

Experiencing Domestic Abuse

This leaflet is specifically for people who live in social housing. That means your landlord will be:

- ➡ the Council
- ➡ a housing trust, housing association, or any other registered social landlord

Certain recommendations in this leaflet are relevant only to those with secure or assured tenancies offered by these landlords. However, anyone experiencing domestic abuse can reach out to the helplines mentioned under **Other Useful Organisations** on page 13 of this booklet.

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse can impact anyone, at any point in their life, regardless of their sex, background, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status or sexuality. It can also be defined as a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control.

Domestic abuse can happen in any type of intimate partner relationship and at times family members and extended family members can perpetrate the abuse. This includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Most victims of domestic abuse are women – it is a gender issue. For this reason, some domestic abuse services and most refuge spaces are for women and their children. Victims/survivors of domestic abuse include LGBT+ people.



Domestic Abuse Act

Following a change in legislation in 2021, in instances where domestic abuse has been confirmed as a cause of homelessness, you will in most instances be viewed as falling within a statutory priority need group and will not require a specific Local Connection to a local authority area.

If you need to leave your home immediately

- ➔ In an emergency always dial 📞 **999**. If you cannot speak, **press 55** when prompted and listen for instructions. You'll be able to conduct your call in silence
- ➔ If possible, go and stay with someone you know and trust, where you feel you will be safe
- ➔ If you are experiencing domestic abuse you can call the 24-hour free National Domestic Abuse Helpline for advice 📞 **0808 2000 24**
- ➔ You can also phone Kensington and Chelsea's emergency out of hours number 📞 **0207 361 3008**
- ➔ Emergency accommodation may be available, particularly if you have children, are pregnant, or are vulnerable due to age or disability.

There are many agencies set up to help victim of domestic abuse, many detailed below. Some of these are specifically tailored to certain groups of people either by age, gender or ethnicity.

Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)

In the first instance, you can speak to our IDVA who will offer support and advice for women and girls (aged 15 or over) living in Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster or Brent experiencing domestic violence from a current or former partner/family member, including forced marriage/honour-based violence.

Mainline telephone: 📞 **020 8741 7008**


Contacting the Council

If you would like to get advice on your housing options, please contact the Housing Solutions Team whether you are:

- ➔ a homeowner
- ➔ homeless or sofa surfing
- ➔ a private rented sector tenant
- ➔ a housing association tenant
- ➔ living in temporary accommodation
- ➔ without recourse to public funds or are a refugee or asylum seeker

Contact us

 housingsolutions@rbkc.gov.uk

 **0207 361 3008**

Visit our Customer Service Centre

Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX
Our opening hours are 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

You can access domestic abuse support and domestic abuse advocate services from the Angelou Service.

 angelou@advancecharity.org.uk

 **0808 801 0660**

(Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm and Wednesday 6pm to 9pm) or

 **0800 059 0108**

(Monday to Friday 10am to 6pm and Thursday 8am to 6pm)

 www.advancecharity.org.uk

If you are a Council tenant in Kensington and Chelsea




If you live in a council property (Housing Management), you can contact our Neighbourhood Management service for support, advice and guidance to discuss your housing options. Our housing officers will approach your disclosure with understanding and sensitivity.

Even if the tenancy is not in your name, or you have lived in the house for a while you can still contact us for support.

- ➔ Contact Housing Management on  **0800 137 111**
- ➔ If you live on the Lancaster West Estate email or call
 -  **lancasterwestoffice@rbkc.gov.uk**
 -  **0800 389 2005**
- ➔ For Grenfell Housing Services email
 -  **grenfellhousingervices@rbkc.gov.uk**



Support for children and families

If you want to seek advice about a child in your household, you can seek advice from the Angelou service.

-  **angelou@advancecharity.org.uk**
-  **0808 801 0660**
(Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm and Wednesday 6pm to 9pm) or
-  **0800 059 0108**
(Monday to Friday 10am to 6pm and Thursday 8am to 6pm).


Translators are available on both lines.



You can also seek advice about children living in your home or if a child is at risk, please contact the assessment and access team duty social work team on  **020 7361 3013** or  **socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk**

Out of hours

If you need a service in an emergency between 5pm and 9am on weekdays or 24 hours a day at weekends and bank holidays, you can contact the Children's and Families Emergency Duty Team on

 **0207 373 2227**

Staying safe in your home

Whether you live in a council home, housing association home, private rented or owned home we can help make your home safer.

If you want to stay in your home but need additional security in place, the Council's Sanctuary Scheme can provide safety measures such as additional locks, stronger doors and fireproof letterboxes. These are available to anyone experiencing domestic abuse or safeguarding issues. Do note that you will need permission from your landlord.

For more information on making your home safer, contact our Community Safety Team at

 **commssafe@rbkc.gov.uk**

or speak to your Housing Officer or Neighbourhood Services Co-ordinator.

Our housing officers can also help you with safety planning guidance if you are looking to leave your home.



If you are a homeowner, living in the private rented sector, or a housing association home

If you are not a council tenant but need advice on your housing options, you can still contact the Housing Solutions team who can advise you of your housing options if you want to move.

As a homeowner, private rent or housing association tenant in Kensington and Chelsea you can also access the Sanctuary Scheme (see page 7) which can help make your home safer.

If you need help recovering your deposit, with your tenancy agreement or advice on getting [housing benefit](#) for a privately rented property, you can also contact [Citizens Advice](#) or Shelter for advice and guidance.

Financial Support for Victims/Survivors

The Revenues and Benefits team in the Council administers Housing Benefit, while DWP administers the Housing Element under Universal Credit.

In cases of supporting individuals fleeing violence, both Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Housing Element allow for dual payments to cover the property they are leaving and the temporary accommodation they are seeking refuge in. This dual payment can last for 4 weeks if there is no plan to return to the original property, or up to 52 weeks if there is an intention to return.

Currently, to apply for dual housing benefit, the victim or their support officer will need to write a letter to request this be put in place to the Revenues and Benefits team. More information can be found [here](#).

For Universal Credit Housing Element, it is best to attend the Job Centre Plus and speak to a work coach if the victim and perpetrator have a joint claim. The work coach can help the victim to also make a single person claim.





Finding a home in Kensington and Chelsea

Whether you live in private or social housing, do not give up your tenancy until you have spoken with your Housing Officer and received legal advice.

If you are leaving your home due to domestic abuse, you will have priority for emergency housing (unless you are subject to immigration controls). You may have to spend time in temporary accommodation before you are permanently rehoused. Your Housing Officer will assist you in making a homelessness application if you feel this is the best option for you.

If you decide to rent privately you may be entitled to support through housing benefit or Universal Credit.

Victims of domestic abuse can contact the homelessness team to discuss housing options by

-  **housingolutions@rbkc.gov.uk**
-  **0207 361 3008** (at any time)
-  Completing the Housing Assistance Online Contact Form (you can complete this in your own language)
-  Visiting us at Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX

If you do not currently live in Kensington and Chelsea but want to apply here

If you do not live in the borough but are experiencing domestic abuse and want to find a safer home, you can approach any council in the country to make a homeless application.

In Kensington and Chelsea you can contact our Housing Solutions Team to discuss your housing options.

If you live in Kensington and Chelsea but want to leave the borough

Whether you're in private or social housing you can approach any council you choose for rehousing.



Important

Do not give up your tenancy until you have spoken with a Housing Officer and received legal advice.

Your Housing Officer can offer guidance in discussing the best options for you. You can contact either your Housing Officer, Neighbourhood Services Coordinator, or the Housing Solutions team for guidance.

Our housing officers can help you with safety planning guidance if you are looking to leave your home.




If you live in a housing association property in Kensington and Chelsea

If you live in a housing association property, the best thing would be to contact your housing officer to discuss your housing options as they may be able to help you move. You are also able to access the Sanctuary Scheme.

However, if you need further advice, our Housing Solutions Officers can offer guidance on safety planning and your options.

If you are seeking asylum in the United Kingdom

If you are living in Home Office accommodation while your asylum application is processed, the Home Office is responsible for ensuring you are living in safe conditions. If you are experiencing domestic abuse, contact Migrant Help on:


 **0808 8010 503** (and alert hotel staff)

This will likely lead to you being moved to a different accommodation site. You can also speak to the Council's Outreach Team if you are worried about your situation.

If you are an asylum seeker living in Kensington and Chelsea in your own living arrangements, and you need to leave your home because of domestic abuse, you have the option to apply for Home Office accommodation while your claim is processed.

You can contact Migrant Help for advice on applying for asylum support, including accommodation:

 **0808 8010 503**

If it is an emergency and you feel in danger, please call the police on  **999**.



Support for male victims

Anyone can experience Domestic Abuse. There are men's domestic abuse advice services available nationally:

- ➔ [Respect Men's Domestic Abuse Advice Line](#) 📞 **0808 801 0327**
- ➔ [Man Kind Initiative](#) 📞 **01823 334 244** (to speak confidentially)
- ➔ [Our work with male victims | Respect](#)

Men can also contact the national 24-hour Domestic Abuse Helpline:

📞 **0808 2000 247**

Support for perpetrators

Respect is an organisation that supports perpetrators, and male victims of domestic abuse.

If you are concerned about your own behaviour and want to talk, Respect has a free, confidential helpline which offers advice and support. Call on 📞 **0808 802 4040** or visit the [website](#).

We also have two services we work with in Kensington and Chelsea to support perpetrators of abuse to change their behaviour:

CIFA (Culturally Integrated Family Approach)

Support for perpetrators from minority communities. Referrals can be made once permission is sought from the perpetrator and all their victims will receive simultaneous support.

Drive

A perpetrator intervention project that works with people one-on-one to form an individualised plan to look at forming healthy relationships. Please ask your Housing Officer if you want to know more about these two services as you will not be able to directly refer yourself.

Other Useful Organisations

National stalking helpline

Provides information, support and advice on risk, safety plans and legislation to victims of stalking and their friends and family.

 **0808 8020300**

(Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm, Wednesday 9.3am to 8pm).

Online form and safety tool  www.suzylamplugh.org

Refuge National Domestic Abuse Helpline


For women who are or have experienced violence, providing confidential, non-judgmental emotional support by female advisors.

 **0808 2000 247** (open 24 hours)

Webchat and contact forms  www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Rape Crisis


For females who have experienced rape, sexual abuse/assault this provides help, information and support from trained female support workers and information for partners, family and friends and other people who are supporting a survivor of sexual abuse.


 **0808 8029999** (Freephone)
12pm to 2.30pm and 7pm to 9.30pm, every day of year


 **rcewinfo@rapecrisis.org.uk**

 Webchat: www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Children and Young Adults


If you think someone is in danger, call the police on  **999**.
If it is not an emergency, you can phone Social Services:

 **03000 41 61 61** (daytime hours) or

 **03000 41 91 91** (out of daytime hours)

Childline

Provides free confidential advice and support for all young people up to the age of 19. The number will not appear on any bill.

 **0800 1111** (Freephone) – 24 hours

 www.childline.org.uk

Thinkuknow


If someone has asked you to do things online that you do not feel comfortable with, Thinkuknow offers advice to young people on sex, relationships and staying safe online.

 www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Ethnic and Minority Groups

Galop

The Galop National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Domestic Abuse Helpline supports all members of the LGBT communities, their families and agencies supporting them who have experienced issues with domestic abuse.


 **0800 999 5428** (Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10am to 5pm and Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 8pm)

 **helpline@galop.org.uk**

 Webchat: www.galop.org.uk

Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre

The centre is available to provide practical, emotional support and signposting for Arabic speaking women who have English as a second language. They also provide one-to-one support, advocacy, outreach and assistance relating to domestic violence, housing, health, legal issues etc.


 **0203 048 4488**

 **contact@al-hasaniya.org.uk**

 [Weekly online drop in session in Kensington and Chelsea](#)

Karma Nirvana


Supporting victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage and LGBTQI community members in fear of coming out.

 **0800 5999247**

 www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Southall Black Sisters Holistic Advice

Support for women or children who are Asian, African-Caribbean or another minority experiencing domestic or sexual violence (including forced marriage, dowry abuse and honour crimes). Multilingual support available. Casework in west London only


 **0208 571 9595** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

 **info@southallblacksisters.co.uk**


 www.southallblacksisters.org.uk


IKWRO

Supporting females from Middle Eastern, North African or Afghan communities who are at risk of honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

 **0207 920 6460** (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.30pm)

 www.ikwro.org.uk

Out of hours emergency:  **07846 275246** (Arabic/Kurdish) or


 **07846 310157** (Farsi/Dari)

The Halo Project

Supporting victims of honour-based violence and forced marriages.

 **01642 683045**


 **info@haloproject.org.uk**

 Webchat: www.haloproject.org.uk
(Monday to Friday, 8am to 10am and 6pm to 9pm;
Saturday and Sunday, 10am to 2pm)

Men

Dads Unlimited

Based in The Men's Advice Line, provides support and advice for males who have or are experiencing abuse.


 **0808 801 0327** (Monday to Friday, 10am to 8pm)


 **info@mensadviceline.org.uk**

 **www.mensadviceline.org.uk**
(Wednesday 10am to 11.30am and 2.30pm to 4pm)

Safeline

Providing services and counselling to men who have experienced rape and sexual abuse.

 **0808 800 5005**
(Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm; Saturday and Sunday 10am to 2pm)


 Text chat: **07860 065187**


 **support@safeline.org.uk**

 Webchat: **www.safeline.org.uk/men**

Survivors UK

Help and advice for men and boys aged 13 and over who have experienced rape or sexual assault.


 **020 3598 3898** (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5pm)

 Text chat: **020 3322 1860** (Monday to Saturday, 12pm to 8pm)

 **www.survivorsuk.org** (webchat available)

Perpetrators Respect

Help to stop you abusing your partner and change your behaviour.

 **0808 80 24040**


(Monday to Thursday, 10am to 8pm; Friday 10am to 5pm)


 **info@respectphoneline.org.uk**

 Webchat: www.respectphoneline.org.uk (Thursday 2pm to 4pm)

Older People Hourglass Support

For over 60s concerned about harm, abuse or exploitation. This might include physical, financial, psychological, sexual abuse or neglect.

 **0808 808 8141** (24-hour line)


 Free text: **07860 052906**

 www.wearehourglass.org/domestic-abuse (webchat available).

Pets

Dogs Trust Freedom Project

A free and confidential dog fostering service for people fleeing domestic abuse and going into refuge or other emergency accommodation. Dogs are cared for by volunteer foster carers for around 6-9 months until they can be reunited.


 **0800 298 9199** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

 **freedomproject@dogstrust.org.uk**

 www.dogstrustfreedomproject.org.uk

Cats Protection Paws Protect

A free and confidential cat fostering service for people fleeing domestic abuse and going into refuge or other emergency accommodation. Cats are cared for by volunteer foster carers until they can be reunited.

 **0345 260 1280** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

 **pawsprotect@cats.org.uk**

 www.cats.org.uk/paws-protect

