

Domestic violence



How we can help if you are being threatened or abused by a relative or partner

Are you being threatened or abused by a relative or partner?

Do you feel that you have no choice but to live with the violence?

Have they told you that there is nothing you can do, nowhere you can go, or that they will find you if you try to leave?

There is no excuse for domestic violence and you can get help to stop it.

This leaflet explains how we can help you if you are living in one of our homes.

What is domestic violence?

It is where you are being abused by someone you have a relationship with (or have had a relationship with in the past). This includes:

- your husband, wife or partner;
- your parents or step-parents;
- other family members (for example, grandparents, in-laws, brothers or sisters); or
- your children.

You can be abused whether you are a man or a woman. Abuse doesn't just mean someone hitting you. It can also be:

- verbal abuse;
- threats;
- sexual abuse;



- stopping you having contact with your friends or family;
- taking away your money; or
- damaging your home or belongings.

**Domestic violence is a serious crime.
You don't have to live with it.**

What can I do?

There are no easy solutions. This leaflet is a quick guide to what you can do to protect yourself and your family. You can talk to your neighbourhood housing officer for more advice on what to do and your legal rights. They will listen to you without judging you or thinking badly of you, and will not tell anyone what is happening unless you say that they can.

You can also talk to any of the other organisations listed in this leaflet. However, please remember that if anyone thinks that your children are being abused, they must tell the police and social services so that this can be investigated.

Can the law help me?

The law has changed. It is now easier for you to get help and protection from domestic violence. You can get information about this from a solicitor, the police or Citizens Advice.

Domestic violence is a crime which the police take very seriously. Their first priority is your

safety and wellbeing. They will help you if you want to press charges but can also give you lots of information and support.

Can I leave my home?

If you are suffering from domestic violence and do not feel safe in your own home, your neighbourhood housing officer can tell you how to find somewhere else to live.

Moving into temporary accommodation

If you need to move quickly, you can contact us. We do not provide emergency accommodation, but if you are a woman, we may be able to find you a place in one of our refuges. These are places where women and their children can live in safety until they either return to their home or move somewhere else.

You can also contact the following organisations. You can find the phone numbers at the end of this leaflet.

Your local council

They may have a legal duty to arrange temporary accommodation for you if you are suffering from domestic violence. This may be in a refuge or bed and breakfast. They will look at your individual situation before deciding whether to do this. They will also work with us to find you a permanent new home.



Women's Aid

This is a national network of organisations providing a wide range of advice and support. They can work with the council to help you find a place in a refuge either in Wiltshire or somewhere else if there are no vacancies or you want to move further away.

Mankind

This is an organisation for men who are suffering from domestic violence. They can give you support and find you a place in a refuge for men.

There are other specialist organisations and refuges for people of different religions and cultures. Please contact us for more information about these services.

Housing Benefit and temporary accommodation

You can claim Housing Benefit for both your home and your temporary accommodation for up to one year, as long as you plan to return to your home within 52 weeks. The rules to qualify for this benefit are complicated, so please talk to your neighbourhood officer for advice and fill in the forms as soon as you can after leaving. If you decide to move into temporary accommodation and never return to your home, you will only be able to claim Housing Benefit for both properties for up to four weeks. You will need to tell us that you want

to end your tenancy agreement. Please ask us for advice first.

Moving to another home

If you want to move to another one of our homes to get away from the violence, we can put you on the transfer waiting list. However, it can take a long time for a property to become available.

Can I speed the process up?

If you are moving to get away from domestic violence, we will give you higher priority on the waiting list. You may need to get supporting letters to show that this is the case (your neighbourhood housing officer will be able to tell you about this). We can move you faster if you don't mind which area or type of property you move into.

Even if you are given the highest priority, it can still take some time and we may only be able to offer you one choice of property.

Can I move if I am not the tenant or if I have a joint tenancy?

If you are not the tenant, you can join the normal waiting list for your own home.

If you are a joint tenant, you can apply for a transfer. You do not have to tell the other tenant that you are moving. You can also put the tenancy into your own name, if the other tenant agrees or if the court gives you a property transfer order (for example, if you ➤

get divorced). Your neighbourhood officer will be able to give you general advice about this, but may need to pass you on to a solicitor or Citizens Advice.

What if my home is damaged?

If your home is deliberately damaged, it is usually up to you to pay for repairs. If your abuser damages your home, you should talk to your neighbourhood officer, as you may not have to pay for the repairs. We may ask you to report the incident to the police.

What if I owe you rent?

It doesn't matter. We will try to help anyone who is suffering from domestic violence. Please talk to your neighbourhood officer.

How will I manage with money and benefits?

You can claim benefits if you leave a violent partner – some can be paid even if you are working. Your neighbourhood officer can offer advice. The important thing is to ask for help early. Many people get into financial problems at times of crisis only because they have not asked for help early enough.

Phone numbers

Please get in touch with your neighbourhood officer as soon as possible so that we can try to help you. If you live in the:

Marden area

tel 01249 466130

(Swindon, Malmesbury, Sherston, Calne, Royal Wootton Bassett, Cricklade and surrounding villages)

Avon area

tel 01249 466140

(Corsham, Melksham, Trowbridge, Bradford on Avon, Chippenham and surrounding villages)

Our office hours are 8.45am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.45am to 4.45pm on Fridays. If you have an emergency outside office hours, please call us on 0800 854 205.

Other organisations you can call are listed below.

Wiltshire Council

0300 456 0100

Swindon Borough Council

01793 463000



**Wiltshire Constabulary
Domestic Violence Units**

Contact via the central Police telephone
number: 0845 408 7000

SPLITZ Support Service

(supports single parents and people suffering
domestic abuse)

0845 600 1945

Wiltshire Social Services

0845 603 1570

Emergency duty team

0845 607 0888

Swindon Social Services

01793 466900

Emergency duty team

01793 436699

Wiltshire Victim Support

01380 729476

North Wiltshire citizens advice bureau

0845 1203707

West Wiltshire citizens advice bureau

0845 1203737

Swindon citizens advice bureau

0845 0505155

Women's Aid Helpline (24 hours)

0808 2000 247

Mankind

(support for men suffering domestic violence)

0870 794 4124

Your doctor, health visitor or solicitor should also be able to help you.





If you would like to have any part of this explained or translated, or in a different format such as in larger print, or on audio tape, please contact us on 01249 465465 to discuss your needs.

আপনি যদি এর কোন অংশের ব্যাখ্যা অথবা অনুবাদ চান, অথবা বড়ো ছ'পার আকার, অথবা অডিও টেপের মতো অন্য কোন ভাষ্যক্রমে চান তাহলে আপনার প্রয়োজনীয়তা আলোচনা করার জন্যে অনুগ্রহ করে 01249 465465 নম্বর ফোনে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন।

倘若您希望我們對該雜誌的任何部分給予解釋或提供翻譯，或以不同格式（如大字體或錄音帶）提供，請致電 01249 465465 聯絡我們，洽商您的需求。

如果您希望我们对该杂志的任何部分给予解释或提供翻译，或以不同格式（如大字体或录音带）提供，请致电 01249 465465 联系我们，洽商您的需求。

Jeśli wymagają Państwo wyjaśnienia jakiegoś fragmentu albo jego tłumaczenia, albo w innym formacie, takim jak duży druk, albo na kasecie audio, proszę się z nami skontaktować pod numerem telefonu 01249 465465, aby przedyskutować Państwa potrzeby.

Herhangi bir kısmının izah edilmesini veya tercüme edilmesini, ya da iri harfler veya ses bantı gibi başka bir formatta verilmesini isterseniz, lütfen ihtiyaçlarınızı konuşmak için bu numaraya telefon edin: 01249 465465.



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