

Domestic Abuse



Derwentside Homes will not tolerate domestic abuse, ever. Derwentside Homes believes that none of its tenants should live in fear of violence from a spouse or partner, former spouse or partner, or other member of their household. We will help and support any person suffering from or threatened with domestic abuse.

Priority is always given to the safety of the person suffering from domestic abuse. We will always provide victims with a quick and sensitive response and will deal quickly and effectively with perpetrators. As a landlord, where victims are our tenants and move because of violence from their partners, Derwentside Homes may apply to the courts to evict those partners from the property.

Definition of Domestic abuse

“The emotional, physical, sexual or psychological abuse of a person by their partner, family member or someone with whom there is, or has been a relationship. It is not limited to any particular group or class but occurs across the social spectrum.”

Domestic abuse is:

- Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.
- Violence that may include physical, sexual, serious financial or emotional abuse.

Dealing with Domestic Abuse

In dealing with victims of domestic abuse, Derwentside Homes will:

- not underestimate the danger someone may be in or assume their fear of violence is exaggerated;
- respect the dignity of victims;
- give serious consideration to the victims account of the incident, recognising that evidence of violence may not always be readily available, and that systematic abuse does not only and necessarily include physical violence;
- consider options for transferring the tenancy, and the mechanisms by which this might be achieved using housing management procedures (such as assignment) or relevant legislation (such as the Matrimonial Causes Act and the Matrimonial Homes Act);
- listen and be guided by the victim in deciding the most suitable course of action in responding to an incident of domestic abuse;
- provide a realistic appraisal of the options that can be explored by Derwentside Homes;
- with the victim's consent signpost / refer to appropriate statutory, voluntary or community organisations if it is unable to help the victim. The exception to this would be if violence against children is disclosed we have a duty to report it under the relevant Children's Act irrespective of the wishes of the person who discloses the information.

Advice & Support

Advice and support will be given to any customer who wishes to access any of the services provided by Derwentside Homes, or by its partners. Factors which will be relevant when considering what course of action is available to the victim include:

- Is the victim a tenant (sole or joint) or have the right to occupy the accommodation?
- Does the perpetrator live with the tenant?
- Is the perpetrator entitled to occupy the accommodation, and if so, in what capacity?
- Does the victim want to remain in the accommodation or does the victim want to be re-housed temporarily or on a long time basis?
- Is the victim or their children at risk if they remain in occupation?
- Does the victim need support and assistance to make a decision as to their needs?
- Is the victim in employment or reliant on welfare benefits (as this will effect the availability of public funding)?

In some cases, support or counselling to end an abusive relationship or the provision of additional support to manage a tenancy may be all the tenant/occupier needs and Derwentside Homes will assist in informing the victim of the other services available to them and will with their consent make contact by referral.

In other cases the tenant/occupier may need specialist legal advice as how to instigate matrimonial, family law or children act proceedings, or how to access other legal remedies such as harassment injunctions.

Tenancy Agreement

Derwentside Homes makes direct reference in its Tenancy Agreement to Domestic Abuse (Section 4(8)):

“You (or anyone living with you or visiting your home, including children) must not:

- inflict violence or threaten violence against any other person living with you or living elsewhere;
- harass or carry out mental or sexual abuse which makes anyone who lives with you leave the home;
- use or threaten to use violence or abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards any other person, including our employees, agents or contractors or anyone on official business.”

Housing Options

Derwentside Homes recognises that when domestic abuse occurs, people often have many practical problems to deal with when they are already feeling vulnerable. Finding somewhere suitable to live is not the least of these problems.

Derwentside Homes will give advice dependant on whether the victim is:

- a non-tenant victim who remains in occupation, with sole or both joint tenants having left the property;
- a sole tenant victim who remains in occupation, with the spouse, partners or former cohabitant having left the property;
- a joint tenant victim who remains in occupation with the joint tenant, spouse, partner or cohabitant having left the property;
- either a joint tenant or a sole tenant with a non-occupant perpetrator.

The advice will consider any surrender, notice to quit and/or possession proceedings and any action will consider perpetrators Article 8(2) Human Rights.

In Durham Key Options, provision for considering transferring a tenant on exception where violence (domestic or other) has been experienced and a move would ease the situation is available.

It is important the victim is able to access advice on their choices, whether such advice is available from Derwentside Homes or another agency.

If the victim signals that they wish to move home, the following options can be explored:

- Transfer on exceptional grounds under the Durham Key Options Choice Based Lettings Policy;
- Advice on the MoveUK scheme, particularly where the person is seeking a move out of the district area;
- Refer to Durham County Council's Homelessness and Housing Advice Service.

When dealing with domestic abuse within the home, Derwentside Homes may consider the scope for evicting the perpetrator and allowing the victim to remain in their home. However, where there would be a likelihood of violence or the threat of other forms of serious abuse if the victim continued to occupy his or her present home, Derwentside Homes may consider, with the consent of the victim, referring the case to Durham County Council for them to consider under the homelessness rules.

Many of the choices available to a victim who needs rehousing will lead to the allocation of social housing. Derwentside Homes will also consider whether a victim is eligible for assistance and be aware of in relation to a victim of abuse/vulnerable person who may have recently moved to the UK (for an arranged marriage or otherwise).

Homelessness

People suffering domestic abuse are at risk of becoming homeless. Where possible, Derwentside Homes will refer the victim to an agency offering a placement in a place of safety (refuge) or other suitable temporary accommodation.

Derwentside Homes recognises that victims need a safe refuge from their abusive partner, and often outreach and resettlement support to enable them to set up a new home. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide alternative accommodation in specific circumstances.

Other Options/Remedies

Derwentside Homes will give victims all relevant information to enable them to make an informed decision to consider the use of any rights and remedies available to people who are victims of domestic abuse and need to resolve any housing issues. Often, other agencies will have the expertise in these matters, and so Derwentside Homes' primary role will be in signposting the person to suitable advice and support agencies.

By telling the victim of the option of seeking an injunction, Derwentside Homes recognises that injunctions ordering anyone not to molest, or

enter the home of, the victim, will not always be effective in deterring perpetrators from carrying out further violence or incursions. Victims will not automatically be expected to return home on the strength of an injunction.

Repairs and Added Security

In circumstances where the person subject to domestic abuse leaves a Derwentside Homes' property unoccupied temporarily, Derwentside Homes will make the property safe.

We may consider extra security measures to help the victim remain in their own home (if they choose that position). We will consider each case on its own merits and will charge the victim for any work.

In circumstances where damage has been caused to a Derwentside Homes property as a direct result of a domestic abuse incident, Derwentside Homes will consider recharging the perpetrator for any remedial work. However, the victim will not be expected to bear these costs and appropriate codes are available for staff use in instances such as this.

Useful Contacts

Derwentside Homes Ltd

Greengates House
Amos Drive
Greencroft Industrial Park
Stanley
Co Durham
DH9 7YE

Tel: 0800 783 9295

E-mail: customer.services@derwentsidehomes.co.uk

Web: www.derwentsidehomes.co.uk

Derwentside Domestic Abuse Service

94a Front Street
Stanley
Co Durham
DH9 0HU

Tel: 01207 233880

Fax: 01207 232888

E-mail: derwentsidedvf@yahoo.co.uk

Web: www.dv-realityrevealed.org/derwentside.htm

National Domestic Violence Helpline

Tel: 0808 2000 247

A national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.

Victim Support line

Tel: 0845 3030 900

A national charity giving free and confidential help to victims of crime, witnesses, their family, friends and anyone else affected across England and Wales.

Samaritans

Tel: 0845 3030 900

Samaritans provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which could lead to suicide.

man2man

Tel: 0208 698 9649

An abuse Helpline for male victims only, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Emergencies only after 10 pm.

Women's Aid

Tel: 0808 2000 247

Women's Aid is the key national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children. We support a network of over 500 domestic and sexual violence services across the UK.

Durham Police

24-non emergency number
0345 60 60 365

Emergency number 999



This leaflet is a guide to how Derwentside Homes will help you deal with domestic abuse. If you would like it translated or in a different format, contact us at the address below.

中文
Chinese

此传单是 Derwentside Homes 如何帮助您处理家庭暴力的指南。如果您需要翻译版本或其他格式，请按如下地址与我们联系。

हिंदी
Hindi

ये लीफलेट बताता है कि डेरवेन्टसाइड होम्स आपको घरेलू हिंसा से कैसे बचा सकते हैं। यदि आपको ये अनुवादित रूप में या अन्य किसी फॉर्मेट में चाहिये, तब नीचे दिये गए पते पर हमसे संपर्क करें।

Magyar
Hungarian

Ez a szórólap megismerteti Önt azzal, hogy a Derwentside Homes hogyan fogja segíteni Önt a családon belüli erőszak megoldásában. Ha szeretne fordítást kapni róla, vagy más formátumban szeretné olvasni, forduljon hozzánk az alábbi címen.

Latviešu
Latvian

Šī brošūra ir ceļvedis par to, kā Derwentside Homes palīdzēs jums tikt galā vardarbību mājās. Ja jūs vēlaties, lai to iztulko vai vēlaties to citā formātā, sazinieties ar mums izmantojot turpmāk minēto adresi.

Lietuviškai
Lithuanian

Šis informacinis lapelis – tai vadovas, kuriame paaiškinta, kaip bendrija „Derwentside Homes“ padeda jums spręsti smurto šeimoje problemą. Jeigu norėtumėte teksto vertimo arba kitu formatu, susisiekti su mumis toliau nurodytu adresu.

Polski
Polish

Ulotka zawiera informacje o tym, jak Derwentside Homes pomaga lokatorom w przypadkach przemocy domowej. Jeśli potrzebne jest tłumaczenie lub inny format dokumentu, prosimy o kontakt z nami pod poniższym adresem.

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ
Punjabi

ਇਹ ਇਸਤਿਹਾਰ ਇੱਕ ਗਾਈਡ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਡਰਵੈਂਟਸਾਈਡ ਹੋਮਸ ਘਰੇਲੂ ਹਿੰਸਾ ਨਾਲ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਮਦਦ ਕਰਣਗੇ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰਾਉਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਫੋਰਮੈਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਰਾਉਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اردو
Urdu

یہ لیفلٹ ایک گائیڈ ہے کہ ڈروینٹ سائیڈ ہومز گھریلو بد سلوکی سے نپٹنے میں آپ کی مدد کیسے کریں گے۔ اگر آپ اس کو ترجمے یا کسی اور شکل میں حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں، تو مندرجہ ذیل پتے پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔



Customer Services

Derwentside Homes,
Greengates House,
Amos Drive,
Greencroft Industrial Park,
Stanley,
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DH9 7YE



0800 783 9295 or 01207 521 100



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