



Domestic abuse in the private rented sector

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We are a national charity bringing communities together to end domestic abuse.

Our aim is to support organisations to work in partnership to identify and respond effectively to domestic abuse to ensure survivors receive the best possible support to live free from abuse.

These agencies include the police, criminal justice partners, housing associations, local authorities, social services, healthcare workers, faith communities and charities.



daha

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

Co-founded in 2014 as a partnership between Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse, Peabody and Gentoo Housing Associations.

We are a national initiative to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse, which includes an accreditation process for housing providers (local authorities, housing associations, homeless services).



The Whole Housing Approach endeavours to improve the housing options and outcomes for people experiencing domestic abuse so that they can achieve stable housing, live safely and overcome the abuse and its harmful impacts.



Whole Housing Domestic Abuse

Our Mission

Improve access to safe and stable housing across all tenure types

Ensure access to a range of housing options and initiatives to give choices for people experiencing domestic abuse to relocate or remain in their existing home.

Our Aims

- Create earlier identification and intervention for survivors of domestic abuse
- Reduce the number of people made homeless as a result of domestic abuse
- Increase tenancy sustainment options so that people experiencing domestic abuse can remain safely in their home when it is their choice.

The WHA approach includes 12 components



Why is home the most dangerous place?

- Domestic abuse thrives because it happens behind closed doors
- Perpetrators are most likely to harm and kill while in the home
- Perpetrators' abuse is the leading cause of homelessness amongst women.
- Perpetrators use a shared home as a form of economic abuse and coercive control
- Housing is one of the key barriers to survivors becoming safe.





‘Why doesn’t she leave?’
or
‘Why does he do it?’

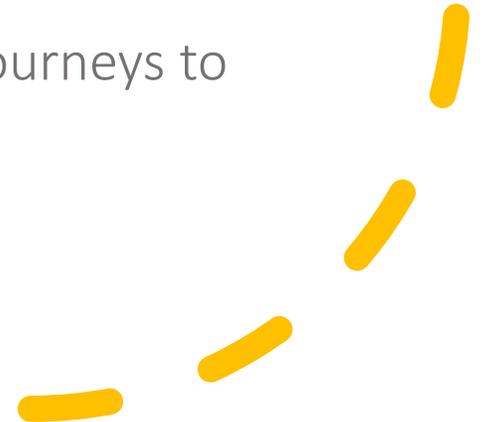
What about survivors living in privately rented homes?

To date, the needs of survivors living in the PRS have not been included in the housing response to domestic abuse. Yet:

- 19% of all households live in the private rented sector. This includes:
- 708,986 survivors, which accounts for nearly 30% of all prevalence of domestic abuse.
- Survivors living in the PRS face unique and significant risks and barriers to safety and housing security

What are the unique experiences of survivors living in the PRS?

- A dependence on permission from landlords/letting agents
- Unaffordable rent and limited access to benefits
- Economic abuse through rent arrears, damages and benefits
- Forced eviction and notice to quit.
- Forced to maintain joint tenancies with the perpetrator
- Lack of access to home safety measures
- Costly, inaccessible and longwinded legal journeys to safety and housing security.



What do survivors in the PRS say they need?

- Supportive landlords and letting agents
- Accessible and affordable legal remedies
- Affordable rent and support to overcome debt, including rent arrears and damages.
- Recognition of economic abuse through housing
- More security options in the home
- Information and advice about housing rights and options



What is the Whole Housing Approach doing to support survivors in the PRS?

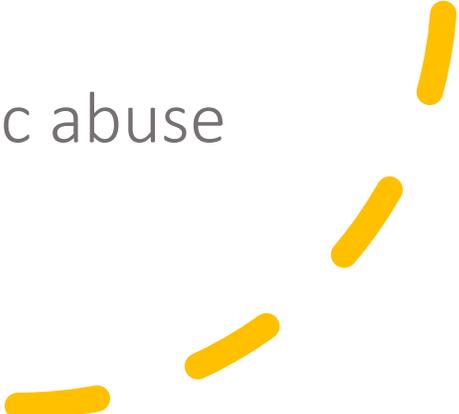
- Influencing legislative change nationally
- Awareness raising and support for letting agents and landlords
- Empowering survivors and specialist support workers to advocate for housing rights and options
- Working creatively through local authority housing and domestic abuse strategies
- Campaigning for local areas to embed a variety of housing support options for survivors in any tenure type.



What can you do to support survivors living in the PRS?

- Ask survivors what they need to feel safe and maintain home security.
- Understand their housing situation and needs
- Consider how perpetrators are using housing as a form of abuse
- Work with landlords and letting agents
- Work with specialist practitioners
- Offer survivors practical support to overcome financial and legal barriers

What can you do to improve professionals' response to survivors living in the PRS?

- Map and engage letting agents and landlords
 - Creatively support and inform landlords/letting agents, and even hold to account
 - Work through PRS and Environmental Health Teams
 - Include PRS specifically in your local housing and domestic abuse strategies
 - Collect data on survivors' tenancy types and different housing needs
 - Work alongside specialist domestic abuse practitioners
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What are your thoughts?

- What is your experience as a professional supporting survivors living in the PRS?
- What do you feel needs to change to better support survivors living in the PRS?
- What do you need as a professional to be better equipped to offer support?
- Anything else?!



For more information

- Email: d.cartwright@standingtogether.org.uk
- DAHA website: <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/>
- Standing Together Website: <https://www.standingtogether.org.uk/>
- Whole Housing Toolkit: <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/whole-housing-approach/>