



Haig Housing Domestic Violence: Our Policy

Domestic violence is generally systematic and repeated abuse which can be both physical and mental. Mental cruelty can be insidious and subtle and proof may not be available. Domestic violence is about the use of power to assert and maintain control over another person.

Domestic violence is most commonly experienced by women and perpetrated by men. However, the Trust also recognises that men and elderly people may be the victims of violence by family members.

*Violence or threats of violence from a person who is associated with the person under threat
(Housing Act 1996)*

*Physical assault, sexual abuse, rape, threats and intimidation, degradation, mental and verbal abuse,
humiliation, deprivation, systematic criticism or belittling
(Home Office, 2000)*

This leaflet is a summary of the Trust's Policy on Domestic Violence – a full copy of this policy is available from Haig Housing – please see over for details.

**Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline
0808 2000 247**

ON REPORTED INCIDENTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Trust will:

- Respond promptly to reports of domestic violence
- Take all reports of domestic violence seriously
- Take a non-judgemental victim-centred sympathetic approach
- Respect confidentiality and agree with the victim methods of contact
- Identify agencies and services able to provide support and assistance
- Deal with all housing requests in line with the Trust's Tenant Selection and Allocation and Transfers Policies (copies available for Head Office)
- Take action to evict perpetrators of domestic violence where appropriate

ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The Trust representative should advise and support the victim but should not be expected to give legal advice. We will:

- advise tenants on how to obtain expert legal advice from solicitors, advice agencies, local authority Social Services Department or the Police
- Assess requirements for temporary accommodation especially if there is a threat to the victim's safety or to that of the children if they remain at home. The Trust does not have temporary accommodation so will refer the victim to their local authority, a Women's Aid Refuge or friends and family.
- Prioritise any emergency repairs needed to the home, including considering additional security measures such as door spyholes and windows locks if the violent person has left the home.

ACTION WHICH CAN BE TAKEN

There are two main actions the Trust can take:

- **Re-housing the victim** (and children, if applicable). Haig Housing will only re-house the victim if they are an ex-Service person.
- **Consider evicting the violent person** – this may be done on grounds of breach of tenancy and there must be compelling evidence from the Police or a doctor for the case to succeed in court. Without permission from the victim for third party evidence to be obtained, the Trust will not start eviction proceedings. Action can be taken only after the expiry of a Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP).

The Trust will only grant one tenancy for a period of Service, therefore would not re-house both parties in a relationship breakdown.