



The Langstane Group

Domestic Abuse Policy

Board of Management / Committee name	People and performance Committee
Approval date	4 August 2026
Implementation date	6 August 2026
Review date	August 2029
Version	3

Version	Date approved	Changes
V1	25-05-2022	New Policy
V2	05-03-2024	Changes following 'Policies not Promises' – a review of Scottish social landlord's domestic abuse policies CIH and Women's Aid. The Scottish Government's definition of domestic abuse has been used. Additional information has been added around private interview space and reference as per the guidance to how the Association will deal with perpetrators is noted. Following consultation with Women's Aid certain words have been replaced to strengthen the policy, for example 'affected by domestic abuse' is replaced 'with those experiencing domestic abuse', and the word 'incidents' removed.
V3	04-08-2026	Full re-write and update in line with recent changes to legislation.

1. Introduction

The Langstane Group is a registered social landlord and is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of tenants and their households.

This policy sets out how we will:

- respond to domestic abuse
- support survivors
- manage perpetrators
- comply with legal duties under the Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2025.

We define domestic abuse as:

“a pattern of abusive behaviour by a partner or ex-partner, which may be physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional, including coercive and controlling behaviour.”

2. Make a Stand

We recognise that domestic abuse happens within our communities and in our homes and we acknowledge it as a crime. In response to this we have signed the ‘make a Stand’ pledge as part of the Chartered Institute of Housing’s mission to work with housing providers to tackle domestic abuse. The Customer Service Manager is the appointed domestic abuse survivor champion and Appendix 1 outlines the commitments within the pledge.

3. Policy Statement

The Association is committed to preventing and alleviating domestic abuse and its impact in the broadest sense through working with other organisations and by collaborative and individual practice to ensure that individuals and any family members, including children, experiencing domestic abuse, receive timely and consistent assistance, information and practical support.

The policy aims to:

- prevent homelessness and address the housing need of those who experience domestic abuse
- to intervene effectively with tenants who perpetrate domestic abuse
- to promote a proactive approach to domestic abuse
- to ensure that through a unified approach, appropriate, sustainable housing solutions contribute to ensuring that violence and abuse are not tolerated
- enable effective sign posting to specialist support services
- to work in partnership with other organisations to create a supportive environment which encourages people to report domestic abuse and to assist in ensuring a joined up, holistic response

We will take proactive steps, including the use of legal powers, to ensure survivors can remain safely in their home or access appropriate alternative accommodation.

4. Legal Framework

This policy complies with:

- Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2025
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

5. Links to other strategic documents and policies

The domestic abuse policy is linked to a number of strategic documents and policies in particular but not solely:

- Equality and Diversity Strategy and Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Supporting and Protecting Adults from Abuse and Harm Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Allocation Policy

6. Principles

We will ensure that:

- the safety of survivors and children is the paramount consideration
- all cases are treated as high priority
- be person-centred, trauma-informed and led by the wishes of the survivor
- responses are non-judgemental and sensitive
- services are accessible to all, regardless of gender, sexuality, or background

7. Identifying Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse may be identified through disclosures by tenants or households, reports from neighbours or agencies or tenancy or repair patterns.

All staff have a duty to recognise signs of domestic abuse, respond appropriately and escalate concerns where required.

8. Risk Assessment and Safety Planning

A Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) risk assessment will be completed in all cases.

This will:

- assess immediate and ongoing risk
- identify safeguarding concerns
- inform safety planning

Safety planning will be survivor-centered, reviewed regularly and involve partner agencies where appropriate.

9. Housing Options

Where domestic abuse is identified, a housing options approach will be adopted.

These options may include:

- remaining in the home with safety measures
- emergency accommodation
- permanent rehousing
- legal action under Ground 15A

Survivors experiencing domestic abuse will be treated as having high priority.

10. Supporting Survivors

We will provide clear information about rights and options, support access to specialist domestic abuse services, ensure private and safe communication and agree an individual action plan.

The wishes of the survivor will guide decision-making wherever possible.

11. Remaining in the Home

The disruption and wide ranging costs, financial, emotional, social, caused by 'having' to move can be greatly reduced where survivors are able to remain in their current home safely. Where a survivor wishes to remain in the home we will:

- assess whether this is safe
- improve property security as a priority
- consider legal action against the perpetrator

Security measures may include but are not limited to; lock changes, enhanced door locking systems, provision of doorbell cameras, provision of new SIM cards and other safety improvements deemed appropriate all at no charge.

12. Rehousing

Where rehousing is required in an emergency, accommodation will be sought via refuge where appropriate or with support from the local authority and we will support survivors to access and navigate this process, making contact or referrals on their behalf.

Where a tenant reporting domestic abuse requests permanent rehousing, we will prioritise their application as a 'management transfer'. In such cases the suspension policy will not be applied and any arrears or recharges on the current account which are deemed to have been as result of the domestic abuse will not be taken into account. Each case will be reviewed and the action taken determined on a case by case basis.

Typically, suitable alternative accommodation will only be offered once under a management transfer scenario, however in instances where the transfer is related to domestic abuse and an impending safety concern, additional offers up to a maximum of 3 will be permitted. We will work with tenants and other housing providers to identify a property and location that meets their needs.

13. Rent arrears and other debts

We will ensure that we take into consideration the impact of domestic or economic abuse on any rent arrears or other housing related debt prior to raising any legal action to recover the debt or property. We will also consider the impact of domestic and economic abuse on a survivors housing situation when considering if we can rehouse or offer a management transfer.

Where possible; any arrears, housing related debt (including repair recharges) or other costs relating to the property will be attributed to the perpetrator and will be pursued.

14. Legal Action

14.1. When Ground 15A Will Be Used

Under part 2 of the Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2025, we can seek recovery of possession in sole tenant cases or terminate a perpetrators interest in the tenancy where domestic abuse has been evidenced.

Ground 15A may be used where:

- a tenant has engaged in abusive behaviour towards a partner or ex-partner
- the property is the victim/survivor's only or principal home
- the victim/survivor wishes to remain or return
- it is safe and appropriate

In all cases where legal action is being considered, we will take reasonable steps to identify all qualifying occupiers and ensure they are informed in accordance with statutory requirements.

14.2. Decision-Making

In deciding whether to pursue legal action under Ground 15A, we will take into account:

- the safety and wellbeing of the victim/survivor and any children (which will be the paramount consideration)
- the wishes of the victim/survivor
- any risk of further abusive behaviour
- any ongoing legal proceedings, including family or protective orders
- the needs and best interests of children, including custody arrangements where known
- the proportionality of the action

14.3. Evidence Gathering

In order to proceed under ground 15A, we must have sufficient evidence to be able to proceed. Evidence may include:

- police or court records
- social work or agency reports
- tenancy records
- statements from the victim/survivor
- the risk of further abusive behaviour

A criminal conviction is not required, but sufficient evidence must demonstrate abusive behaviour.

14.4. Notice Procedures

Before court action a formal notice of proceedings (NOP) will be served on the tenant and any qualifying occupiers. We will:

- ensure the survivor is contacted at the earliest opportunity where legal action is being considered
- explain the process, the evidence being relied upon and the implications of court action
- provide advance warning of the service of the notice, where it is safe to do so
- assess and manage any risks associated with serving the notice, particularly where the survivor and perpetrator reside in the same property
- ensure that appropriate safety planning and support arrangements are in place prior to notice being served

14.5. Court Action

At court we may:

- seek recovery of possession (sole tenant cases)
- seek termination of tenancy interest (joint tenant cases)

Throughout the court process we will ensure the survivor is safe and supported and if the repossession order is granted, offer the tenancy to them.

Where a court grants an order for recovery of possession under Ground 15A, we will offer a tenancy of the property to the victim/survivor as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 28 days after the tenancy has been terminated, unless it is not possible or appropriate to do so in the circumstances

14.6. Streamlined Process

Where there has been a relevant criminal conviction for abusive behaviour which is punishable by imprisonment within the previous 12 months, we may use the streamlined process.

We will consider proportionality and the impact on all parties, including any children, before proceeding under the streamlined process.

14.7. Other legal mechanisms

Where someone feels unsafe in their home and would prefer their spouse/partner does not live in the property with them they will be supported where appropriate to apply to the court for an interdict, exclusion order or anti social behaviour order.

An interdict can:

- Restrain or prohibit conduct by one spouse against the other or any of their children
- Prohibit one spouse from entering or remaining in the matrimonial home or in a specified area around the matrimonial home
- Stop a partner/ex-partner making other forms of unwelcome contact such as phoning, texting or emailing or doing other things, for example taking items from the victim's home, where evidence of such harassment is available. The court can also attach power of arrest provided an application has been made.

An exclusion order can remove the perpetrator from the property. An Anti-Social Behaviour order can be sought where the domestic abuse is having a significant impact on the wider community.

15. Perpetrators

Where legal proceedings are raised under Ground 15A, we have a duty to provide the perpetrator and any qualifying occupiers with advice and assistance in relation to finding alternative accommodation.

This will be provided as soon as reasonably practicable after proceedings are raised and will include:

- housing options advice across all tenures
- referral to local authority homelessness services where appropriate
- signposting to relevant support services

Any assistance provided will be delivered in a way that prioritises the ongoing safety of the survivor and any children.

In all cases where we are aware of domestic abuse, the perpetrators housing situation will be considered and housing options advice offered. Where appropriate, we will assist with rehousing either within our own housing stock or with another housing provider.

16. Support

The circumstances of applicants or tenants that experience or have experienced domestic abuse will be varied. Employees will recognise the enormous emotional impact domestic abuse causes and be accepting that when engaging with survivors it may be challenging for them to follow normal procedures and consideration will be given.

For example, where a survivor does not respond to an offer of housing within a set time, this may be because it has not been possible for them to while having to potentially hide the application from the perpetrator, so normal timescales may not be appropriate.

Equally, a survivor may not leave the first time, leaving is a process that must be done safely, and they should see no disadvantage to repeat applications for housing where domestic abuse has been a factor.

Officer discretion and judgement will be expected and encouraged when engaging with survivors of domestic abuse to ultimately come to the best resolution possible for them.

Survivors may request that correspondence relating to an application for housing is not sent to the primary address. Where this is the case robust processes will be in place to ensure that is abided by.

17. Information Sharing and Data Protection

We are aware any disclosure of domestic abuse is extremely sensitive and any reports will be dealt with in a non-judgemental and confidential manner. Those experiencing domestic abuse will be encouraged to allow the sharing of information with other agencies, including the Police and local authority departments, to ensure that the full range of civil and criminal action can be pursued and appropriate assistance provided.

We will seek consent to share information wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so. However, information may be shared without consent where this is necessary and lawful, including where there is a risk of harm, safeguarding concerns, or legal requirements to disclose information.

This is dealt with under the Supporting and Protecting Adults from Abuse and Harm Policy and Child Protection Policy. Where a person is identified as being subjected to domestic abuse, any interaction with them will be guided by best practice principles.

All information will be managed in accordance with:

- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018

We will:

- process data lawfully and securely
- protect sensitive and special category data
- share information only where necessary

A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be undertaken where required.

18. Partnership Working

When dealing with cases of domestic abuse, we will ensure a partnership approach is taken to best support the survivor and ensure safety planning. We will work in collaboration with Police Scotland, Local Authorities and Domestic Abuse Support organisations.

19. Training

All relevant staff will receive specific domestic abuse training as well as training on this policy and its implementation. A staff toolkit has been created for use alongside this policy which all staff will have access to.

20. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring will take place by the Leadership and Management Team who will receive anonymised reports detailing domestic abuse cases being dealt with.

The policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there are material changes to legislation that would affect this policy. Training will be provided to front line employees on a regular basis.

21. Equality and Diversity

We are committed to ensuring services are inclusive and accessible to all. Domestic abuse services will be provided without discrimination and be non-gender biased. In all cases, we will consider the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people. We will ensure that their needs and best interests are considered in line with relevant legislation and guidance, including children's rights obligations.