

<b>Title</b>	<b>Domestic Abuse Policy</b>
<b>Document Owner</b>	Director of Housing
<b>Next Review Date</b>	December 2018
<b>Corporate Aim</b>	Create great neighbourhoods where people and communities flourish

## 1. POLICY PURPOSE AND AIMS

This Policy details the principles by which whg will support victims of domestic abuse and assist perpetrators to change their behaviour.

- 1.2 The aim of the Policy is to support victims and mitigate the risk of domestic abuse to all customers. We take all forms of domestic abuse seriously and are committed to ensuring that customers experiencing domestic abuse are provided with a fair, sensitive, and confidential service.

## 2. OUR POLICY

- 2.1 whg adopts the Home Office definition of domestic violence and abuse:

‘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 can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

This includes so called ‘honour’ based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

- 2.2 whg condemns all forms of domestic abuse and will seek to provide high quality advice, support, and practical assistance to customers who are the victims of domestic abuse, within the constraints of existing resources.
- 2.3 We will work closely with external partners such as Walsall Council, Police, and Walsall Domestic Violence Forum, to deal effectively with domestic abuse and reduce repeat offending.

- 2.4 We will provide support and advice to customers experiencing abuse, considering all possible solutions, and where necessary referring them to other relevant organisations for more specialist support.
- 2.5 We will offer a confidential service; at our offices, by telephone, or an agreed choice of safe venue. However, we do advise that any safeguarding concerns will be reported to relevant agencies.
- 2.6 whg will always seek to support victims to remain in their homes. We will work with partner agencies and victims to consider target hardening and other preventative measures to protect victims of domestic abuse and sustain tenancies.
- 2.7 Target Hardening of victims' properties may include advice, physical changes to properties such as increased security and imposing preventative measures against perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- 2.8 The re-housing of victims will be considered if they are at significant risk in their current homes. In these cases whg will undertake an assessment of how the risk will be mitigated if a move is arranged.
- 2.9 whg will undertake the most appropriate action against perpetrators of domestic abuse where evidence is available to do so.
- 2.10 We will ensure that colleagues are well trained and have the knowledge and resources available to effectively deal with customers who are suffering from or threatened by domestic abuse.

### **3. PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS**

- 3.1 whg will keep a record of all reports of domestic abuse and monitor data to improve performance and may tailor our service to the needs of our customers.
- 3.2 Cases will be monitored through our 'Housing Performance Management' (HPM) system and whg will regularly monitor outcomes and assess them against agreed standards.

### **4. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 4.1 whg will review this Policy and accompanying procedures every three years or sooner in the event of significant legislative or regulatory changes.

### **5. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004

Walsall Domestic Violence Forum (WDVF) – [www.wdvf.co.uk](http://www.wdvf.co.uk)

Women's Aid – [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

Refuge – [www.org.uk](http://www.org.uk)

Mankind Initiative – [www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk)

Men's Advice Line – [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, & transgender (LGBT) – [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk) /  
[www.brokenrainbow.org.uk](http://www.brokenrainbow.org.uk)