

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing Options

Domestic Abuse

The Home Office describes domestic abuse as:

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

- *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 pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.”

Domestic abuse occurs across all ages, races, and classes, regardless of education, income, or mental ability. It happens between people in same sex relationships and can also be carried out by women against men. It is important to acknowledge that all forms of domestic abuse can have damaging and lasting effects on the victims and other members of the family. The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people cannot be overestimated in terms of their immediate safety, emotional and physical wellbeing, and long term development.

Domestic abuse can be in many different forms. For example, it could include:

- Constantly being put down, belittled or harassed.
- Controlling behaviour such as, not being allowed to leave the home without permission or unaccompanied.
- Being made to feel inferior, worthless or even crazy.
- Being threatened with violence or physically assaulted.

Do not leave yourself at risk. Call 999 if your situation is urgent or if you think you may be in danger. The Police take ALL calls on domestic abuse seriously.

Help is available:

People who are experiencing domestic abuse can often feel isolated, anxious, or even hopeless about the situation, and this can mean that they remain exposed to potential harm. This needn't be the case. If you believe you are experiencing domestic abuse, help is available. There is a range of local and national services that can provide support and assistance to help you deal with, and overcome your situation. Services can be tailored to your needs whether you remain in your home or decide to leave. The important thing is that you are safe.

This factsheet provides a general overview on some of the services available, and the sort of assistance you can expect.

If you have to leave your home in an emergency:

If you leave home because you are at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse, it is important to make sure you are safe wherever you go. If you decide to stay with friends or relatives make sure you are safe from the perpetrator and seek advice as soon as possible. If you are not able to find somewhere safe a refuge may be the most appropriate place stay and the services listed below will be able to help you find a suitable vacancy.

A refuge is a place to stay that offers safe and secure accommodation to people who have experienced domestic violence or abuse. A refuge can provide space and time to think things through in a non pressurised environment. There will usually be staff, who are there to help you deal with your situation, and support you in the decisions you make. They will be able to help you set up any appointments you need to make and can accompany you at appointments to lend support and advocate on your behalf.

There are nearly 400 organisations providing refuge accommodation for women in the UK. For more information contact the National Domestic Violence Helpline or visit the Women's Aid website.

Taking your children with you if you go to a refuge:

Normally you can take your children with you when you go to a refuge, but some refuges cannot take families that include teenage boys. If this is the case, other housing options can be explored.

What you should try and take with you:

If you leave home in an emergency it may not be possible for you to take your belongings with you, but if you do get the chance or if you are making a planned departure here are some of the things to try and take with you:

- Clothes
- Toiletries
- Benefit books, or letters about you benefits
- Prescribed medication
- Passports/birth certificates
- Confirmation of your national insurance number

- Bank account details
- A photograph of your partner
- Children's toys
- Details of your solicitor

Sometimes it is safer just to leave the property, these things can be sorted out later - the main thing is that you are safe.

The help available if you want to remain in your home:

Your rights to remain in your home in the long term will depend on a number of factors. If you are able to do so, various options may be available to help make your accommodation a safe and suitable place to be. Measures can include:

- Security measures to your home
- Alarms/mobile phones for your safety
- Making sure Police are aware
- Legal advice and assistance - to try and stop behaviour, or to remove your partner

Obtaining legal advice:

You will need legal advice if you want to take out an injunction, or take other legal action. A solicitor can tell you if you can get legal aid to help pay for the action you wish to take. For help to find a solicitor contact the Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Legal Advice Service or The Law Society.

How the Housing Options Team can help:

As a housing advice service, Fareham Borough Council's Housing Options Team can help you to link in with services that offer appropriate help and guidance to help you deal with your situation.

If you are homeless as a result of having had to flee violence or abuse we can help you to secure safe accommodation to give you the time to work through your issues and think about what you wish to do in the longer term. We can explore your housing options with you, and provide the advice and assistance needed to help you to find suitable solution to your housing needs.

Services available:

The 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline:

Telephone: 0808 2000 247 or visit: www.womensaid.org.uk

This is run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, and is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others who may be calling on their behalf.

The Helpline can give support, help and information over the telephone, wherever the caller might be in the country. If you need to find somewhere safe to stay the Helpline can help you to find refuge accommodation. The Helpline is staffed 24 hours a day by fully

National Centre for Domestic Violence

Fast, free assistance to obtain an injunction

www.ncdv.org.uk

Tel: 0800 970 2070

Fareham Citizens Advice Bureau

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Tel: 03444 111 444

Community Legal Advice

<http://www.clsdirect.org.uk/>

Provides free help or legal advice over the phone, and can help you to find a solicitor.

Law Society

National resource for finding a local solicitor

[The Law Society](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk)