

1 Policy statement

- 1.1 At Rooftop Housing Group (Rooftop) we are committed to delivering high quality services that provide our customers with a safe environment and pleasant places to live and to work with partners with a common aim to reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour. We will provide support to those who have been affected by domestic abuse and remove any barriers to reporting incidents. Our aim is to enhance the quality of life for our customers by promoting active engagement with them, working with relevant stakeholders and by being a responsive landlord to contribute to the overall well-being of individuals and families.
- 1.2 This Policy sets out Rooftop's commitment to assisting customers and applicants who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse.

2 Statutory and Regulatory context

- 2.1 This document has been reviewed in line with the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) Neighbourhood and Community Standard (April 2024) which states:
 - 2.1.1 "Registered providers must work co-operatively with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice".
 - 2.1.2 "Registered providers must have a policy for how they recognise and effectively respond to cases of domestic abuse".

3 Policy outline

- 3.1 We believe that our customers should not live in fear of violence, abuse or harassment from a partner, former partner or any member of their household or family.
- 3.2 Domestic abuse is still a largely hidden crime and measuring the true scale of the issue is difficult. Domestic abuse happens in all communities, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- 3.3 As a housing provider, Rooftop is well placed to recognise the signs of domestic abuse. We will:
 - 3.3.1 Take all reports seriously and work pro-actively with survivors to report domestic abuse and offer advice and signposting to specialist domestic abuse organisations.
 - 3.3.2 Assist perpetrators of domestic abuse who wish to positively change their behaviour by helping them access support and assistance.
 - 3.3.3 Use the appropriate legal tools and powers available to us to tackle perpetrators living in our homes who do not wish to positively change their behaviour. This may be to assist a survivor to terminate their tenancy and gain alternative accommodation, support them to seek a property adjustment order and to have a perpetrator removed from a property they have no entitlement to.
 - 3.3.4 Work pro-actively with Local Authorities and partner agencies (for example, Women's Aid, The Dawn Project, Mankind, Police) to support victims of domestic abuse, ensure access to appropriate services and support, and promote

awareness, challenge attitudes, provide and improve the response to domestic abuse.

- 3.3.5 Assist local housing authorities (for example, District and City Councils) by providing temporary safehouses.
- 3.3.6 Assist local Social Services authorities (for example, County Councils) by providing support to survivors when they are in a safehouse.
- 3.4 We recognise:
 - 3.4.1 Domestic abuse exists primarily as part of violence against women and girls, including different forms of family violence such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so called “honour crimes” but that domestic abuse is also experienced by men.
 - 3.4.2 The detrimental effect domestic abuse can have on children and vulnerable adults. We will also implement our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults’ Policy.
- 3.5 We will:
 - 3.5.1 Ensure that all new and existing residents are aware that domestic abuse is a criminal offence and a breach of the terms of their tenancy agreement.
 - 3.5.2 Work with partner agencies to promote awareness of domestic abuse, both publicly and professionally, participate in appropriate campaigns and pro-actively review and improve performance.
 - 3.5.3 Provide a sensitive and confidential response to anyone approaching us for assistance and respect the wishes of the survivor.
 - 3.5.4 Ensure that we only involve other agencies and share information with the consent of the person reporting domestic abuse, unless:
 - The information is necessary for the protection of children or vulnerable adults.
 - We are required by law or due to criminal offence, for example, as part of a criminal investigation.
 - 3.5.5 Assist survivors to report domestic abuse to the appropriate agencies, including the police, local district housing authority and local specialised domestic abuse agencies.
 - 3.5.6 Assist anyone who witnesses potential domestic abuse to report their concerns to the appropriate agencies.
 - 3.5.7 Aim to ensure that victims of domestic abuse are aware of the options and support available to them, so that they can make informed decisions about the route they wish to take to end the abuse and rebuild their lives. This will include the provision of appropriate advice about their housing options and about their legal rights and responsibilities regarding their tenancy.
 - 3.5.8 Work in partnership with legal, statutory and voluntary services to ensure that support is provided in a co-ordinated way to provide temporary and permanent homes, support victims and take appropriate action with the perpetrators.
 - 3.5.9 Ensure that domestic abuse is included in any Safeguarding training provided on induction, and further guidance and assistance is available to all colleagues when needed via a domestic abuse lead.
 - 3.5.10 Provide appropriate and regular training for colleagues to recognise, report and deal with domestic abuse effectively.
 - 3.5.11 Assist with additional security measures, as needed, to our temporary and permanent homes and act outside our normal repairing policy as necessary and

appropriate in certain circumstances. This may include works carried out as an emergency, required as a result of violent or threatening incidents.

3.5.12 Continue to sign up for the Chartered Institute of Housing's 'Make a Stand' pledge to show our commitment to supporting people experiencing domestic abuse. In line with the pledge, Rooftop will:

- Put in place and embed a policy to support customers that are affected by domestic abuse.
- Make information about national and local domestic abuse support services available on our website and in other places so that they are easily accessible for customers and colleagues.
- Ensure our Colleague Handbook includes support to colleagues who may be experiencing domestic abuse.
- Appoint a champion at a senior level within Rooftop to own the activity we are doing to support customers and colleagues experiencing domestic abuse.

4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Principles

4.1 At Rooftop we are committed to creating and sustaining a diverse and inclusive environment achieving positive outcomes for potential and existing customers, our colleagues and the wider community. Our commitments to our customers, colleagues and communities are detailed in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy. We are an organisation that values diversity, champions equality and inclusion. We demonstrate this through the activities and the services we provide. This means living by, working to and acting on our Values.

5 Vulnerability: Reasonable Adjustments

5.1 There are occasionally circumstances where we need to consider working outside of the parameters of this Policy. This may be where there are several complexities present, or where customers have vulnerabilities that may lead us to make reasonable adjustments to the way we apply this Policy. In such cases, a referral should be made to the Complex Cases Review Group via the Head of Housing, where any approach outside of this Policy (and potentially other policies) will be considered and recorded, if agreed. This will always be considered in the context of the Assessing and Supporting Vulnerability Policy.

6 Data Protection: Principles

6.1 Rooftop recognises the importance of protecting the personal data of our customers, colleagues, contractors and other stakeholders and our commitment to compliance with data protection laws and managing personal data responsibly. As an organisation, we are committed to ensuring everything we do with personal data follows the principles of lawfulness, transparency, fairness and accuracy whilst minimising the amount of data we collect and only using it for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes until we no longer need it.

7 Objective

7.1 To support customers who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse, by ensuring they have access to appropriate support, advice, housing options, while promoting safety, well-being, and partnership working across agencies to reduce incidents and impacts of domestic abuse.

8 What is Domestic Abuse?

8.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 says:

Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if

- a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
- b) The behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- a) Physical or sexual abuse
- b) Violent or threatening behaviour
- c) Controlling or coercive behaviour
- d) Economic abuse (see below)
- e) Psychological, emotional or other abuse

And it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

“Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to

- a) Acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
- b) Obtain goods or services

A’s behaviour can be considered abusive towards B even where it consists of conduct directed towards another person, e.g. B’s child.

“Personally connected” applies if:

- a) They are, or have been, married to each other.
- b) They are, or have been, civil partners to each other.
- c) They have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated).
- d) They have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated).
- e) They are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other.
- f) They each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (where parental relationship means either being the parent of the child or having parental responsibility for the child).
- g) They are relatives.

9 Review

- 9.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years unless there are major changes in legislation or good practice.

10 Consultation

- 10.1 Leadership Team Sub-Group May 2025
- 10.2 Executive Team June 2025
- 10.3 Other (Inclusion Alliance) May 2025

11 Responsibilities

Responsible body

- 11.1 Formulation, amendment and approval of policy Executive Team
- Monitoring of policy Leadership Team

Operational management of policy/policy author

Supported Housing Manager

11.2 **Date of formulation of policy**

March 2019

11.3 **Dates of policy reviews**

June 2025

April 2024

April 2022

11.4 **Date of next review**

June 2028

Associated documents

Internal – Rooftop policies and procedures

- Allocations and Lettings Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Assessing and Supporting Vulnerability Policy

External

- [Domestic Abuse Act \(2021\)](#)
- [Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard \(April 2024\)](#)