanctuary Scheme identified through the needs assessment

7.4.4. survivor and specialist provider voice

7.5. Homelessness pathway:

7.5.1. Unmet need identified relating to access to safe accommodation

7.5.2. any significant barriers identified through the needs assessment

7.5.3. survivor and specialist provider voice

7.6. Data on move on:

7.6.1. where survivors are moving to (including refuge move on and other pathways to new accommodation); is this data collected by specialist services, housing, refuge? And from LA. Outline the housing outcomes for survivors, opportunities and challenges, barriers.

7.6.2. where are V/S moving on to, and barriers and challenges for this e.g., secure tenancies, availability of accommodation via local authorities, pathways, protocols

7.6.3. Data on protected characteristics (see appendix 1 for suggested data set)

(Sub section): Homeless prevention services in [area]

- 7.7. Domestic abuse need for homelessness services.
- 7.8. Describe provision; outline how it can be a pathway to safe accommodation.
- 7.9. Data on approaches due to domestic abuse; male/female; % accepted as in priority need / not. Describe change in Act re priority need, anticipated impact on demand. Tenure coming from when approaching; additional needs of those approaching through this route; any differences in need compared with other routes to safe accommodation; any barriers.
- 7.10. Temporary accommodation: local use currently, any issues with this; what is provided (outside safe accommodation definition) and what support is available to V/S in temporary accommodation. Project increase in demand based on above priority need data. How to address this while prioritising V/S safety. Any current use of B&B/Hotels, how this will be changed – specify not to be used for any V/S.
- 7.11. Exempt accommodation: that it will not be used for victim/survivor fleeing domestic abuse and why. See the Whole Housing Approach Year 2 report’s section on Exempt Accommodation for further explanation.
- 7.12. Out of area referrals: data and response (numbers, where from), specify they will be responded to in the same way as local referrals.

8. Safe accommodation provision in [area]

Within this section, include the following:

- 8.1. Outline the Act and Guidance requirements.
- 8.2. **Quality Standards:** set out how the following quality standards already are, or can be, incorporated locally e.g., into commissioning.
 - MHCLG
 - Women’s Aid Federation of England
 - Imkaan
 - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) – specify that this is not a sector service standard, but for housing providers – it does not qualify the housing provider to deliver a specialist domestic abuse service or domestic abuse support.
 - Sanctuary Scheme (see Appendix).
 - Respect standards, which relates to work with perpetrators.
- 8.3. **Refuge:**
 - 8.3.1. Guidance definition, including specialism. S.4 of the Statutory Guidance states “*expert help provided to all victims and their children by specialist staff in domestic abuse support services.*”
 - 8.3.2. Describe local provision, who provides it, funding/commissioning arrangements.

- 8.3.3. describe types of support provided: in refuge; for those accessing Sanctuary Scheme; and other support for V/S that can be provided outside of safe accommodation, therefore not fitting the definition but part of the overall picture (how to support V/S who are unable for any reason to access safe accommodation?); Statutory Guidance lists:
- Overall management of services within relevant [safe] accommodation
 - Support with the day-to-day running of the service
 - Advocacy support, which can include a range of different types of roles (not only Independent Domestic Violence Advocates or IDVA's. See the Whole Housing Approach toolkit for other types of advocacy, including Co-Located Advocacy and Mobile Advocacy).
 - Domestic abuse prevention advice
 - Specialist support for victims: designed specifically for victims with relevant protected characteristics; designed specifically for victims with additional and / or complex needs
 - Children's support, which is an essential service offered as part of refuge service provision. The need for this support should be considered for other types of accommodation as defined in the statutory guidance but not at the expense of this service being offered in refuge services.
 - Housing-related support
 - Advice service
 - Counselling and therapy
- 8.3.4. Detail of refuge provision: specialism, number of units, building owned by, support provider, accessible units, largest family size accommodated, upper age limit of children, NRPF, quality standard; describe buildings; provision compared with 1/10,000 population.
- 8.3.5. describe staffing, referral pathways (local / national), response to out of area referrals, length of stay (limits / average)
- 8.3.6. impact of Covid-19 on demand/availability
- 8.3.7. describe any second stage / move on accommodation via refuge
- 8.4. **Specialist safe accommodation:** definition from Act/Guidance. If no specialist safe accommodation provided locally, give brief indication of potential need.
- 8.5. **Sanctuary Scheme:** describe delivery model, delivery partners, process and procedure, provision, funding, demand. Detailed data on who this is provided to, same as with refuge data, and including tenure types – identify any barriers, e.g., owner occupiers, private rental sector.
- 8.6. **Other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation:** a safe (self-contained) place that includes access to wrap around support and specialist support, e.g., for V/S with complex needs. The (draft) Statutory Guidance refers to the Whole Housing Approach: it should be noted that the Whole Housing Approach isn't a form of

accommodation. It is a model that brings the housing and domestic abuse sectors together to deliver safe accommodation and support across all tenure types. At the time of writing, Standing Together and other domestic abuse organisations have responded to the consultation on the Statutory Guidance to seek to clarify this.

- 8.7. **Other accommodation in the local area:** any other specialist women's provision, but not specific to domestic abuse so outside of safe accommodation definition.

9. Whole Housing Approach

Within this section include information about the Whole Housing Approach¹¹ and the local implementation of the WHA.

Suggested Wording

The Whole Housing Approach (WHA) is a framework for addressing the housing and safety needs of victim/survivors in a local area. It brings together under one umbrella all the main housing tenure types alongside the housing options and support initiatives needed to help people experiencing domestic abuse to either maintain or access safe and stable housing.

Central to the effective provision of a WHA is the role of the WHA Coordinator who ensures these initiatives are delivered in a safe, consistent, and coordinated way, alongside the role of expert including specialist domestic abuse services who provide critical advocacy and support for victim/survivors in accessing these options and initiatives.

The WHA model includes 14 components, representing the main tenure types, the housing options and initiatives bespoke to domestic abuse and expert domestic abuse support with a focus on assisting survivors to obtain the best housing outcome possible. It considers the actions that can be taken against abusers/perpetrators, which should always start with the awareness, agreement, and involvement of victim/survivors.

The WHA addresses victim/survivors' experiences of economic abuse, which is now recognised in the Domestic Abuse Act and refers to when an abuser may 'restrict, exploit and sabotage the victim/survivors' access to money and other resources such as food, clothing, transportation and a place to live'¹². It considers how economic abuse and the financial hardship often associated with having to flee and starting over impacts on a victim/survivors choices, ability to access safety and freedom and their financial status in the long run. The Flexible Funding pot aims to redress the economic injustices and inequalities that many victim/survivors face.

¹¹ https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/media/11066/whole-housing-project-report_year-two_final.pdf

¹² Surviving Economic Abuse – <https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/what-is-economic-abuse/>

The WHA mission is to meaningfully address the safety and housing needs of victim/survivors, ensuring they can maintain or access safe and stable housing as quickly as possible. It achieves this with the following aims:

- 1. To bring together the housing and domestic abuse sectors through a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to keep victim/survivors safe and hold abusers to account. Coordination efforts join up existing WHA components in a local area and work with key agencies and stakeholders to address any gaps. Victim/survivors voices and experiences should be at the heart and centre of a WHA partnership. As explained above, the role of the WHA Coordinator and specialist domestic abuse support services are crucial to the provision of a CCR and keeping victim/survivors' voices at the centre of the approach.*
- 2. To create earlier identification and intervention for domestic abuse through raising awareness of and improving responses to domestic abuse with key housing agencies and stakeholders, including those working in privately owned and private rented sectors.*
- 3. To reduce homelessness linked to domestic abuse by improving the options available and giving victim/survivors more choice to remain or relocate to a new property.*

The following components are part of a WHA and are also defined in the statutory guidance as 'safe accommodation support'. A dedicated toolkit chapter accompanies each and it is recommended that this strategy refers to best practice contained within these:

- **Refuge Services:** refer to the WHA toolkit section 4 for further guidance.*
- **Sanctuary Scheme:** refer to the WHA toolkit section 15 for further guidance.*
- **Move On Accommodation:** Work is underway to create a dedicated toolkit section for this housing option. Initial guidance has been provided in section 17. Move on should consider move on from refuge services and longer term need for more stable housing.*

<https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/whole-housing-approach/whole-housing-toolkit/>

Other components included in the WHA framework can assist local authorities and tier one partnership boards with meeting other housing legislation contained within the DA Act.

***The Amendment to Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and omitting the vulnerability category for Priority Need** (Part 7 miscellaneous and general), for example, extends homelessness priority need to all eligible victim/survivors of domestic abuse by removing the vulnerability test, which will enable more victim/survivors, mainly without dependent children to access housing and prevent homelessness.*

Access to social housing is vital for many victim/survivors who are looking to overcome the harmful impacts of domestic abuse. Social housing is often more affordable than private renting and usually provides an offer of a more secure, long-term tenancy. The following WHA components can assist local authorities with considering best practice when delivering this new duty:

- ***Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance's accreditation** process and standards includes eight priority areas that considers a housing service's operations and helps to create system change within that organisation. This embeds processes that guides behaviour so that they deliver safe and effective interventions in domestic abuse cases. It prioritises the safety and support needs of victim/survivors and emphasises perpetrator accountability.*
- *A **Co-Located Advocate** is employed by a specialist domestic abuse service and is co-located in a local authority housing service. They bring expertise in safety planning and offer direct support to victim/survivors who present to the local authority housing service as homeless due to domestic abuse. They may also support the local authority with fulfilling their duties and following procedures to conduct or contribute to homeless interviews in partnership with the housing service, offers support throughout the homelessness prevention, relief and main duty stages included in the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017.*

An example of good practice implemented by a DAHA accredited local authority in London working in partnership with their co-located advocacy service created a domestic abuse specific Personalised Housing Plan, which includes prompt questions for staff that uses empathic language and safety planning considerations.

***The Secure Tenancies Act**, which grants secure tenancies in cases of domestic abuse where an original sole or joint secure tenancy (or assured tenancy for housing association tenants) was held (Part 7 miscellaneous and general).*

- *The **Managed Reciprocal** scheme offers a coordinated, cost-effective tool to prevent the loss of social tenancies. It ensures victim/survivors do not have to go through the homelessness route and face having to accept a private rented accommodation without any security of tenure when they had to flee their secure tenancy through no fault of their own.*

*The WHA framework by design is **flexible and adaptable**. It can account for variations in the availability of social housing stock, existing CCR partnerships and governance structures, service provision and local need. It is meant to be an adaptive solution that continues to evolve and grow over time, with different components being introduced and growing at different stages. The important role of a WHA Coordinator or equivalent is crucial for local delivery as they act as a*

linchpin, bringing partners and stakeholders together from across 12 components to consider and deliver consistent, joined up responses that meaningfully address the safety and housing needs of victim/survivors.

Local WHA:

This section could include data and information relating to any WHA component, beyond the definition of safe accommodation based on what is provided / available locally; local processes for supporting V/S and/or holding perpetrators accountable within this provision. Describe how the Whole Housing Approach could be developed locally.

Include any data from the Needs Assessment re demographics and barriers relevant to each of these areas:

- 9.1. Social housing: consider how survivors end up having to give up a secure tenancy to seek safety and freedom from the perpetrator¹³. This should take into consideration tenancy agreements; joint tenancies; Anti-Social Behaviour; supporting survivors through occupation orders and Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPO); managed reciprocals, Secure Tenancies Act (Part 7 DA Act).
- 9.2. Supported and sheltered housing.
- 9.3. Privately rented accommodation: local assistance / licencing schemes; landlords; rent arrears; ASB; sanctuary scheme; for those leaving refuge.
- 9.4. Privately owned accommodation: what is known / not known; barriers (national research and data, anything from the needs assessment); economic abuse.
- 9.5. Perpetrators and housing: data; local response; V/S safety; tenancy agreements; joint tenancies; training.
- 9.6. Managed reciprocals (links to 9.1).
- 9.7. DAHA.
- 9.8. Moving on into longer term settled accommodation: local provision / availability and data, pathways taken by survivors.
- 9.9. Flexible Funding.
- 9.10. Housing First.
- 9.11. DA service provision for housing: Mobile Advocacy and Co-located Advocacy as listed in the Whole Housing Approach. Local areas may use different terminology (For example, Nottingham refer to as Safe Accommodation Advocates).
- 9.12. WHA Coordination.

¹³ https://www.solacewomensaid.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/Solace%20Women%27s%20Aid%20housing%20report_The%20price%20of%20safety_Mar16.pdf

10. Strategic priorities and actions

Within this section define each priority, including why it is a priority, how this will be met, and list actions for the local area. Then at the end list all actions together, specify how the Action Plan will be developed and how progress against the strategy/action plan will be monitored and evaluated.

Part 4 Requirements

- 10.1. Delivering the safe accommodation statutory duty
 - 10.2. Access to safe accommodation
 - 10.3. Refuge accommodation
 - 10.4. Second stage move on accommodation
 - 10.5. Sanctuary Scheme
 - 10.6. Any additional priorities (i.e., other WHA components)
-

11. Commissioning priorities

- 11.1. How the new burdens funding will be used in response to the findings of the Needs Assessment?
- 11.2. How the commissioning process will be fair and sustain expert and experienced domestic abuse service provision?
- 11.3. Consider how you are monitoring and evaluating the services and how services are meeting the quality standards.
- 11.4. Use a similar approach to [commissioning guidance](#) developed in Wales, which clarifies the difference between specialist and non-specialist, and specialist 'by and for' domestic abuse services
- 11.5. Recognise the gendered nature of domestic abuse, which is a form of VAWG. Imkaan & Women's Aid's [Successful Commissioning Guide 2014](#) provides useful detail which should be reflected in this section.
- 11.6. Make clear that local authorities must never apply local connection restrictions to survivors accessing any form of safe accommodation, including refuge services, move-on and long-term housing.
- 11.7. Highlight key points about current problems and solutions with procurement for services, which are identified in the government's [VAWG Commissioning Toolkit 2016](#).
- 11.8. Commissioning plans and tenders should consider how it will cover the full costs of service delivery.

12. Appendices

Suggested information to include within the Strategy Appendices include:

- 12.1. Definition of domestic abuse as defined in section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- 12.2. Engagement with key partners, both locally and nationally. (note: it's important to be aware of national helplines, live chats, and support services available)
- 12.3. Data sets on protected characteristics (refers to s7.6.3)
Please see appendix 1 for a list of national research and data based on protected characteristics.
- 12.4. Sanctuary Scheme Standards – check list (see appendix 2)

Appendices to this document for support in drafting your strategy

Appendix 1: data sets and research based on different protected characteristics

Guidance

When including information specific to protected characteristics, use local data if available, or national data/research if needed. This should include information about what the need for safe accommodation is or might be, challenges in providing this. This should also include any evidence of the type of support required/desired by different survivors and the local provision of these services.

This should also highlight any intersections / differences within these groups and recognise that they are not homogenised and that they do not experience oppressions in isolation.

Highlight how survivors' voices will guide this as it evolves with future needs assessments, and as data collection increases and broadens. Recognise the barriers faced by survivors, particularly those who are minoritized, to come forward and share their lived experiences. While men are not a protected characteristic, you could consider how to integrate male survivors through each section.

Younger survivors

Crime Survey of England and Wales 2019/20: women aged 16 to 19 significantly more likely to be subject to domestic abuse in the previous year than older age groups.

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021: London refuge services 2019/20 less than 1% of women placed were aged 16-18; 25% of unsuccessful referrals recorded were from this age group.

Two refuges in England provide 12 spaces specifically for young women aged 16-24.

Older survivors

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021: 1.9% of refuge service users were aged 61 or over.

One refuge in England provides four spaces specifically for women aged over 45.

Femicide Census¹: between 2009 and 2019, 14% of femicide victims were aged 66 or over; of which 34% were killed by an intimate partner and 25% by their sons.

Black and minoritised women

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021²: data presented for all services (community and refuge), not broken down. 62.1% White British; 8.8% Asian/Asian British; 6.5% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British. 3.7% white Eastern European. 37 organisations (of which 20 are in London) provide 394

¹ <https://www.femicidecensus.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Femicide-Census-10-year-report.pdf>

² <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The-Domestic-Abuse-Report-2021-The-Annual-Audit.pdf>

(209 in London) spaces for black and minoritised women. This includes on refuge (62 spaces) for refugee and trafficked women and women with insecure immigration status.² refuges in London provide eight spaces for women from a specific religious group.

No refuges specifically for women subject to / at risk of forced marriage.

Migrant women and women with no recourse to public funds

Southall Black Sisters³ supported 196 women who had NRPF with accommodation, subsistence and advocacy in 2019/20, there were 46 different categories of immigration status. Five most common were: spousal visa (43%), asylum-seeker (8%), EU dependent visa (5%), visitor visa overstayer (5%), unspecified visa overstayer (5%). Therefore, 57% of women were on non-spousal visas with NRPF and not eligible to apply for DDVC or leave to remain under DV Rule. Southall Black Sisters⁴ quote refuge monitoring from 2017 in which on average only one space per region in England was available for a woman with NRPF.

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021: 29% of service users (community and refuge) who were not British Nationals (N=3,262) had no recourse to public funds.

4% of vacancies posted on Routes to Support could consider women who had no recourse to public funds. 4.5% of rejected referrals stated NRPF as the reason.

Disabled survivors

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021: 25.9% of refuge service users were recorded as having a disability; mental health most common (18.5%); 5.7% of women had more than one disability. 6.9% had a physical disability. No refuges specifically for women who are deaf. Two refuges (both in London) offering twelve spaces for women with learning disabilities. Of vacancies posted on Routes to Support in 2019/20 (10,340), 0.9% were recorded as having full wheelchair access and 1.2% for a person with limited mobility.

Crime Survey of England and Wales 2019/20: 14.7% of women with a disability experienced domestic abuse in the previous year compared with 6% of women without disabilities.

Lesbian and bisexual women

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021: 3.3% of refuge service users identified as lesbian, bisexual, gay, pansexual or queer. 0.6% of service users (community and refuge services) identified as trans. NB: significant missing data on both. No refuges specifically for LGBTQ+ survivors, but spaces available in non-by and for services.

³ <https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SBS-and-LAWRS-joint-response-to-the-Migrant-Victims-of-Domestic-Violence-Review.pdf>

⁴ <https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/DA-Bill-Briefing-Paper-2.pdf>

Stonewall Housing LGBT accommodation-based domestic abuse services report (2018)⁵. Galop 2020⁶: data and barriers to accessing accommodation.

Transgender women and non-binary individuals

Stonewall Housing LGBT accommodation-based domestic abuse services report (2018)⁷. Galop 2020⁸: data and barriers to accessing accommodation. Trans survivors: this is a contested area. A Stonewall report (2018) stated domestic abuse sexual violence services already worked with trans women and did not see this as a problem. FOVAS, for example, responded that this was biased and excluded contrary voices – they emphasise female-only (i.e., cis) spaces.

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021 shows (see below) that many women's services are working with men as well, so much will depend on local areas' approaches and existing services, and how these can be developed.

Women facing severe and multiple disadvantage

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021: Two refuges in England supporting women with substance use needs or complex needs (13 spaces). 15.2% of refuges had a specialist mental health support worker, 9.9% had specialist drug use worker, 9.9% had a specialist alcohol use worker. 3.9% of rejected referrals stated mental health needs as the reason; 4.5% rejected due to drug and alcohol needs; 0.8% because of specific types of previous offences (violence/arson); 1.6% were identified as unsafe to work with.

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2020⁹: Needs of refuge service users: 3.7% offending support; 8.1% drug support; 7.1% alcohol support; 15.3% physical health; 44.5% mental health; 22.1% more than one area.

AVA/Agenda – Multiple Disadvantage www.avaproject.org.uk.

Women with larger families

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021: 43% refuge vacancies posted on Routes to Support could accommodate a woman with two children; 15.1% could accommodate a woman with three children. 0.5% of rejected referrals stated the needs of a large family as the reason.

Women's Aid Nowhere to Turn for CYP (2020)¹⁰ quotes the Women's Aid Annual Audit of 2020: Only 4.6% of refuge vacancies are available to women with four or more children; can't find this statistic in the original report.

⁵ https://stonewallhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BA_Project-overview.pdf

⁶ http://www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Galop_RR-v4a.pdf

⁷ https://stonewallhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BA_Project-overview.pdf

⁸ http://www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Galop_RR-v4a.pdf

⁹ <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/The-Domestic-Abuse-Report-2020-The-Annual-Audit.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Nowhere-to-Turn-for-Children-and-Young-People.pdf>

Women with older boy children

Women's Aid Nowhere to Turn for CYP (2020)¹¹: Of 262 refuge spaces for which data was available:

Age limit for male children (years)	Vacancies (N)	Vacancies %
8	1	0.38%
10	4	1.53%
11	3	1.15%
12	19	7.25%
13	14	5.34%
14	40	15.27%
15	40	15.27%
16	79	30.15%
17	11	4.20%
No age limit/18	40	15.27%
No children	11	4.20%
Total	262	

Women in employment

Women employment rates and pay gaps compared to men:

- In the UK, 15.49 million women aged 16+ were in employment in October-December 2020, down 117,000 from a year ago. The female employment rate was 71.8%, down from a record high of 72.4% a year previously. The male employment rate was 80.6%¹².
- Median weekly pay for female full-time employees was £543 at April 2020. This compared to £619 for male full-time employees.
- Women have seen an increase in redundancies, unemployment, and people claiming unemployment benefits since the start of the pandemic. More women than men have been furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention scheme, partially because women were more likely to be working in a sector that has been shut down by the pandemic. Mothers and women from minority ethnic groups have been particularly affected by the pandemic.

Women's experiences of economic abuse – including where the perpetrator controls finances, takes out debt in the victim/survivor's name, or damages property that accrues charges – creates additional challenges to the victim/survivor's financial capacity to secure safe and stable accommodation. Include research and data provided by Surviving Economic Abuse (SEA)¹³, some examples include:

¹¹ <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Nowhere-to-Turn-for-Children-and-Young-People.pdf>

¹² <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06838/SN06838.pdf>

¹³ <https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Statistics-on-economic-abuse.pdf>

- 1 in 5 British women have experienced financial abuse in a current or former relationship
- 95% of women who experience domestic abuse report experiencing economic abuse
- More than half of women experiencing domestic abuse said they have no money so could not leave.
- A third of victim-survivors do not tell anyone about financial abuse: those that do are more likely to tell a friend or family member.

Information about the affordability of housing and changes to welfare benefits creating further disadvantages for victim/survivors, who are disproportionately women. Key findings from a 2019 report by Women’s Budget Group¹⁴ highlight that woman in general struggle to access housing in private rented and privately-owned markets:

- There is no region in England where the average home to rent is affordable for a woman on median earnings.
- Across England, average rents take 43% of women’s median earnings and 28% of men’s.
- Reforms since 2012 have broken the link between rent and housing benefit levels, with 90% of private renters on housing benefit in 2015 facing shortfalls.

This same report shows that cuts to social security also disproportionately impact on women:

- Women make up 60% of housing benefit claimants and so are being disproportionately affected by these cuts.
- Universal credit is also having a negative impact. The five-week waiting period on application is leaving many people in rent arrears. Tenants on universal credit are six times more likely to fall behind on rent than other benefit claimants.¹⁵

Having a safe and stable home is essential for achieving freedom from the perpetrator and overcoming the impacts of domestic abuse. Social housing has ‘social rent’, which is on average 50% of the market rate linked to local wages.¹⁶ This offers much needed security to victim/survivors to begin the process of rebuilding their lives.

Women in full time employment or earning over a certain amount may not be able to access refuge services due to not being able to access welfare benefits yet cannot afford the rent fees. Local authorities should consider how to capture this in the needs assessment and address this issue

¹⁴ <https://wbg.org.uk/analysis/reports/a-home-of-her-own-housing-and-women/>

¹⁵ Women’s Budget Group (2019) *A home of her own, housing and women*. Retrieved from <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/WBG19-Housing-Report-full-digital.pdf>

¹⁶ Social rents vary from area to area and are set using a government formula. This creates a ‘formula rent’ for each property, which is calculated based on the relative value of the property, the size of the property and relative local income levels. Landlords have flexibility to set rents up to 5% above the formula rent (10% in the case of supported housing) – this is known as the ‘rent flexibility level’. Formula rent is also subject to rent caps, which vary according to the size of the property.

through their strategy. For example, is it possible to capture how many women are turned away from refuge due to affordability.

Children and young people

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 explicitly recognises child victims in two ways:

- i. The definition of domestic abuse (s.1) states (s1.5): *For the purposes of this Act A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).*
 - ii. S.3 of the Act identifies “Children as victims of domestic abuse”:
 - (1) *This section applies where behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is domestic abuse.*
 - (2) *Any reference in this Act to a victim of domestic abuse includes a reference to a child who-*
 - (a) *sees or hears, or experiences the effects of, the abuse, and*
 - (b) *is related to A or B.*
 - (3) *A child is related to a person for the purposes of subsection (2) if-*
 - (a) *the person is a parent of, or has parental responsibility for, the child, or*
 - (b) *the child and the person are relatives.*
 - (4) *In this section-*
 - “child” means a person under the age of 18 years;*
 - “parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989 (see section 3 of that Act); “relative” has the meaning given by section 63(1) of the Family Law Act 1996.*
- 62% of children subject to domestic abuse are directly harmed; holding perpetrators accountable and providing children and young people with support from specialist services are essential to improve the outcomes for these children¹⁷, but very few have access to it¹⁸.
 - One in seven children and young people under the age of 18 will have lived with a domestic abuser at some point in their childhood¹⁹.
 - Nationally, there is patchy support available for children and young people that directly addresses their experience of being subject to domestic abuse²⁰. Children are directly impacted by the abuser’s coercive controlling behaviours including following the end of the relationship and during child contact.

¹⁷

<https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Final%20policy%20report%20In%20plain%20sight%20-%20effective%20help%20for%20children%20exposed%20to%20domestic%20abuse.pdf>

¹⁸

<https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Insights%20National%20Dataset%20Briefing%202017%20-%20children.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/the-survivors-handbook/children-and-domestic-abuse/>

²⁰ <https://media.actionforchildren.org.uk/documents/patchy-piecemeal-and-precarious-support-for-children-affected-by-domestic-abuse.pdf>

Heterosexual male survivors

Women's Aid Annual Audit 2021:

- On 1st May 2020 47% of entries on Routes to Support had one or more services for men, including 33 out of 263 refuges (12.5% of refuges) which could also accommodate men. There were 181 refuge spaces available for men, 24 for men only and 157 for either men or women.
- 23 services that reported a net increase of one or more service types for men. Seven (30.4%) of these had a corresponding increase in staff. Of the services reporting a net increase in service types for men, 14 (60.9%) reported no change to staffing level and two services reported a decrease in the number of staff, despite providing these additional services.

Respect, 2019²¹: Analysis of calls to Men's Advice Line 2014-19 (of 31,341 total calls, 17,823 were from male victims).

- 15,153 gave information on their sexual orientation, of these 98.9% identified as heterosexual.
- Of those (14,654) with an age recorded, over half (59%) were 31-50.
- Of those (14,967) with an ethnicity recorded, 47.6% were White
- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British; 9.3% were Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; 13.6% were Asian/Asian British.
- 1.2% of callers were signposted to refuge services. 1.4% were signposted to immigration support. 6.4% were signposted to housing support.

Gay and bisexual men

Stonewall Housing LGBT accommodation-based domestic abuse services report (2018)²².

Galop 2020²³: data and barriers to accessing accommodation.

Transgender men and non-binary individuals

Stonewall Housing LGBT accommodation-based domestic abuse services report (2018)²⁴.

Galop 2020²⁵: data and barriers to accessing accommodation.

Appendix 2: Sanctuary Scheme Checklist

²¹ <https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/respect/attachment/file/16/Respect-Toolkit-for-Work-with-Male-Victims-of-Domestic-Abuse-2019.pdf>

²² https://stonewallhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BA_Project-overview.pdf

²³ http://www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Galop_RR-v4a.pdf

²⁴ https://stonewallhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BA_Project-overview.pdf

²⁵ http://www.galop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Galop_RR-v4a.pdf

Currently, there are no minimum standards for the Sanctuary Scheme. The Whole Housing Approach team produced draft standards that will be finalised alongside the completion of an academic evaluation of the scheme, expected in late 2022. The standards centre on 4 priority areas:

Safe and Suitable	
Victim/survivors are believed and supported by staff who understand the dynamics, risk factors and safety and support needs relating to domestic abuse.	
Victim/survivors are offered domestic abuse support as part of the service	
A suitability assessment is carried out to ensure the scheme is appropriate and safe	
Victim/survivors are informed about security measures being recommended and involved in decision making within reason	
Sanctuary security measures / devices are installed when the property type and condition is appropriate and with consent of the victim/survivor	
Fire safety checks occur when a risk of arson is identified	
Security measures / devices are only installed where the landlords' consent has been obtained (if private rented and social housing) and where it is not in breach of joint tenancy / ownership rights	
Security measures / devices installed are in line with the victim/survivors wishes, preferences and how the type and level of security measures installed will impact on their safety & wellbeing	
Any additional security work requested by the victim/survivor or identified through the survey or installation work, which is not covered by the scheme is acknowledged and appropriate advocacy and support is provided	
Information sharing - key agencies are notified when Sanctuary works are installed to support a robust coordinated response	
Accessible	
A diverse range of victim/survivors can access the scheme	
Victim/survivors can access the scheme regardless of their housing tenure and whether they are in permanent or temporary housing	
Victim/survivors across the spectrum of risk (standard, medium and high) can access the scheme.	
Victim/survivors can access the scheme without having to make a police crime report or the uptake of other services	
Victim/survivors are supported to access alternative, temporary, emergency accommodation if in imminent danger and waiting for security measures to be installed	

Effective	
There is a partnership agreement or protocol in place that outlines the shared purpose, delivery model, key agencies involved and their responsibilities, Sanctuary security measure options, referral pathways and plans for monitoring and evaluating the scheme.	
There are dedicated roles to offer the core services for delivering a safe, suitable, effective, accessible, and efficient service	
The Sanctuary Scheme security measures offered as part of the scheme are reasonable, practical, necessary, and appropriate	
The scheme is offered as a housing option by the local authority as part of homelessness prevention	
The security installer service provider uses qualified installers and installs security measures and devices that meet industry standards.	
Consistent information is collected and shared about Victim/survivors	
Victim/survivors are satisfied with the service and indicate it has had a positive impact on their safety, wellbeing, and enabled access to more stable housing	
Continuous improvements are made to the scheme to ensure quality and enhance its effectiveness	
Efficient	
The scheme has procedures that details how referrals are processed and supported through to completion of the Sanctuary work	
Victim/survivors are in contact with the minimum number of staff involved the scheme as possible, ideally a single point of contact from start to end	
The scheme is adequately funded to meet demand and reach as a diverse range of survivors	

Appendix 3: Useful resources and references to consider in drafting the introduction to the Strategy

Office of National Statistics

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusefindingsfromthecrimesurveyforenglandandwales/previousReleases>

Women’s Aid

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support/what-is-domestic-abuse/domestic-abuse-is-a-gendered-crime/>

Imkaan

<https://www.imkaan.org.uk/resources>

Galop

<https://galop.org.uk/lgbt-peoples-experiences-of-domestic-abuse/>

Hearing Women's Voices

<https://www.wrc.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=66c03dc1-5c2a-450b-af30-67e16d9711a8>

Domestic Abuse Housing Association – Whole Housing Approach

<https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/whole-housing-approach/>

[Whole Housing Approach, Year 1 Report \(DAHA, 2020\)](#)

[Whole Housing Approach, Year 2 Report \(DAHA, 2021\)](#)

Appendix 4: Useful reading and referencing for section 3 of the strategy template

Useful reading

- See page 4 for a definition of how Women's Aid, who oversee the network of refuges in England, define refuge service model. This also applies to community based domestic abuse services: https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/media/10650/4_wha-refuge-services.pdf
- The VAWG commissioning guidance developed in Wales includes a clear distinction between types of support services available. It offers an explanation of the technical differences between non-specialist, specialist and specialist 'by and for' services, which are vital to ensure that survivor/victims of domestic abuse receive the right support, and which meets the Government's commitments under the Istanbul Convention.
- Women's Aid publish annually a Domestic Abuse Report, which presents the most comprehensive set of data on domestic abuse in the country: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/evidence-hub/research-and-publications/the-domestic-abuse-report/>
- Imkaan, from Survival to Sustainability: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/2f475d_9cab044d7d25404d85da289b70978237.pdf
- Response to Complexity: Survivors of Domestic Abuse with 'complex needs': <https://equation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/EQ-LIB-209.pdf>