

Domestic violence

Our Commitment

Sentinel is committed to tackling domestic violence by providing support to victims and taking appropriate and fair action against perpetrators. We will treat domestic violence as a priority and make contact with you within one working day. Where we are able to, we will arrange for you to be interviewed by some one of the same gender or ethnic background if you wish.

What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is when one partner harms another partner or ex-partner in some way. This can be physical abuse and/or other behaviour which leads to them having power or control over the partner including harassment, making threats, withholding money or other material things, destroying belongings and emotional abuse. This can happen in all types of relationships and men can suffer domestic violence in some cases.

I think I may be suffering domestic abuse.

There are 3 important steps to take:

- Recognise that it is happening to you – it is usually a pattern of abuse, with some abusers saying sorry and persuading you that it won't happen again. However, domestic violence usually gets worse over time
- Accept that you are not to blame – it is not easy to explain your partners behaviour and many victims blame themselves. It is not your fault. Nobody deserves this type of behaviour
- It can be very difficult to take the first step and ask for help and you may find it easier to tell somebody you trust first. There are many organisations out there to offer help and support

What can I do?

It is a good idea to try to prepare in case you decide you need to leave urgently. You may need somewhere safe to stay quickly which could be with relatives, at a woman's refuge or in emergency accommodation through the local authority. Save extra money for a bus or taxi fare, get an extra set of keys to the house and car, consider taking legal documents and medication.

What can Sentinel do?

We recognise that your safety is a priority and will liaise with the local authority and Police to ensure that you have somewhere safe to stay. We will prioritise a housing transfer if you are unable to stay in your home. Rent arrears will not prevent a victim from being transferred.

We can also refer you to organisations who can give you more specialist advice and support.

Other leaflets on anti-social behaviour:

- How to make a complaint & collect evidence about anti-social behaviour
- Support for victims & witnesses of anti-social behaviour
- Support for perpetrators of anti-social behaviour
- Leaseholders & anti-social behaviour
- Remedies for anti-social behaviour
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour
- Anti-social behaviour and going to court

If you would like
Domestic violence
in large print, braille or translated please contact the
Customer Service Centre on
0800 195 5515 from a landline or
0300 666 5515 from a mobile.



What about my home?

There are a number of housing options which include:

- Attempting to stop the violence and stay with the perpetrator,
- Leave home temporarily
- Leave home permanently
- Stay in the home and get the perpetrator to leave

Each case is different and it is important that you get housing advice from one of the organisations listed on the page opposite.

Sanctuary schemes

Many local authorities have a Sanctuary Scheme which aims to make it possible for victims of domestic violence to stay in their home and feel safe. The Sanctuary Schemes can create a 'Sanctuary room' in the home fitted with extra locks, bolts and a reverse opening solid door, where it is safe to await the arrival of the Police. Other security measures can be used including window locks, window grilles and 'Birmingham' bars.

The Schemes operate at no cost to the victim and is open to any person who is threatened with homelessness due to domestic violence or hate crimes. It offers people an alternative to moving home, leaving family and friends, and finding new schools for their children.

Safer With Sentinel

Sentinel offers a package of measures to help and support victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour including domestic violence. We will design a tailor-made package of support for you which may include covert CCTV, personal security equipment, security measures for the home, Communicare 24 alarm system, support before and after court hearings and referrals to specialist support agencies.

I think a neighbour or friend is experiencing domestic violence, what can I do to help?

Make sure they are safe. This is the most important thing. If you suspect an incident is taking place, call the Police on 999.

Be understanding, supportive and a good listener. They may have to trust you before they can admit that this is happening. If you are critical, it may stop them telling you any more.

Respect their decisions. It may take time for them to get enough courage to seek help or leave the relationship. You can't force them to take action – it must be their decision.

Help them get help. They may need you to go to hospital with them, or report it to the Police. You might be able to get information and advice from other organisations on their behalf.

Keep yourself safe. Do not offer to talk to the abuser as it may put yourself in danger, and the abuser may punish the victim for confiding in you.

Organisations that can help.

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| Police emergencies | 999 |
| Hampshire Constabulary | 08450 454545 |
| Rights of Women | 0207 2516577 |

Housing and refuge advice

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| Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council | 01256 844844 |
| Hart District Council Housing Services | 01252 622122 |
| Rushmoor Borough Council Housing Services | 01252 398 398 |
| Refuge National Crisis Line (24 hrs) | 0808 2000 247 |
| Shelterline | 0808 8004444 |
| Basingstoke Women's Refuge | 01256 350996 |

General advice

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| Citizens Advice Bureau Basingstoke | 01256 322814 |
| Citizens Advice Bureau Yateley | 01252 878410 |
| Citizens Advice Bureau Fleet | 01252 617922 |
| Victim Support | 0845 30 30 900 |

Specialist advice, counseling and support

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| Stonham Housing – Domestic Abuse Team | 01256 474550 |
| National Domestic Violence Helpline (24 hrs) | 0808 2000 247 |
| Samaritans | 0845 7909090 |
| Relate | 0845 130 40 16 |
| Basingstoke Rape & Sexual Abuse Crisis Centre: Office | 01256 843810 |
| Crisis line | 01256 840224 |
| Women's Aid (24hrs) | 0808 200 0247 |
| Hart & Rushmoor Victim Support Group for victims of domestic abuse | 07962 915870 |

Children and families

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| Childline childrens services | 0800 11 11 |
| Parents Anonymous (For Parents who do or might abuse) | 0207 263 8918 |

Advice for men

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| Male Advice Line and Enquiry (experiencing domestic abuse) | 0845 064 6800 |
| Mens Advice Line (for victims and perpetrators of Domestic Violence) | 0808 801 0327 |
| Mankind UK (advice after male rape and sexual assault) | 01273 510447 |
| Male Victim Helpline | 0845 064 6800 |