



Domestic Abuse Policy Statement

Version	Draft v1.0
Policy Owner	Dovecotes TMO
Date	January 2026
Status	Board Approved 18/11/2025
Review Date	September 2029 or earlier if required

Policy owner	Chief Officer
Applies to	All employees of Dovecotes TMO who are required and authorised to work additional hours outside their normal contracted hours
Approved by	Board
Effective date	18/11/2025
Review cycle	Every three years, or sooner where legislation, employment guidance, operational requirements or Board instruction require review

Publicising the Policy Statement

This policy statement and all associated procedures and other documents will be publicised in the Tenancy Toolkit page.

Any changes to this policy statement will be notified to our staff and other relevant stakeholders using a variety of communication tools including:

Noticeboard item;

- Manager and team briefings; and
- Specialist training for relevant staff
- Website

Policy Statement Scope

1. Purpose

To outline Dovecotes TMO's approach to preventing and responding to domestic abuse. To ensure compliance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and related legislation. To provide clear guidance for residents on available support and reporting mechanisms.

The Domestic Abuse Policy Statement sets out the Dovecotes Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) approach to responding to reports of domestic abuse from residents and household members. A household member refers to any person living permanently in the property (regardless of length of time they have lived there).

1.2 It applies to all tenants and leaseholders living in a Dovecotes TMO property and should be read in conjunction with the individual tenancy or lease agreement.

1.3 This is a high-level policy statement and should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy Statement and other associated policy statements, policy guidance documents and procedures.

2. Policy Key Objectives

2.1 By publishing this policy statement, the Dovecotes TMO aims to ensure compliance with the policy key objectives. The policy key objectives set out what is to be achieved by implementing the policy.

2.2 All staff and managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the policy key objectives.

No.	Domestic Abuse Policy Statement Key Objectives
1	Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, regulation and best practice
2	Ensure that residents experiencing domestic violence can approach Dovecotes TMO in confidence knowing that staff will be sympathetic and supportive
3	Ensure all reports of domestic abuse are treated seriously and as a matter of high priority
4	Ensure close working relationships are established with local authorities and external support agencies
5	Ensure residents are put in contact with appropriate agencies that can help them by providing specialist advice and support
6	Ensure a clear and concise policy and procedure is maintained, which outlines the assistance Dovecotes TMO can offer residents affected by domestic abuse

3 Regulatory Code and Legal Framework

3.1 This policy statement and procedure document complies with the Home & Communities Agency's Neighbourhood and Community – Anti-social Behaviour Standard.

3.2 The most important legislation, case law and national standards/guidance that currently govern registered provider policy and practice are:

Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 1996, 2004	Human Rights Act 1998	Family Law Act 1996
Protection from Harassment Act 1997	Crime and Disorder Act 1998	Data Protection Act 1998
Homelessness Act 2002	Children Act 2004	Civil Partnership Act 2004
Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004	Equalities Act 2010	GDPR 2019
Domestic Abuse Act 2021		

4 Policy Scope

This policy applies to all residents living in properties managed by Dovecotes TMO, household members and visitors, and any person affected by domestic abuse within our community.

4.1 Domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of gender including transgender, ethnicity, religion, class, age, sexuality, disability or lifestyle. However the vast majority of the victims of domestic abuse are women, teenagers and children. Women and girls are also considerably more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of violence, and sexual abuse.

4.2 Domestic abuse also affects men, and can occur in a range of relationships including heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender relationships, and within both immediate and extended family networks.

4.3 There are specific types of domestic abuse that impact on some ethnic groups, these include 'honour based' crimes, forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Dowry abuse and ritual based crimes.

4.4 It has been recognised that people who are physically disabled, have a learning disability or mental health support needs can be particularly vulnerable to domestic abuse and are less able to obtain the help that they may need to escape.

4.5 The Dovecotes TMO will work with people who are experiencing domestic abuse for the first time, through to those who have suffered repeatedly.

4.6 We will also consider the needs of the family and this include perpetrators where appropriate.

Definition of Domestic Abuse

5.1 The Dovecotes TMO uses the cross-government definition of domestic abuse, which is:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members* regardless of gender or sexuality. This abuse can encompass but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.*

*Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparents and any other extended family member, whether directly related or not, including in-laws or step-family.

**This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group."

(Home Office, 2013)

5.2 Domestic abuse can go beyond actual physical violence. It can also involve emotional abuse, the destruction of a spouse's or partner's property, their isolation from friends, family or other potential sources of support, threats to others including children, control over access to money, personal items, food, transportation and the telephone, and stalking.

5.3 It can also include child/parent or any other person who has a close or blood relationship with the victim.

5.4 It can also include violence inflicted on, or witnessed by, children. The adverse effects of living with domestic abuse for children must be recognised as a child protection issue. The effects can be linked to poor educational achievement, social exclusion and to juvenile crime, substance abuse, mental health problems and homelessness from running away.

5.5 Domestic abuse is not generally a 'one-off' occurrence; it is most often frequent and persistent. Domestic abuse is often underpinned by a pattern of abusive behaviour. Principles Zero tolerance for domestic abuse. Victim-centred approach: Listen, believe, and support. Confidentiality: Information will be shared only when necessary for safeguarding. Equality and diversity: Support is available regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality, or disability.

6 Policy Statement

Dovecotes TMO is committed to ensuring that all residents live in a safe environment, free from abuse. Domestic abuse is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in any form. We will work proactively to support victims, safeguard families, and hold perpetrators accountable, in partnership with specialist agencies.

6.1 The **Dovecotes TMO** is a housing provider and therefore our approach to domestic abuse will be within the scope of our remit as a housing provider. Where possible we will liaise with relevant agencies that may be able to provide additional support and resources to victims of domestic abuse.

6.2 It is widely recognised that domestic abuse is widespread and traditionally under reported. It can happen in any household, including same sex households. Incidents can also occur within a community location. We believe that no one should live in fear of domestic abuse and will take steps to advise, assist and support any resident suffering from or threatened with domestic abuse.

6.3 We will take a victim centered approach that is risk based and offers flexibility so that we can take into account individual needs. Our primary concern will always be the safety of the victim and any affected household members.

6.4 We will maintain impartiality in situations where a relationship has broken down and this has not been due to domestic violence or abuse.

6.5 For many victims there will be repeated incidences of violence or abuse before support is sought. We believe that each incidence of domestic abuse, including the first, is an offence.

6.6 We will treat victims with respect and ensure that where possible their privacy is maintained. We will have private rooms available to carry out interviews and we will try to interview the victim separately from their abuser. We will not pass on information to a third party without consent from the resident unless we believe there is a risk to children or vulnerable adults. (See Hyde's Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy Statement and Procedure)

6.7 Where we find that people from black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups are being pressured into 'Forced Marriage' or become aware of 'honour crimes being planned or committed, or when we identify that someone is at risk of FGM or ritual abuse we will ensure that specialist agencies and statutory authorities are made aware.

6.8 When we feel that specialist agencies are better placed to provide support, this information will be made available to the victim and/or their advocate and where appropriate support will be provided to assist the individual to obtain the help that they need.

6.9 We will provide victims with a named contact, who if requested, will be of the same sex. Where required we will provide translation services.

6.10 We expect our staff to support our commitment to support people who are dealing with domestic violence or abuse.

6.11 We will offer training to staff where the role may involve working with victims of domestic abuse and we will use the expertise that is available both within the Group and within the community to provide advice and guidance that is relevant.

6.12 For many victims, their first instinct is to move to a new property, in our experience this is not always the best option as it can take them away from their support networks and does not always meet their needs. We will work with the victim to look at a range of alternatives including:

- Domestic Abuse Support Services and Advice Lines;
- Domestic Abuse Sanctuary schemes and target hardening (where available);
- Additional property security;
- Accessing counselling and other health and wellbeing services;
- Refuges; and
- Support with injunctions.

The above options will only be considered following agreement from the victim.

6.13 Where we have identified that the resident experiencing domestic abuse has an existing vulnerability (e.g. mental health issues, physical disability etc.) we will carry-out a Tenancy Risk Assessment in accordance with Hyde's Preventing Tenancy Failure Policy Statement, Policy Guidance document and Procedure.

6.14 Where the police have been notified of a crime resulting from domestic abuse staff will take into account any advice or recommendations made.

6.15 We will consider taking action to evict the perpetrators of domestic abuse using the powers available under the Housing Act 1996 and other relevant legislation.

4 Associated Policy Guidance Documents and Procedures

Policy Guidance Documents	Procedures
Tenancy Management Policy Statement	Domestic Abuse Procedure
Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy Statement	Safeguarding Children and Adults Procedure
ASB Policy Statement	ASB Procedure
Decant Policy Guidance document	Decant Procedure

5 Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

5.1 We monitor performance indicators at group, directorate and local team levels.

- 5.2 Risk A policy statements and procedures will be subject to an annual health check. The review will ensure that all operational, strategic and regulatory changes are compliant and that the procedures are reflective of the Landlord Services on offer.

6 Equality and Diversity

- 6.1 This policy aims to ensure that all cases of domestic abuse are treated consistently and fairly regardless of a person's age, gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexuality, nationality or marital status, or for any other reason not related to the above. We will take all necessary steps to ensure we meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010

Version History

Version no.	1.0	Effective date:	
Full/partial review/new policy		New policy statement	
Brief summary of changes		N/a	
Staff consultation:(teams):		May 2026	
Resident consultation Y/N		N/A /y /n	
Signed-off by:		Executive Board January 2026	
Date Published:		May 2026	
Policy Statement Author		Nikki Rolls	

Responsibilities

Residents: Report concerns and cooperate with investigations. Dovecotes TMO staff: Identify signs, respond promptly, and refer to specialist services. Partnership working: Collaborate with police, local authority, and domestic abuse agencies.

Support for Victims

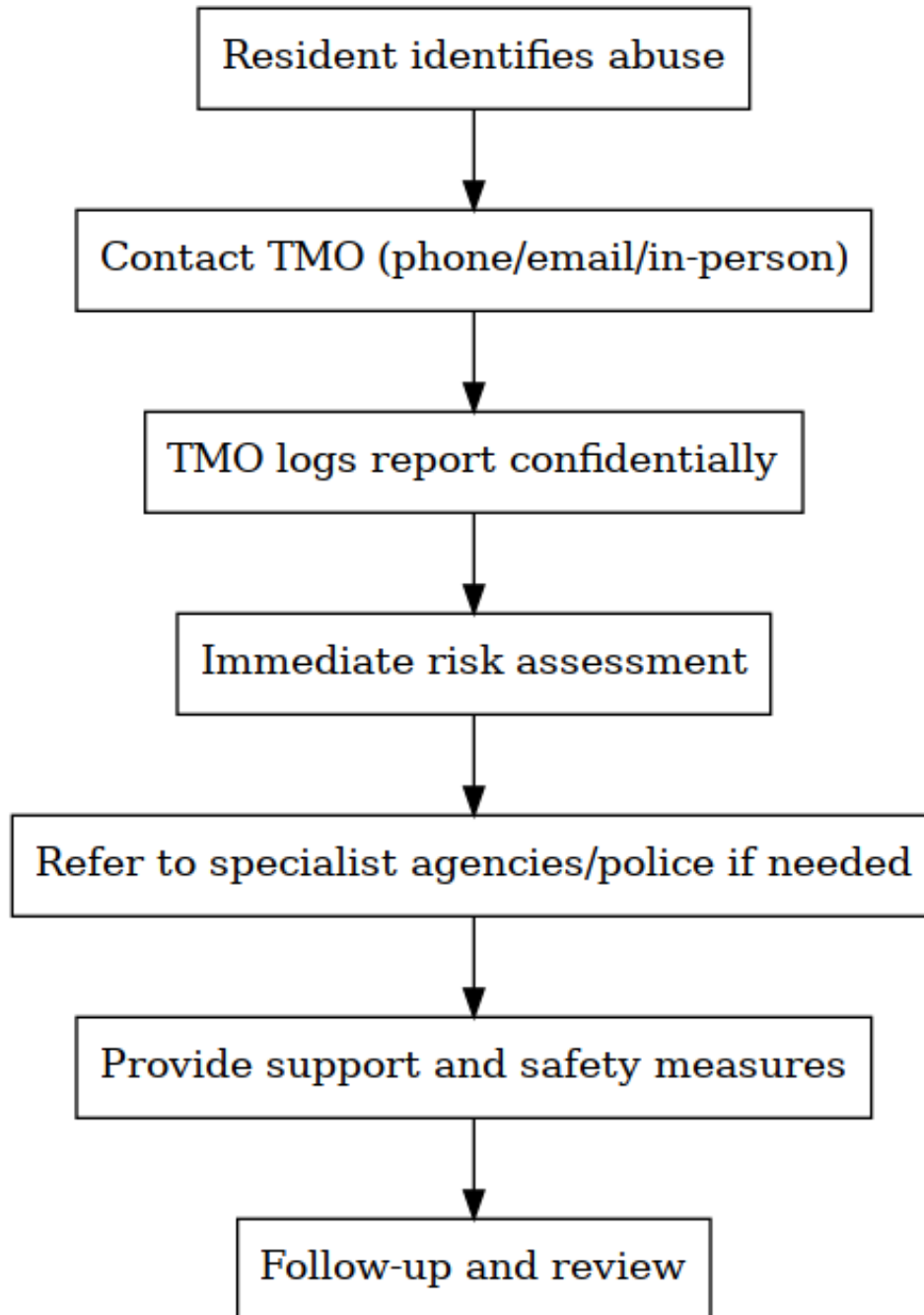
Provide advice and signposting to specialist services (e.g., Refuge, Women's Aid, local DAHA-accredited services). Offer emergency repairs and security measures (e.g., lock changes, target hardening). Assist with management transfers or rehousing where necessary. Ensure victims are not penalised for rent arrears caused by abuse.

Action Against Perpetrators

Take tenancy enforcement action where appropriate (e.g., injunctions, eviction). Work with police and legal services to protect victims and the community.

Reporting and Confidentiality

Residents can report domestic abuse via: TMO office (in person or phone), Email or online form. All reports will be handled sensitively and confidentially, in line with GDPR.



Training and Awareness

Staff will receive regular training on domestic abuse awareness and response. Community engagement to raise awareness of support available.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if legislation changes. Annual checks to ensure contact details and referral pathways are up to date.

Appendix: Useful Contacts

National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Women's Aid Live Chat: www.womensaid.org.uk

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327

Local Authority Domestic Abuse Services: The Haven 08000 194 400