



Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole

SAFER BCP
SAFE
ACCOMMODATION
STRATEGY

2026-2031



BCP Council, Dorset Police, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Services, The Probation Service and Our Dorset Health Services.

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INTRODUCTION

This strategy is part of the wider Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Community Safety Partnership's response to domestic abuse and contributes to the BCP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy 2026-2031.

It sets out how we plan to respond to our statutory duty under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and our commitment to the delivery of Safe Accommodation within BCP for people fleeing domestic abuse over the next five years.

This strategy supports the vision of the Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy (2026 – 2031) “that no resident living in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, should live in fear of or experience domestic abuse”.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 sets out in statute that local authorities must prepare and publish a local strategy based on a robust needs assessment that details the ways in which provision for accommodation-based domestic abuse support will be developed, commissioned, and delivered.

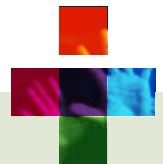


The Act provides guidance on how to further protect the millions of people who suffer and experience domestic abuse, as well as measures to strengthen the response to those who use abusive behaviours. The Act sets out the requirements around the provision of Safe Accommodation:

- Assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their areas for survivors and their children including those who come from outside of the area.
- Prepare and publish a Safe Accommodation Strategy for the provision of such support to cover their area having regard to the needs assessment.
- Give effect to the strategy (through commissioning-decommissioning decisions).
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.
- Report back annually to central government.

Thank you

We'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to shaping this strategy, including stakeholders and individuals with lived experience, through our public consultation, surveys and the Experts by Experience Board.



WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 has a cross-government definition of domestic abuse and is in two parts. Having a precise definition means we all understand what is meant by domestic abuse.

The definition of domestic abuse can be found in Section 1 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The definition of domestic abuse is:

“(2) Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if:

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and

(b) the behaviour is abusive.

(3) Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

(a) physical or sexual abuse

(b) violent or threatening behaviour

(c) controlling or coercive behaviour

(d) economic abuse

(e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.”



The definition also encompasses what is called Honour Based Abuse (HBA), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage and it is clear that victims are not confined to one gender, sexuality, ethnicity, or socio-economic group.

While the definition above applies to those aged 16 or above, Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA) can equally involve children under 16 as well as over 16. There is currently no legal definition of adolescent to parent violence and abuse, however it is recognised as a form of domestic abuse. Further information on the new statutory definition of domestic abuse can be found in the Statutory Guidance:

Definition of domestic violence and abuse: guide for local areas - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



BCP PREVENTING DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY 2026-2031



Safer BCP, the Community Safety Partnership for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area commits to a collaborative, robust and effective response to Domestic Abuse following three key principles.

- 1 We will **put the survivor at the centre** of all work.
- 2 We will **respond to local need** based on needs assessments, local data collection and lessons learnt from Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- 3 We will **work collaboratively** to ensure a consistent zero tolerance approach to domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is not merely a collection of statistics and descriptions; it inflicts immense harm on millions of survivors and survivors each year. BCP Council and the BCP Community Safety Partnership are committed to reducing this harm by offering the most comprehensive Safe Accommodation service possible within our current capabilities.

This strategy sets out our aims around Safe Accommodation in line with the Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy under the following four priorities:



SAFE ACCOMMODATION

Safe Accommodation for the purpose of s.57 of the Act is defined by the Domestic Abuse Support (Relevant Accommodation and Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Sanctuary Schemes) (Amendment) Regulations 2021.



It includes accommodation provided by local housing authorities, a private registered provider of social housing, or a registered charity whose objectives can include provision of support to survivors of domestic abuse.

Safe Accommodation can take many forms, and the table below gives a definition of the types of accommodation which includes provision of support to survivors and their children.

Table 1: Safe Accommodation

Accommodation	Description
Refuge	A refuge offers single gender or single sex accommodation and domestic abuse support which is tied to that accommodation. The address will not be publicly available. Accommodation may be in shared or self-contained housing, but in both cases the service will enable peer support from other refuge residents.
Dispersed accommodation	Self-contained accommodation dedicated to supporting survivors of domestic abuse with a similar level of specialist domestic abuse support as provided within a refuge but which may be more suitable for survivors who are unable to stay in a refuge with communal spaces, and/or where peer support from other residents may not be appropriate, owing to complex support needs, or where older teenage sons cannot be accommodated in a women only refuge, for example.
Specialist accommodation	Specialist Safe Accommodation offering single gender or single sex accommodation, alongside dedicated domestic abuse support which is tailored to also support those who share particular protected characteristic(s) eg. LGBTQ+, disability and/or who share one or more vulnerabilities requiring additional support e.g. substance misuse, mental ill health.

Move on accommodation	Dedicated accommodation facilitating move on from more intensive services for those who still need low level support around domestic abuse.
Sanctuary schemes	Providing enhanced security measures to survivors' remaining in their own homes, where it is safe for them to do so, where it is their choice, and where the perpetrator does not live in the accommodation.
Other domestic abuse emergency accommodation	Other safe spaces provided on a temporary basis to those experiencing domestic abuse in an emergency, must be provided by Local Housing Authorities (LHA), social housing providers or specialist charities. Bed and Breakfast which is not separate and self-contained is not a form of Safe Accommodation.

The statutory guidance sets out the different types of domestic abuse support that might be provided under the Duty. The aim is to ensure that survivors and their children in Safe Accommodation receive expert help provided by specialist staff from domestic abuse support services. This includes support that is directly provided within Safe Accommodation

services such as refuges, and outreach support services provided to survivors in other types of relevant accommodation, including their homes in the case of a sanctuary scheme. It is the responsibility of the local authority to assess whether an individual survivor needs accommodation-based support and ensure that their support needs are met.

Table 2: Examples of support required for accommodation-based survivors.

Type of support	Example
Advocacy	Risk assessment and development of safety plans. Liaison with other professionals, eg, social workers, Health.
General advice	Financial, Benefits, back-to-work support, legal.
Housing advice and support	Securing a permanent home, rights to existing accommodation and advice on how to live safely and independently.
Domestic abuse prevention	Support to recognise the sign of domestic abuse to prevent re-victimisation. Domestic abuse courses.
Specialist support for those with protected characteristics and/or multiple disadvantage	Interpretation services, using by and for specialist organisations when required, drug and alcohol services, mental health support.
Children's support	Advocacy, dedicated 1-2-1 support, group work.

THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL PICTURE



Nationally, we know that Domestic Abuse is a leading cause of homelessness for women. National data shows that **1 in 5 women** who experience Domestic Abuse **will become homeless** compared to just 1% of women who do not experience domestic abuse. ¹

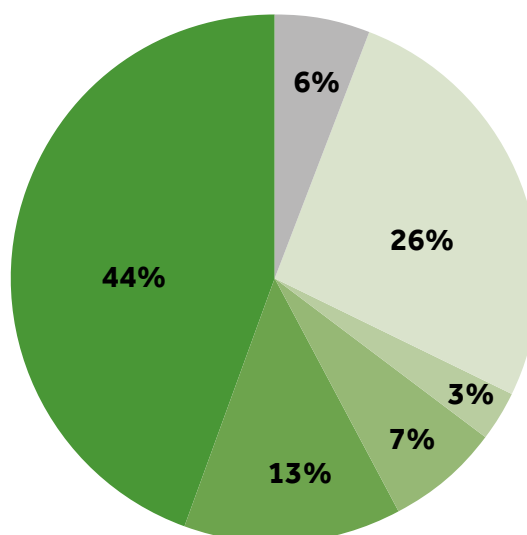
Figures on male survivors who become homeless owing to domestic abuse are unavailable at this time, but one can assume a proportion of male survivors will also become homeless owing to domestic abuse and surveys suggest male survivors find it very hard to access support for domestic abuse. Survivors of domestic abuse are legally classed as a vulnerable adult entitling them to priority housing support.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that **2.3 million people** aged 16 years and over (1.6 million women and 712,000 men) experienced domestic abuse in the year ending (YE) March 2024.

National figures show that the police recorded **851,062 domestic abuse-related crimes** in England and Wales in the YE March 2024.

There were **51,183 domestic abuse-related prosecutions** in England and Wales in the YE March 2024. Of these, 38,776 resulted in convictions and 12,407 resulted in non-convictions. ²

National data shows the number of individuals accessing Safe Accommodation by type below. In 2022-2023, of the **51,000 individuals** supported, just under half of those were children. It was estimated that **25,000 individuals** who applied for Safe Accommodation were not supported, owing to capacity constraints. For **5,500 of those** individuals the reason they were not supported was because the Local Authority could not meet their needs owing to multiple disadvantage. ³



44% Refuge 22,490	7% Specialist 3,780
26% Sanctuary 13,380	6% Other 2,910
13% Dispersed 6,660	3% Second stage 1,450

¹ Centre for Homelessness Impact, Women, Homelessness and Violence: What works?, 2021

² www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesoverview/november2024

³ HM Government, Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Report: "A Patchwork of Provision: how to meet the needs of victims and survivors across England and Wales", 2023.

Local picture

Table 3: Table 3 shows Dorset Police data for the last 3 years relating to Domestic Abuse crimes and incidents, which shows consistency across the 3 years with a slight reduction in figures for 22/23.

Domestic Abuse	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Violent Crimes	4,708	4,348	4,514
Incidents	6,554	5,719	6,353
Serious Sexual offence	249	199	238
MARAC Cases	743	725	734

Table 4: Table 4 shows the utilisation data for Bournemouth and Poole refuges across the last 3 years; there was a reduction in 2023/2024 owing to a large-scale enquiry during which time the service was closed to new referrals.

Service	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Bournemouth Refuge	93%	92%	78%
Poole Refuge	97%	95%	76%

In addition to our commissioned Safe Accommodation, households can be accommodated in temporary accommodation when there are no vacancies, or our commissioned Safe Accommodation will not meet their needs. As of the 7th January 2025, there were 30 households being supported in temporary accommodation as a result of fleeing domestic abuse. In the BCP area there are well established accommodation based

and community services in place supporting survivors of domestic abuse. These include refuge and respite room accommodation as well as home security for people in their own homes, outreach service, hospital in reach and children's specialist support. The current provision has been in place for a number of years with service delivery models which predate the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Table 5: Table 5 shows the number of households that approached the Council for assistance owing to being homeless or worried about becoming homeless because of domestic abuse in 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
No. of Domestic Abuse Approaches	340	416	439
No. owed a homeless duty	204	167	168
Prevention (prevented from becoming homeless)	50	50	39

Housing data for those placed in temporary accommodation in September 2024 showed the following groups were unable to access refuge accommodation.

- Survivors with higher levels of need due to mental ill-health, substance misuse and accessibility.
- Survivors with a disability, including learning and physical disability (e.g. wheelchair user).
- Survivors local to BCP who do not want to flee the area but cannot safely access refuge.
- Families with 3+ children.
- Children's needs too high for refuge.
- Support needs too high for refuge.
- Older male children.

Needs Assessment Key Findings

The following summary is taken from the Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment commissioned in 2021, our most recent data analysis report compiled by the BCP Domestic Abuse Commissioning Manager and our own Domestic Abuse Lived Experience survey 2023.

- In 20/21 77% of those applying for a refuge space were not accepted, the reasons being 'too close to refuge', 'too high needs', 'no suitable space for size of family' and 'prioritisation of referrals with higher risk scores'.

- There are no refuge spaces which can accommodate a wheelchair user.
- There are no refuge spaces that can accommodate families with 3+ children owing to room sizes and shared living facilities.
- There is only 1 male space situated within a female refuge.
- Half of refuge clients were recorded as having a disability, of which 67% were mental health issues.
- 176 households were supported to remain in their own homes in 23/24 because of target hardening works carried out by BCP Council.
- Local survivors wanted more support to remain in their own homes.
- Most respondents from the domestic abuse survey felt support was not available because they were not aware of what services were available.

Whilst there has been progress and improvements since the Safe Accommodation needs assessment in 2021, BCP Council acknowledges that there is still work to be done. We aim to enhance our Safe Accommodation offer over the next five years as part of the broader initiative to end domestic abuse across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole.

Successes and Challenges within BCP

Success	Challenge
There is one refuge in BCP with 18 self-contained units which can accommodate women and children, commissioned by BCP Council. It shows examples of risk reduction and improved outcomes for survivors.	Current refuge provision cannot meet demand and does not cater for all needs. Of those referred into refuge 77% were not accepted and alternative provision was found. There are gaps in provision for those with protected characteristics, however, there was a lack of data to properly define this need. Not all survivors need high impact DA support. Survivors with Disabilities, Survivors who identify as LGBTQ+ and those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) face challenges in accessing support. Families with older teenage sons cannot access refuge.
There is one male refuge space which is attached to the above-mentioned women's refuge and meets the need of one male domestic abuse survivor.	This space is attached to the female refuge which is not appropriate, and feedback suggests males do not fully access all the support on offer as a result. The male service is always at capacity, with temporary accommodation in frequent use as an alternative. Local data shows 39 males presented to BCP Housing as homeless owing to domestic abuse in 23-24, evidencing the gap between need and provision. National data suggests 82% of men found it hard to access domestic abuse support of any kind.⁴
There is an 8-bed unit for female survivors who are also at risk of homelessness and have multiple disadvantage, this has shown a great degree of success evidencing best practice, significant partnership working, risk reduction and improved outcomes.	Funding for this project was initially provided by the DLUHC Respite Room pilot, followed by the Rough Sleepers Initiative and the New Burdens grant. However, future funding for this project is not guaranteed at this time.
BCP Council were awarded capital and revenue funding in 23/24 under the 3 year Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP) to deliver 70 units of housing led accommodation. A women-only block of 10 units within this programme has been identified. Women with multiple disadvantages including experience of Domestic Abuse will be accommodated.	This is not dedicated to only survivors of domestic abuse and specialised support into this service is yet to be established.

⁴ Mark Brookes, Mankind Initiative. "Male victims of domestic abuse and partner abuse: 70 key facts", 2023.

Our Target Hardening scheme works well, with an easy referral pathway working with all tenants across both the social housing and private sector. This supports more DA survivors to remain in their own home by providing improved home security.	This is not currently linked into specialist domestic abuse support so is not a comprehensive Sanctuary Scheme. Sanctuary schemes provide survivors of domestic violence and hate crime with a way to stay safe in their home and stop them from becoming homeless. The awareness of the current Target Hardening scheme amongst colleagues, partners and the community varies. The awareness and knowledge of civil orders, non-molestation orders and occupation orders, which offer an additional layer of protection for survivors when remaining in their own homes, varies across different organisations providing a service.
Move on accommodation A rent deposit scheme enables survivors to move on from Safe Accommodation into more settled housing. The landlord liaison team maintain relationships within the private rental sector, to secure accommodation. Tenancy sustainment officers support individuals for up to 12 months once they have found settled accommodation.	Affordability, quality and availability of private rentals can make finding move on accommodation a challenge. ⁵ Availability of social housing is limited and there is high demand for housing. ⁶
BCP Council is progressing with Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation. DAHA strives to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction and adoption of an established set of standards and an accreditation process. Published a Domestic Abuse Tenants policy for BCP Homes.	DAHA requires a cultural shift around domestic abuse and can be difficult to embed with colleagues and tenants. Policies and procedures around domestic abuse need creating, producing and embedding organisationally. The case management systems do not allow for easy data analysis, and they are varied across the organisation.

⁵ Crisis, "Falling Short: Housing benefit and the rising costs of renting in England", 2022.

⁶ National Housing Federation, "People in Housing Need- he Scale and Shape of Housing Need in England", 2021.

Across BCP there are now 6 Children and Young People Domestic Abuse Advocates (CYPDAA), 5 commissioned by BCP Council and 1 by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). Mapping and pathway guidance and documents have been distributed to colleagues and partners along with details on how to access CYPDAA support which is also available for the public on the BCP Council website. Published a 'By and For' National list for all to access, to enhance the correct support offering to minoritised individuals and those with intersecting characteristics.	National data suggests children and young people accessing DA specialist provision is lowest in the South West, suggesting there is more to be done in publicising these services and ensuring children and young people get the support they need. ⁷ Some of these services are grant funded therefore the ongoing sustainability is unknown.
A Domestic Abuse Housing Advocate has been employed to work with all survivors and their children who are placed in temporary accommodation because of domestic abuse. Families with children are prioritised for family hostels and self-contained temporary accommodation. Recruited a group of Domestic Abuse Champions within the Housing team who will act as domestic abuse specialists within Housing. They will receive advanced training and support to better assist their clients and colleagues.	The volume of survivors in temporary accommodation remains high.
A domestic abuse lived experience survey was rolled out across BCP, and a report was written from this. An 'Experts by Experience' survivor voice group has been established.	Extracting information to inform service development can be challenging owing to the variation in responses, but work is being undertaken to take actions from all lived experience work and some individuals are reviewing policies for BCP Council to ensure the authentic voice is heard. The Experts by Experience group is a new initiative and feedback is only just starting to be collated.

⁷ HM Government, Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Report: "A Patchwork of Provision: how to meet the needs of victims and survivors across England and Wales", 2023.

BCP Council offers comprehensive DA training at Level 1 and Level 2, Housing DA training and regular additional DA related training opportunities including intersectional awareness to staff and other professionals.	Ensuring all colleagues attend the relevant training and recording of training needs modelling. Dissemination of training opportunities does not have a clear pathway.
There is an established Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Board with full representation from relevant partner organisations. A Safe Accommodation task and finish working group has addressed the recommendations from the needs assessment 2021.	

Best Practice

The Respite Rooms National Pilot Programme provided single sex short stay supported accommodation for survivors of Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) who were experiencing, or at risk of, street homelessness. It provided vulnerable women with intensive, trauma informed support and helped them make choices and decisions around their next steps for recovery. The programme started operation in October 2021 in 12 English Local Authorities (LAs). The pilot ran for 18 months with funding of £5.4 million and provided 121 bedspaces.⁸

BCP Council were successful in securing funding to become one of the 12 LA's to pilot this scheme. The national programme evaluation was positive as was the local review which demonstrated significant outcomes. The service has continued with funding through additional grants as it was so well received and needed in the area. Our co-located multi-agency team within the Respite Rooms provision effectively meets the needs of the women accessing the service. Service users rated the support they received very highly.

“

In the past I've been treated like I was a problem, a nuisance, basically scum. When I got any help, it wasn't because they really wanted to help me, it was because they wanted me to go away, like, they'd do whatever little they could to just make me someone else's problem. Shove me in a hostel with men sticking needles in their arms, when they know I've got a problem myself and I'm black and blue from what a man did to me, why not? Who cares about her, she's a stupid [slur for a sex worker] junkie, just make her go away. Make her invisible. But you know who cares? They [Respite Rooms staff] do. They actually treat me like a human being, not like a [expletive].

Anonymous, 2023, p54.⁸

”

⁸ DLHUC, Respite Rooms Pilot Programme Evaluation: Final Report, 2023.

OUR SAFE ACCOMMODATION PRIORITIES

The following five priorities will be the focus of the BCP Safe Accommodation Strategy 2026 – 2031 Delivery Plan:

Priority 1 Prevention and Early Identification

Priority 2 Access to appropriate housing and support services

Priority 3 Support survivors to return home and move on

Priority 4 Relationships

Priority 5 Improve Data Collection and Ensure Responses are Survivor Led

Priority 1 Prevention and early identification

Survivors (adults and children) are supported at an early stage with options to remain safe at home to prevent homelessness

We will:

- Monitor and uphold the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation principles.



- Align with the overarching BCP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy's "Prevent" priority to ensure the early identification of survivors of domestic abuse to prevent homelessness.
- Ensure survivors have access to advice, guidance and support which enables them to reach decisions about their future.
- Ensure all housing staff can identify and respond effectively to survivors of domestic abuse.
- Ensure partner organisations, practitioners and the community have access to quality information on available services and pathways, to encourage the early identification of domestic abuse to prevent homelessness.
- Align with the overarching BCP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy's "Pursue" priority, which focuses on taking appropriate action against perpetrators and where required housing solutions to reduce risk. This approach aims to protect victims, enabling them to remain in their home and, in turn, prevent homelessness.

Priority 2

Access to appropriate housing and support services

Accommodation options and appropriate support is in place for all survivors when they need it.

We will:

- Respond to survivors presenting to Housing with domestic abuse as a risk for homelessness by prioritising in accordance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Commission Safe Accommodation through a specialist domestic abuse organisation that meets the needs of everyone.
- Ensure that services are of a consistently high quality in terms of both support and the accommodation provided to enable survivors to recover and rebuild.
- Provide comprehensive trauma informed support tailored to the needs of those requiring Safe Accommodation, including those with protected characteristics and children without prejudice and barriers.
- Enhance our understanding of the barriers faced by individuals with protected characteristics in accessing Safe Accommodation.
- Further understand the challenges faced by those with No Recourse to Public Funds, through education and collaboration with services for minority ethnic groups.
- Ensure robust community services are in place to provide consistent support to survivors throughout their journey wherever they may be living.

Priority 3

Support survivors to return home and move on

Work collaboratively with survivors to return home safely or move into alternative long-term accommodation.

We will:

- Establish clear pathways for move on accommodation in collaboration with our housing partners. This will include exploring managed reciprocal schemes as an additional option for move on accommodation out of area.
- Ensure that survivors can move on and re-settle within a community by providing effective resettlement support, helping them to rebuild their lives and integrate smoothly into their new environment.
- Collaborate closely with partners to explore and find solutions to common issues around move-on.
- Commissioned Safe Accommodation services are effectively delivered and monitored through key performance indicators to manage throughput efficiently.
- Dorset Police will continue to utilise and promote the use of Domestic Abuse Protection Orders to remove perpetrators from addresses to allow survivors to return to the home, obtain civil orders, and work with support agencies.

Priority 4 Relationships

Ensure effective, multi-agency working to meet the housing needs of survivors of domestic abuse.

We will:

- Explore co-location opportunities with specialist domestic abuse services.
- Work closely with the Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead to embed the Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to Domestic Abuse within housing services.
- Bring together housing organisations and the domestic abuse sector through a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) to keep survivors safe and hold perpetrators to account.
- Continue to sit at a strategic and operational level across multi-agency partnerships to address domestic abuse across the BCP Council area.



Being homeless because of domestic abuse is different from general homelessness. Survivors are not simply without housing they have been forcibly displaced by trauma. Leaving a home is not a choice; it's an act of survival. A secure home from the start can prevent breakdown, mental health crises, and re-entry into homelessness services. It's not only the right thing it's economically sound policy.



Priority 5 Improve Data Collection and Ensure Responses are Survivor Led

Continue to develop our understanding of needs through improved data collection and ensure survivors have an effective voice.

We will:

- Develop a partnership minimum data set to identify and understand gaps, trends, emerging needs and future demands for Safe Accommodation.
- Ensure data sets record protected characteristics to understand the level of need for individuals with protected characteristics.
- Develop a performance framework with key performance indicators to monitor and measure the impact and success of this strategy.
- Be informed by those with lived experience, including underrepresented groups and those with multiple disadvantage, to better shape Safe Accommodation services.
- Continue to grow and utilise our Experts by Experience Board to capture their expertise and guidance.

TARGET OUTCOMES

In focusing on the priorities above we will ensure the following outcomes are achieved.

- Survivors have the option to remain in their own homes with the necessary support to do so.
- A variety of Safe Accommodation options are available, along with resettlement support.
- Specialist provision and Safe Accommodation for those with protected characteristics.
- Specialist support and Safe Accommodation for male survivors.
- A highly trained workforce supporting those accessing Safe Accommodation.
- Specialist support for children including therapeutic and resettlement support
- Training for housing staff and a specialist worker such as an IDVA based within housing teams.
- Survivors and agencies know the services and support available to those experiencing domestic abuse.



Delivering the Strategy

This Safe Accommodation Strategy (2026-2031) will be reviewed annually. The Domestic Abuse Strategic Group (DASG) will oversee the implementation through a detailed delivery plan and report to the Community Safety Partnership Executive Board every six months to ensure accountability and achievement of the strategy outcomes.

Measuring Success

A task and finish group will be formed to develop both quantitative and qualitative data sets. This data will inform key performance indicators, which will measure the outcomes and impact of this strategy.

Links with other strategies

- **BCP Council Corporate Strategy**
(2024-2028) which sets out 2 key priorities:

Our Place and Environment

Vibrant places where people and nature flourish, with a thriving economy in a healthy, natural environment.

Our People and Communities

Everyone leads a fulfilled life, maximising opportunity for all.

- BCP Preventing Domestic Abuse Strategy 2026- 2031
- BCP Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Strategy 2026-2031
- BCP Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy (2021-2025)



HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you or someone you know needs support around domestic abuse, there is help available from the organisations listed below and more information can be found here including:

'By and For' services

Help with domestic abuse | BCP

Local support organisations

- BCP BCHA Domestic Abuse Referrals & Support Line 01202 710 777
- BCP Refuge 01202 547 755
- Sexual Trauma and Recovery Service (STARS) 01202 308 855
- Victim Support Dorset 0300 303 0163
- Paragon Dorset 0800 032 5204
- BCP Council Housing Options 01202 123147



There are also national organisations which can help:

- National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247
- The National Centre for Domestic Violence 0800 970 2070
- Women's Aid 0808 2000 247
- Mankind Initiative 01823 334 244



DELIVERY PLAN

PRIORITY 1 – PREVENTION AND EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Outcome	Actions	Lead	Year 1 2025/26	Year 2 2026/27	Year 3 2027/28	Year 4 2028/29	Year 5 2029/30
1.1 BCP Homes and Housing Options achieve and maintain the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation.	1.1.1 Completion of the DAHA accreditation for BCP Council Housing Services.	BCP Homes, Housing Options, BCP Repairs & Maintenance Team		✓			
	1.1.2 Continue to monitor the impact and outcomes of the DAHA accreditation.	BCP Homes, Housing Options, BCP Repairs & Maintenance Team			✓	✓	✓
	1.1.3 Develop targeted training programme for BCP Council housing staff to meet the criteria of the accreditation and ensure customers and tenants are fully supported.	BCP Homes, Housing Options, BCP Repairs & Maintenance Team	✓	✓			
1.2 Survivors are informed of their housing rights and the support services available to them.	1.2.1 Develop a comprehensive five year Communications plan to ensure information is accessible and readily available to survivors, stakeholders and professionals in the BCP Council area. This will reflect the requirements of the DAHA accreditation for BCP Council Housing Services and the wider Community Safety Partnership Community Safety Awareness & Engagement Plan. This will be monitored through the Domestic Abuse Strategy Group and formally reviewed on an annual basis.	Safer BCP Partnership Partners*	✓				
	1.2.2 Ensure our Children's Early Help offer is fully informed around housing options through training and the BCP Safe Accommodation Communication's Plan.	Early Help & Targeted Intervention		✓			
	1.2.3 The new Domestic Abuse Champions will establish and maintain links with all our commissioned and non-commissioned specialist domestic abuse services.	BCP Homes, Housing Options, BCP Repairs & Maintenance Team	✓				
	1.2.4 Review current training to ensure the Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse Concession and services available to individuals with no recourse to public funds, is sufficiently covered.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Public Health & Communities	✓				
	1.2.5 Include a specialist domestic abuse housing advocate role within the recommissioning of domestic abuse services.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships		✓			

* Safer BCP Partnership Partners are BCP Council, Dorset Police, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Services, The Probation Service and Our Dorset Health Services.



1.3 Survivors can safely remain in their homes, reducing the risk of homelessness.	1.3.1 Enhance the target hardening service by creating a comprehensive Sanctuary Scheme based on the guidance provided by DAHA.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships		✓			
	1.3.2 Commission good quality community based specialist domestic abuse services to support survivors and prevent homelessness.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Public Health & Communities		✓			
	1.3.3 Ensure Housing staff understand the criminal and civil remedies available to remove perpetrators from the home.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Public Health & Communities	✓				
	1.3.4 Our targeted domestic abuse training programme will ensure staff know how to advise and support survivors seeking to remove perpetrators and will consider accommodation options for the person displaying harmful behaviours, helping survivors to remain and feel safe in their own home.	BCP Homes and Housing Options		✓			
	1.3.5 The new BCP Homes Management Moves Policy will identify survivors as eligible for management moves as required.	BCP Homes	✓				
	1.3.6 Reach agreement with Registered Social Landlords in the BCP Council area to deliver a survivor led service to minimise the need to move and where required facilitate management moves.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Registered Social Landlords				✓	

* Safer BCP Partnership Partners are BCP Council, Dorset Police, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Services, The Probation Service and Our Dorset Health Services.



PRIORITY 2 – ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Outcome	Actions	Lead	Year 1 2025/26	Year 2 2026/27	Year 3 2027/28	Year 4 2028/29	Year 5 2029/30
2.1 All survivors will have access to Safe Accommodation with specialist support.	2.1.1 Develop a commissioning plan to meet the housing needs of all survivors of domestic abuse (adults and children).	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Public Health & Communities	✓				
	2.1.2 Commission specialist Domestic Abuse services that support adults and children: • Remaining in their home • Residing in Safe Accommodation and temporary accommodation • Making their own temporary accommodation arrangements.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships		✓			
	2.1.3 We will minimise the use of temporary accommodation and where this is provided, as a last resort, specialist Domestic Abuse support will be offered until the household can move into Safe Accommodation.	Housing Options			✓		
	2.1.4 Develop an inclusive quality Safe Accommodation offer through existing stock, development and procurement and registered provider relationships which meet the identified needs as set out in the strategy.	Housing Delivery		✓			
2.2 All survivors will have access to Safe Accommodation which meets their specific risk levels and support needs.	2.2.1 Develop a clear pathway into safe accommodation which is based on individuals' risk and support needs.	Housing Delivery		✓	✓		
	2.2.2 All housing staff will have a clear understanding of the pathway and referral processes into specialist Domestic Abuse services.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Commissioned Service Providers			✓		
2.3 Survivors with protected characteristics and multiple needs will have their accommodation and support needs fully met.	2.3.1 Our targeted training programme will ensure Housing staff and commissioned services understand the housing needs of those with protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.	BCP Homes, Housing Options, BCP Repairs & Maintenance Team and Commissioned Service Providers		✓			
	2.3.2 Develop an inclusive quality accommodation offer for Safe Accommodation which meets the identified needs of people with protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.	Housing Delivery		✓			
	2.3.3 Commissioned services will provide specialist Domestic Abuse support that meets the needs of survivors with protected characteristics/multiple needs.	Commissioned Service Providers		✓			



PRIORITY 3 – SUPPORT TO RETURN HOME AND MOVE ON

Outcome	Actions	Lead	Year 1 2025/26	Year 2 2026/27	Year 3 2027/28	Year 4 2028/29	Year 5 2029/30
3.1 All survivors in Safe Accommodation are supported to move onto independent accommodation.	3.1.1 Commissioned providers of Safe Accommodation are required to provide reliable accurate advice around housing options including access to rent deposit scheme, tenancy sustainment and landlord incentives in the private rented sector.	Commissioned Service Providers		✓			
	3.1.2 Commissioned services are supported and robustly monitored to ensure sufficient managed moves through Safe Accommodation.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships			✓		
3.2 Survivors maintain stable housing and retain their social housing tenancy.	3.2.1 Strategic Housing Partnerships to consider a reciprocal social housing scheme. The scheme is a collaboration between housing associations and local authorities in the South West of England, ensuring survivors of domestic abuse can access safe, managed moves across Council borders without losing their security of tenure.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships			✓		
3.3 Enhanced safety and stability for survivors moving on from Safe Accommodation.	3.3.1 The new commissioned community support service provision will include resettlement support for people moving on from Safe Accommodation.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships		✓			
3.4 Survivors if safe to do so can return home.	3.4.1 Housing staff explore options for supporting survivors who wish to return home, ensuring it is safe to do so.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Commissioned Support Providers		✓			



PRIORITY 4 – RELATIONSHIPS

Outcome	Actions	Lead	Year 1 2025/26	Year 2 2026/27	Year 3 2027/28	Year 4 2028/29	Year 5 2029/30
4.1 A robust partnership and community response to domestic abuse.	4.1.1 Work with the Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead to facilitate and enhance the Coordinated Community Response to survivors of domestic abuse.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships			✓		
	4.1.2 Strengthen partnerships with local organisations and community groups to expand the resources and support available to survivors in line with the 5 year Communications Plan.	Safer BCP Partnership Partners *		✓			

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PRIORITY 5 – IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION AND ENSURE RESPONSES ARE SURVIVOR LED

Outcome	Actions	Lead	Year 1 2025/26	Year 2 2026/27	Year 3 2027/28	Year 4 2028/29	Year 5 2029/30
5.1 We will gain a clear understanding of emerging needs and trends to better address and meet identified need.	5.1.1 Set up a task and finish group under the governance of the DASG to agree future data monitoring across commissioned services, BCP Homes, BCP Council Housing, Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care.	Safer BCP Partnership Partners*		✓			
	5.1.2 Ensure housing and specialist services data for homelessness and Safe Accommodation applicants record protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010, to ensure levels of need are captured and inform service delivery.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Commissioned Service Providers	✓				
	5.1.3 Continue to report and review key data sets to Central Government.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Commissioned Service Providers	✓				
	5.1.4 Ensure adequate resource to fully review and evaluate data sets to inform future strategy and commissioning of specialist domestic abuse services.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Public Health & Communities		✓			
	5.1.5 Formal review of strategy and needs data to inform new strategy and commissioning plan.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships and Public Health & Communities					✓
5.2 Survivors will have a key role in the design and delivery of Safe Accommodation and future service provision.	5.2.1 Experts by Experience to be trained and supported to take part in the commissioning and procurement of Domestic Abuse services.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships	✓				
	5.2.2 Introduce a peer review approach as part of the ongoing evaluation of Safe Accommodation.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships, Public Health & Communities and Commissioned Service Providers			✓		
	5.2.3 Review the current processes for obtaining and evaluating customer feedback through Housing Options, BCP Homes and commissioned services.	Strategic Housing & Partnerships, BCP Homes and Commissioned Service Providers		✓			

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